

**Policy and Procedure for the  
Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) and the  
Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)  
for students studying for University of Essex Awards at  
South Essex College**

**South Essex College of Further & Higher Education  
September 2018**

## **POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR THE ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR LEARNING (APL) AND THE ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (APEL)**

This policy relates to students studying for University of Essex awards at South Essex College.

Applicants who believe they may be eligible for AP(E)L will be given the opportunity to have their prior learning assessed and accredited towards the relevant taught degree scheme. Unless stated otherwise, the procedures and guidance below apply equally to both APL and APEL.

This document contains:

**Section A: South Essex College Policy** on the use of prior learning and prior experiential learning towards the requirements for a University of Essex award; and

**Section B: South Essex College Procedure** for the process of accreditation.

### **Definitions**

**APL**                      **Accreditation of Prior Learning - the formal recognition of prior learning gained outside the University through formally assessed courses.**

**APEL**                      **Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning - the formal recognition of prior learning gained outside the University through other experience, typically gained in the workplace.**

**AP(E)L**                      **Abbreviation used to encompass both of the above**

***Admissions Officer/  
Information Services Manager (Higher Education)***  
**Member of staff responsible for the oversight of the admissions process**

***AP(E)L Assessor/  
Approval Panel***      **Course leader responsible for admissions into the scheme concerned, and/or AP(E)L approval panel where these exist at partner institutions.**

## **SECTION A: POLICY**

### **1. Applications**

- 1.1** Application for AP(E)L should normally be made before the student commences study on the programme into which s/he is seeking to transfer prior learning.
- 1.2** Applications must consist of a written request, stating the University of Essex award in respect of which the student seeks AP(E)L, and documentary evidence of the learning, in the form of transcripts, certificates or other suitable evidence in the case of experiential learning.
- 1.3** A decision as to whether AP(E)L can be approved will depend both on the specific requirements and learning outcomes of each programme and the details of each individual application.
- 1.4** Applicants should note that the award of specific credit via APL towards their intended programme of study may not necessarily directly reflect the value/level of the credit assigned to their current/previous qualification, i.e. it may be less.
- 1.5** Exemptions will not be considered for prerequisites in certain disciplines where professional and statutory regulating body requirements apply.
- 1.6** Exemptions will only be considered for full modules of study; not elements therein.

### **2. 'Shelf-Life' of Learning**

The time elapsed since the student undertook learning that forms the basis of an AP(E)L application is a relevant factor to be considered in each case. Normally, learning should have taken place within the five years prior to the enrolment date for the intended programme of study.

[Note: attention should also be paid to the University of Essex Policy on The re-use of credit from University or external sources towards University of Essex awards]

### **3. Volume of AP(E)L in University awards**

- 3.1** It is important to note that the acceptance of AP(E)L towards University of Essex awards is an admissions decision based on each individual case. The maximum volume of AP(E)L outlined below is provided for the guidance of applicants and schools but does not constitute an entitlement.
- 3.2** For taught postgraduate awards a student may seek to import learning to a maximum of one third of the volume of credit that is required to be studied for the named University award.
- 3.3** For undergraduate awards of over 240 credits a student may seek to import learning to a maximum value of two thirds of the volume of credit that is required to be studied for the named University award.

- 3.4** For undergraduate awards of 240 credits or less the maximum credit value permitted to be imported is one half of the volume of credit that is required to be studied for the named University award.
- 3.5** For specified teaching qualifications the maximum credit value permitted to be imported is one half of the volume of credit that is required to be studied for the named University award.
- 3.6** Summary of requirements for admission via AP(E)L:

