

**Procedures for  
Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL),  
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL),  
Exemption and  
Credit Accumulated Transfer**

**QUA 13**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Date of 1<sup>st</sup> Issue</b>	<b>Last Reviewed</b>	<b>Date of Next Review</b>	<b>Responsibility of</b>
09	August 2014	April 2025	April 2027	Quality

This document can also be produced in alternative formats upon request.

## Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Aim .....	4
3. Definitions and Responsibilities.....	4
4. Audience .....	5
5. Advice and Guidance .....	5
6. Policy for APL, RPL, Exemption and Credit Accumulation Transfer (CAT).....	5
7. Evidence for APL/RPL.....	9
8. APL/RPL Panel .....	11
9. Process for Applicants for APL/RPL on Admission .....	12
10. Process for Staff for APL/RPL on Admission .....	13
11. Process for Students APL/RPL for Full Unit or Part Unit .....	15
12. Process for Staff APL/RPL for Full Unit or Part Unit.....	16
13. APL and RPL Appeals.....	18
14. Exemption .....	18
15. Credit and Accumulation Transfer (CAT) .....	19
16. Quality Assurance .....	19
17. Links to other Documents.....	20

# Accreditation of Prior Learning

## 1. Introduction

The Northern Regional College recognises that many students apply for a programme of study for which they may have already learnt certain relevant skills and/or knowledge. Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) or Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) are used in this document to cover the range of processes used formally to acknowledge and establish that some reasonably substantial and significant element of learning has taken place. Such learning may have been recognised previously by an external education provider; described as 'prior certificated learning' or it may have been achieved by reflecting upon experiences outside the formal education and training systems; described as 'prior experiential learning'.

The key guiding principle regarding APL/RPL is that it assesses what has been **learnt**, not what has been **done**.

Application of APL/RPL processes may be used to accredit an applicant with the necessary entry requirement for a particular programme i.e. where an applicant can show they have the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding; or it may be used to accredit, or exempt, an applicant for a specific unit/module, depending on awarding organisation regulations i.e. where an applicant can show they have the knowledge, skills and understanding needed for particular modules to shorten the normal period of learning.

The College also recognises that many students may have gained formal accreditation for qualifications already undertaken in the College or from another institution; and that students will have certificates to confirm this. Application of 'Exemption' or 'Credit Accumulation Transfer' (CAT) processes may apply in these circumstances for a full unit/module or for part of a unit/module.

NB It is vital that the awarding organisation is contacted for advice and guidance before the College approves or guarantees APL/RPL as an accreditation route.

## 2. Aim

The aim of this document is to provide College applicants, students and staff with sufficient guidance regarding APL/RPL. The document also covers the policy and process for Exemption and CAT.

## 3. Definitions and Responsibilities

- 3.1. **Accredited** – formal learning certificated by an awarding organisation to confirm that a student has attained credits, units or modules i.e. the student has formal certificates.
- 3.2. **Applicant** – the person making the APL/RPL application who has responsibility for collating the evidence, identifying learning, matching learning to entry requirements/learning outcomes, communicating with APL Advisors, meeting deadlines and APL/RPL paying fees.
- 3.3. **APL** - Accreditation of Prior Learning – the process of assessing and, as appropriate, recognising prior experimental learning or prior certificated learning for academic purposes. This recognition may give the learning a credit vale in a credit-based structure and allow it to be counted towards the completion of a programme of study and the award of the qualification associated with it.
- 3.4. **RPL** - Recognition of Prior Learning – any process that acknowledges and establishes publicly that some reasonably substantial and significant element of learning has taken place and can be assess to have done so.
- 3.5. **APL/RPL Adviser and Subject Specialist** – Course Coordinator/Director who has responsibility to provide the applicant with, advice and guidance regarding APL/RPL process; information regarding entry requirements and learning outcomes; support the assessment of the evidence presented; progress the application accordingly; and provide feedback to the applicant.
- 3.6. **APL/RPL Coordinator** – Quality Manager who will have an overview of APL, RPL, Exemption and CAT processes; centrally track applications and outcomes; and arrange APL Panels.
- 3.7. **APCL** – Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning - a process through which previously assessed and certificated learning is considered and, as appropriate, recognised for academic purposes.
- 3.8. **APEL** – Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning - a process, through which

learning achieved outside education or training systems is assessed and, as appropriate, recognised for academic purposes.

