1. Introduction

1.1 This policy sets out the University’s requirements for the management and assessment of Accredited Prior Learning (APL). The regulatory requirements relating to APL are stated in Senate Regulation 2: Regulations governing admission and registration for taught programmes.

1.2 This policy applies to prospective students who wish to apply for the recognition of credits gained previously at the University or another institution towards a University award. It does not apply to the assessment of an applicant’s eligibility for entry to a programme based on non-standard entry qualifications/experience.

2. Terminology

2.1 Accreditation of Prior Learning

Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) is the generic term used for the award of credit for demonstrated learning achieved prior to entry to a programme of study. It falls into two main categories:

- **Accreditation of Prior Certified Learning (APCL)**– the recognition of learning that has previously been assessed and certificated by an education provider, for example an institution of Higher Education

- **Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)**– the recognition of prior learning gained through relevant experience which can be evaluated

2.2 Direct Entry

Direct Entry is the term used to describe the process whereby applicants for undergraduate programmes who have studied part of an equivalent programme at another institution apply through UCAS to enter a programme at an advanced point of study (typically year 2). A separate APL application is not required.

2.3 Credit

Credit is the means by which learning outcomes are quantified at a given level.

2.4 Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes specify the minimum attainments that students are expected to meet to be awarded credit for a given module or programme.

2.5 Module
A module is a component of a programme with its own approved learning outcomes and assessment methods. Modules are at a specified level in accordance with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ).

3. **Principles**

3.1 APL is accepted by the University as specified for particular programmes of study.

3.2 Where the option for APL or Direct Entry exists this will be publicised in the prospectuses and departmental information.

3.3 Each academic department within the University can decide whether it is appropriate to accept APL for programmes it offers.

3.4 Where APL is offered this will be approved as part of the programme approval process for new programmes. Any amendment to requirements may be approved by College Academic Committees.

3.5 Where APL is offered the requirements should be recorded on the relevant programme specification.

3.6 Departments may specify particular modules as compulsory and therefore not eligible for APL. This should be recorded on the relevant programme specification.

3.7 Credits may be given for prior learning where the level, standard content and relevance of that learning are judged to be appropriate to a particular programme of study.

3.8 APL may be granted for whole modules only and at the same level as the programme of study for which an application is being made. In certain cases it may be appropriate to allow APL from a higher level qualification to count towards a lower award. Where this is possible it will be stated in the programme specification.

3.9 Decisions regarding the accreditation of prior learning are an academic judgement and departments will determine whether the prior learning is at the required level and broadly equivalent to the learning outcomes which would have been assessed during a module.

3.10 Departments will determine the currency of prior learning on a case by case basis within an overall requirement that, at the time of application, any prior learning which is more than five years old will not normally be considered current for this purpose.

3.11 Students may receive an exit award if they have been awarded APL credit, providing they have accumulated sufficient University of Leicester credits, during their period of registration at the University to qualify for such an award.

3.12 Direct entry may be included in a formal articulation agreement with another institution, in accordance with procedures detailed in the Code of Practice on the University’s Procedures for Managing Higher Education Provision with Others.

4. **Application Process**

4.1 Prospective students who require further information on the admissions process should contact the Admissions Office for campus-based programmes, or the relevant Distance Learning hub for distance learning programmes. Specific information about requirements relating to a particular programme may be obtained from the relevant department.
4.2 Applications for consideration of APL should be made at the point of application or as soon as possible thereafter.

4.3 Applications for APL will not be considered after a student has registered for a programme at the University.

4.4 Applicants should make a written request on the appropriate form for the consideration of APL to the Admissions Office/Distance Learning Hub stating the modules from which exemption is being requested.

4.5 Departments or Distance Learning Hubs as appropriate, will advise applicants of the specific requirements which relate to a particular programme. An indication of the minimum requirements is given below and a sample form for APL is given in Appendix 3.

For APL
- Institution and dates of attendance
- Programme title
- Programme structure, module content and scheme of assessment.
- Qualification obtained, if any
- An authorised transcript of marks, endorsed by the institution
- An academic reference from the institution awarding the credits

For APEL
- A summary of the applicant’s professional experience and specific activities, including employment and relevant training with dates
- A detailed commentary of what has been learned from these activities and how these are relevant to the level of the programme and intended learning outcomes of the particular modules from which exemption is sought
- Confirmation from the relevant employer(s) or other independent source that the activities claimed by the applicant have been undertaken with some indication of the level at which these were undertaken

4.6 The application for AP(E)L should be submitted to the Admissions Office or Distance Learning Hub as appropriate which will forward it to the relevant department for consideration.

5. **Consideration of Applications**

5.1 Applications will be considered by at least two members of the academic staff of the department, one of whom will normally be the programme director or admissions tutor.

5.2 All applications for APL will be treated equitably regardless of the type and source of learning being assessed.

5.3 Submission of an application for APL does not guarantee that exemptions from particular modules will be granted.
5.4 A decision regarding whether an application for APL should be approved will depend on the requirements and specific learning outcomes of the modules for a particular programme as well as the individual application.

