



WAVERLEY ABBEY COLLEGE

Accreditation of Prior Learning

Recognition of Prior Learning at Waverley Abbey College

APEL is the recognition of learning, gained through professional or other experience, as equivalent to the learning outcomes of a Waverley Abbey College programme of study for which exemption of credit is being sought.

This policy and process offers the opportunity for you to gain formal recognition for learning that has been achieved prior to undertaking your higher education programme with Waverley Abbey College. This process is called the Accreditation of Prior and Experiential Learning or APEL. The College uses Middlesex University's Credit Framework Levels to assess and quantify prior learning in terms of credit points at a particular academic level. Academic credit awarded for prior learning can be used towards your Middlesex University qualification where it is considered to be equivalent to specific programme and/or module learning outcomes. Middlesex University Regulations are available on the University's website: <http://www.mdx.ac.uk/about-us/policies/university-regulations>.

Qualification	Academic level	Number of credits
University Certificate	4	40
Certificate of Higher Education	4	120
University Diploma	5	40
Higher Diploma	5	120
Diploma of Higher Education / Foundation Degree	4 and 5	240
Graduate Certificate / Advanced Diploma	6	60
Graduate Diploma	6	120
Bachelors Degree with Honours	4, 5 and 6	360
Postgraduate Certificate	7	60
Postgraduate Diploma	7	120
Masters Degree	7	180

The maximum amount of credit that may be counted towards a qualification is normally two thirds of the total required for the qualification. For example, 240 credits can be recognised through APEL towards the 360 credits required for the Bachelors degree with honours. Academic credit only where you can provide evidence of prior learning that has been or can be assessed and/or formally recognised by the College.

Certificated learning

This can include qualifications or certificates awarded by a university or other awarding body. This is known as certificated prior learning (CPL). Only parts of the prior qualification that are directly relevant to the learning outcomes of your College programme will be recognised for the purposes of awarding credit. This may mean that only part of the credit value of a prior qualification may count towards the achievement of your Middlesex University qualification.

Where a prior qualification or certificate is not from a recognised awarding body, its equivalence to specific learning outcomes will need to be established by reference to the awarding body. 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.

Evidence of prior learning is normally in the form of higher education qualifications that you have been awarded by a university or other recognised awarding body. Within the regulations of Middlesex University the credit value of your qualifications can be partially or wholly counted towards the achievement of your Middlesex University qualification.

Experiential learning

You can also claim academic credit for learning from experience and/or work. This is called experiential learning. Evidence of this learning must be submitted for assessment to the College. This may be in the form of a portfolio of evidence.

Your claim for academic credit must be based on evidence of 'learning' and not on 'experience', 'time spent' or 'work' alone. There must be evidence of learning. For example academic credit is not awarded for the following where there is no further evidence of learning provided:

- Attendance at and/or participation in courses
- Training courses that do not have a recognised credit value
- Year of experience at work
- The level of seniority signified by your job title

However the above may provide the context for your prior learning and provide evidence towards an academic credit where it is supplemented with additional evidence of related learning, for example through some form of reflective commentary.

Types of evidence for experiential learning

The kind of evidence of experiential and/or work based learning is dependent on the type of experience or work that has provided the context for your learning that is appropriate to the intended programme of study. This could be in the form of a portfolio that includes the following:

- A job description that clearly and comprehensively articulates your duties and level of responsibility
- A detailed curriculum vitae that articulates your personal, professional and career development
- Professional qualifications or certificates that may or may not have an established academic credit value
- Evidence of continuing professional development activity, in-company training, professional updating
- Evidence of significant work projects and activities you have personally undertaken
- Case studies. An evaluation of a particular case or event in which you have been involved, which demonstrates evidence of the learning you are claiming
- Artefacts you have produced such as reports, policies and procedure documents, websites, designs, photography, video, audio files, articles etc
- Statements by a line manager or other independent source familiar with your work projects and the requirements of your job roles (testimonials should be to confirm other evidence. They are not adequate evidence in themselves)

Each item of evidence in your portfolio must be supplemented by an evaluation of how it has contributed to your learning. This will normally also be specifically related to identified learning outcomes in selected modules from your College higher education programme to demonstrate equivalence. Where significant work projects or case studies are identified these can form the basis of specific examples of 'areas of learning' that structure your claim for academic credit.

Making a claim

You will need to make it clear at the point of application that you wish to make a claim for the recognition of prior learning. Registry can advise you in the first instance on the practicalities of making a claim and the types of evidence that will be required. An appropriate Year Leader or Tutor can assist in identifying where specific learning outcomes are likely to be able to be demonstrably met through the submission of evidence of your prior learning. It may be that the advice at this stage is that you lack sufficient and appropriate evidence of relevant prior learning.

It is important to note that it is your responsibility, as claimant, to submit your claim and provide sufficient and appropriate evidence of your prior learning. The college will charge you a fee of £250 for the assessment of prior learning evidence portfolios.

The assessment process

The assessment of evidence of prior learning is subject to the same processes as any assessment of learning in relation to validated modules. The evidence that you submit will be initially assessed by an appropriate Year Leader or Tutor to assess the extent to which it demonstrates the achievement of learning outcomes against which your claim is made. The outcome of the first assessment will be moderated by a second Tutor and where at academic level 5 or above it will be reviewed by an External Examiner. The results of the assessment process will be formally considered by the Collaborative Programme Accreditation Board where the decision about awarding academic credit will be made.

The outcome of the assessment claims are on a pass/fail basis and are not graded and do not contribute to degree classifications. Where academic credit is awarded this will be notified by the College to Middlesex University Registry and it will be identified on your transcript on the successful completion of your programme of studies.

Getting help

If you are intending to make a claim for prior learning at the point of application you should contact Registry who can discuss your prior learning and advise you on the types of evidence that will be required.