- 3.9. CAT** – Credit Accumulation Transfer - where a student can use credits gained elsewhere to count towards a qualification e.g. credits gained at another learning provider or college.
- 3.10. Course Coordinator/Director** – member of staff within the College who has responsibility for all aspects of course delivery.
- 3.11. Exemption** – where a student does not have to complete a whole unit or a whole module as they have certificates to show the content has already been formally accredited.
- 3.12. Informal learning environment** - e.g. work experience, voluntary work, community work, family or life experiences.

## 4. Audience

This policy applies to all applicants, students and staff.

## 5. Advice and Guidance

Advice and guidance regarding APL/RPL can be obtained from:

- Awarding organisations;
- College curriculum staff;
- College Student Services; and
- External Verifier/Standards Verifier.

## 6. Policy for APL, RPL, Exemption and Credit Accumulation Transfer (CAT)

- 6.1. Applicants, students and staff **MUST** check awarding organisation rules, regulations and processes for all expressions/applications of APL, RPL, Exemption or CAT.
- 6.2. It is the applicant's/student's responsibility to produce the required evidence to show how his/her skills and experience meet the entry requirements, learning outcomes or assessment criteria as stated within the qualification. If applicable, the College will seek consent from the applicant to share his/her information with the awarding organisation.
- 6.3. All communication with the applicant/student regarding APL, RPL, Exemption or

CAT is the responsibility of the Course Coordinator/Director.

- 6.4. If APL, RPL, Exemption or CAT is applied for full/part unit/module, the student may decide not to attend certain taught classes. Any arrangements should be discussed and agreed between the student and Course Coordinator/Director. If it is agreed that the student will not attend classes this will be recorded as an 'authorised absence'; ultimately, it is the student's decision.
- 6.5. Higher Education credits certified by Pearson, cannot be used as prior learning (APL, RPL, Exemption or CAT) to contribute to the achievement of another HE award of an equivalent level to be certified by Pearson e.g. any part of a Level 5 HND that has been certified cannot be used as evidence for APL/RPL towards the achievement of an additional Level 5 HND.
- 6.6. If APL, RPL, Exemption or CAT is being used for full/part unit/module, the student must still enrol and pay the appropriate enrolment fee for the course, in addition to any applicable awarding organisation fees.
- 6.7. APL/RPL needs to ascertain if **learning has taken place** at a prior time - i.e. that experiences or information acquired have turned into skills and/or knowledge. Hence APL/RPL can only be ascertained through an assessment process.
- 6.8. APL/RPL cannot be used for an entire qualification; it can be used for part of a unit/module, for a full unit/module, or for a number of units/modules (please see below for foundation degree requirements). Individual qualifications or awarding organisations may have specified regulations as to the percentage of the qualification that may be APL/RPL'ed. It is the responsibility of the Course Coordinator/Director to check individual awarding organisation regulations.
- 6.9. The minimum amount of work that may be APL'ed is one full module and the maximum amount of work that may be APL'ed is 50%– alternative to this may be a table below:

Award	Maximum credits which may be accredited via RPL / APL	Minimum credits to be studied on qualifications/p rogramme of study at [Institution]	Total credits required for award
Bachelor's degree with Honours	240 <i>(levels 4 &amp; 5 only)</i> <i>(2/3's)</i>	120 <i>(All 120 at level 6)</i>	360
Top-up Degree with Honours	None <i>(entry check only)</i>	120	120

Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)

OU Ordinary Degree (ie without Honours)	150 (at levels 4 & 5) (50%)	150 (all 60 credits at level 6)	300
Foundation Degree	120 (at levels 4 & 5) (50%)	120 (including at least 60 at level 5)	240
Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) (including HND)	120 (50%)	120 (at level 5 or above)	240
Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) (including HNC)	60 (50%)	60 (at level 4 or above)	120

