

SRC OU Recognition of Prior Learning Guidelines

The guidelines below are to be read and used in conjunction with SRC RPL policy. This document will be reviewed in line with RPL policy review dates.

Southern Regional College provides a student centred environment that is responsive to the academic and vocational requirements of individuals of all ages and backgrounds, in which they may be empowered to reach their full potential. To widen participation in learning the College recognises the value of previous learning and experience. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) (i.e. that which is certificated), Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL), Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) are included in the formal approach of such recognition.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL), and Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) are assessment processes that allow achievement from a range of activities, using any valid assessment methods, to be recognised.

Students who are able to demonstrate that they have already fulfilled some of the learning outcomes of the programme by means other than attendance on the planned programme, and will be able, by completing the remaining requirements, to fulfil the learning outcomes of the programme and attain the standard required for the award, may be admitted with advanced standing, thus exempting them from some modules or stages of the programme.

If the student's prior learning is not certificated, the college itself will assess the student's learning directly, either by requiring the applicant to take the normal assessments of the programme or by some other appropriate form of assessment.

A student admitted on the basis of uncertificated learning and experience or through prior certified learning is subject to the same principles of admission as all other students on that programme. Subject to the requirements of any Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements the partner institution has discretion to admit a student with exemption from certain elements of the programme or with specific credit.

Students are encouraged to take responsibility for making and supporting their claims for APL/APEL/RPL prior to admission.

Students may be awarded Recognition for Prior Learning (certified, experiential or uncertified), towards the requirements of a named award up two-thirds* of the total credit requirements for that award.

*(*Two-thirds of RPL is only permitted for full, three-year bachelor's degrees (360 credits) or full Masters Degrees (a minimum of 180 credits) and not sub-awards, where the usual maximum is 50%.)*

Recognition for Prior Learning (certified, experiential or uncertified) is not permitted at level 6 of a Bachelor's Degree or for the thesis/dissertation module, where students are expected to complete 120 credits in order to gain the award.

Supporting documentation:

- Application for Accreditation of Prior Learning (Higher Education)
- Application for Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (Higher Education)

Links to other policies:

- HE Admissions Policy

RPL/APEL/APL Procedures

There are five stages to the process, as shown in the chart below:

Stage 1: Information and individual advice on RPL/APEL/APL
Stage 2: Guidance on planning an RPL/APEL/APL claim
Stage 3: Producing a claim
Stage 4: Assessing a claim in line with Awarding Organisation (AO) requirements
Stage 5: Claim Outcomes: Recording the outcome and notifying the student and the AO if applicable

These stages may involve students, Course Tutors, support staff the HE Sector Tutor, Higher Education Business & Development Leader and HE Scheme Administrator. Academic or support staff will be involved in advising and guiding students to prepare evidence of learning and will not be involved in the assessment process. Claims for RPL/APEL/APL will be judged on level, relevance, status, authenticity and currency. It is the student's responsibility to provide College with relevant details of previous attainments and unit/module learning outcomes.

Level. Level is defined in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework/Academic Framework generic level descriptors for defining accepted tiers of learning achievement. In assessing the level of prior learning from institutions outside the UK, assistance will be sought from recognised authoritative public sources, such as UK National Agency for the recognition and comparison of international qualifications and skills (UK NARIC).

Relevance. For recognition of achievement, the prior learning must be relevant to the target programme of study. This means that it must be at a similar level, must have similar learning outcomes, and cover a similar knowledge and/or skills base. The level, learning outcomes and knowledge/skills base need not be identical, but they must be close enough to those in the target programme to allow the student to progress without the need to repeat the exempted study.

Status. Status refers to certificated learning (APL) only and requires that the learning has been assessed according to relevant criteria, and that the result has been formally documented, normally through the medium of a transcript or official letter. If status is uncertain, the student may be asked to provide additional evidence e.g. through a reflective statement.

Authenticity. The assessor will satisfy themselves that the evidence, e.g. certificate belongs to the student by seeing the original, or if it was in a different name, by also evidence of change of name e.g. a marriage certificate.

