

Document Reference:	Accreditation of Prior Learning (Certificated and Experiential) (Higher Education)
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Date:	July 2014
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Originator:	Quality & Standards Committee
Approval by:	Quality Improvement Committee
Date for Review:	September 2016

Description:

This Code of Practice will be of interest to staff, students and applicants wishing to make applications for accelerated entry onto, or within a programme of study in higher education. The Code specifically makes clear the principles and processes that must be adhered to when making claims for accreditation of prior learning (APL), a process categorised into two distinct categories- experiential and certificated.

Version 1.4 (July 2014) introduces the following changes with immediate effect:

- Inclusion of awarding body Grimsby Institute (section 1.3, appendix APL1)
- Maximum credit allowances for APL of Grimsby Institute Foundation Degrees
- Inclusion of External Examiners to review applications for experiential learning (section 3.8, appendix APL2)

If you need any further advice on how the regulations work, you should contact the Quality and Standards Department.

Department Contacts: Quality and Standards (Higher Education)
University Centre Grimsby (01472) 311222

Additional guidance can be obtained by visiting www.qaa.ac.uk and referring to QAA Code of Practice: Section 10 Admissions to Higher Education.

**This document is available in alternative forms
on request from the HE Admissions & Administration Office**

1: Introduction

- 1.1 This Code of Practice sets out the key principles and processes relating to accreditation of prior learning (APL)
- 1.2 Its content provides clarity regarding the rights and responsibilities within the APL process for:
- i. applicants wishing to gain accelerated entry into higher education
 - ii. students currently enrolled at the Institute wishing to gain exemption from a module(s) not yet studied
 - iii. staff supporting applicants or students making a claim
 - iv. the Board responsible for making APL decisions
- 1.3 The Code of Practice is written with regard to the codes and regulations as defined by the following awarding bodies:
- i. University of Hull
 - ii. Leeds Metropolitan University
 - iii. Edexcel
 - iv. Teesside University
 - v. Grimsby Institute
- 1.4 Excluding Edexcel programmes, in every instance the final arbiter of any APL application will be the awarding body

2: Admission with Credit

- 2.1 Applicants and enrolled students may be admitted with credit for prior learning to programmes at both undergraduate and post graduate level
- 2.2 Most claims for credit are likely to be against specific modules whose learning outcomes match the certificated learning and/or the learning gained from experience. This is referred to as 'specific credit'
- 2.3 If certificated, or experiential learning, does not exactly match modules specifically, but does reflect the aims and learning outcomes of the programme, APL may be awarded for 'general credit'
- 2.4 Applicants and enrolled students may make application for:

Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APcL) – by claiming credits against i) successful completion of a certificated and relevant programme of study or ii) successful completion of part of a relevant programme of study where credits have been awarded, at least at the equivalent level.

Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APeL) – by claiming credits against relevant work or life experience or other uncertificated learning in which the acquisition of skills or knowledge at the equivalent level to the higher education programme has been gained.

Credit which has previously been used to award a 'qualification', must not be used towards credit for another qualification at the same level, unless it is recognised as credit for direct entry to the next level of study i.e. credits awarded on a Certificate in Higher Education (Level 4) may not be used towards another Certificate in Higher Education, but can be used towards a Diploma in Higher Education or Honours degree.

- 2.5 Accreditation can only be granted against whole modules
- 2.6 Normally an applicant or enrolled student will not be admitted with credit to a point more than halfway through their final level of a programme of study and the last 60 credits must be delivered at the Institute. For example, an application for APL onto a Foundation Degree will not normally be granted beyond the first 120 credits of the award.
- 2.7 The support of the programme leader in determining whether an application is suitable for approval for APL is important. Academic staff must provide both the applicant and APL board, details of their judgement regarding the academic suitability of the request for APL
- 2.8 Regardless of the academic tutors 'view' on the suitability of the APL request, academic tutors must not sanction any request for APL and in all instances must not allow an applicant/student APL prior to formal approval by the board
- 2.9 Applicants/ students must attend all scheduled modules until formal approval is given for any exemption from a module

3: Evidence

- 3.1 The Institute must be able to assure itself that any claim to accredit prior learning is acceptable, sufficient, authentic and current.
- 3.2 If within the claim, the evidence is being presented to 'match' a module, evidence must be presented in such a way that the board can easily determine the extent to which the evidence matches, as far as possible, the learning outcomes for that specific module.