- 6.10. Where APL/RPL is used for admission, the applicant must demonstrate a clear knowledge/subject of the equivalencies to normal entry requirements; and demonstrate he/she is ready to study at the level of programme being applied for. Applications for APL/RPL for admission will be decided by the APL/RPL Panel (please refer to section 8 regarding APL/RPL Panel).
- 6.11. Applications for APL/RPL for admission will have their deadline dates posted on the College website. Deadline dates may also be subject to awarding organisation requirements. It is at the College's discretion to consider applications after these dates. Applicants should ensure they adhere to any deadlines set by awarding organisations.
- 6.12. Decisions regarding applications for APL/RPL for admission, **MUST** be finalised **BEFORE** the course commences.
- 6.13. Applications for full/part unit/module APL, RPL, Exemption and CAT can only be used for **internally assessed parts** of the qualification i.e. these processes cannot be used to assess the learning outcomes and assessment criteria where a qualification specifies that assessment must be through an externally set or marked exam or assignment.
- 6.14. Applications for full/part unit/module APL, RPL, Exemption and CAT will be decided by the Course Coordinator/Director for FE.
- 6.15. Applications for full/part unit/module APL, RPL, Exemption and CAT will be decided by the APL Panel for HE.
- 6.16. APL/RPL for a **full** unit/module can only be requested when **applying** for the programme.
- 6.17. APL/RPL for **part** unit/module may be requested after a student has **registered** and been inducted into a programme and **before** teaching of the unit/module

commences. APL/RPL for full/part unit/module will incur a financial administrative cost to the student. This will be £35.00 for part of a unit/module (up to 50%) and £75.00 for a full unit/module. This must be paid by the applicant before assessment.

- 6.18. Payments for APL/RPL for full/part unit/module should be made at Campus Reception before the student submits his/her application and evidence; students should attach their receipt to the application form.
- 6.19. Where a student applies for APL, RPL, Exemption or CAT, for full/part unit, but his/her application is not successful, he/she may appeal the decision using the College's 'Student Assessment Appeals Policy'. Please note that appeals can only be submitted where there has been a procedural irregularity or where the applicant can provide new information that was not available at the time of application.
- 6.20. Where part of a unit, a full unit, a number of units, have been achieved through the use of APL, RPL, Exemption or CAT, this must be clearly stated in a student's portfolio by the Course Coordinator to ensure that internal verifiers and external examiners are aware it has been applied.



## 7. Evidence for APL/RPL

### 7.1. Types of evidence

- Evidence that may be used for APL/RPL include, but are not limited to:
  - certificates demonstrating learning;
  - audio/video tapes;
  - education and training records;
  - employer statements;
  - extra-curricular activities;
  - life experiences;
  - observation reports;
  - references;
  - reflective statements;
  - reports of professional discussions;
  - statements of fact;
  - transcripts;
  - voluntary activities;
  - witness testimonies; and
  - work activities.

Please note: that evidence submitted at a higher level will be counted down i.e. the evidence will only be considered for the level of programme for which APL/RPL is being sought. Please also note that gradings/marks assigned to evidence provided will not be considered in awarding the final grade/mark for the programme for which APL/RPL is being used.

### 7.2. Conditions for evidence

Evidence must be:

- **Authentic and genuine** i.e. staff must be confident that the evidence presented clearly relates to the applicant's own effort and achievements and that it has not been produced by anyone else.
- **Current** i.e. staff must be confident that the evidence presented relates to current learning i.e. within the last 5 years. Where the qualification, professional, statutory or regulatory body have specific requirements and/or time limits for the currency of

evidence, certification, or demonstration of learning, these should be clear and transparent.