5.5 Applicants may be requested to provide additional information or attend an interview in support of their application as required.

5.6 Assessors will match the evidence provided by the applicant against the intended learning outcomes of the modules for which exemption has been requested considering the following:

- Subject content and knowledge
- Volume of learning
- Level of learning
- Evidence of achievements
- The requirements of Professional or Statutory Bodies, where appropriate

5.7 In forming a judgement about level assessors will refer to the characteristics articulated in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications published by the Quality Assurance Agency at:


5.8 An application for APL will only be granted where a department is satisfied that:

- The factual statements included in an application have been verified
- The dates of the prior learning have been checked and confirmed to have taken place in the last five years (or sooner where specified in the relevant programme specification)
- There is a correlation between the prior learning or experience and the level and intended learning outcomes of the modules which will not be taken as a result of the APL
- Where the prior learning is certificated the applicant has gained marks which are equivalent to those required to pass a module at the University

6. Outcome of Consideration of Applications

6.1 On completion of consideration of an application for APL the relevant department should report its decision to the Admissions Office.

6.2 Applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application for APL by the Admissions Office.

6.3 Where an application has been approved the following information should be included:

- Modules from which exemption has been granted
- Impact on normal and maximum periods of registration
- The impact the reduction in the number of credits being studied may have on their status as full-time students, where appropriate
- The impact on funding
• The impact on any visa and entry requirements
• Any impact on the classification of the award
• The revised fee payable, having adjusted for the modules from which a student is exempt
• The period over which the fee will be billed

6.4 The decision and any relevant documentation will be held on the applicant’s record.

7. Appeals against decisions

7.1 The consideration of APL applications involves an academic judgement. The University will not review a decision on an application for APL where an applicant simply disagrees with the academic judgement that has been applied.

7.2 If an applicant believes that the application has not been considered in accordance with the relevant department’s stated procedure, or the applicant obtains additional documentation pertaining to their application prior to registration which was not available at the time of the initial assessment, they should submit a formal request for review in accordance with the process detailed in the University’s Code of Practice for Admissions.

8. Limitations on APL

8.1 Senate Regulation 2 states that the maximum number of credits for which a student may be granted APL is one half of the taught credits which lead to an award and no student may be granted exemption from a project or dissertation.

8.2 Requirements vary according to programme and level and mode of study as detailed below but the maximum number of credits for which exemption may be granted is 60 for taught postgraduate programmes, 180 for bachelor’s programmes and 240 for integrated master’s programmes.

8.3 A summary of limitations by level of study is given in Appendix 1.

Undergraduate programmes

8.4 APL will not be granted at a module level for full-time undergraduate programmes but will be considered as a request for direct entry to a particular level of study.

8.5 For full-time undergraduate programmes applicants will apply for direct entry to the second year of a three year degree programme through UCAS.

8.6 In exceptional cases applicants may apply for direct entry to the third year of a four year integrated master’s programme.

8.7 APL/Direct Entry will not be granted to the final year of any programme.

8.8 APL may be granted on a module basis for distance-learning programmes up to a maximum stated in Appendix 1, except in cases where a programme approval panel grants exemptions at a higher threshold, which in all cases will not exceed 50% of the taught elements of the programme.

Postgraduate Taught Programmes
8.9 Applicants may apply for exemptions up to a maximum of 60 taught credits.

8.10 Exemptions will not be granted for the dissertation/project.

9. **Impact of APL on awards**

9.1 Where AP(C)L is approved this will be graded and, where appropriate will contribute to the final classification of an award. Where credits do not count towards classification of the final award, departments may determine that the level achieved is sufficient for the credits to be awarded but are not required to undertake a separate grading exercise.

9.2 Where AP(E)L is approved this will be ungraded and classification of an award will be based on modules undertaken at the University.

10. **Student Transcripts**

   The amount and level of credit for which exemptions have been granted will be recorded on the student’s transcript.

11. **Registration Periods**

   Normal registration periods for students who have been granted exemptions from modules based on APL will normally be adjusted according to the number of modules for which exemption is granted based on the percentage these represent of the programme.

10. **Fees**

   Where an applicant is granted exemption from modules their programme fee will be adjusted accordingly and the revised fee will be notified to the applicant prior to their entry to the programme.

   1. For undergraduate students granted direct entry to years two or three fees will be charged for the years for which they register at the applicable rate.

   2. For all other students the fee will be reduced according to the number of credits for which exemption has been granted.

   3. Full-time undergraduate students will be required to pay their tuition fee following the standard billing pattern for such students.