Certificated Learning

- 3.3 Certificated learning claims must be supported by the official transcript made by the awarding body of the original qualification. This should include any guidance explaining the allocation of credit and the grading scheme of the awarding body
- 3.4 Where credit has not yet been confirmed, academic references from the awarding body must be supplied and any offer made must be conditional

Experiential Learning

- 3.5 Experiential learning claims must be supported by a portfolio of evidence

3.6 The most successful APeL cases are those where a supportive portfolio of evidence is provided with detailed and comprehensive information regarding the claim. Often portfolios seen by the board have included different types of evidence to support an applicants learning and achievements, together with commentaries and proof of authenticity. Examples may include:

- i. A professional narrative/essay on the learning you have gained
- ii. Samples of work
- iii. Practice-based documents
- iv. Reports on observations of practice
- v. Video/audio tapes with commentary and analysis related to achievement of learning outcomes
- vi. Witness testimonies from relevant people such as line managers, colleagues, those who can confirm your achievement/learning gained

3.7 The claim must always be accompanied by a letter or statement of support from the programme leader. Copies of interviews with the relevant programme leader are particularly useful. Copies of interviews can often reassure an APL board that particular attention has been given to ensure that should the accreditation be granted, the applicant or enrolled student would be able to cope with the demands of the programme

3.8 Applications for Prior Experiential Learning (APeL) will be reviewed by the relevant External Examiner for Teesside University and Grimsby Institute awards. Teesside University Quality Handbook Section D3 may be referred to for additional information.

4. Rights and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the applicant/ student to:

- 4.1 Fully complete the APL Application Form (APL1) (see appendix 3) and Mapping Document (APL2) (see appendix 4)
- 4.2 Submit their APL application inclusive of all of the information required by the APL board in order for a decision to be made.

Programme leader/ module tutor

It is the responsibility of the programme leader/ module tutor to:

- 4.3 Meet with the applicant/student prior to the completion of an APL claim to provide information, advice and guidance regarding the APL claim and to clarify the type and extent of APL that the tutor is comfortable in supporting
- 4.4 Meet with the applicant/ student prior to the completion of an APL claim to clarify the range and type of evidence required and to assist in the completion of the mapping document.

- 4.5 Provide the student with the learning outcomes for each module that the applicant/ student wishes to make a claim against
- 4.6 Complete section 3 of the APL application within 10 working days of the initial request being made by the applicant/ student).

5. Submission of APL Claims and Timescales

- 5.1 If students are based at Grimsby Institute, all APL claims must be submitted to the HE Admissions and Administration Office. If students are based at Yorkshire Coast College APL claims must be submitted to the respective programme leader.
- 5.2 Upon submission the claim will be date stamped and a receipt provided to the applicant/ student
- 5.3 All applications will be reviewed by a panel which will consist of two academics and a representative from HE Quality and Standards department.
- 5.4 An applicant/ student can expect a formal written outcome from the claim within 10 working days of the submission of the APL claim
- 5.5 Should an applicant/ student not receive a response within 10 working days of the submission of the APL claim, they should contact the Institute's HE Admissions and Administration Office 01472 311222 Extension 1422
- 5.6 A copy of the APL outcome must be sent to the programme leader/module tutor within 12 days of the claim being submitted by the applicant/ student

