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, information on the background and benefits of the Accreditation of Prior Experiential and Certificated Learning (APECL) at Kent.

What is APECL?

The Accreditation of Prior Experiential and Certificated Learning is known as APECL at Kent. It offers individuals the chance to receive recognition for qualifications or experience gained, for example, in the workplace.

- APECL can assign academic credit value to prior learning/experience, which can 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.

APECL and APEL

The two different types of Accreditation of Prior Learning are:

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

  E.g. 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) – the process through which learning achieved outside of education or training systems is assessed and, if appropriate, recognised for academic purposes.³

  To gain credit for APEL, a portfolio of evidence is required (an APEL Portfolio⁴) that presents the learning from experience relevant to the chosen university programme.

Benefits

APECL is beneficial for individuals wishing 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 that best suits their skills and knowledge, avoiding the need to repeat learning previously completed, and saving time.

- APECL benefits individuals who wish to gain credit for work in their field by 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 interest to study at Kent and check whether your prior learning/experience relates to it. APECL can be used to gain credit onto undergraduate, postgraduate and full/part-time programmes. Kent programme details can be found at: http://www.kent.ac.uk/studying/

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¹ Academic credit, usually known as ‘credit’, is awarded on completion of learning, and indicates the level and the amount of learning that has been completed. For example, a typical degree is worth 360 academic credits.

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

³ http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/apl/API_PDF

⁴ An APEL Portfolio is a collection of reflective writing and evidence that demonstrates how 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 must indicate on your UCAS/direct entry application form that you have an APCL you wish to have considered.

- You will be then required to provide information on your prior learning for the relevant school/centre responsible for the programme on which you wish to study to assess your claim.

Making an APEL claim:

- If you think you may have an APEL claim, it is advisable to contact the relevant school/centre prior to indicating an interest in APEL on your application to ensure that your experience is relevant and to check that APEL is available for that programme.

- To make an APEL claim, you must indicate on your UCAS/direct entry application form that you have an APEL you wish to have considered.

- The relevant school/centre responsible for the programme on which you wish to study will then discuss your prior learning in further detail with you.

- Once the possibility of an APEL claim has been agreed, 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 presenting your experience, normally through an APEL Portfolio, showing evidence of how your experience meets the learning outcomes of the module(s)/stages for which you are claiming credit.

Things to Consider

Academic judgement:

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

- 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 towards which they wish to claim credit.

Limits:

- There are limits to the amount of APECL that can be claimed towards a university programme, this is typically 2/3 for an undergraduate Honours Degree, and ½ for a Master’s level programme. However, the limits can vary from programme to programme, depending 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 marks are given for modules awarded credit by APECL. If you receive APECL, the overall grade for your programme will be determined on the marks you receive for the module(s) taken at Kent.

- Receiving APECL may affect your 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 affect 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/apelcl.html.

- If you have specific queries about APECL and the programme you are interested in, please contact the Programme Leader.

- If you are unsure about what programme you would like to enter, but feel you have some relevant experience, please contact the Information and Guidance Unit in Admissions at information@kent.ac.uk.