

## TRURO & PENWITH COLLEGE

### ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR LEARNING

(sometimes referred to as Recognition of Prior Learning)

When stated in a partnership agreement with an awarding body Truro and Penwith College follow the relevant awarding body's Accredited Prior Learning Procedure (APL). All other APL requests follow the College process.

**Accreditation of Prior Learning is a method of assessment (leading to the award of a qualification) that considers whether learners can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit(s)/module(s) through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and do not need to develop through a course of learning.**

#### Definitions

1. **Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL):** is the award of credit towards an award in respect of previous study at HE level which the student has passed. APCL may be awarded in respect of a completed programme of study (eg HND, FD) or in respect of one or more modules or units of a programme. Learning outcomes of prior certificated learning must be available to the college from the awarding institution and must map against all module learning outcomes of the new programme of study.
2. **Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL):** is the award of credit towards an award in respect of knowledge and skills acquired through life, work experience, and/or study which are not formally attested through certification by a recognised professional or academic body. Experiential learning is formally reviewed to determine that the learning has in fact occurred and that it is still current in relation to the unit(s)/module(s) concerned, and its equivalence to credit weightings and levels. It is the student's learning, not his or her experience, which is being assessed. Applicants will be required to demonstrate that they have satisfied the learning outcomes of the unit(s)/module(s) for which credit is claimed.
3. **Programme entry credit:** is an objective measure of the credit weighting and level of previous learning and is normally considered as part of the admissions process, with reference to the programme specification. Prior certificated learning undertaken in the UK Higher Education system will normally have appropriate credit weightings and levels attributed to it. As such it will attract credit based on the academic value and level of the achievement: a student who has successfully completed a Diploma of Higher Education, for instance, will normally be entitled to claim 240 programme credits, 120 at Level 4 and 120 at Level 5. Programme Entry credit may be recorded on a transcript provided by another HE institution or confirmed by another institution.
4. **Unit/Module credit:** is credit awarded towards the attainment of specific unit/module learning outcomes, working towards an award. Credit is against units/modules approved as part of a programme leading to an award. All the learning outcomes of unit/module have to be satisfied in order for credit to be granted. Claims for unit/module credit may

be part of the normal admission process or may occur at the beginning of a unit/module. A student may not be awarded credit in respect of part of a unit/module, except where a unit/module incorporates both a theoretical and professional practice element, and those elements are separately assessed. In such cases a claim for credit may be agreed against one of the two elements.

- Individual programmes may specify units/modules which must be taken and passed within the minimum credits to be taken at Truro & Penwith College. These units/modules should be specified in the programme specification. For example, students will normally be expected to undertake a project/research based assessment.

### Maximum permitted credit for APCL/APEL

- The maximum amount of credit which a student may claim towards a Truro & Penwith programme and the minimum credit which must be studied at the College in relation to specific awards is:

APCL/APEL		Credit studied on a Truro & Penwith College programme
Honours Degree	240 credits	120 credits, including at least 60 at Level 6
Degree	220 credits	100 credits, including at least 60 at Level 6
FdA/FdSc	120 credits	120 credits, including at least 60 at Level 5
DipHE	120 credits	120 credits, including at least 60 at Level 5 or above
HND	120 credits	120 credits, including at least 60 at Level 5
HNC	60 credits	60 credits at Level 4 or above
CertHE	60 credits	60 credits at Level 4 or above

**NB:** A student who is transferring into an HNC/HND, or is 'topping-up' to an HND must satisfy the requirements of ALL units/modules in the programme for which s/he is to receive credit. Programme Leaders must therefore award specific credit and grades for ALL such units/modules on admission. Any units/modules not covered by previous study must be completed and passed before an award may be made.

- Where a student claims APCL credit towards a programme in respect of credits which form part of another award which s/he has previously been awarded, the amount of APCL credit which can be awarded should be carefully considered by the programme team in the light of the student's overall academic profile. Students with Truro & Penwith College awards should not be treated any differently than students applying with awards from other HE institutions.
- Decisions on the award of credit are a matter of academic judgement and are therefore final.