   4. For all other programmes the revised fee will be spread over the revised normal registration period and can be paid yearly or in accordance with the revised billing schedule.
Appendix 1

The table below provides a summary of the maximum number of credits for which APL may be granted for University awards. The actual number of APL credits allowed for a particular programme is detailed in the relevant programme specification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University Award</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Number of Credits for Award</th>
<th>Maximum APL Credits permitted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Certificate of Higher Education</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma of Higher Education</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation Degree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 year full-time (or equivalent part-time/distance-learning) Honours Degree</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 year full-time Integrated Masters Degree</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate Certificate</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate Diploma</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters Degree</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>60*</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*taught credits only
Appendix 2

Roles and Responsibilities

Applicant

General Requirements

1. Identifying whether a claim for APL might be appropriate and contacting the relevant department/distance learning hub to seek advice and guidance.
2. Ensuring that they apply for the programme of study for which APL might be claimed.
3. Familiarising themselves with the programme and modules including the intended learning outcomes to establish where prior learning might be claimed.
4. Submitting a claim for APL at the earliest opportunity, by deadlines specified by the relevant department and prior to registration.
5. Providing all the required information for an APL application to be assessed and complying with departmental guidance in this respect.

Applying for APCL

1. Providing detailed evidence of the structure, level and content of previous studies to enable the University to make a decision on their application.
2. Considering whether previous studies are likely to match modules for which exemption is sought in terms of content, learning outcomes and level before an application is submitted.
3. Ensuring that applications submitted relate to demonstrated learning achieved within the previous five years.

Applying for APEL

1. Applicants applying for APEL should recognise that it is the outcomes of any learning gained from experience that may be accredited and not just the experience itself. There will therefore be a requirement to reflect on this learning during the application process.
2. Applicants should be aware that submitting an application for APEL will require the production of a written submission which may, for example, include a commentary on their experience or a portfolio of work and they will be required to work on this independently.
3. Applicants wishing to submit an application for APEL are advised to contact the relevant admissions tutor/programme director to discuss whether a claim can be pursued, the nature of the submission required and timescale for its consideration.
4. Applicants should only start work on such a submission if they hold an offer for the programme for which they wish to claim APEL.
5. Applicants who decide to submit a claim for APEL should be aware that submission of a claim does not guarantee it will be successful.
Departments

1. Publishing clear written APL policies and procedures for programmes for which APL is available.
2. Advising students seeking APL for campus-based programmes on departmental requirements including documentation to be submitted or referring applicants to the appropriate distance learning hub.
3. Assessing applications for APL, ensuring that they demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes for the modules for which exemption is being claimed.

Admissions Office/Distance Learning hub

1. Providing initial advice to applicants on the documentation to be completed and sending out the AP(E)L application form.
2. Advising applicants on deadlines for submitting applications for APL and the timescale for the consideration of applications.
3. Sending the completed application to the admissions tutor/programme director for consideration.
4. Notifying the applicant of the decision with respect to their application for APL.
5. Where an application for APL is granted ensuring that students are provided with the information specified in section 6.3 above.
6. Updating the applicant’s pre-registration record to include;
   • modules from which exemption has been granted
   • normal and maximum periods of registration, taking account of exemptions granted
   • any adjustment to the fee
7. Assessing the impact the reduction in the number of credits being studies may have on their status as full-time students and/or any visa and entry requirements.

Registry/Distance Learning hub

1. Ensuring that the student’s transcript reflects the amount and level of credit for which exemptions have been granted.
2. Ensuring that the student’s post registration record includes
   • the appropriate normal and extended registration periods
   • modules from which exemption has been granted
   • normal and maximum periods of registration
3. Advising the student on any revisions to their timetable that arise from the exemptions that have been granted.
Accreditation of Prior Learning Application Form

Please complete section 1 to 3 of this form if you wish to submit a claim for the accreditation of certificated prior learning (APCL) and submit it to the relevant academic department.

Section 1

Name:

Contact Details:

Applicant Number:

Title of the programme for which you have applied:

Section 2

Name of Institution which awarded credits for prior learning:

Title of programme for which you were registered:

Dates registered:

Mode of Study: Full-time/Part-time (delete as appropriate)

Title of award obtained (if any):

Date of award:

Please provide a copy of or a link to the programme specifications and module specifications or complete the section below:
### Details of Programme Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module Title</th>
<th>Level 4,5,6 or 7</th>
<th>Number of Credits</th>
<th>Details of how the module was assessed, e.g. examination, essay, project</th>
<th>Mark obtained</th>
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### Section 3

Please complete the following details, giving the full title for the University of Leicester module which you wish to be considered for APL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module Title</th>
<th>Credit Rating</th>
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Please sign and date this form and attach an authorised transcript of your results

Signed ................................................................. Date .................
Section 4 (to be completed by the Programme Director/Admissions Tutor)

1. Please list below the University of Leicester modules against which learning outcomes and achievement have been matched and indicate whether exemption may be given.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module Code</th>
<th>Module Title</th>
<th>Can be recognised as APL (Yes/No)</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

2. Please indicate the adjusted periods of registration taking account of the impact of the exemptions:

   Normal period of registration:
   Maximum period of registration:

Signed .............................................................. Date .................................

Print Name .............................................................