

Applicant/ Student Information on the Accreditation of Prior Experiential & Certificated Learning at Kent.

Introduction

The following is designed to give you as an applicant/ student background information on the Accreditation of Prior Experiential and Certificated Learning (APECL) at Kent and how it could benefit you.

What is APECL?

The Accreditation of Prior Experiential and Certificated Learning is known as APECL at Kent, it offers individuals the chance to gain recognition for qualifications or experience they have already gained, for example in the work place.

- APECL can enable prior learning/ experience to be given an academic credit value which can then be used to gain exemption from relevant module(s)/ stages, of a university level programme.¹
- APECL can enable people to enter a university programme at the point that best suits their experience and skills.

APCL and APEL

The two different types of Accreditation of Prior Learning are:

- **Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL)** - this is the process, through which previously assessed and certificated learning is considered and, if appropriate, recognised for academic purposes.²

i.e. an applicant with a Foundation Degree who wants to use its credit value towards a BSc at Kent in a similar subject area.

- **Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)** – this is the process through which learning achieved outside education or training systems is assessed and, if appropriate, recognised for academic purposes.³

To gain credit for APEL, a portfolio of evidence is developed, (an APEL Portfolio⁴) which includes evidence reflecting on how learning from experience is relevant to the university programme to be taken.

Benefits

APECL is of benefit to individuals who wish to gain qualifications at university level.

- APECL makes university level education accessible to a wide variety of individuals.
- APECL allows individuals to enter university at the point which most suits their skills and knowledge, avoiding the need to repeat learning already carried out, saving time.
- APECL benefits individuals who wish to gain credit for work in their field, turning professional practice into academic credit.

How to make a claim?

Guidance on making an APECL claim can be found at: <http://www.kent.ac.uk/cpp/apecl.html> below is an overview of the process.

Finding a University Programme:

- The first step is to find a programme or area of study at Kent you are interested in and then see if your prior learning/ experience relates to it. APECL can be used to gain credit onto undergraduate, postgraduate, full/ part-time programmes. Kent programme details can be found at: <http://www.kent.ac.uk/studying/>

¹ Academic credit, normally known as just 'credit', is awarded on completion of learning, and indicates the level of learning and the amount of learning that has been carried out. For example a typical degree is worth 360 academic credits.

²<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/apl/APL.pdf>

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⁴ An APEL Portfolio is a collection of reflective writing and evidence that demonstrates how prior experience of an applicant meets the learning outcomes of the modules for which credit is sought.

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Making an APCL claim:

- To make an APCL claim you will need to indicate on your UCAS/ direct entry application form that you have APCL that you wish to have considered.
- You will be then be required to provide information on your prior learning so that the relevant School/ Centre responsible for the programme on which you wish to study can assess your claim.

Making an APEL claim:

- If you think you may have an APEL claim, then it may be advisable to make contact with the relevant School/ Centre prior to indicating an interest in APEL on your application. This will help ensure that your prior experience is relevant, and that APEL is available for that programme.
- To make an APEL claim you will need to indicate on your UCAS/ direct entry application form that you have APEL that you wish to have considered.
- The relevant School/ Centre responsible for the programme on which you wish to study, who will then be able to discuss your prior learning with you.
- Once it has been agreed that it is possible to claim APEL, you will be referred to an appropriate APEL Portfolio Supervisor, from the relevant School/ Centre responsible for the programme on which you wish to study.
- The APEL Portfolio Supervisor will help guide you in demonstrating your prior experience, normally through an APEL Portfolio, showing evidence of how your prior experience meets the learning outcomes of the module(s)/stages you are claiming credit for.

Things to Consider

Academic Judgement:

- APECL is an effective method of ensuring that individuals are able to use, where appropriate any prior learning/experience towards gaining a University qualification.

- However there is no guarantee that all individuals will be able claim APECL. Approval of all APECL claims is a matter of academic judgement, based on the fit of the applicant's prior learning/ experience, with the module(s)/ stages of the programme they wish to claim credit towards.

Limits:

- There are limits to the amount of APECL that can be claimed towards a University programme, this is typically 2/3rds for an Undergraduate Honours Degree, and ½ for a Masters level programme. However the limits can vary from programme to programme, dependent on the content of the programme, and any compulsory modules/assessment.

Other:

- APECL must be claimed and approved prior to the commencement of the module(s) against which credit is claimed.
- No mark is given for modules you receive APECL for. If you receive APECL then the overall grade for your programme will be determined on the marks you receive for the module(s) you do take at Kent.
- Receiving APECL may affect you status as a full-time student, depending on how much credit you claim, as studying less modules may mean you are considered part-time. This could impact on funding and student loans.

Further Information

- For detailed information on everything involved in making an APECL claim please consult the University of Kent Applicant APECL Guidance available at: <http://www.kent.ac.uk/cpp/apeccl.html>
- If you have specific queries about APECL and the programme you are interested in please contact the Programme Leader.
- If you are unsure what programme you would like to enter, but feel you have some relevant prior experience then you can contact the Information and Guidance Unit in Admissions information@kent.ac.uk. A Student Support Officer is also available within the central APECL Unit – Centre for Professional Practice (CPP) S.Brown@kent.ac.uk