

Accredited Prior or Certificated Learning (AP(E)L) Guidance Notes

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The Principle of Credit on Entry

APL is the acronym used for accrediting prior **certificated** learning – that is modules or courses taken that resulted in marks being recorded or a certificate being awarded.

APEL is the acronym used for accrediting prior **experiential** learning – that is work experience.

The core principle of accrediting prior experiential learning (AP(E)L) or prior certificated learning (APL) is that a student can join a course and eventually graduate from it without having to study all modules because previous experience or modules completed before the proposed registration (or a combination of the two) has equipped them to enter part way through a course AS IF they are in the same position as the other students in their cohort.

Could I apply for AP(E)L?

Any prospective student who thinks they have the relevant experience (APEL) or certificates (APL) to replace part of the course they want to take should discuss this with the Admissions Office or the Admissions Tutor who can provide guidance. It is the applicant’s responsibility to fill out an application form and produce evidence for credit on entry. The application form (SF029b) is available on the WUC website <https://writtle.ac.uk/HE-Regulations-&-Policies>

How do I prove that I have achieved the relevant learning?

The applicant will need to produce certificates, transcripts and details about any courses taken or modules/units of study successfully completed. For demonstrating experiential learning, a portfolio of work and references from, for example, an employer or a business client are required.

How do we gauge the quantity and level of previous learning against our modules?

We use the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) to measure what has been done in terms of level, and the standard credit weighting to measure quantity. For example, a 15 credit Level 4 module counts for the same amount and level from any UK university. For non-UK degrees information on the comparability of qualifications from overseas can be sought from UK NARIC. Please contact Admissions if you need assistance.

Qualifications and Credit Framework	Level	Level			Typical awards						
		Name	Award								
	8	Doctorate	D								PhD
	7	Masters	M							MA/Sc	
	6	Honours	H					BA	BA Hons		
	5	Intermediate	I			Dip HE	FdA				
	4	Certificate	C	Cert HE			FdSc	BSc	BSc Hons		

One credit is calculated as 10 hours of study. Full-time study comprising eight 15 credit modules per year gives a study programme of $8 \times 15 = 1200$ hrs / year = 120 credits. The academic year comprises two semesters, with semester 1 running over 13 weeks and semester 2 over 14 weeks. The semesters include time for assessment, giving a weekly study expectation of 45 hrs /week for a full-time course. Note that 7.5 ECTS are the same as 15 credits.

Can I use my FE level 3 credits?

No, the credit transferred must be at the same level as the module it will replace.

How do we interpret and gauge the content of previous learning against our modules?

To work out what the modules or work experience already achieved would be equivalent to an Admissions Tutor will map the learning outcomes from the previous course against the learning outcomes for the modules that the applicant would like to be exempted from. To do this the Admissions Tutor needs lots of information, for example, a transcript from the student's previous institution and other documents such as a module guide or a link to the institution's website where the contents of the module are available. For experiential learning, a portfolio of work and documents such as job descriptions as well as any references are required.

If the mapping doesn't work perfectly is there anything that can be done?

If many of the learning outcomes and the appropriate number of credits have been fulfilled by previous courses/experience but there are some learning outcomes not covered, the Admissions Tutor might be able to set up a **bridging study** for the applicant to complete to fill in the gap(s).

What would a bridging study expect me to do?

A bridging study can be anything from a summer course organised to bring a group of students up to speed on an aspect of the course to an arrangement for a one-to-one tutorial to fill in a small knowledge gap. A bridging study can also be a piece of work to complete before starting the course to demonstrate the necessary skill or preparation. It is very important that any work set as part of a bridging study is completed satisfactorily as registration on the course will depend on this. An Admissions Tutor will only set work that is essential to ensure the applicant will not be disadvantaged on the rest of the course.

Is it possible to carry over credit for part of a module?

No, this would be against the regulations governing APEL arrangements.

Do I have to do all this if I am a Writtle Foundation Degree student moving on to Hons (Top Ups) or a Postgraduate moving from PG Cert to PG Diploma to MSc/MA?

No, if the progression is part of what is called 'an articulated programme' i.e. a programme that has been designed with that progression from one level to another built in, it is assumed that the progression works and the mapping has already been done when the course was designed. In this case the Course Leader will do what is necessary. If a student enrolled on a Foundation Degree knows that they want to transfer to a BSc/BA (Hons) in the subject this should be discussed with the Course Leader at the earliest opportunity for further advice.

Can I use credit for a course I have completed elsewhere to change my subject or add a dissertation to change my ordinary degree to an honours degree?

To qualify for APL the applicant must be transferring to a course to **complete their studies**, for example changing institutions mid-course and bringing the successfully completed modules, or transferring to a **higher award** and bringing the completed lower award, for example topping up a foundation degree to an honours degree. APL cannot be used to convert an awarded BSc (Hons) in one subject to a BSc (Hons) in a related subject by taking some additional modules in the new subject. Also a completed ordinary degree cannot be used as credit towards an honours degree as both reach level 6 so the honours degree is not technically a higher award.

The exception to this is with articulated postgraduate courses such as PGCert, PGDip, MSc/MA packages. A student at WUC can receive the smaller award and then at a later point continue to a larger award even though they are all at level 7.

Is there a limit to how many credits I can claim credit for?

Yes, this varies depending on the type of course:

Award	Maximum credits that may be imported	Minimum credits to be taken at Writtle	Total credits for award
Master's Degree	60	120 (QCF Level 7)	180
Postgraduate Diploma	40	80 (QCF Level 7)	120
Graduate Diploma	40	80 (QCF Level 6)	120
Postgraduate Certificate	20	40 (QCF Level 7)	60
Graduate Certificate	20	40 (QCF Level 6)	60
CHEP (Cert of HE Practice)	30	30 (QCF Level 7)	60
Honours Degree	240	120 (must be Level 6)	360
Foundation Degree	120	120 (must be at least Level 5)	240
Diploma of HE	120	120 (must be at least Level 5)	240
Certificate of HE	60	60 (must be at least Level 4)	120

How long ago can it be since I studied for my credits?