Currency. For prior learning to be current it would need to have been achieved relatively recently. The definition of currency may vary from vocational area to vocational area (subject to subject), and may need careful evaluation prior to the award of APL/APEL/RPL. Evidence of continuing relevant/academic activity between the learning and application may be required in support of a claim for the currency of the learning.

No APL/APEL/RPL recognition may be counted towards the requirements of more than one academic award of the same type at the same level.

Stage 1 Information and individual advice on APL/APEL/RPL

This involves students systematically reflecting and assessing their prior achievements and experiences to select those where significant, relevant learning occurred. Individual applicants will receive clear guidance on the rationale for their evidence of learning and advice on its compilation and desired overall structure, for example mapping to learning outcomes or performance indicators. Submission and assessment procedures will be clearly stated, and will include provision for discussion of a draft prior to formal submission.

Stage 2 Guidance on planning an APL/APEL/RPL claim

Applicants will be advised in each case as to what would comprise adequate evidence of prior learning. A submission could include:

- a summary of the learning of knowledge and/or skills claimed;
- reflection on the learning claimed in relation to the target programme;
- a summary of evidence against each element of learning or learning outcome, cross referenced against the full evidence;
- full evidence; Evidence may include:
 - proof of achievement, e.g. certificates
 - work/practice-based documents;
 - reports on observations of practice;

- video/audio tapes, with commentary and analysis related to achievement of learning outcomes;
- analytic and evaluative description of practice;
- statements from supervisors in relation to aspects of practice;

Students must state how they will collect and present evidence required for accreditation.

Stage 3 Producing a claim

For APL students will be required to map previous certificated achievement against elements of the qualification to which they intend to enrol. The attached form (appendix 1) may assist this process.

For APEL, clear statements need to be submitted, identifying the learning, expressed in precise terms to claim possession of knowledge and skills. Students will collect and collate evidence to support the statements. Evidence will be presented in a structure appropriate to the elements of/the qualification being claimed, normally in the form of a portfolio. Students are advised and encouraged to present relevant and concise portfolios. The attached form (appendix 2) should be used for this process

Stage 4 Assessing a claim

Assessment methods may vary but will include assessment of documentation against element of/qualification being claimed, oral questioning or demonstration of skills. Whatever manner of assessment is used, it must be such that the judgement made can be considered by representatives of the awarding organisation e.g. external verifiers, moderators or examiners with the same degree of confidence as other more traditionally assessed performances.

Stage 5 APL/APEL/RPL Claim outcomes

Claims may be approved or not approved. The student will be informed.

Approved claims will go forward to the awarding organisation with other assessed work for external scrutiny if required, accompanied by relevant APL/APEL/RPL documentation.

Not approved claims will be returned to the student, with either a requirement for further evidence in particular aspects of the claim (to be detailed) or to recommend that APL/APEL/RPL is unlikely to be awarded with the reasons explained in detail. Partially approved claims may be awarded where specific elements are supported by evidence. The student will be informed.

Accreditation

Approved claims may not be included in the calculation of the award classification.

Appendix 1

Accreditation of Prior Learning/Recognition of Prior Learning (Higher Education)

Student:

Course applied for:

Course studied to date:

Learning already achieved:

Date of achievement:

Course studied to date:	Course applied to:
Unit or Modules completed from: <i>Unit or Module Title and learning outcomes</i>	Mapping to unit or modules: <i>Unit or Module Title and learning outcomes</i>
Credit:	Credit:

The modules above have been examined and cover similar or the same learning outcomes.

Authorised by the Higher Education Business & Development Leader

Signature:

Date:

Appendix 2

Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (Higher Education)

Student:

Application:

Course studied to date:

Experience achieved:

Dates of experience:

Experience claimed	Mapping to modules: <i>Unit or Module Title and learning outcomes</i>
Credit:	Credit:

The experience above covers similar or the same learning outcomes.

Authorised by the Higher Education Business Development Leader

Signature:

Date: