



WAVERLEY ABBEY
COLLEGE

Accreditation of Prior and Experiential Learning (APEL) Policy and Process

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CONTENTS

1	Introduction to the Policy and Process	3
2	Introduction to the Principles of Accreditation	3
	2.1 Accreditation	3
	2.2 Principles of management	4
3	Types of Accreditation	6
	3.1 Prior Certificated Learning	6
	3.2 Prior Experiential Learning	6
4	The Collaborative Programme Accreditation Board	6
5	Accreditation of Individual RPL Claims	7
	5.1 RPL claims	7
	5.2 The process for making an individual credit claim with certificated learning	7
	5.3 The process for making an individual specific credit claim with experiential and/or work-based learning	7

1. Introduction to the Policy and Process

This policy is underpinned by the 'Statement of Vision, Mission and Values' of Waverley Abbey College and should be read and understood in the context of that statement. The statement is available on the College website and on Moodle.

The Waverley Abbey College Accreditation of Prior Learning Policy has been written with reference to the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education Guide (Part B, Chapter B6 Assuring and Enhancing Academic Quality) and the Quality Assurance policies and Regulations of the validating body, Middlesex University.

The primary aim of this document is to assist the College in delivering an exceptional student experience in all aspects of their relationship with the College and so, in turn, help deliver our vision, mission and values.

The College encourages applications for its undergraduate programme from those with prior learning or related life experience and with the potential to do well at the College whatever their background (NB. The College does not currently offer accreditation of prior learning for its postgraduate programmes). Our values include a belief in the power of education to transform lives and communities, a commitment to encourage the potential of individuals and a passion for the highest quality of education and scholarship. We attract students from a wide range of social and ethnic backgrounds and have a strong record of success in student retention and employment.

2. Introduction to the Principles of Accreditation

2.1 Accreditation

Accreditation is the formal mechanism for the recognition of learning that is achieved outside of the College's validated undergraduate programmes of study. The College uses the Middlesex University academic credit framework to evaluate and quantify prior learning in terms of credit points at a particular level (see table below). Recognition of prior learning is important for the personal and professional development of individuals. It also works to assure the learning outcomes and assessment of education and training activities delivered by employers and other organisations.

Table - Credit Framework Levels

FHEQ Level	Description	FQ-EHEA
Level 3	Foundation Level	
Level 4	Certificate Level (e.g. CertHE)	Short cycle (within or linked to the first cycle) qualifications
Level 5	Intermediate Level (e.g. FdA/FdSc, DipHE)	
Level 6	Honours Level (e.g. BA/BSc Hons, BA/BSc)	First cycle (end of cycle) qualifications
Level 7	Masters Level (e.g. Postgrad. Certificates/Diplomas, Integrated Master's and MA/MSc)	Second cycle (end of cycle) qualifications
Level 8	Doctoral Level (e.g. PhD/DPhil/DBA)	Third cycle (end of cycle) qualifications

2.2 Principles of management

The accreditation process is available for undergraduate programmes and is managed according to the following principles:

- 2.2.1 Middlesex University is responsible for the academic standards of all academic credit awarded in its name.
- 2.2.2 The College manages the process of assessing and awarding academic credit for its validated programmes in accordance with Middlesex University's Quality Assurance policies, Regulations and Policy for the Accreditation for the Award of Academic Credit.
- 2.2.3 The College will assess all applications for credit rigorously in accordance with the assessment regulations and applicable policies of Middlesex University. Credit will be awarded for demonstrable learning achievement (ie not time taken).

