

# Accreditation of Prior Learning Policy

## 1. Introduction and values

- 1.1. Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) involves giving recognition for substantial and significant learning through the award of credit and/or exemption from a module or modules on a taught course at Queen Mary University of London (Queen Mary).

## 2. Purpose

- 2.1. This policy applies to all programmes leading to the award of a Postgraduate Taught qualification. Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) involves giving recognition for substantial and significant learning through the award of credit and/or exemption from a module or modules on a taught course at Queen Mary.

## 3. Legislative context

- 3.1. This policy ensures compliance with consumer protection legislation.

## 4. Scope

- 4.1. This policy is applicable to:
  - a) all programmes leading to the award of a Postgraduate Taught qualification.
- 4.2. For applicants looking to apply for an Undergraduate award, please refer to the Student Transfer Policy.

## 5. Principles/Definitions

- 5.1. Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL) involves giving credit for prior learning at higher education (HE) level that has been formally assessed and certificated, including in the form of credits awarded in the UK HE Qualifications Framework.
- 5.2. Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) involves giving credit for prior learning gained through experience, where this has been assessed by academic staff at the University and met the relevant requirements for recognition.

- 5.3. Readmission involves a prior Queen Mary student applying to study on a programme that they have previously been enrolled on, most commonly to progress to a higher-level stage (e.g. completing a PGDip and then applying for the same programme at master's degree level). Students with good academic standing who have withdrawn for non-academic reasons can be considered for readmission. Students who have failed a programme or aspects of their study must not be considered for readmission.

## **6. Roles and responsibilities**

### **The Applicant will:**

- 6.1. Submit the APL request at the time of application
- 6.2. Provide any supporting documentation (e.g. certificates, transcripts, references etc.) to support their APL application

### **The Admissions team will:**

- 6.3. Make an initial assessment of the course application and refer the APL request to the relevant academic School/Institute to be considered
- 6.4. Process a decision once the application has been assessed by the School/Institute

### **Academic Selectors will:**

- 6.5. Undertake an assessment of the APL application
- 6.6. Provide a recommendation to the Dean for Education for approval of the APL request, as necessary

### **The Dean for Education will:**

- 6.7. Evaluate the recommendation of the Academic Selector
- 6.8. Confirm their decision to the Academic Selector

### **The Fees team will:**

- 6.9. Process any agreed fee deduction when the fee invoice is provided to the applicant at enrolment.

### **The Registry team will:**

- 6.10. Adjust the module diet on the student's record to record any module exemptions due to APL.

## **7. Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL)**

- 7.1. Applications for APCL will be considered only at the point of admission.
- 7.2. APCL will be granted by the Dean for Education, on the recommendation of the academic admissions selector or programme lead. Each application for APCL must be considered on its individual merits, with provision of relevant documented evidence. The decision to award credit is a matter of academic judgement.
- 7.3. Credit may be given for the whole or part of the learning and/or experience that has been submitted with an application for APCL. Credit must only be given only for whole modules that were completed successfully at the first attempt. Credit will not be given for parts of modules nor for credit achieved as a result of a resit examination or a condoned pass. Credit should not normally be given for modules which have been completed as part of an exit award made following failure to progress or failure to obtain the intended award. Credit must only be given where the learning submitted demonstrates achievement of relevant learning outcomes at the appropriate level; credit may be given for higher level study but will not be given for lower-level study in the relevant subject.
- 7.4. APCL should normally be granted for certificated learning that has taken place within the five years prior to the intended start of study at Queen Mary. Exceptions must only be made where there is demonstrable evidence that credit obtained outside the five-year period has maintained its currency. In assessing currency, the Dean must consider any changes to curriculum and additional information supplied by the applicant, for example, relevant professional experience that has built on the certificated learning in question.
- 7.5. APCL must not be granted for:
  - a) dissertation or project modules;
  - b) core modules that must be completed for accreditation purposes or recognition by professional statutory and regulatory bodies.

## **8. Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)**

- 8.1. Applications for APEL should normally be considered only at the point of admission to postgraduate taught programmes. Applications for recognition of experiential learning may be considered only on an exceptional basis and with submission of substantial and documented evidence.
- 8.2. APEL must be granted by the Dean for Education, on the recommendation of the academic admissions selector or programme lead. Each application for APEL will be considered on its individual merits. The decision to award credit is a matter of academic judgement.
- 8.3. Credit may be given for the whole or part of the experiential learning that has been

submitted with an application for APEL. Credit must only be given where the experiential learning demonstrates achievement of relevant learning outcomes at the appropriate level.

