



## **ARDEN UNIVERSITY QUALITY ASSURANCE DOCUMENT QA 6 – ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR LEARNING POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

1. Accreditation of Prior Learning is the process through which a student may be given formal recognition for learning achieved prior to their admission to the programme for which they are applying. APL is used for exemption from a particular module(s) of a programme. Where prior learning is used to inform an admissions decision which does not involve the granting of exemptions that will be regulated by Arden University Admissions policies relevant to the specific programme.

Provision for conferring exemption under these regulations applies only to Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL) and this term is used throughout this document.<sup>1</sup>

Responsibility for exercising these regulations may be delegated by Academic Board to an appropriate sub-committee.

### **General Principles**

2. To receive an Arden University award, a student must study at least one third of the total required credits for the award. This means that credit previously achieved on conferred awards at lower levels to the award for which the student is applying, or on incomplete programmes, may be used for APCL up to a maximum of two thirds of the credits required for the award subject to the requirements of professional bodies. This provision also applies in respect of any exit awards contained within the programme. For example, a student admitted into Level 6 of a degree would need to attain 100 credits of new learning to be eligible for an ordinary degree
3. Arden University academic transcripts will indicate if an award which has been conferred includes APCL and list modules against which the transferred in credits apply.
4. Students who seek admission to a programme with APCL are not permitted to register onto the course until such admission has been approved in writing.

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<sup>1</sup> Any proposal to accept experiential learning will require an amendment to this policy through QSC and Academic Board.



5. The same prior learning credit may not normally be double counted towards more than one module or programme.
6. Following admission, if a student subsequently discovers that they may have met the learning outcomes of particular modules, they may apply for APCL of those modules, provided that they have not previously been awarded credit exemptions for the prior learning being used for the new APCL claim. Such claims may only be made for individual modules, not to entire levels of programmes, and may not be made during the first 60 credits of study with Arden University.
7. The marks or grades obtained for accredited prior learning, including such learning which has resulted in the conferment of an award, do not normally contribute to the algorithm used to determine the classification of an Arden University award, unless within the provisions of paragraph 14 below.
8. Modules which have been awarded a compensated or condoned pass will not normally be accepted for APCL unless there is clear evidence that relevant learning outcomes have been met, for example the attainment of a complete level of study or award.
9. Exemption will not be granted in respect of Level 6 modules.

## **Process**

10. APCL decisions will be evaluated by an Admissions Tutor, who is able to provide the necessary support and guidance to facilitate students through the APCL process. In this capacity, the role of the Admissions Tutor includes:
  - a. Supporting Arden University Admissions Advisors in communications with students.
  - b. Providing information and advice on all matters relating to APCL to learners who might be eligible.
  - c. Counselling students to help them gain a feeling of self-worth and self-confidence with regard to how prior evidence could contribute to the learning process.
11. Documentation, approved by the Admissions Committee, must be completed in respect of any APCL claim. Admissions Advisors will be responsible for the completion of this (supported by Admissions Tutors) but approval of the application must be provided by an Admissions Tutor. The application form



will list all modules exempted and indicate the rationale for the exemption and the provenance of the credits utilised. While these are all individual applications, the following general principles are provided for guidance-

- a. Prior learning must be clearly shown to be: current; sufficient in terms of credit volume; authentic; relevant; and valid;
  - b. Currency normally requires that the prior learning is no more than 60 months, but see para 10 below;
  - c. A student cannot receive exemptions in excess of the credits presented for APCL;
  - d. Where a student presents a completed relevant award, for example a HND, and requests exemption from complete stages of an Arden University programme, then provided that award meets the learning outcomes of the exempted level it may be accepted in its entirety. Programme Teams are responsible for providing guidance on this, for example listing essential modules. In such cases, applicants would be required to study any essential modules not contained within their award;
  - e. Where it is not possible to consider exemption from a full stage under (d) above, exemption from individual modules may be considered. It is recognised that differences in title and content may mean that the content of Arden University modules may be spread across two or more modules presented for APCL. In such cases a narrative should be provided explaining the academic judgment used in conferring exemption;
  - f. In the case of international awards, the documentation should reference NARIC to show the value of the award.
12. If the learning is beyond the five year currency limit, applicants are required to provide evidence of updating of their professional knowledge and practice. This evidence may comprise some or all the following:
- a. CV: to cover employment history, focussing on how the applicant has maintained their knowledge and practice since qualifying with the award(s) for which they are seeking credit;
  - b. Evidence of successful completion of relevant CPD training, if applicable;
  - c. Reflective statement: detailing how knowledge and practice has remained up to date;
  - d. An employer reference(s): on institutional headed paper or, exceptionally, an email directly from the employer's institution, confirming that the applicant's job and CPD has enabled them to keep



up to date with information and current practices in the subject area in which the applicant is intending to study.

13. A register of recognised awards and qualifications conferred by higher education institutions and other educational bodies, both within the UK and overseas, accepted as the basis for admission with prior learning to specific courses at Arden University will be held by the Admissions Office.

### **Credit Awarded by Arden University (including learning undertaken at Associate Colleges)**

14. Subject to these regulations, any student who has successfully completed modules when registered for an Arden University course leading to a named award which has **not** been conferred and who then applies for admission with prior learning to a further course leading to a subsequent Arden University award, may transfer to the second course, Arden University credits and their associated marks, subject to any restrictions within the Programme Specification and the provisions on currency of APCL above. If the first named award has been conferred, the credits, but not the associated marks or grades, may be transferred to the second award.

Current students wishing to transfer between routes within a programme may do so subject to Arden University transfer rules and the Programme Specification and are not included within these regulations.

### **Quality Assurance**

15. A report containing details of APCL decisions reached will be prepared quarterly and presented to the Admissions Committee for scrutiny. Admissions Committee will provide an evaluation of APCL decisions as part of an annual report to Academic Board.

The report to Academic Board will specifically comment on how Arden University policies and practices are aligned with relevant sections of the Quality Code, currently B6 Expectation as expressed in indicators 2, 3, 4, 15, 16 and 18 which deal with accreditation of prior learning.

As part of annual programme monitoring, each Programme Committee will receive a report on APCL.