6. Concern, Complaint and Appeals

- 6.1 Applicants (that are enrolled students of the Institute) can raise a concern or complaint following the Code of Practice QACom. Concerns and Complaints by Students (accessible on the Institute's Higher Education Quality and Standards home page:
http://www.grimsby.ac.uk/documents/quality/Concerns_and_Complaints_Policy.pdf
- 6.2 Applicants (that are not enrolled students of the Institute) can make a complaint by following Code of Practice QAAAdm. Higher Education Admissions Appeals & Complaints (accessible on the Institute's Higher Education Quality and Standards home page:
http://www.grimsby.ac.uk/documents/quality/CoP_admissions_complaints.pdf
- 6.3 Applicants/ students should note that all Code's of Practice can be obtained in hard copy from the Institute's Quality and Standards department**

The following pages are for guidance only:

The following section provides guidance regarding the rules and regulations imposed by each of the Institute's awarding bodies. Applicants/ Students and staff should note that this information provided hereafter is for guidance use only as awarding body regulations are subject to change.

Whilst the Institute makes every attempt to ensure the accuracy of information it provides to applicants and students, awarding body regulations do periodically change at which point the Institute, where practicable will ensure the timely updating of relevant Institute Codes of Practice.

In every instance however the APL board will apply the most up to date version of all awarding body regulations

University of Hull

A. Applicants or enrolled students must complete at least the full final stage of the award sought (with limited exceptions). The following maxima apply:

Award	Credits given for the full award	APL Permitted	Final Stage
Certificate in Higher Education	120	60	(single stage)
Diploma in Higher Education	240	120	Diploma Stage
Foundation Degree	240	180	Final 60 credits of the Intermediate stage
Honours Degree	360 (480 Sandwich)	240 (360)	Honours stage
Graduate/Post Graduate Certificate	60	0	(single stage)
Graduate/Post Graduate Diploma	120	60	Diploma
Post Graduate (Taught) Masters	180	120	Masters

B. Honours classifications can only be based on credit awarded by the University of Hull (including credit awarded by a partner institution but leading to a University of Hull award)

C. Any prior learning must be no more than nine (9) years old and must have remained sufficiently contemporaneous to the subject in the time since award was made.

- D. The full University of Hull Code of Practice can be accessed at:
http://www.hull.ac.uk/policyregister/qualityhandbook/section_j/J07

Teesside University

E. Maximum Credit Allowances

Grimsby Institute's APL Scheme does not make provision for a student to submit a claim for an entire intermediate or final award on the basis of prior learning. Limits have therefore been set for the number of credits from prior learning that can be allowed against each qualification at Teesside University. The maximum amount of credit that can be claimed towards each award has been determined on the basis of emerging sector norms and is set out in the following table:

MAXIMUM CREDIT CLAIMS	
Award	Maximum Credit Available
University Certificate in Professional Development [UCPD] or University Certificate in Continuing Education [UCCE]	normally none ¹
University Certificate in Advanced Professional Development [UCAPD] or University Certificate in Advanced Continuing Education [UCACE]	30 credits
Certificate in Education [CertEd]	60 credits
Certificate in Higher Education [CertHE]	60 credits
Higher National Certificate [HNC]	60 credits
Higher National Diploma [HND]	180 credits (including no more than 60 at Level 5)
Diploma in Higher Education [DipHE]	180 credits (including no more than 60 at Level 5)
Graduate Conversion Diploma in Psychology	none
Foundation Degree [Fd]	180 credits (including no more than 60 at Level 5)
Degree	240 credits at Levels 4 and 5
Professional Graduate Certificate	see specific programme document
Degree with Honours	300 credits (including no more than 60 at Level 6)
Postgraduate Certificate in Education [PgCE]	30 credits
University Certificate in Postgraduate Professional Development [UCPPD] or University Certificate in	none

¹ Normally credit claims will not be accepted towards UCPD or UCCE awards unless the credit studied forms part of a defined UCPD or UCCE award. In such cases, 10 credits may be claimed.

