

# APL/APEL Policy

## Introduction

1 Accreditation of prior learning (APL) is defined as a system whereby academic credits can be awarded for previous learning that has taken place either through formal courses of study (Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning - APCL) or in other ways (Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning - APEL).

Credits gained can be:

- Accumulated - counted towards an award (for example, a Diploma/ Degree);
- Transferred - to another course of study or to another institution;
- Used to grant exemption from part of a course of study.

A distinction between general and specific credit should be noted as follows: General credit is awarded by the body which validates a course/qualification and demonstrates for external reference the volume and level of work associated with that course/qualification. The award of general credit makes no commitment about the use of that course/qualification by another body/institution for the award of specific credit via APL towards a subsequent qualification.

It is the responsibility of a receiving institution, i.e. UEA, to decide how much specific credit to award an individual student via APL, based on the level, extent and perceived relevance of the material (both knowledge and skills based) contained within the course/qualification offered by the applicant when compared with his/her intended course of study at UEA.

2 The following guidelines aim to clarify the position concerning cases of APCL/APEL but additional, more specific guidelines may be used in certain Schools where approved by the University Learning and Teaching Committee.

## APCL Principles

3 Specific credit may be awarded for courses which form a substantial part of a degree/higher education qualification, that carry a credit-rating and are clearly comparable in level, academic standard, content and learning outcomes to an equivalent award at UEA.

4 Applicants must note, however, that the award of specific credit via APCL towards their intended course of study at UEA is not guaranteed and may not necessarily directly reflect the value/level of the general credit assigned to their current/previous qualification by the validating body, i.e. it may be less.

5 Exemptions are not awarded for courses/qualifications that were awarded five years ago or longer, prior to the enrolment date for the intended course of study, unless the candidate can provide supporting evidence which gives an account of ways in which learning achieved through the course/qualification

has been applied actively and updated within the past five years.

Exemptions may not normally be granted where a student has previously registered for and failed part of an award and wishes to seek readmission to the same or similar award.

6 Schools may not award exemptions for core or compulsory modules except via a concession approved by the Academic Director of Taught Programmes.

7 Schools may not award exemptions for pre-requisites in certain disciplines at UEA, e.g. where the modules are required for Law Society recognition or are needed for professional practice, unless the applicant can show that the identical modules have been completed elsewhere.

8 For undergraduate Honours degree courses and Integrated Masters degrees, a candidate must normally attain the final 240 credits at UEA (or the final 360 credits in the case of degree courses comprising 480 credits). Under exceptional circumstances, a concession may be granted for a candidate to be admitted to Year 3/the final year of a degree course.

9 Postgraduate taught students may be granted APCL for 50% or less towards the total number of credit points for an award. APCL shall not be granted in respect of the dissertation component of a course.

### **Application process**

10 The applicant's request must be made in writing, enclosing:

- (1) A certified copy of certificate(s) or parchment(s);
- (2) a syllabus;
- (3) a completed application form, which asks for a transcript of the subjects taken, a full record of academic results achieved and contact details of an academic referee at the institution which awarded the qualification.

All applications should be sent to the Admissions, Recruitment and Marketing Service.

It should be noted that alternative APL application procedures are in place in HSC and EDU, and that these Schools have delegated authority to approve applications on behalf of the University Learning and Teaching Committee.

11 Procedure for the approval of APCL:

*For Undergraduate/Integrated Masters Candidates:*

**Direct entry to Year I  
(Spring Semester) or Year II  
(Autumn Semester)**

Delegated to Schools

**Direct entry to Year II (Spring  
Semester)**

Learning and Teaching Committee

*For Postgraduate Taught Candidates:*

**Exemption for 50% or less  
towards the total number of  
credits for an award**

Delegated to Schools

- 12 Requests for approval/concessions to Learning and Teaching Committee should be sent to the following:

Undergraduate, Integrated Master's and Postgraduate Taught Candidates:  
Relevant **Learning and Teaching Service (LTS) Hub**

UEA staff or their immediate Family:

**Admissions Recruitment and Marketing Service (ARM)**

13 The University will charge an APCL assessment fee (a flat rate of £60). If the application is successful, the candidate will be charged a fee for the award of exempted credit, i.e. £20 per 20 credit exemption. Therefore:

Total Cost = Tuition fee for the outstanding credits/modules required + Fee for the award of credit + the APCL assessment fee

The APCL assessment fee is not refundable.