<b>AWARD</b>	<b>MAXIMUM CREDITS WHICH MAY BE IMPORTED</b>	<b>MINIMUM CREDITS TO BE TAKEN ON UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX VALIDATED COURSES <sup>1</sup></b>	<b>TOTAL CREDITS FOR AWARD <sup>2</sup></b>
Masters Degree	60	120	180
Postgraduate Diploma	40	80	120
Graduate Diploma	40	80	120
Postgraduate Certificate	20	40	60
Graduate Certificate	20	40	60
Postgraduate Certificate in Education	60	60	120
Professional Graduate Certificate in Education	60	60	120
Certificate of Education	60	60	120
CHEP (Certificate of Higher Education Practice)	30	30	60
Honours Degree	240	120	360
Ordinary Degree	200	100	300
Foundation Degree	120	120	240
Diploma of HE	120	120	240
Certificate of HE	60	60	120

<sup>1</sup>**Note:** The Rules of Assessment specify the particular requirements for volume of credit at specific levels of the FHEQ within each University award.

<sup>2</sup>**Note:** Where individual awards have a higher credit total (e.g. Honours degrees with 480 credits) the maximum import thresholds outlined above continue to apply.

#### **4. Calculation of degree results**

In calculating the final degree result of a student who makes a successful AP(E)L application, any courses or modules from which the student is exempted on the

basis of AP(E)L will be excluded from calculated averages or other methods used to determine the student's final degree result.

## 5. Transcripts

The transcript for a student who makes a successful AP(E)L application will indicate the elements of the scheme from which the student was exempted.

## SECTION B: PROCEDURE

1. Applicants wishing to be awarded credit for AP(E)L will be advised in the first instance to discuss the matter with the Central Admissions Team/Programme Leader who will ensure that the applicant is given access to the Programme Specification, including the programme structure and the rules of assessment and is informed of the College's AP(E)L policy and procedure.
2. The Central Admissions Team/Programme Leader will verify that the application is in accordance with the policy in Section A. If it is not in accordance, s/he will inform the student of the discrepancy in writing. Otherwise, the application will be passed to the AP(E)L Panel for approval.
3. The applicant will submit evidence of previous learning in the form of award certificate(s), transcript(s) or, in the case of experiential learning, a portfolio of evidence. This will be passed to the approval panel. The AP(E)L approval panel may request additional information, e.g. details of a course syllabus and/or the assessment methods.
4. The AP(E)L request is checked by CMA Compliance & Information Manager (HE) & Programme Partnership Manager who carry out the following actions to determine whether the student is eligible for AP(E)L towards a University of Essex award, documenting each action on the attached pro forma. It will:
  - (a) Decide whether, in the case of APL, further evidence in a format specified by the admitting department is required, in addition to the student's initial submission, and inform the student if such evidence is required.
  - (b) Assess the evidence against the requirements and learning outcomes of the relevant degree scheme and the available constituent courses or modules. It may consult with other members of academic staff as appropriate. Consideration should be given to:
    - subject content and knowledge
    - volume of learning
    - level of learning
    - evidence of achievement
    - currency of the student's knowledge in relation to the requirements of the scheme
    - restrictions imposed by Professional or Statutory Bodies, if applicable.
  - (c) Decide whether the student is required to present themselves for interview by the AP(E)L assessor or another appropriate member of staff, and make the necessary arrangements.

5. If it is decided that the AP(E)L request cannot be accepted, this will be documented on the pro forma and a response will be sent to the student by the Central Admissions Team.
6. If it is decided that the student's application for AP(E)L can be accepted the Programme Partnership Manager & CMA Compliance & Information Manager (HE) will make a recommendation to the Dean/Associate Dean of Academic Partnerships that a specific amount of credit (e.g. exemption from individual course(s) or exemption from a year of study) towards the relevant degree scheme should be awarded. The Dean/Associate Dean will inform the College of his/her decision. A copy of the pro forma will be forwarded to the CMA Compliance & Information Manager (HE).
7. The Central Admissions Team will inform the student of the decision, in writing and will undertake appropriate actions on the student's computerised record.

