Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)
Guidance for Staff

The following guidance notes provide an overview for staff in relation to processing claims for the Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL).

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1. Introduction to APL

1.1 What is APL?

The Accreditation of Prior Learning (known as APL) offers existing and potential students the opportunity to gain recognition for qualifications they have already achieved at other institutions, or to gain recognition for learning from other experiences, for example in the work place.

- It enables prior learning to be given an academic credit value which can then be used to gain exemption from relevant modules, or stages, of a university level programme.¹
- It enables people to enter a university level programme at the point that best suits their experience and skills. It also helps ensure that learners do not have to repeat prior learning.

1.2 Benefits of APL

APL is of benefit if you wish to gain qualifications at university level, it:

- Makes university level education accessible to a wide variety of individuals.
- 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.
- Supports individuals who wish to gain credit for work in their field, with the potential to turn professional practice into academic credit.

There are four mechanisms for recognising APL at the University of Kent:

- APEL Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning - This is the process through which learning achieved outside education or training systems is assessed and, as appropriate, recognised for academic purposes.
- APCL Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning – At Kent APCL relates to learning at higher education level, which has been formally achieved, but which has not been awarded credits or a qualification by a UK Higher Education Institution (HEI). For example, qualifications awarded by a non-UK higher education degree awarding body.
- Credit Transfer - Relates to learning at higher education level, which has been formally achieved, and awarded credits or a qualification by a UK HEI.
- Articulation Arrangements – In an articulation arrangement, an assessment is made of the equivalence of the learning undertaken at another institution with that required by a stage or stages of an appropriate programme at Kent. This is with the aim of securing direct entry for a cohort or cohorts of students from the partner institution to the Kent programme.

1.3 Credit Transfer and APCL recognise learning that has already been achieved assessed and certificated.

A typical Credit Transfer claim might be from an applicant who has completed a programme such as a Foundation Degree at a UK HEI who would like to use credit achieved on that degree towards a programme in a similar subject area.

A typical APCL claim might be from an applicant who has studied an award at an overseas HEI, in a relevant subject area, who would like to use credit from that award towards a programme at Kent.

Recognising this type of prior learning is straightforward, provided:

- It can be evidenced through a certificate or transcript.

¹ Academic credit, normally known as ‘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.
• Is at the right level.
• Is relevant to the university programme to be taken.
• It can be demonstrated that the content of the prior learning is relevant to the content of the new programme to be undertaken.

1.4 **APEL** is the recognition of learning that has not previously been formally recognised, for example learning achieved outside education or training systems. This learning is then assessed and where appropriate given an academic credit value.

A typical APEL claim might be from an applicant with significant work based who wishes to have that learning assessed, and then given an academic credit value, towards a degree. Before the academic credit value of such prior learning can be assessed applicants are normally asked complete and submit a portfolio of evidence (APEL Portfolio).\(^2\)

This portfolio would include reflections on prior learning from experience and how this is relevant to the university programme the applicant wants to take, along with an evidence base for the prior learning, i.e. references, CVs, examples of work.

APEL is a good way of making use of relevant experience, particularly from the workplace, to gain credit at university level; however the process is more involved than Credit Transfer or APCL and requires commitment from the applicant to produce their portfolio of evidence at the correct academic level and within required timeframes.

1.5 **Articulation Arrangements** are a formal relationship between two linked programmes of the University and another organisation or body. In articulation arrangements successful completion of work in those institutions, may permit direct entry for an agreed cohort to a specified Kent programme. A mapping is required to demonstrate how the cohort’s prior learning is relevant to the Kent programme, and a formal legal agreement is required to underpin the relationship between Kent and the partner organisation.

1.6 **Key Areas to Consider Regarding APL**

1.6.1 Unless the programme specification states otherwise then APL can normally be used to gain credit onto any taught Kent programme.

1.6.2 Credit can be awarded for individual modules or entire stages of programmes.

1.6.3 APL can be used for new and existing students, but must be approved prior to the commencement of the module(s) for which credit is sought.