- 8.4. While there is no formal limit on the period of time that has elapsed since the relevant experiential learning has taken place, the Dean for Education should take into account how recently the learning took place in reaching a decision to award credit for APEL.
- 8.5. APEL must not be granted for:
  - a) dissertation or project modules;
  - b) core modules that must be completed for accreditation purposes or recognition by professional statutory and regulatory bodies.

## **9. Readmission**

- 9.1. A Queen Mary graduate who has successfully completed a Queen Mary Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma (as the intended award) may be admitted with APL to a programme leading to the associated Postgraduate Diploma or Masters degree.
- 9.2. Applications for readmission to a programme previously failed or one which shares modules with a programme previously failed must only be considered exceptionally, following approval from the Dean for Education and the Director of Admissions (or nominee).
- 9.3. Applications for these cases of readmission should address the reasons for the initial withdrawal and the changes in circumstances which enable the applicant to return to study.
- 9.4. Applicants who have successfully completed a Queen Mary Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma (as the intended award), or a student registered on a top up programme who wishes to use prior learning awarded from Queen Mary must surrender original award certificate or any existing lower-level award certificates, where appropriate, before receiving any new award in line with the academic qualification process and prevent duplication of credits or qualifications.
- 9.5. Following a successful application for readmission, a student must study only the elements of the programme yet to be completed, for the Postgraduate Diploma or Masters award and the amount of academic credit to be taken will be reduced accordingly. The award regulations must take account of all marks and modules taken during both registration periods.
- 9.6. Students who are currently enrolled on a programme at Queen Mary and wish to change their programme should refer to Academic Regulation 2.50

## 10. Maximum credit awarded

The maximum credit awarded following successful applications for APCL and APEL is set out in the table below. This information is provided for the guidance of applicants for APL and the maximum credit volumes specified below do not constitute an entitlement.

For successful applications for readmission to Queen Mary programmes, the below caps do not apply and the amount of academic credit to be taken must be reduced accordingly in line with the previous award obtained.

Award	NQF level	Maximum credit given through APL	Minimum credits to be taken at Queen Mary	Total credits for award
DClinDents	8	120	420	540
MRes Economics and MRes Finance (taken over two academic years)	7	120	120	240
Masters	7	60	120	180
Postgraduate Diploma	7	30	90	120
Postgraduate Certificate, except PGCert in Academic Practice and PGCert in Teaching and Learning in HE	7	15	45	60
Postgraduate Certificates in Academic Practice and Teaching and Learning in HE	7	30	30	60

## 11. Rules for progression and award

- 11.1. Where credit has been awarded for APL the amount of academic credit to be taken at Queen Mary must be reduced accordingly in line with the Academic Regulations 2.7

## 12. Students who require a Student Route visa to study

- 12.1. All applications for APL are subject to the UKVI student immigration rules in force at the time of the request. Students on a Student Route visa who are considering joining a programme with APL should take advice from the Queen Mary Advice and

Counselling Service before proceeding.

### **13. Fees**

- 13.1. Where an applicant is admitted with APL, the fee for the programme of study should normally be adjusted to reflect the proportion of study at Queen Mary.

### **14. Appeals and complaints (if relevant/applicable)**

- 14.1. Applicants who are not satisfied with the outcome of the assessment of an application for APL should refer the [Admissions Appeals and Complaints Policy](#).

### **15. Associated information**

- 15.1. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Academic Regulations
- Admissions Policy
- Student Transfer Policy

### **16. Review**

- 16.1. This policy will be reviewed at least every year.
- 16.2. Minor updates to this policy that do not affect the rules, principles or intent of this policy may be approved by the Chief Governance Officer, Jonathan Morgan, on behalf of Education Quality Standards Board and Senate.

## Policy Information and Document Control

<b>Policy title</b>	Accreditation of Prior Learning 2026/27
<b>Version number</b>	All related admissions policies are available on the <a href="#">Policy Zone webpages</a>
<b>Related policies and procedures</b>	All related admissions policies are available on the <a href="#">Policy Zone webpages</a>
<b>Approval level</b>	Education and Quality Standards Board.
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<b>Policy owner</b>	Chris Sleeman, Director of Admissions
<b>Policy contacts</b>	Nafisa Ahmed, Admissions Manager & Rebecca Wildman, Deputy Head of Admissions (Postgraduate).