14 APCL applications may take up to 6 weeks to complete. All applicants should be advised of this, and should be aware of semester restrictions concerning APL for half year arrangements, especially if the intended course of study involves year-long modules.

15 ARM will notify the candidate of the outcome in writing, and a copy will be sent to the appropriate LTS Hub. If the application is considered by the Learning and Teaching Committee, the appropriate LTS Hub will write to the student and copy the letter to ARM and the School as appropriate.

### **APEL Principles**

16 APEL exemptions are not normally awarded for certain professional disciplines. Applicants should consult the relevant School for further advice.

17 APEL applications will be assessed individually. Candidates must demonstrate that relevant, practical experience has been gained, and compile a portfolio of evidence using:

- (1) where applicable, confirmation by line-manager of job responsibilities and job description;
- (2) a record of achievements;
- (3) where applicable, details of specialist training/skills;
- (4) contact details of two referees, who can comment on the candidate's achievements;
- (5) documentation to demonstrate the learning outcomes achieved and the candidate's personal reflection of how the experience

- has furthered his/her understanding of the relevant subject area;
- (6) a completed application form.

In the first instance, applicants should contact the relevant LTS Hub and obtain the programme specification for the intended course of study. Candidates should indicate the relationship between the programme specification and their portfolio of evidence, and may consult the appropriate Course Director/School/Faculty Admissions Officer for advice.

The responsibility for assessing APEL cases shall be delegated to two members of the academic staff within the relevant School(s), who will interview candidates on the basis of their portfolios. The APEL interview may last up to an hour and may be recorded to enable interviewers to check the validity of their eventual assessments. The interview should focus on key, relevant learning experiences and candidates will be invited to give a detailed narrative account of the relationship between their prior learning and their intended course of study. The assessors should forward their joint recommendations to the Head of School.

Records relating to the APEL assessment must be retained. The candidate should also keep the portfolio of evidence for future reference.

The Head of School will consider the evidence put forward by the applicant and the recommendations of the assessors. The Head of School may approve and endorse the APEL exemption on behalf of the School Board, inform the candidate in writing and copy the letter to the relevant personnel:

Undergraduate, Integrated Master's and Postgraduate Taught Candidates:  
**Relevant LTS Hub**  
UEA staff or their immediate Family:  
**ARM**

If the Head of School agrees with the assessors' judgement that no exemption should be granted, based on the evidence presented, the School/Faculty shall inform the applicant in writing.

18 For postgraduate taught applicants, APEL exemptions may not be granted for more than 25% of the total number of credit points required for an award.<sup>1</sup>

19 For undergraduate/integrated masters applicants, APEL exemptions may not be granted for more than 60 credits of the total number of credit points required for an award.<sup>2</sup>

20 The University will charge an APEL assessment fee (a flat rate of £120). If the APEL application is successful, the candidate will be charged a fee for the award of exempted credit, e.g. £20 per 20 credit exemption. Therefore:

Total Cost = Tuition fee for the outstanding credits/modules required + Fee for the award of credit + The APEL assessment fee  
The APEL assessment fee is not refundable.

21 APEL applications may take up to 10 weeks to complete. All applicants should be advised of this, and should be aware of semester restrictions concerning exemption for half year arrangements, especially if the intended course of study involves year-long modules.

<sup>1</sup> Postgraduate taught applicants: the maximum APL (i.e. a combination of APCL + APEL) that may be granted is 50% of the total number of credit points required for an award.

<sup>2</sup> Undergraduate/integrated master's applicants: the maximum APL (i.e. a combination of APCL + APEL) that may be granted is 50% of the total number of credit points required for an award.