1.6.4 Specific forms for mapping APCL and Articulation Arrangement claims (and Credit Transfer claims from Partner College or Validated Institutions) are provided under Annex R of the University’s Code of Practice for Taught programmes.

1.6.5 All claims for APL must be made within the guidelines contained in the University’s Code of Practice for Taught Programmes, Annex R, [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexr.html](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexr.html) and the Credit Framework for Taught Programmes, in particular sections 10 (Credit Transfer), [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html#credittransfer](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html#credittransfer) and Annex 3 [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex3.html](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex3.html)

2. **Processes Outside of the APL Requirements**

There are certain admissions procedures which fall outside of the APL processes and have their own requirements:

• Claims for mid-year transfer from a programme of study at another institution.

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\[^2\] 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. See 7.2 of this guidance for further information.
• Claims for admission without the threshold entry qualifications.

APEL portfolios are sometimes used to consider if an applicant/student has suitable experience to join an academic programme at Kent where they do not meet the standard admission requirements.

• Incremental Study - where programmes share a common title for separate awards (e.g. PGCert/ PGDip/Masters in X) students are not required to make APL claims to take into account the previous stage’s learning, i.e. a student can progress from a PG Cert to a PG Diploma to a Masters.

3. Procedures for APL

3.1 For detail on the procedures to follow when an applicant/student wishes to make an APL claim, and the forms required for recommending approval of APL claims please consult the University’s Code of Practice for Taught Programmes, Annex R at http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexr.html

3.2 Please also consult Annex R for the procedure to follow when setting up an Articulation Arrangement.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Within the University there are specific members of staff who will need to become involved in supporting APL claims through to approval.

• Admissions Officers – Once an applicant indicates they wish to make an APL claim Admissions Officers support them through the process.

For Credit Transfer claims, in consultation with appropriate Directors of Studies, Admissions Officers are authorised to approve requests for Credit Transfer in line with the requirements of the Credit Framework 10.1.1- https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html#credittransfer

For APCL claims Admissions Officers will make recommendations to the relevant Faculty Committee (Education Committee for undergraduate claims, Graduate Studies for postgraduate claims) on the approval of claims.

• Portfolio Supervisor - The key roles of the portfolio supervisor are to:

i) to guide the applicant in developing their APEL portfolio against the learning outcomes;

and

ii) to assess the portfolio, ensuring it is complete and suitable.

The Admissions Officer for the School/Centre relating to the programme for which APEL is sought should identify a suitable APEL Portfolio Supervisor. This could be the Admissions Officer or a relevant subject specialist from the School/Centre.

The Supervisor will also make recommendations to the relevant Faculty Committee on approval of APEL claims.

• Programme Leaders – Programme Leaders may need to be involved in the consideration of potential APL claims along with Admissions Officers, to help determine if an applicant/student has the relevant prior learning in order to make a claim. For APEL claims the Programme Leader may also need to help identify a suitable Portfolio Supervisor.
4.2 For APL claims from existing students the Programme Leader may be required to take on the responsibilities of the Admissions Officer, as detailed in Annex R of the Code of Practice for Taught Programmes.

5. Key Committees

5.1 Faculty Education and Graduate Studies Committees

The relevant Faculty Committee considers recommendations submitted for the approval of

- APCL claims
- APEL claims
- Credit Transfer claims from Partner Colleges or Validated Institutions
- APL Protocols connected to Articulation Arrangements

Normally recommendations are considered by the Chair of the relevant Committee on the basis of Chairs’ Action.

Decisions of the committee are then recorded by the Faculties Support Office (FSO) for reporting to the APL Board.

5.2 APL Board

The APL Board monitors and oversees APL activity within the University, it is able to advise the University on APL policy and ensure that Kent remains in line with national developments in credit accumulation and transfer.

