



Accreditation of Prior Learning – Guidance for Applicants

Exemplar guidance to applicants on portfolio completion and framework for reflection

1. The range and forms of assessment appropriate to consider claims for recognition of prior learning may include: focused interviews, completion of a piece of work or reflective diary, or learning journal, or portfolio. Applicants are encouraged to discuss what documentation is required with the appropriate Faculty/School Admissions Tutor. The following guidance is intended for APEL applicants who are required to complete a portfolio:
 - a. Ensure that you allow sufficient time to complete the portfolio, which may require several drafts.
 - b. Think about the information you wish to include. Do not assume the reader will have an understanding of the points you are trying to make or know of the programme you are referring to. Write clearly and give details about the programme(s) you have attended. Where possible include programme learning outcomes.
 - c. Provide information concisely and coherently. It should reflect an academic approach at the level that you are seeking credit. It should include evidence of substantial study and experience related to your area of practice and the programme subject area for which you are applying.
 - d. Each learning experience included should contain evidence that shows reflection on what has been learned and how this has been applied in order to maintain and enhance current practice.
 - e. When presenting information for your portfolio, consider:
 - i. Whether it is worthwhile to elaborate on a particular programme of study, project etc or on practical evidence that is more relevant
 - ii. Whether there are tangible outcomes from previous study that can be used as evidence, for example, photocopies of feedback, comments or any other information relating to how project outcomes were evaluated/received
2. A framework to support *Reflection* might focus on:
 - a. Major events undertaken in studies/experiences
 - b. Thoughts and feelings about such events – reflecting back on feelings and thoughts at the time compared with now
 - c. New skills or learning developed as a result of the events – have these led to changes in attitude or actions and has the learning been transferred to other situations?
 - d. What reading has been undertaken, including articles or books that support learning? Were these useful or not?
 - e. What personal changes have taken place as a result of the learning – for example, greater level of confidence?
3. The Faculty/School will provide you with information on the presentation of acceptable evidence, the volume of material required and the proof of authenticity. You will be made aware of any professional body requirements which may apply. Applications (see Appendix 3 for a standard application form for APL) should be made directly to the Faculty/School and the

Faculty/School will provide you with a timeframe of which the request is considered.

4. The University will consider all applications fairly and effectively in line with the procedures outlined in this document. In the event of a claim being denied, you are entitled to feedback
5. If you wish to challenge a decision to reject your application you should write to, or where agreed email the relevant Head of School to which you applied detailing the nature of the complaint. The complaint must typically be made within 14 days of the decision.
6. On receipt of a complaint, the Head of School (or nominee not involved in the admissions process) will review the decision to reject the application. Following this review the Head of School (or nominee) will write to you giving grounds for their decision, normally within 14 days.
7. If you have complained to the Head of School and remain dissatisfied you may submit your complaint to the University's Complaints Officer within 14 days of the Head of School's response. This Officer (or their nominee) will not review academic or professional judgements that have been made but will review matters relating to process. The Officer or nominee will aim to provide a response – a reasoned judgement – within 14 days of receiving a complaint. This judgement will represent the University's final decision on the matter.
8. A standard charge may be levied for consideration of APEL, which will be clearly communicated to you, the applicant, prior to consideration of evidence.