Normally five years maximum. If credit is more than five years old, but the applicant has been in relevant work, the Admissions Tutor can discuss whether a joint APL and APEL claim should be made.

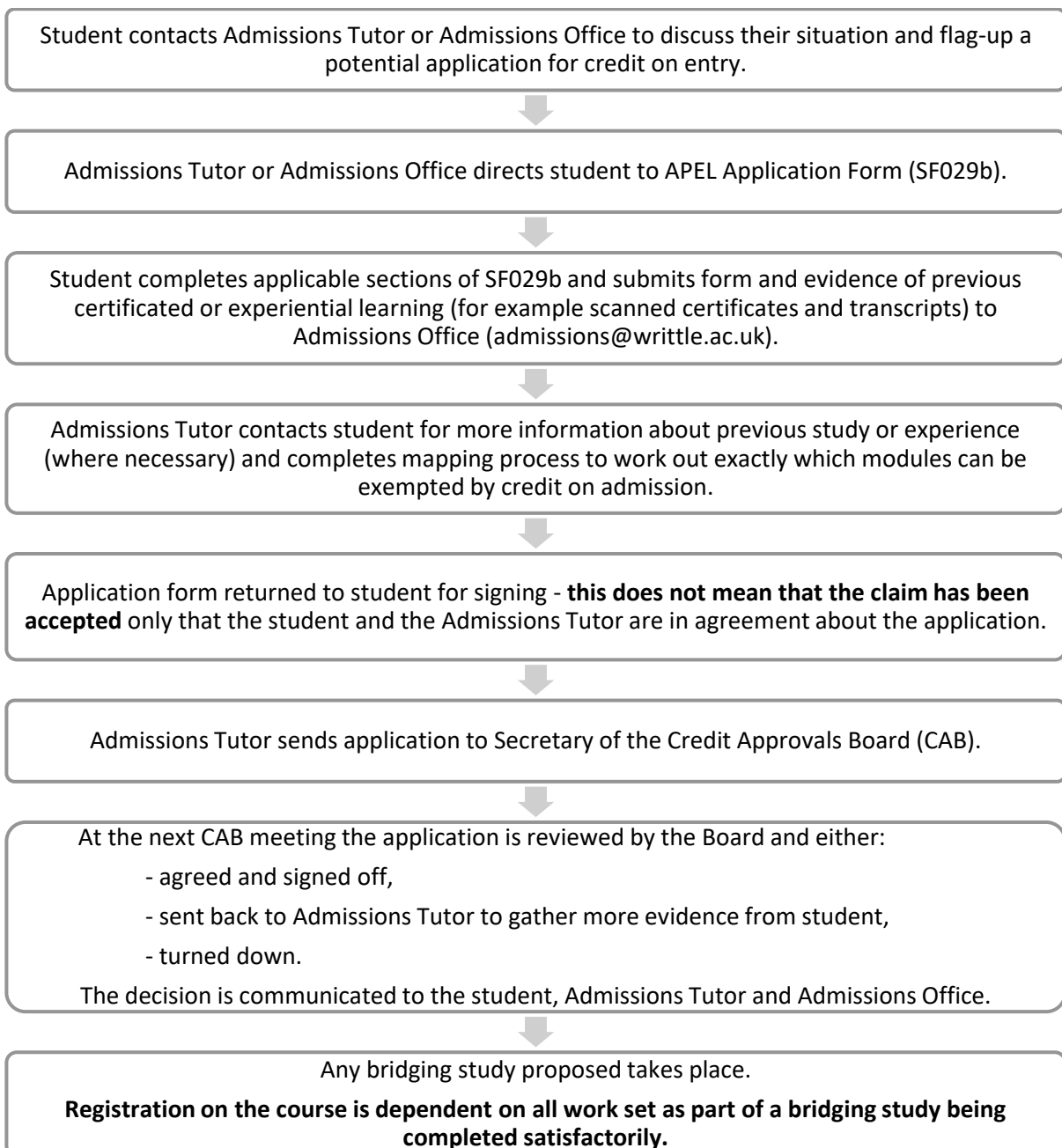
Are the marks awarded by my old college carried over to the new course?

When credit is brought in from another institution it is thought of as a block of credit that exempts the applicant from a similar amount of credit to be taken at WUC. However, we are not in a position to award those marks only to exempt the student from our own modules. The final degree classification is calculated on the basis of WUC marks only. When the marks on the credit being imported were generated by WUC, then the marks can be used and the degree classification is calculated in the usual way.

What appears on my final transcript?

If the credit was imported from another institution it appears as a block of credit imported and the modules taken at WUC appear with their titles and the marks. If it was all WUC modules (as in an articulated top-up) then all module titles appear with their marks.

Who is responsible for what and how does the process work?



Important

Please note that until the application is agreed by the CAB and signed off the applicant is not registered on a course at WUC. This is why it is called **credit on entry**. Not being registered on a course can create problems for any student and for International Students can result in a breach of visa requirements.

If an application is turned down by the CAB what can the student or staff member do?

It is possible to Appeal against a decision by contacting the Secretary to the Credit Approvals Board who will advise on the procedure. Where an appeal is made, an independent panel will be called and their decision will be final.

Help at hand

Secretary of the Credit Approvals Board (CAB)	qualityoffice@writtle.ac.uk
AP(E)L Admission / General Admission enquiries	admissions@writtle.ac.uk