

South Central TEI Common Awards APL Policy

1. APL includes both
 - a. APEL: Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning, which is learning acquired through life experiences including work and uncertificated training, for which no formal qualification or academic credit has been gained *and*
 - b. APCL: Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning, which is any learning for which an award has been achieved or formal academic credit granted.

2. At least two-thirds of the credits required for any award must be gained through study on the Common Awards programme. No more than 60 credits of APEL may be granted for any award. Any exceptions to this will need to be approved by the Chair of the Management Board in accordance with section 19 below.

3. APL may be granted where the student demonstrates prior learning equivalent to that defined in the learning outcomes for one or more module(s) for which APL is being claimed. For the purposes of fulfilling programme regulations, a student who has been granted APL for a module is automatically counted as if they had passed that module through study on the programme.

4. APL may also be granted where the student demonstrates prior learning which falls within one or more of the Subject Specific Knowledge or Subject Specific Skill level learning outcomes for the programme (and may also fulfil one or more of the Key Skill learning outcomes). If the APL covers some but not all of the level learning outcomes, the claim will need to be referred to the Chair of the Management Board in accordance with section 19 below.

5. When APL is granted, consideration must be given to how the student will demonstrate fulfilment of all the level learning outcomes through either their APL or through modules they will take in their study on the programme. This may include fulfilling a level learning outcome through a module taken or APL granted at a higher level. (For example, in the study necessary to meet the level 5 SSK1 learning outcome, or in APL granted against a level 5 module which fulfils the level 5 SSK1 learning outcome, a student will necessarily meet the level 4 SSK1 learning outcome.)

6. APL may be granted against any module validated in the Common Awards in Theology, Ministry and Mission, with the exception of the level 6 and 7 dissertation modules, the level 6 Extended Project module, and the level 6 Independent Study (long) module.

7. It is the student's responsibility
 - a. to decide whether or not to claim APL, and
 - b. to provide evidence to substantiate any claim for APL.

8. Centres may offer support to students seeking to claim APL, but must treat all students alike in the support offered.

9. Evidence to support a claim for APL must be
 - a. Current – from within five years of the start date of the student's joining the programme (in the case of APCL this may include learning from any award conferred in the previous five years), and
 - b. Relevant – appropriately matched to the learning claimed, and
 - c. Sufficient – to demonstrate the achievement of the learning claimed, and
 - d. Authentic – clearly related to the student's own efforts and achievements. Evidence may include material generated by a group of which the student was part, but the student's own contribution to this must be clearly identified.

10. Evidence for APEL may in principle be of any kind, including: a portfolio of evidence, a structured interview, completion of a piece of work accompanied by a reflective account of the learning achieved, artefacts, a performance-based assessment, or completion of the assessment used to demonstrate learning in the module for which comparability is being claimed. However the centre may specify how it requires claims to be presented, and may require the student to justify how the evidence relates to the learning outcomes to which it is claimed to be equivalent.

11. Each centre shall designate one or more APL officers from amongst those who are members of the Board of Examiners for the TEI. They shall be responsible for liaison with students concerning APL claims, making a preliminary assessment of such claims, and presenting them for formal consideration (including completing the checklist and mapping document provided by Durham University).

[Note – currently these officers are Steve Summers (Guildford), Phillip Tovey (Oxford), Beth Dodd (Sarum) and Paul Dunthorne (Winchester). Any student question may be addressed to the relevant APL officer.]

12. Claims shall be formally considered by a sub-committee of the Board of Examiners for the TEI, consisting of the designated APL officers from the different centres and a chair appointed by the Co-chair of the South Central TEI responsible for Accountability, Quality and Enhancement. The chair shall be responsible for convening its meetings.

13. The APL sub-committee may judge:
 - a. That the student has substantiated their claim in whole or in part, and that APL should be granted for all or part of the claim;
 - b. That the student has presented good evidence for their claim in whole or in part, making it probable that all or part of the claim is well founded, and that the student should be asked to supply further information (the form of which the sub-committee may choose to specify) to enable a final decision to be made. The chair of the sub-committee and an APL officer from a centre other than the one in which the student is studying (appointed by the chair) shall assess the further evidence once it has been submitted, and determine whether the claim has then been substantiated and APL should be granted, or whether the claim has still not been substantiated and therefore should be rejected;
 - c. That the evidence presented in respect of all or part of the claim does not fall into either of the above categories, and therefore that all or part of the claim should be rejected.

14. If in accordance with section 5 above the student intends to fulfil the programme learning outcomes other than through passing modules which would normally meet the requirements of the programme regulations (or being exempted from such modules though APL in accordance with section 3 above), the APL sub-committee shall be presented with the student's proposed track and shall decide whether or not it is sufficient to meet the programme learning outcomes.
15. The discussions of the APL sub-committee as well as the outcome must be minuted so that the reasons for accepting / rejecting the application are clearly recorded. The minutes should be received and ratified by the next meeting of the full Board of Examiners.
16. The student must apply for APL in time that if the request is rejected by the APL sub-committee she/he is still in a position to take all the modules necessary to achieve the award. To this end, students must be advised of when the sub-committee will meet, and when claims must be received by the centre for processing ahead of the sub-committee meeting. All APL claims should normally be submitted before the start of the student's second year of study.
17. Applications for APL may be made at any point after the student has received an offer of place, conditional or unconditional.
18. Applications for APL which fall outside the criteria specified here may be made to the Chair of the Management Board, at the discretion of the APL officer of the centre following consultation with the chair of the APL sub-committee and normally a preliminary consideration of the application by the APL sub-committee.
19. Applications may also be made for direct entry to level 5 of the BA in Theology, Mission and Ministry. This is where the applicant can demonstrate
both
 - a. that he or she has the prior learning or experience needed to go straight into study in that level (for example through having attained a 2:1 degree from a British University, or equivalent, or 120 credits at level 4 or above in theology and/or ministry from another institution);**and either**
 - b. that he or she has met all the level 4 programme learning outcomes;**or**
 - c. that he or she has sufficient prior understanding in the area of theology, ministry and mission to be able to join the programme at level 5 and that he or she will demonstrate achievement of all the programme's learning outcomes by the time he or she completes their award, including all the level 4 learning outcomes. (For example, in the study necessary to meet the level 5 SSK1 learning outcome a student will necessarily meet the level 4 SSK1 learning outcome.)

20. Applications for direct entry are treated as APL. However it is noted that the focus of such applications is primarily on whether the student is ready to go straight into study on the programme at level 5 in light of his or her prior learning.
21. Classifications for any award are based on the work undertaken on the programme, not on work included as part of an APL claim or application for direct entry to level 5.