## APL/APEL APPLICATION FORM

**Partner Institution:**

**Applicant Name:**

**Programme/module applied for:**

**Date:**

**1) Description of student's learning:**

Dates credits achieved		Institution	Qualification <i>Level and course title</i>	Credit level (NQF)	Total NQF credits achieved <i>(in 15 credit increments)</i>
From	To				

**Mapping of previous study against proposed exempted modules:**

Modules studied previously	NQF Level	credits	Modules for which exemption is requested	NQF level	credits

**2) Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)**

Module title	Learning outcomes of previous study	Module title	Learning outcomes of proposed modules

*(Please see the examples in the Appendix to this form)*

**Please confirm by ticking the box whether you have you seen:**

- all relevant certification:
- formal LO documentation from the previous institution:

Please confirm that the prior learning evidenced was taken within the last 5 years:

If the prior learning was not taken within the last 5 years, what is the justification for accepting the currency of learning? (e.g. C.V. Personal Development Portfolio)

**3) Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL):**

*Please list the evidence supplied (e.g. portfolio. C.V. etc.)*

**4) AP(E)L Assessor comments/recommendations:**

**Partner Institution AP(E)L Assessor:**

**Name:** ..... **Date:** .....

**Title:** .....

**Partner Institution Approval:**

**Programme Partnership Manager**

**Name:** ..... **Date:** .....

**CMA Compliance & Information Manager (HE)**

**Name:** ..... **Date:**.....

**University of Essex Approval:** .....

**Date:** .....

**Name:** .....

**Title: Dean of Academic Partnerships**

**Date:**.....



**Appendix - Examples of the mapping of the learning outcomes of modules showing the level of detail required in part 2 of this form.**

**Example 1**

<b>Module title, level &amp; credits</b>	<b>Learning outcomes of previous study</b>	<b>Module title, level &amp; credits</b>	<b>Learning outcomes of proposed modules</b>
Introduction to Business Studies L4 15 credits	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recognise the diversity of approaches to management and managing; and contrast different theories of management</li> <li>2. Understand the organisational contexts within which the manager operates</li> <li>3. Understand marketing, financial and human resource management functions</li> <li>4. Understand the activities, techniques and objectives that characterize the main functions of management</li> </ol>	Business Finance L4 15 credits	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understand the process of company accounts preparation.</li> <li>2. Explain the influence and purpose of accounting standards and legislation on the preparation of published financial statements.</li> <li>3. Examine costing systems. Absorption costing and overheads and the potential benefits of Activity Based Costing.</li> <li>4. Understand the use of marginal costing for short term decision making.</li> <li>5. Recognise the utility of break-even charts and profit volume graphs.</li> </ol>
Equivalence approved?			
Introduction to Marketing L4 15 credits	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understand the role of market research in the formulation of product, distributional or promotional decisions, in business organisation.</li> <li>2. Segment markets and make appropriate targeting decisions.</li> <li>3. Use the marketing mix to devise a promotional plan for a good or service.</li> <li>4. Evaluate marketing strategies.</li> <li>5. Formulate a marketing strategy for a product or service.</li> </ol>	Fundamentals of Marketing L4 15 credits	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe how the Marketing environment affects a firm's strategy</li> <li>2. Identify influences on consumer behaviour</li> <li>3. Understand the concepts of segmentation, targeting and positioning</li> <li>4. Analyse the marketing mix</li> <li>5. Describe the role of marketing within service firms</li> </ol>
Equivalence approved?			
Introduction to Human Resources L4 15 credits	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Be aware of the main areas of HR knowledge-at an outline level. Link as relevant with OB issues including motivation/ leadership/culture /control.</li> <li>2. Have evolved an awareness of issues central to the efficiency of the HR function, including recruitment, selection, induction and release of staff.</li> <li>3. Be able to define, explain and discuss organisational structures and relative theories</li> <li>4. Demonstrate a broad understanding of management skills and the relevant theories.</li> <li>5. Demonstrate a basic understanding of employment law</li> </ol>	Human Resource Management L4 15 credits	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify job requirements, develop job descriptions and recommend job qualifications</li> <li>2. Outline and understand the recruitment and selection process by assessing various tools including testing, application blanks, interviews, references and resumes</li> <li>3. Understand major laws affecting personnel practice</li> <li>4. Distinguish between various compensation programs and rate different incentive plans as motivations in particular situations</li> <li>5. Formulate simple programs of policies and guidelines for motivation of employees, effective communications and safety concerns</li> <li>6. Discuss the importance of socialisation process in developing a dedicated, loyal, productive employee; and develop a process to bring it about, including the essentials of employee training and development</li> </ol>
Equivalence approved?			
Business and Financial Planning L5 30 credits	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify and evaluate personal strengths, weaknesses and learning styles.</li> <li>2. Demonstrate understanding of financial forecasting techniques.</li> <li>3. Demonstrate understanding of decision-making techniques in a financial context.</li> <li>4. Demonstrate the acquisition of relevant financial IT skills.</li> <li>5. Demonstrate the acquisition of effective time-management.</li> </ol>	Financial Decision-making L4 15 credits	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Apply understanding of quantitative decision making techniques</li> <li>2. Critically evaluate the most appropriate forecasting model for specific business needs</li> <li>3. Analyse and calculate problems using mathematical and statistically based tools and techniques</li> <li>4. Critically assess decision making management software programs, websites, and associations for their usefulness as information resources</li> </ol>