Terms of reference and membership for the APL Board are available as part of Annex R of the University’s Code of Practice for Taught Programmes - https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexr-appendix-a.html

6. Parameters for APL Claims

6.1 When recognising prior learning for APL the University is approving credit towards a student’s final award.

Therefore, the APL process needs to be rigorous and completed within the requirements of the Credit Framework and Code of Practice.

Claims for APL are assessment decisions, therefore Schools/Centres/Partners recommending approval of a claim for APL should be confident that the prior learning involved is comparable to assessment / learning undertaken at the University. Decisions regarding the awarding of APL are a matter of academic judgement.

Below are considerations for Schools/Centres if they are approached by an applicant/student wishing to make an APL claim.

6.2 Limits on APL

To ensure a sufficient amount of new learning is carried out at the University before a student is awarded a qualification, there are limits on the amount of credit that can be used as APL towards a new Kent award.

- Limits differ for each type of qualification offered by the University and, therefore, you should confirm the limit for the exact qualification that credit is being sought against. These are detailed in the University’s Credit Framework for Taught Programmes Annex 3 - https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex3.html

Example limits are:
- 3 year BA/BSc (Hons): no more than two thirds or 240 credits of the award can be made up of APL.
- Masters Degrees, no more than half or 90 credits of a Master’s can be made up of APL.

- It is important applicants/students are aware that the amount of credit they can claim for their prior learning is limited and that the amount of credit they can gain is dependent on the fit of their prior learning with the Kent programme they are taking.
- Credit limits are the same for all mechanisms of claiming APL.
- The University’s Credit Framework states that a specific amount of new learning must be carried out at a certain level, i.e. for a BA (Hons) a minimum of 120 credits of new learning must be carried out, and 90 of these must be at level 6 (see Annex 3).
- As well as a maximum number of credits that can be claimed as APL there is also a minimum number which is 5 credits.

6.3 Grading
The award of APL does not carry any numerical mark and does not contribute to the overall stage average or degree classification. This is because credit for prior learning can be recognised, but not the marks and grades. The classification is determined on the new learning carried out at Kent.

6.4 Language of Study
Where the evidence relating to an applicant's prior learning is submitted in a language other than English, the APL assessor must either possess sufficient competence in the language in question in order to make an effective assessment; or must direct the applicant to provide a translation into English of any prior assessed work submitted.

6.5 Plagiarism
Any work submitted by an applicant in support of an APL submission that is found to contain elements of plagiarised work will be discounted. Where plagiarism is suspected in a submission from a University-registered student, the work in question will be referred to the School Disciplinary Committee for consideration under the Academic Discipline procedures.

6.6 Spent Credit
Use of APL as a means of transferring credit between two University awards is subject to the requirements on ‘spent’ credit set out in the Credit Framework (see, in particular, clause 10.3 at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html#credittransfer).

6.7 Compulsory assessment
If a programme has compulsory modules/assessment then this should be considered when assessing an APL claim. It may be that a claim for APL against a compulsory element of a programme has to be refused.

6.8 Criteria to Consider
APL assessors should consider the full range of assessment methods so that the most appropriate is utilised for the student to demonstrate their skills and knowledge against the required learning outcomes.

The following Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) identified criteria should be considered:

- **Acceptability** – is there any appropriate match between the evidence presented and the learning being demonstrated? Is the evidence valid and reliable?
- **Sufficiency** – is there sufficient evidence to demonstrate fully the achievement of the learning claimed?
• **Authenticity** – is the evidence clearly related to the applicants’ own efforts and achievements?

• **Currency** – does the evidence relate to current learning? Where professional bodies and/or Schools have specific requirements and/or time limits for the currency of evidence, certification or demonstration of learning, these should be made clear and transparent.

6.9 Evidence of Learning

For Credit Transfer and APCL, evidence is normally provided through a certificate or transcript showing completion of the learning for which credit is being claimed.

For APEL, evidence will be contained in the APEL portfolio. This evidence will relate to the reflective learning the applicant/student writes about in their portfolio and whether their experience is sufficient to meet the relevant learning outcomes against which credit is sought.