Postgraduate Continuing Education [UCPCE]	
Postgraduate Certificate [PgCert]	30 credits
Postgraduate Diploma [PgDip]	60 credits
Masters Degree	120 credits
Professional Practitioner Qualification	see specific programme document
Professional Doctorate	see specific programme document

Leeds Metropolitan University

- F. Normally an applicant or enrolled student will not be admitted with credit to a point more than halfway through their final level of a programme of study and the last 60 credits must be delivered at the Institute.
- G. The University's Academic Principles and Regulations relating to APL can be found in Section B8 and can be accessed at:
http://www.leedsmet.ac.uk/metoffice/rso/downloads/Regs_B.doc

Edexcel

- H. External verification/moderation of APL evidence will be considered in the same way as traditional evidence for the same qualification.
- I. When approving credits, these will generally be made at Pass level however the Board may still consider awarding at Merit or Distinction level.

Grimsby Institute

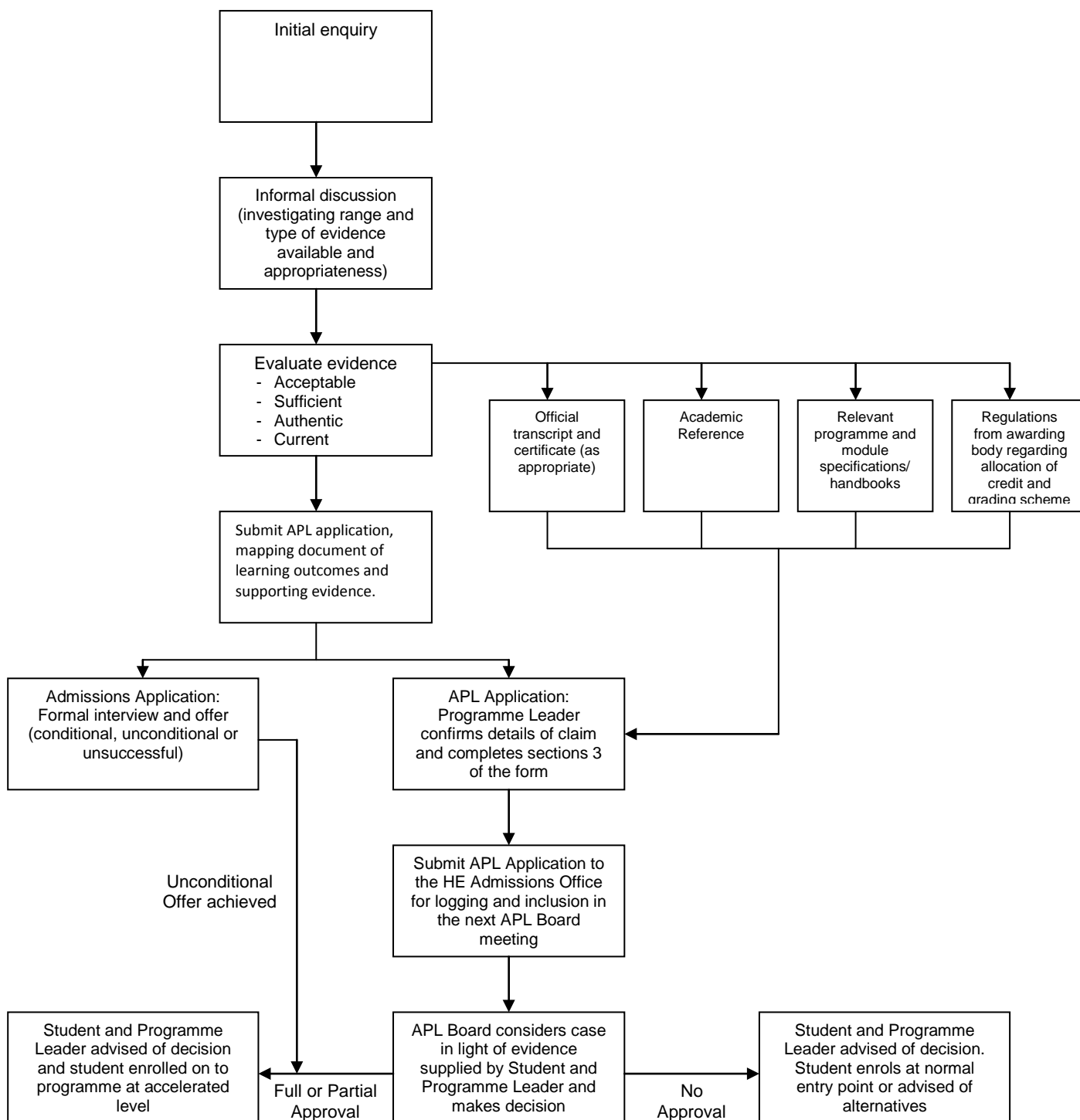
J. Maximum Credit Allowances

Grimsby Institute's APL Scheme does not make provision for a student to submit a claim for an entire Foundation Degree award on the basis of prior learning. Limits have therefore been set for the number of credits from prior learning that can be allowed against a Foundation Degree award at the Grimsby Institute. The maximum amount of credit that can be claimed is set out in the following table:

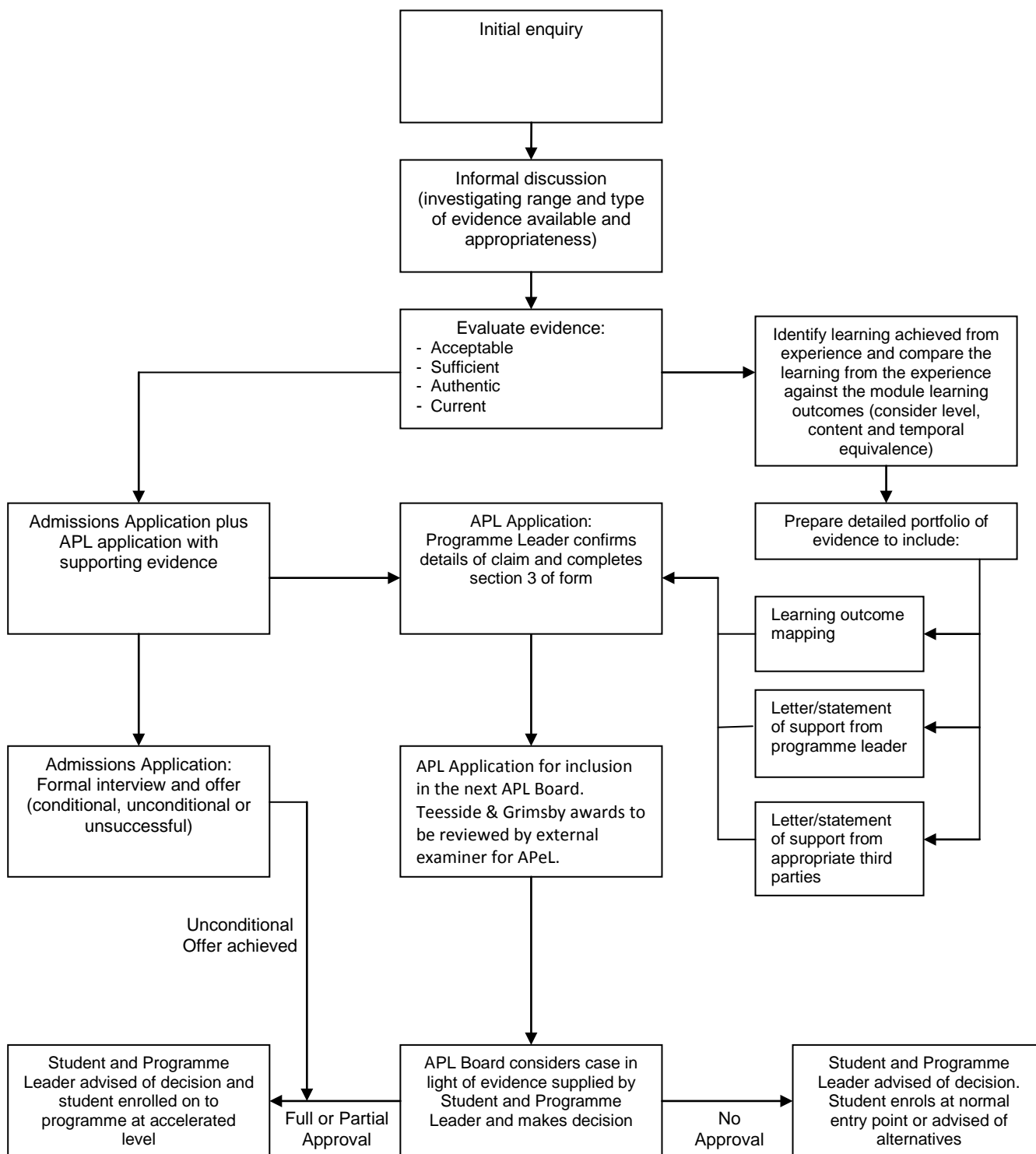
Award	Credits given for the full award	APL Permitted	Final Stage
Foundation Degree	240	180	Final 60 credits of the Intermediate stage