- 2.2.4 The assessment of accreditation will be subject to internal moderation and approved by the Collaborative Programme Accreditation Board and appropriate external scrutiny.
- 2.2.5 Accreditation can lead to the award of specific credit. The award itself does not constitute the award of a University qualification but rather credit that can count towards such a qualification.
- 2.2.6 Specific credit is that which relates to and can count towards the achievement of an identified Middlesex University qualification.
- 2.2.7 The award of specific credit provides students with exemption awarded against specific modules of the programme and enables students to access the programme at a later stage and complete it in less time than it would normally take.
- 2.2.8 Specific credit for learning cannot be awarded at a higher level or with a greater number of credit points than the general credit rating of the same learning.
- 2.2.9 The maximum amount of specific credit that can count towards a Middlesex University qualifications is defined in the Middlesex University Regulations.
- The Regulations stipulate that the maximum amount of credit which can be counted towards a qualification is normally two-thirds of the total required for the qualification. For example 240 credits can be recognised towards the 360 credits required for a Bachelors degree with honours. However, a programme of study may require that a student undertake compulsory modules against which a claim for prior learning may not be made.
- 2.2.10 All credit awarded will be certificated. All specific credit used towards an award bearing programme will be recorded as part of a student Statement of Results or Transcript.
- 2.2.11 All credit awarded through accreditation will be ungraded.
- 2.2.12 Claimants may appeal against decisions of the Collaborative Programme Accreditation Board in accordance with the College's Admissions Policy or its Student Complaints and Appeals Policy.
- 2.2.13 The College will provide advice to support the development of a proposal or claim for accreditation and appropriate staff development for those involved in accreditation assessment.
- 2.2.14 The accreditation proposal or claim remains the responsibility of the proposer/claimant.
- 2.2.15 Accreditation activity will be subject to annual monitoring.

3. Types of Accreditation

There are two types of learning activity, certificated and/or experiential learning (RPL), which can be accredited by the College towards a Middlesex University qualification:

3.1 Prior certificated learning

Certificated learning includes qualifications or certificates awarded by a university or other awarding body as evidence of previously recognised learning that has an established academic credit value.

Where a prior qualification or certificate is not from a recognised awarding body, its equivalence to specific learning outcomes will need to be established with reference to UK NARIC. Where a qualification or certificate's credit value cannot be established, the prior learning associated with it will require further evidence that can be assessed.

3.1 Prior experiential learning

Academic credit for prior experiential learning and/or work-based learning (that is learning that is derived from experience or work) can also be claimed where appropriate evidence of this learning is submitted by the claimant for assessment by the College.

4. The Collaborative Programme Accreditation Board

The College awards academic credit for certificated or experiential learning through the Collaborative Programme Accreditation Board.

The Collaborative Programme Accreditation Board is constituted as follows:

- Programme Leader
- Middlesex University Link Tutor
- Assessor(s) and external examiners as appropriate

Terms of Reference of the above board are:

- To consider and, where appropriate, to award credit in respect of claims for accreditation put forward by individuals and to decide upon the number and level of credits.

The decisions of the board are reported to the assessment board of the programme concerned and are subject to scrutiny by external examiners aligned to the programme. The operation of the Collaborative Programme Accreditation Board will be included as part of the programme annual monitoring report required by the University.

5. Accreditation of Individual RPL Claims

Individual RPL claims can include evidence of either certificated and experiential learning or a combination of both.

5.1 RPL claims

Individual RPL claims can be considered at the stage of admission to the programme of study providing the opportunity for exemption awarded against specific modules of the programme to enable students to access the programme at a later stage and complete it in less time than it would normally take.

Each Faculty identifies the mechanisms in place for the consideration of individual RPL claims. The Collaborative Programme Accreditation Board oversees this process. Faculties considering individual RPL claims for the purpose of admissions shall be required to have an approved RPL Assessment Plan in place to ensure that the process of assessing claims is reliable, valid and transparent. Faculty Assessment Plans are approved by the Collaborative Programme Accreditation Board and are reviewed annually. All claims for credit at level 5 and above must include evidence of external review.

Individual RPL claims cannot normally be applied for during a programme of study.

5.2 The process for making an individual credit claim with certificated learning

Normally an RPL claim for specific credit with certificated learning in relation to a College programme of study will be made during the admissions stage.

Where a claimant/applicant provides evidence of certificated learning, an assessment of the certificated learning against the learning outcomes of the programme will be made by the relevant Programme Leader or nominee. This assessment will be subject to moderation by a second assessor and where not previously subject to external review at level 5 or above, scrutiny by an appropriate External Examiner.

5.3 The process for making an individual specific credit claim with experiential and/or work-based learning

RPL claims for specific credit involve a process of identifying, assessing and accrediting relevant learning that has been gained through experience (such as employment, work experience or volunteering) that can be shown to be equivalent to learning within the named programme or modules.

Where a claimant/applicant provides evidence of experiential learning, an assessment of the experiential learning against the learning outcomes of the programme will be made by the relevant Programme Leader or nominee. This

assessment will be subject to moderation by a second assessor and where at level 5 or above scrutiny by an appropriate External Examiner.
The RPL claim will then be considered for approval by the Collaborative Programme Accreditation Board with regards to admissions with credit.