6.10 Currency of Learning

Learning is normally considered to be current when it has been completed within the last five years. This is because it is important that knowledge and skills are up to date and because over time academic programmes develop and change.

If learning is more than five years old then some evidence of having kept up-to-date with the subject area should be requested.

This could be a CV showing where work has kept an applicant/student up-to-date in the key knowledge or skills areas of a programme, or a brief written statement.

6.11 Level and Volume of Credit

It is important to ensure that any applicant/student’s prior learning equates in terms of level as well as content and is worth the amount of credit being requested. It should also meet the necessary APL limits as highlighted in Annex 3 of the Credit Framework [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex3.html](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex3.html).

6.12 Overseas or Professional Body Qualifications

For any applicant/student presenting overseas qualifications for credit, or qualifications from Professional Bodies equivalency with UK higher education credit should be established where necessary, i.e. through European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) credits.

6.13 Name Change

If an applicant/student’s name has changed since achieving the prior learning for which credit is sought, evidence should be sought of name change to ensure that the applicant/student’s claim is genuine.

6.14 Deadlines

APL claims should be made and approved prior to the commencement of the module(s) for which credit is being sought. This ensures that any applicant/student who has a claim for credit rejected can register for the module(s) for which credit was being claimed.

If claims for credit are not made and approved prior to the commencement of the module for which credit is sought, then the applicant/student may be at risk of being unable to complete the required learning for their chosen programme.
7. **Considering APL Claims**

7.1 **Academic Judgement**

Any decision on whether to recommend an APL claim for approval is an academic one. This means that it can be recommended that the applicant/student take the module(s) for which credit is being claimed in circumstances such as, but not limited to:

- The applicant/student’s prior learning does not meet the requirements of the relevant learning outcomes for which credit is being claimed.
- The applicant/student would suffer from not being involved in the full learning experience of the programme.

It should be noted that Schools/Centres should provide feedback on request to students on the outcome of the assessment of their APL.

7.2 **APEL Claims**

APEL is the process through which learning achieved outside education is assessed and, as appropriate, recognised for academic purposes. APEL must be assigned a credit value - this takes place through the assessment of a reflective portfolio of evidence produced by the applicant/student showing how knowledge, skills and learning from their experience meets relevant learning outcomes for which credit is being claimed.

Alternative methods of assessing the match between learning from experience and learning outcomes are available, such as:

- Written reports.
- A module assignment.
- An observed performance/presentation supported by a written piece.
- Analysis of a product design and production.
- Case studies.

It is important that the form of assessment chosen is the most appropriate to the applicant/student's experience, and the proposed programme.

7.3 **Advising Applicants/Students on APEL Claims**

The following should be considered when assessing potential claims for APEL:

- Does the applicant/student understand that they will be required to produce a portfolio of work to support the APEL claim?
- Is it possible to identify where the applicant/student’s prior learning from experience will map to learning outcomes, and how much credit this mapping will allow the applicant/student to apply for?
- Does the applicant/student have suitable prior learning from experience for the level and volume of credit applied for?
- Is there sufficient time for the claim for APEL to be completed? (a submission date for the APEL portfolio should be negotiated and agreed with the applicant/student).
- If a claim is rejected is there time for the applicant/student to register on the module for which credit is being sought?
- Is the form of assessment proposed suitable for the applicant/student and the prior learning they have?

7.4 **Supervising Production of an APEL Portfolio**

The purpose of an APEL portfolio is to provide evidence of how prior learning from experience meets the relevant learning outcomes for which credit is claimed.
Those supervising an applicant/student’s APEL claim should consider the following when supporting the production of a portfolio:

- The APEL claim should be an account of learning achievement. This will be a new undertaking for the majority of applicants/students, therefore, APEL applicants/students often need support in articulating their learning.
- What is the most appropriate design for the portfolio? What specific experiential learning needs to be evidenced to meet the relevant learning outcomes for which credit is sought?
- Is the portfolio organised clearly? This will aid assessment of the work when the portfolio is complete.
- Are there sufficient links being made between the reflective work in the portfolio and the learning outcomes that need to be met?