APPENDIX 1: Flow chart of Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning process

Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APcL)



Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APeL)



APL1

Office use only:

Logged on Data File

RoD sent to HoS

RoD sent to Applicant

**ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR LEARNING (APL)
APPLICATION FORM**

for

**ADVANCED ENTRY
CERTIFICATED OR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING**

Please read instructions before completing this form

Part 1 – Applicant Details

Applicant Name	First name:	Last (family) name:
	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>

Nationality:	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	Student ID No: (if applicable)	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>
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Email Address:	<input style="width: 85%;" type="text"/>
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Home Address:	<input style="width: 85%; height: 150px;" type="text"/>
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Part 2 – Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) claim:

Full title of the programme the applicant is applying to study. Prefix as appropriate with <i>MA, MSc, BA, BSc, Fd, HND, HNC, Dip, etc).</i>
<input style="width: 100%; height: 100%;" type="text"/>

Tick **relevant awarding body for the above programme:**

Awarding Body:	Hull: <input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/>	Teesside : <input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/>	Edexcel: <input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/>	Grimsby Institute: <input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/>
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Programme Leader's Name:	<input style="width: 75%;" type="text"/>
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For Applications where Prior Certificated Learning is being claimed

State the qualification title previously achieved:	<input style="width: 95%; height: 40px;" type="text"/>	State the Year the qualification (or credits) were achieved	<input style="width: 95%; height: 40px;" type="text"/>
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Amount of Credits				
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2

Part 3 – Programme Leader’s Assessment Statement

Please indicate whether the claim is for SPECIFIC and/or GENERAL Credit	<i>Tick</i> Specific Credit <input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Tick</i> General Credit <input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/>
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Programme Leader’s Assessment Statement:

(Your assessment statement must include comments on the following):

1. The applicant’s ability to study at the point of entry.
2. Whether exemption from studying any of the modules of which APL is sought would impact on the student’s ability to study on future modules.
3. Whether the evidence is sufficient, valid, authentic, reliable and current.
4. Whether you are satisfied that the prior learning meets the requirements for APL.

Programme Leader’s Signature:

Print Name:

3

Part 4 – Applicant Documentary evidence

Please tick as appropriate to confirm documentary evidence is provided with the application.

