

Accreditation of Prior Experiential/Certificated Learning Programmes in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy.

Introduction

APE/CL (or Accreditation of Prior Experiential/Certificated Learning) is an element of the University's Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme that forms part of the General Regulations for all educational programmes.

These general regulations are available from the following link:

<http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionIV/cats.html>

The AU Psychology offers a suite of programmes in modular form which train people in cognitive behaviour therapy. These programmes are at Level 7, effectively being programmes at the Masters level. However there are two exit awards, i.e. at PG Certificate and PG Diploma.

'Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) (Certificated) Learning [AP(E)(C)L]: The University has devolved arrangements for the management and assessment of accreditation of prior learning to Faculties within the general policy set out in the Quality Handbook. Faculties may allow APL, APEL or APCL up to a maximum of one-third of the credits required; for example, 20 ECTS credits at level 6 or 30 ECTS credits at level 7, subject to there being in place rigorous systems that require candidates to provide evidence of how previous study matches the explicit criteria of expected learning outcomes. A lower maximum number of APL, APEL or APCL credits may be stipulated where necessary for programme coherence. Normally AP(E)(C)L applies to optional modules only (i.e.: not core modules or the dissertation/project). Any proposal to allow APL outside the above limits must be formally approved by the relevant Faculty Programme Board.'

Additionally, for an MSc, up to 15 ECTS (30 CATS) of the 30 total possible may be may be considered.

Regulations for Accreditation of Certificated Learning (APCL)

APCL refers to accreditation making use of previous, credit-bearing study, i.e. programmes which carry ECTS points (CATS points).

The University regulations state that the maximum amount of accreditation that can be granted for any prior learning is up to one third of the of the total points required to complete the proposed programme of study. For an MSc, which require 90 ECTS points (180 CATS) of study, this means that **no more than 30 ECTS points** (60 CATS) may be accredited from any prior learning. For the purposes of a PG Diploma, the percentage should be considered in terms of the award for which the applicant is applying.

In practice this means that the following will apply:

1. Applicants may apply for up to 10 ECTS APCL towards the PG Certificate programmes

2. Applicants may apply for up to 20 ECTS APCL towards the PG Diploma programmes
3. Applicants may apply for up to 30 ECTS APCL towards the Masters level programme
4. No APCL is available for the 'Introduction to CBT' modules
5. Credits from institutions other than Southampton will be considered on a case-by-case basis

It is a requirement of the APL process that students requesting APL should evidence that the prior learning was at the required level. For masters degrees this means the prior learning must be equivalent to level 7 in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England (FHEQ). As a guide this could include work completed for the award of:

- Masters degrees (eg: MPhil, MLitt, MRes, MA, MSc)
- Integrated Masters degrees (eg: MEng, MChem, MPhys, MPharm)
- Postgraduate Diplomas
- Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) with a masters level component
- Postgraduate Certificates

(Source: <http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionIV/cats.html>)

Regulations for Accreditation of Experiential Learning (APEL)

APEL refers to accreditation taking account of previous experience, which is not necessarily certificated. Experiential learning from a number of sources may be considered (e.g. workshops run by BABCP, University or NHS).

APEL for a maximum of 15 ECTS (30 CATS) may be applied for, in relation to one or both of two modules: Introduction to Theory and Skills and Theory and Skills II. Applicants should be able to demonstrate that they have met the learning outcomes of the modules for which they are applying APEL.

Consideration of APEL will be on a case by case basis by two members of the programme team.

Evidencing the relevance and validity of prior learning:

In line with the guidance in the University of Southampton Quality Handbook an APL application will only be considered based on credit can be considered to be:

“valid, sufficient, authentic (i.e. related to the applicant’s own efforts and achievements), current, and relevant.”

As a result the guidance indicates that credit will only be given for an award made no more than 5 years prior to date the application is submitted (unless a candidate is able to demonstrate evidence of continuous application, updating and relevance to their practice and the intended programme of study for APEL).

A requirement of the accreditation process is that any prior learning being considered should align with the Learning Outcomes of the programme of study that the student is undertaking at the University of Southampton. Any student requesting accreditation of prior learning is therefore required to provide suitable

evidence that the work for which they are seeking credit was the equivalent of level 7 (masters-level) study. Typically this evidence will usually in the form of an appropriate study transcript or diploma supplement for the qualification that was issued by the institution where the learning was undertaken. A breakdown of the prior programme of study such as that contained in a transcript or diploma supplement is to be preferred over a certificate for the award as it would normally show the level of study for each component of the qualification and the number of credit points of study associated with it.

Sometimes an additional request may be required to ensure a learning outcomes match with the intended programme of study at UoS, which may be in the form of outlines for the modules that were studied, portfolios of work, or essays written for the purpose of assessment.

Special case: UoS alumni seeking APL

In the case of students submitting a request for APL for study undertaken at UoS we will undertake to obtain the necessary evidence in the form of a transcript or diploma supplement from the relevant Faculty Student Administration Office. If further evidence is required the applicant will be contacted and informed what evidence is being sought.

The APL process

The application for APL will be administered by staff in the programme administrator in discussion with programme staff and the CQA team. Student Administration Team. Applications for APL will not normally be accepted once a student has started a programme of study. The student should clearly indicate the modules for which APL has been sought as part of their intended programme of study on the relevant forms. This is important as the transcript or diploma supplement for any award that is eventually made by the University of Southampton on successful completion of a programme of study should indicate where any APL was awarded.

The decision to approve or reject an application for APL will normally be taken by two or more of the following Psychology staff:

- Director of Programmes,
- Programmes Director for CBT programmes
- Programme Lead for relevant programme.
- Module co-ordinator for the relevant module

The decision may sometimes be delegated to another experienced member of academic staff Psychology who is associated with the relevant masters programme.

The AU Psychology can provide information for students who wish to present an application for APL. This guidance will normally be limited to not more than two meetings with an appropriate member of staff, lasting not more than 1 hour each (ie a maximum of 2 hours).

From September 2013 the following fees for an application for APL will apply:

- fee for APL application - £50
- fee for guidance on APQ application - £75 per hour
- no fee is payable for an application for APL for credit from a previous awarded by the University of Southampton

These fees are subject to annual review.

All claims will be treated equitably regardless of the source of learning that is being assessed for APL.

The considering staff will verify the final decision in one of the following outcomes:

- application for APL granted in full
- application for APL granted in part (e.g. 30 credits instead of 60)
- application for APL referred for resubmission on one further occasion only
- application for APL refused

All decisions about APL will be made in accordance with the regulations for the relevant programme.

A record of final decision regarding APL and the rationale behind the decision will be lodged by members of the Faculty Student Administration Team and the details of successful applications should be reported to Faculty Programmes Committee.

Resubmission

In line with the guidance in the University Quality Handbook an application claim for APL that is deemed to be unsuccessful may be resubmitted. The applicant may request feedback on her/his application which may be used to inform a subsequent claim. Students may request a review of the conduct of the APL process but there is no appeal against the final judgment as this is an academic decision.

Implications for progression and final award

The University Quality Handbook indicates that any accredited prior learning will not normally be graded and that credit from outside the University of Southampton should not normally be used for classification purposes. For the purpose of equity we will not use credit from University of Southampton awards in deciding the final classification of the intended masters level award and will instead only calculate the classification using marks awarded during the current programme of study.

**AU Psychology Programmes in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy
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