### 7.5 Assessing a finished APEL Portfolio

In assessing a portfolio the following can be used as guidance:

- Is the background of the prior learning from experience relevant to the credit sought?
- Is the portfolio’s presentation and organisation good?
- Does the portfolio meet the requirements of currency and authenticity?
- Is the content sufficient for the level of credit being applied for?
- Does the portfolio evidence, meet the relevant learning outcomes against which credit is sought?

Award of credit should be recommended when an applicant/student can demonstrate that they have achieved the relevant learning outcomes against which credit is being claimed.

If it is considered that an applicant/student has not demonstrated sufficiently that they have achieved the relevant learning outcomes, then appropriate academic advice should be offered and guidance given on carrying out further work on the APEL claim.

### 7.6 APEL Portfolio Word Counts

There are no set word limits for APEL portfolios. Evidence and reflective statements included should only be the ones that best reflect how an applicant/student meets the learning outcomes.

APEL portfolios should aim to strike a balance between reflective statements and evidence in order to show sufficiently that learning outcomes have been met.

As a guideline for the size of a portfolio you may want to consider the length of the assessment for the module(s) that credit is being claimed for.

### 7.7 Providing Feedback

Applicants/students are entitled to request feedback from the University on their APL claims, for example if their claim is rejected. If a claim has been rejected then feedback should make clear the reasons why, so that the claim can be amended before resubmission.

When a claim is rejected applicants/students should normally be allowed at least one re-submission attempt in line with the recommended timescales for submitting an APL claim.

It may not be possible for an applicant/student to re-submit a claim where:

- It has been decided that the prior learning does not meet the relevant learning outcomes for which they are claiming credit.
The learning experience would be impaired by missing teaching on the module(s) for which credit is being claimed.

8. Further Information

8.1 For general guidance on APL and credit the following are useful resources:


http://www.seec.org.uk/ (last accessed 23 August 2018)

http://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/academic-credit-higher-education-in-england-an-introduction.pdf?sfvrsn=a3b3f981_14 (last accessed 23 August 2018)
Appendix A
Timescales for Accreditation of Prior Learning

The following are recommended timescales to guide staff and applicants when an APL claim is made, however, each APL claim is different and the exact length of time that it will take to develop, submit and approve an APL claim will depend on the individual case.

Any claim for APL must adhere to individual programme deadlines and be approved prior to the commencement of the specific module(s) for which credit is being sought.

Credit Transfer/APCL: Recommended timescales

It is recommended that any claim for Credit Transfer/APCL is made as soon as possible, and must be made and approved prior to the commencement of the module(s) for which credit is sought.

Applicants should be contacted by the School/Centre to progress any claim and it is recommended that these are made at least six weeks before the commencement of the module(s) for which credit is being sought. This is to allow time for a decision to be made, for any follow up work to be carried out if a claim is rejected and subsequently resubmitted, and for an applicant to be registered on the upcoming module(s) if their claim is finally rejected.

No claims for Credit Transfer/APCL can be made after the commencement of the module(s) for which credit is sought.

APEL: Recommended timescales

APEL is a good way of making use of relevant experience, particularly from the workplace, to gain credit at university level; however, APEL portfolio development can take a long period of time and requires commitment to produce the portfolio of evidence at the correct academic level and within the required time frame. It is therefore essential that claims for APEL are made as soon as possible and must be made and approved prior to the commencement of the module(s) for which credit is sought.

It is recommended that before a claim for APEL is made applicants consult the guidance available at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/documents/quality-assurance/codes/taught/pdf/annexr-apl-guidance-for-applicants-students.pdf

When assessing suitability of an APEL claim, or making an APEL claim it is recommended:

- That a minimum of six weeks is allowed to develop the APEL portfolio. The actual amount of time required to develop the APEL portfolio is dependent on the programme and individual's experience; it can take more than six weeks.
- That a further six weeks is allowed for assessment of the APEL portfolio by the University.
- That time is allowed so any changes can be made to the APEL portfolio if it is not successful at the first submission.