Equivalence approved?			

## Example 2

Module title	Learning outcomes of previous study	Module title	Learning outcomes of proposed modules
Performance Measurement in Organisations L4 30 credits		Human Resource Management L4 15 credits	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Identify job requirements, develop job descriptions and recommend job qualifications</li> <li>8. Outline and understand the recruitment and selection process by assessing various tools including testing, application blanks, interviews, references and resumes</li> <li>9. Understand major laws affecting personnel practice</li> <li>10. Distinguish between various compensation programs and rate different incentive plans as motivations in particular situations</li> <li>11. Formulate simple programs of policies and guidelines for motivation of employees, effective communications and safety concerns</li> <li>12. Discuss the importance of socialisation process in developing a dedicated, loyal, productive employee; and develop a process to bring it about, including the essentials of employee training and development</li> </ol>
Equivalence approved?			
Principles of Financial and Business Management L4 30 credits	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recognise the diversity of approaches to management and managing; and contrast different theories of management</li> <li>2. Understand the organisational contexts within which the manager operates</li> <li>3. Understand marketing, financial and human resource management functions</li> <li>4. Understand the activities, techniques and objectives that characterize the main functions of management</li> <li>5. Understand the range of purpose, structure, size and financial status of business</li> <li>6. Understand national and global changes in the economic structure of industrialised economies and recognise their impacts on business activity and work patterns</li> <li>7. Understand changes in the social, legal and technological environment and recognize their impacts on business activity and work patterns</li> <li>8. Understand the impacts of European and international organisations on business activity and patterns of employment</li> <li>9. Understand different types of market structure within which firms operate and their likely impact on business activity</li> </ol>	Business Finance L4 15 credits	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Understand the process of company accounts preparation.</li> <li>7. Explain the influence and purpose of accounting standards and legislation on the preparation of published financial statements.</li> <li>8. Examine costing systems. Absorption costing and overheads and the potential benefits of Activity Based Costing.</li> <li>9. Understand the use of marginal costing for short term decision making.</li> <li>10. Recognise the utility of break-even charts and profit volume graphs.</li> </ol>
		Financial Decision-making L4 15 credits	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Apply understanding of quantitative decision making techniques</li> <li>6. Critically evaluate the most appropriate forecasting model for specific business needs</li> <li>7. Analyse and calculate problems using mathematical and statistically based tools and techniques</li> <li>8. Critically assess decision making management software programs, websites, and associations for their usefulness as information resources</li> </ol>
Equivalence approved?			