

# Accredited Prior Certificated Learning Policy

## 1. Accredited Prior (Certificated) Learning

Applications for accreditation of prior certificated learning (APCL) should normally be made before the commencement of study on the course into which the student wishes to transfer prior learning.

Applicants who believe they may be eligible for APCL will be given the opportunity to have their prior learning assessed and accredited towards the relevant course. This policy applies to all cases.

Applicants seeking consideration of prior learning must provide documentary evidence of the learning that they wish to be considered; this may be in the form of transcripts, certificates and the learning outcomes relating to their previous course.

A decision as to whether APCL can be approved will depend both on the specific requirements and learning outcomes of each course and the details of each individual application.

Applicants should be made aware that the award of specific credit via APCL towards their intended course of study at the University may not necessarily directly reflect the value/level of the credit assigned to their current/previous qualification (i.e. it may be less).

Exemptions will only be considered for full modules of study; not elements therein.

Exemptions will not be considered for prerequisites in certain disciplines where professional and statutory regulating body requirements apply (e.g. Law programmes).

## 2. 'Shelf-Life' of Learning

The time elapsed since the student undertook learning that forms the basis of an APL 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 course of study. Applications may be considered for learning that has taken place more than five years previously and will be reviewed at the

discretion of the academic team. The Academic team will have regard to the study topic and how the subject matter may have changed over the period of time since the study took place.

### **3. Re-use of Credit from University or External Sources towards University of Essex awards**

*After Credit and HE Qualifications Credit Guidelines for HE Qualifications in EWNI, CQFW, NICATS, NUCCAT and SEEC, 2001.*

References to Levels 4, 5, 6 and 7 refer the QAA's *Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England and Wales*.

## Module Level

## Award Level

A student successfully completes a unit of study outside the University and is awarded credit

The credits may form the basis of an application for APL/APEL towards the requirements for a University award up to a volume of one third of the total requirement for the award

Undergraduate Certificates (Level 4)  
Diplomas and Foundation Degrees (Level 5)  
Graduate Certificates and Diplomas (Level 6)  
Postgraduate Certificates and Diplomas (Level 7)

A student successfully satisfies requirements for an award outside the University of Essex

The credits, in whole or part, may form the basis of an application for APL/APEL towards a higher-level award, up to a volume of one third of the total requirement for the award, but not towards an equal or lower level award.

Honours Degrees (Level 6)

A student successfully satisfies requirements for an award outside the University of Essex

The credits are considered spent in the certification of the award. They cannot be used a second time towards any further award. Any surplus credits gained in pursuit of the award may be used towards a higher-level award, up to a volume of one third of the total requirement for the award.

## **Examples:**

A student who achieves a Graduate Certificate, or a Graduate Diploma, may apply to use the credit towards any Postgraduate or Masters award because they are all at a higher level and the Certificate and Diploma are not terminal awards.

A student who has gained an Honours Degree may not use credit forming part of the award towards any further awards at any level.

### **3. Volume of APCL**

It is important to note that the acceptance of APCL towards awards is an admissions decision based on each individual case. The maximum volume of APCL outlined below is provided for the guidance of applicants and departments but does not constitute an entitlement.

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 award.

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 award.

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.

For specified teaching qualifications the maximum credit value permitted to be imported is one half the volume of credit that is required to be studied for the named University award.

## 4. Summary of requirements for admission via APCL:

<b>Award</b>	<b>Maximum credits which may be imported</b>	<b>Minimum credits to be taken on University of Essex Online courses</b>	<b>Total credits for award*</b>
Masters Degree	60	120 (NQF Level 7)	180
Postgraduate Diploma	40	80 (NQF Level 7)	120
Graduate Diploma	40	80 (NQF Level 6)	120
Postgraduate Certificate	20	40 (NQF Level 7)	60
Graduate Certificate	20	40 (NQF Level 6)	60
Honours Degree	240	120 (NQF Level 6)	360
Ordinary Degree	200	100 (with a minimum of 60 at NQF Level 6)	300
Foundation Degree	120	120 (NQF Level 5)	240
Diploma of HE	120	120 (NQF Level 5)	240
Certificate of HE	60	60 (NQF Level 4)	120

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

2 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.



## **5. Calculation of degree results**

In calculating the final degree result of a student who makes a successful APCL application, any courses or modules from which the student is exempted on the basis of APCL will be excluded from calculated averages or other methods used to determine the student's final degree result.

## **6. Transcript**

The transcript for a student who makes a successful APCL application will indicate the elements of the course from which the student was exempted.