No claims for APEL can be made after the commencement of the module(s) for which credit is sought.
## Appendix B
### Glossary

| Admissions Officers | In relation to Credit Transfer Admissions Officers:  
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Make decisions on claims in consultation with the relevant</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Director of Studies, based on evidence provided and ensure</td>
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<td></td>
<td>that the prior learning is relevant to the Kent learning</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>outcomes.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Ensure that claims are processed within the University’s</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Code of Practice.</td>
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</table>
| In relation to APCL Admissions Officers:  
|                     | • Make recommendations to the relevant Faculty Committee on  |
|                     |   claims for prior certificated learning, based on evidence  |
|                     |   provided and ensure that the prior learning is mapped to  |
|                     |   the relevant learning outcomes.                             |
|                     | • Ensure that claims are processed within the University’s    |
|                     |   Code of Practice.                                           |
| In relation to APEL Admissions Officers:  
<p>|                     | • Act as the liaison point for School/Centre on the development |
|                     |   of claims for APEL, identifying where appropriate a suitable |
|                     |   Portfolio Supervisor for an applicant.                      |
|                     | • Provide when required appropriate subject specific advice on |
|                     |   APEL claims.                                                |
|                     | • Help ensure that APEL portfolios and claims are within the  |
|                     |   University’s Code of Practice and Credit Framework.        |
| APCL                | This stands for Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning. |
|                     | This is the process, through which previously assessed and   |
|                     |   certificated learning achieved at a non-UK HEI is         |
|                     |   considered and, as appropriate, recognised for academic    |
|                     |   purposes.                                                  |
| APL                 | This stands for Accreditation of Prior Learning. This is the  |
|                     |   umbrella term used by the University of Kent to describe   |
|                     |   recognition of formally completed prior learning, and     |
|                     |   learning from experience which can be used to gain        |
|                     |   academic credit.                                           |
| APEL                | This stands for Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning.|
|                     | This is the process through which learning achieved outside  |
|                     |   education or training systems is assessed and, as          |
|                     |   appropriate, recognised for academic purposes.             |
| Code of Practice    | The University of Kent’s Code of Practice for Quality        |
| for Quality        | Assurance of Taught Programmes. Annex R of which details    |
| Assurance for       | the rules and processes for APL at Kent.                      |
| Taught Programmes   |                                                               |
| of Study            |                                                               |
| Credit (Academic    | Academic credit is awarded to students on achievement of    |
| Credit)            | Through APEL it can also be awarded for prior learning from  |
|                     | experience. Academic credit indicates the level of learning  |
|                     |   and the amount of learning carried out.                     |
| Credit Transfer     | Is prior learning at higher education level, which has been  |
|                     |   formally achieved, and awarded credits or a qualification  |
|                     |   by a UK HEI.                                                |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Currency refers to when learning was completed. To be considered current, learning must normally have been completed within the last five years.</th>
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</table>
| General Credit | General credit refers to the amount of academic credit that a programme is worth once it has been completed, e.g. a BA/BSc Honours Degree is worth 360 general credits.  
It is important when assessing and advising on an applicant/student’s claim to take into account the difference between their general and specific credit.  
General credit represents the whole of the learning achieved on an accredited course. Specific credit is the amount and level of credit which can be used from this general credit value onto another course.  
A full definition for general credit can be found at [http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html#generalcredit](http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html#generalcredit) |
| Learning Outcome | A learning outcome is a statement of what a learner is expected to know, understand and demonstrate following completion of a particular module/programme of study. Learning outcomes are key in APL as prior learning needs to be assessed against the learning outcomes of the new programme of study to determine if credit can be awarded. |
| Level | Refers to the level of learning carried out. |
| Level 4 | This is normally the first level of an honours degree, and the first level taken on the way towards higher level qualifications. Certificates of Higher Education can be awarded at this level. |
| Level 5 | This is normally the second level of an honours degree, other programmes at this level are ordinary (non-Honours) degrees, Foundation degrees and Diplomas of Higher Education. |
| Level 6 | This is normally the third level of an honours degree, leading to a BSc or BA Honours Degree. Other programmes at this level are Graduate Certificates or Graduate Diplomas. |
| Level 7 | This is the level of a Masters Degree, Postgraduate Certificates and Postgraduate Diplomas. |
| Mapping | Mapping is comparing the prior learning of an applicant/student to the learning outcomes of their chosen Kent programme. |
| Module | A module is unit of education on a specific subject area. A module is made up of a number of learning outcomes. |
| Quality Assurance Agency | The independent body entrusted with monitoring and advising on standards and quality in UK higher education. |
| Portfolio | In the context of APEL a portfolio is a collection of work designed to demonstrate an applicant/student’s learning from experience and how this learning relates to the programme for which they are seeking credit. |
| Portfolio Supervisor | Acts as the liaison point for APEL applicants/students on the development of their APEL Portfolio, guides applicants/students through production of their APEL Portfolio and makes recommendations to the relevant Faculty Committee on whether |
credit should be awarded for an APEL portfolio completed under their supervision.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Programmes</strong></th>
<th>Programmes are the courses of academic study that the University offers. For example a BA (Hons) is a degree programme.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reflective Writing</strong></td>
<td>Reflective writing in the context of APEL is looking back on your experience, analysing what you have learnt from it, assessing how that will affect you in the future, in work or as a student, and linking it to the modules for which you are seeking credit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Specific Credit</strong></td>
<td>Specific credit is the amount of credit that can be specifically mapped to the learning outcomes of the Kent programme for which you are claiming APL. (Please see General Credit above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage</strong></td>
<td>This refers to the stage of the programme onto which you are seeking APL. For a full-time BA/BSc (Hons), for example, you would normally have Stages 1, 2, and 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Credit Framework for Taught Programmes</strong></td>
<td>This is Kent’s Credit Framework which details the limits and rules on the use of academic credit at Kent. Annex 3 relates specifically to the limits on the amount of credit that can be used for APL.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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APPENDIX C