4. Credit for prior certificated learning which occurred more than eight years ago will not normally be accepted. Where outdated certificated learning exists, but can be combined with more recent experiential learning, the certificated learning should be considered as part of an APEL claim.
5. Applications for programme credit (advanced point of entry) should normally be made as part of the admissions process prior to registration on a programme. Applications for unit/module credit should normally be made prior to registration on a unit/module, but may exceptionally be accepted within 2 weeks of the start of the unit/module. Evidence to support a unit/module credit claim must normally be submitted halfway through the unit/module or within 30 days (whichever is the earlier).
6. APEL claims are subject to the normal academic regulations governing the marking and successful completion of a unit/module. A student who has submitted an assessment for an APEL claim which has been deemed to have failed to satisfy the learning outcomes required would either be offered the opportunity to submit an appropriate piece of referred coursework for the unit(s)/module(s), or, exceptionally, the Award Assessment Board may require the student to repeat the unit/module with attendance as a further attempt.
7. A claim for APCL programme credit will not normally be awarded with marks attached unless the College is familiar with the marking scheme and academic standards. The consequent effect on the calculation of final aggregate marks, including classifications for undergraduate awards should be made clear in writing to students.
8. A claim for APCL unit/module credit would not normally be approved with marks unless a student can demonstrate that the learning was directly applicable to the unit/module against which the claim was being made and the College was familiar with the marking scheme and academic standard.
9. All APCL/APEL decisions must be recorded and clearly identified in all papers considered by Subject Assessment Panels and Award Assessment Boards and in the student transcript. Claims for APEL will be examined in line with the standard quality assurance procedures including external examining where appropriate.
10. The College reserves the right to reject an APCL/APEL claim based on academic judgement and the comparability of marking systems.

### **Process**

The prior achievement that would provide evidence of current knowledge, understanding and skills will vary from sector to sector. It will depend on the extent of the experience, technological changes and the nature of the outcome claimed. If the currency of any evidence is in doubt, the Programme Leader may use questions to check understanding, and ask for the demonstration of skills to check competence.

Where evidence is assessed to be only sufficient to cover one or more learning outcomes, or to partly meet the need of a learning outcome, then additional assessment methods should be used to generate sufficient evidence to be able to award the learning outcome(s) for the whole unit/module.

If the collated evidence of APL for a learner is judged by the College not to be sufficient to meet all the requirements of the relevant unit(s)/modules(s), then the learner will have to complete the normal assessment for those unit(s)/modules if they wish to be awarded the qualification.

The assessment process will be subject to the usual quality assurance procedures of the College, for example internal standardisation and internal verification. Evidence gathered through APL should be clearly referenced and sign posted to aid internal assessment and internal and external verification. This will result in a receipt of a transcript of learning, which clearly identifies the units/modules awarded.

Making an APL claim may take time and be as demanding as completing the unit/module of study for which credit is being claimed.

The evidence that a student submits with their APL claim should be:

- relevant
- authentic
- valid
- current – within eight years
- at the right level
- referenced
- sufficient
- verified by one referee.

APL evidence can include:

- any certificated learning achieved with another higher education institution
- comprehensive CV encompassing personal life experiences relevant to learning outcomes
- courses/units/modules completed including open learning. Curriculum details, outcome and assessments are required
- conferences attended or papers given
- study days attended
- journal articles/case studies published
- projects completed or work group records
- participation in journal clubs, quality circles, induction programmes
- practice experience innovations, research activity
- reflective writing, critical incidents
- teaching, health promotion materials developed
- testimonial from clinical supervisors or any other relevant professionals
- audio visual presentations

As with any assessment decision on procedural grounds; if a learner wishes to appeal against a decision made about their assessment they need to follow the standard College policy and procedures.