	<i>Tick</i> ✓ Not Applicable	<i>Tick</i> ✓ Yes	<i>Tick</i> ✓ No
Authentic evidence of prior certificated learning is provided (e.g. qualification certificate, results transcript, module handbook, etc).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A portfolio of authentic evidence of prior experiential learning is provided (e.g. examples & verification of your own work that is relevant & current).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A mapping document is provided that shows how the APL claim maps across to the learning outcomes of each module of which credit is sought		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Programme Leader's statement is included		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Certificates, Results Transcripts and other original documentary evidence

Copies may be submitted with your application, provided a member of staff (e.g. programme leader) has signed the copies to confirm they have seen the original documents.

Part 5 – International Office Documentary evidence for overseas applications:

	<i>Tick</i> ✓ Not Applicable	<i>Tick</i> ✓ Yes	<i>Tick</i> ✓ No
International English Language Testing System (IELTS) certificate and verification for applicants whose first language is not English.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Verification of UK NARIC comparison of qualification and transcript compatibility claimed for APL		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Verification of UK NARIC recognition that the overseas awarding body is a legitimate educational institution to award the qualification(s) claimed for APL		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

CHECKLIST

- Has an AP1 mapping form been completed for **each** module credit request?
(if not, the application may not be approved)
- Is there a Programme Leader's statement included in the AP1 form?
(incomplete forms will be returned)
- Is a portfolio of documentary evidence to support the APL application provided?
(if not, the application may not be approved)

Part 7 – Submission of the APL application

Please forward the APL application and supporting documents to:

**HE Admissions & Administration Office
Grimsby Institute of Further & Higher Education
Nuns Corner
Grimsby
DN34 5BQ**

Please do not hesitate to contact the Higher Education (HE) Admissions & Administration Office on Tel: 01472 311222 ext 1422 should you require further information, advice or guidance.

Part 8 – Return of portfolio of evidence documents

If you wish to have your evidence documents returned, please tick below, as appropriate.

<i>Tick</i> ✓ Yes	<i>Tick</i> ✓ No
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Applicant will collect the portfolio of evidence documents from the HE Admissions & Administration office

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Applicant requests the portfolio of evidence documents to be posted to the address below:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR LEARNING (APL) MAPPING DOCUMENT

APL2

Please read instructions carefully before completing this form

An APL mapping document must be completed for each module that credit is being sought. Clear explanation is required to evidence how the claim for credit maps across to the learning outcomes of the programme of which the applicant is applying. If APL is being claimed for a number of modules, please copy further pages as required.

Module Learning Outcomes					Mapping Evidence						
Please give the module title, level and credit, together with the module learning outcomes of the programme the applicant is applying of which credit is being sought.					<p><u>For certificated learning:</u> Give the module title, level and credit of the qualification achieved, together with the module learning outcomes to show how certificated learning maps across to the outcomes in the left hand column (see instructions guide on specific credit).</p> <p><u>For experiential learning:</u> Provide a clear explanation of how the experiences map across to the requirements of the module learning outcomes in the left hand column, making reference to appropriate evidence (see instructions guide on general credit).</p>						
NB: This column is for module learning outcomes of the new programme.											
Module Title:		Level		Credit		Module Title:		Level		Credit	
Learning Outcomes (of the new programme):						Evidence:					

Module Title:		Level		Credit		Module Title:		Level		Credit	
Learning Outcomes:						Evidence:					
Module Title:		Level		Credit		Module Title:		Level		Credit	
Learning Outcomes:						Evidence:					
Module Title:		Level		Credit		Module Title:		Level		Credit	
Learning Outcomes:						Evidence:					

Module Title:		Level		Credit		Module Title:		Level		Credit	
Learning Outcomes:						Evidence:					
Module Title:		Level		Credit		Module Title:		Level		Credit	
Learning Outcomes:						Evidence:					
Module Title:		Level		Credit		Module Title:		Level		Credit	
Learning Outcomes:						Evidence:					

Module Title:	Level	Credit	Module Title:	Level	Credit
Learning Outcomes:			Evidence:		
Learning Outcomes:			Evidence:		