FAQ’s

What is the difference between General and Specific Credit?

General credit is the amount of credit that prior learning is worth in total. Specific credit is the amount of general credit that can be specifically mapped against the learning outcomes of the modules for which credit is being claimed. For example, an applicant/student has 240 credits from a previous award, but only 120 of these are relevant to the modules for which credit is sought - the general credit value would be 240 credits, the specific credit value 120 credits.

What limits are there on the amount of credit that can be claimed?

There are certain limits on the amount of credit that can be used as APL towards a new Kent programme. This is to ensure that there is a sufficient amount of new learning carried out at the University of Kent before a student can be awarded a Kent qualification.

The exact limits are detailed in the University’s Credit Framework - http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex3.html

What grade will an applicant/student receive for APL?

Credit approved via the APL process does not carry a numerical mark or contribute to the classification of the programme for which credit is claimed. In other words the prior learning submitted towards an APL claim provides credit towards the overall programme, but cannot be used towards the final grade for the programme.

What are the deadlines for APL claims?

It is important that APL claims are made prior to the commencement of any modules for which credit is claimed. This allows assessment of the claim, and if a claim is unsuccessful allows students to register for the modules that they were claiming credit for.

When making an APL claim applicants/students should always be made aware of the specific admission deadlines of the programme they are applying to join.

What would happen if an APL claim is not successful?

There is no guarantee that an APL claim will be successful. If for any reason an applicant is unable to claim credit against modules in their chosen programme they will be required to take those modules as normal. Depending on the reasons for the claim being unsuccessful the applicant is normally entitled to one re-submission.

Where can I find more information on the regulations and process of APL at Kent?

- Kent Credit Framework - http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/index.html

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