



European School  
of Osteopathy

# Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APL) Policy and Procedure 2020

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# 1.0 Introduction

Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APL) is the term given to the assessment of previously acquired certificated learning and the award of academic credit within the context of the Osteopathy Programme. These regulations adhere to the indicators and expectations detailed for the recognition of prior learning in the QAA Revised Quality Code for Higher Education (March 2018)

## 1.1 Purpose

The APL process as defined in this document enables an individual to apply for exemption from study of module(s), and to be awarded credit for those module(s), based on recognition of their previous certificated study. It does not apply to the assessment of an individual's prior learning and/or experience for the purpose of entry into Year 1 to the Osteopathy Programme.

## 1.2 Definitions

**Credit:** a means of quantifying and recognising learning awarded for the verified achievement of designated teaching and learning outcomes at a specified level. One credit represents 10 hours of notional learning time at a specified level.

**Module:** a discrete unit of learning at a specified level normally leading to the award of credit and/or which contributes to a qualification.

**Recognition of prior learning (RPL):** the method of assessment (leading to the award of credit) that considers whether a learner possesses the knowledge, understanding and/or skills which demonstrate that the learning outcomes for one of more modules have been met.

**Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL):** the process by which academic credit and exemption from study may be given for modules(s) by the official recognition of prior learning. Such exemption is a matter of academic judgement based on an assessment of the equivalence of learning.

**Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL):** the recognition of prior learning which has taken place within a Higher Education provider, including Buckinghamshire New University, and has resulted in a certificated award of credit.

**General Credit:** a term given to the total credit that an individual may have as the result of prior learning, usually at another institution. In terms of credit transfer, all the general credits possessed by a student are eligible for consideration.

**Specific Credit:** a term given to the proportion of the total credit for which prior recognition is given when mapped against the learning outcomes for the ESO M.Ost. Osteopathy Programme. Where comparison of the module learning outcomes show little commonality, an individual may be given less specific credits than the total general credits they actually hold.

**Exemption:** a term given where a learner is awarded credits for a module without them having to undertake the module content or assessment.

**Advanced Standing:** where students are able to start at a later stage in the programme, if they have undertaken sufficient certificated learning elsewhere, that has been recognised by the School through APL. Students eligible for Advanced Standing can join the ESO programme either at the beginning of Year 2 or Year 3, depending on the outcome of their APL application. Direct entry into Year 4 is not possible.

**APL Assessor:** refers to those academics at the ESO who have been nominated by the Dean of Academic Studies and given responsibility for advising applicants about APL, for assessing applications and making recommendations to the APL Panel. They also have responsibility for confirming applicants with advanced standing against specified Osteopathy Programme entry requirements, in liaison with the ESO Admissions Team.

#### **Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree Awarding Bodies**

**(FHEQ):** describe the achievement represented by higher education qualifications. They apply to degrees, diplomas, certificates and other academic awards granted by a higher education provider with degree awarding powers.

## 2.0 Principles

These regulations are based on the key principle that decisions to grant APL are based on the achievement of learning and the evidence used to demonstrate the equivalence of that learning.

In order for accreditation to be considered, the prior learning has to be:

- **Relevant** – there must be an appropriate match between the evidence presented and the learning claimed;
- **Sufficient** – there must be enough evidence to demonstrate achievement of the learning claimed;
- **Authentic** – the evidence must be the result of the applicant's own work and experience;
- **Current** – the currency of the prior learning will be determined by the APL Assessor.

Where applicants can demonstrate that equivalent learning has been achieved to the satisfaction of the APL Assessor and approved by the APL Panel, the School will allow exemption from agreed modules. The limits for the amount of entry with advanced standing exemption, through APL that can be permitted for the M.Ost. programme are up to 240 credits at levels 4 and 5 (Years 1 and 2 respectively).

Applications for APL should normally be made prior to enrolment on the level/module(s) from which exemption is sought. Submission of an application for APL does not guarantee that exemption will be granted.

Exemption will be for a whole module or modules to the maximum permitted limits. Exemption is not allowed for part of a module.

Where credit is allocated to exempted modules or levels, this will be recorded on the student's academic profile: both on the Bucks student record and the ESO student record and has to be indicated on the Bucks Assessment Board Sheet.

Where APL has been approved, the classification of an award will be determined on the basis of the marks awarded for modules undertaken at the ESO for the M.Ost. Programme only, and excluding modules with exemption.

In permitting exemption, credits must not be "double-counted" in the award of any further qualification. Whether gained at the ESO or another institution, credit can only be accumulated towards one single award.

Students exiting the ESO will be provided with a transcript showing the modules undertaken, level, percentage mark awarded and total credits achieved whilst studying for the M.Ost. at the ESO. Where the student has been awarded credits through APL this will be indicated on the transcript from the ESO.

## **APL Applications for Module Exemption (Form 1)**

In cases of APL, academic judgment must be used to ascertain whether the academic content and learning outcomes of the certificated award used as evidence are equivalent to the standard of learning that would otherwise have been achieved from satisfactory completion of the modules from which the applicant seeks exemption.

For exemption from modules only, the applicant is required to complete the APL mapping **Form 1** and provide original supporting evidence.

Applications for exemption from a module of the ESO M.Ost. programme based on APL credits awarded by another institution will first be considered by the APL Assessor.

A learner's prior studies submitted for APL will only be considered if they closely match the content of the module(s) from which exemption is being sought. Where equivalency between the previous study and the M.Ost. module(s) cannot be established, no credit will be awarded under RPL.

Percentage marks from modules for which APL is claimed will not be brought into the calculation of the M.Ost. programme.

Please note that exemption from modules will not result in a reduction of fees. The benefit of module accreditation is simply that you will not have to attend the lectures concerned.

## **Applications for Advanced Standing (Form 2)**

Individuals who wish to apply for advanced standing (e.g. looking for exemption from an entire academic Year) should complete **Form 2**. Those who successfully apply for exemption from a level or levels of a programme, through APL, are considered as being programme with advanced standing.

The Assessor will determine during the assessment interview whether an applicant is eligible for module exemption only or for exemption from the entire

## 3.0 Process

Individuals wishing to apply for APL should submit an application through UCAS, as described on the ESO website: <https://www.eso.ac.uk/undergraduate/applying-to-the-eso/the-applicant-journey/>. Part of the UCAS application is that applicants provide a personal statement - APL applicants should use this to indicate the reasons why they wish to join the ESO and, if applicable, leave their current programme.

The ESO Admissions Team will upload your application from UCAS and a member of the Admissions Team will contact you to arrange an interview with you, an APL Assessor and a member of the ESO Admissions Team. During the interview the APL Assessor will make a decision as to whether an applicant is eligible to proceed with the APL process. If so, the Assessor will provide guidance to the applicant on the APL mapping procedure, and confirm the nature of evidence required. The relevant APL mapping form will be sent to successful applicants within 7 days of the interview.

It is then the responsibility of the individual to complete and return the mapping forms and to supply the supporting evidence.

The evidence supplied by the applicant is then used in a mapping exercise to establish the equivalence of learning for APL. Based on the outcome of the mapping, the APL Assessor will make a recommendation to the Buckinghamshire New University APL Panel and the decision to approve or reject the recommendation rests with the APL Panel.

Applications for APL will be submitted to and considered by the APL Panel at Buckingham New University prior to the commencement of the programme/module(s) from which the individual is seeking exemption. This may be at a pre-entry point to the programme, or during the programme prior to the start of the module from which exemption is sought.

It is the responsibility of the Admissions Team to notify individuals of the outcome of their application - the decision will be conveyed via UCAS. Where the decision is to reject the application, clear reasons for the rejection will be provided upon request.

APL decisions are recorded on the ESO Record System for reporting to Assessment Boards.

Appeals from applicants against the decision made by the APL Panel should follow the procedure for Appeals against Admissions Decisions in the ESO Admissions Policy.

<b>Step</b>	<b>Process</b>	<b>Role Holder Responsible</b>
1	Initial Enquiry	Admissions Officer
2	Interview Set Up	Admissions Officer
3	Assessment Interview	APL Assessor
4	Module Completion Guidance	APL Assessor
5	Outcome and enrolment	Admissions Officer

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## 4.0 Auditing

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Policy Name:	
Policy Owner:	Dean of Academic Studies
Policy Approver:	
Audience:	Potential students requesting Direct Entry
Storage Location:	ESO Website
Effective Date:	February 2020
Review Date: (Unless other revisions are required prior to this date)	February 2021
Version:	Final
Equality Impact Assessment:	Are there any implications for a protected characteristic group as defined by the Equality Act 2010 in this policy? <input type="checkbox"/> Positive Impact   <input type="checkbox"/> Negative Impact   <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral
Details:	<Provide details if there is a either a positive or negative impact>

## 5.0 Contact Us

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### Further Information

If you have further questions regarding this document or require further information, please contact our team.