- **Relevant** i.e. staff must be confident that the evidence presented is relevant to the course being applied for (for admission) of the learning outcomes/assessment criteria (for whole/part unit).
- **Reliable** i.e. staff must be confident that the evidence is dependable and trustworthy and that a different assessor would reach the same conclusion regarding the evidence presented.
- **Sufficient** i.e. staff must be confident that there is enough evidence to meet the entry requirements (for admission) and for full/part unit/module that there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate fully the achievement of the learning being claimed.
- **Valid** i.e. staff must be confident that the evidence presented is clear and transparent and that there is a link between the learning being evidenced and the outcomes against which recognition is being sought.

### 7.3. Presentation of evidence

Presenting evidence is the responsibility of the applicant. The applicant should present his/her evidence in a logical and accessible format which clearly shows how his/her experience is equivalent to the entry requirements (for admission) or meets the learning outcomes (for whole/part unit). Evidence is usually presented in a portfolio format to include:

- Title Page – with the applicant's name and programme unit/module for which they are applying for APL/RPL.
- Introduction –why the applicant is applying for the programme, how it fits into the applicant's career plan, and what the applicant is asking for through the APL/RPL application (for APL/RPL on admission); context of the evidence being produced and how the evidence has been collated (for full/part unit).
- Education and Training – including schools/colleges attended with corresponding dates; employment history with employer, job role and date/s of employment; qualifications with grade and date/s achieved; and details of training attended with title of training, provider, duration and date.
- Reflection on Learning and Experience - what the applicant has learnt from his/her experiences i.e. changes to performance, changes to behaviour, professional development and how this links to the requirements i.e. entry

requirements and programme (for APL/RPL on admission) or learning outcomes (for full/partunit).

- Awareness of course expectations (for APL/RPL on admission) - what the course entails in terms of content and workload and how the applicant will approach this
- Declaration of Authenticity – statement explaining that the experiences and learning described are genuine and the applicant’s own work.
- Evidence relating to the experiences and learning described.

## 8. APL/RPL Panel

- 8.1. The APL/RPL Panel is for **ALL** applications for APL/RPL on **admission**; and for HE APL/RPL applications for unit/module exemption.
- 8.2. The APL/RPL Panel will consist of:
  - For FE: relevant Curriculum Area Manager, relevant Course Coordinator, Head of Teaching and Learning Excellence and/or the Quality Manager.
  - For HE: relevant Curriculum Area Manager, relevant Course Director, Head of Department with responsibility for HE and Head of Teaching and Learning Excellence and/or the Quality Manager.
- 8.3. The APL/RPL Panel will meet, as and when required.
- 8.4. The APL/RPL Panel will assess and score the evidence against set marking criteria. After discussion the Panel will decide if the applicant should be admitted to the programme (for APL/RPL on admission) or granted exemption (for full/part unit).
- 8.5. The outcomes of the APL/RPL Panel will be:
  - **Approved**
  - **Not approved**
  - **Insufficient evidence**
- 8.6. The outcome and reasons for the Panel’s decision **MUST** be fully recorded on the ‘APL, RPL, Exemption and CAT 5A – Evaluation Form’ (Ulster University courses, record the Panel’s decision on ‘Annex C’).
- 8.7. All APL/RPL Panel records will be held by the Quality Unit.

## 9. Process for Applicants for APL/RPL on Admission

In support of widening access and participation, applicants who do not have the specified entry requirements, but who have relevant experience and skills, may be admitted onto a programme of study. The process of APL/RPL for admission to a programme, is an assessment of the applicant's '**readiness to successfully progress**'.

Process:

- 9.1. Applicants should contact the relevant Course Coordinator/Director for advice regarding the APL/RPL **process** for admission.
- 9.2. Course Coordinator/Director explains the process and provides the applicant with an 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 2 - Expression of Intent to Submit Application'.
- 9.3. Within 5 working days of initial enquiry: Applicant completes an 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 2 - Expression of Intent to Submit Application' and returns to the Course Coordinator/Director.
- 9.4. Within 14 working days of receiving 'Expression of Intent': Course Coordinator/Director provides the applicant with advice and guidance regarding evidence required and sends applicant 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 3 - Application Form' and 'Portfolio Guidance'.
- 9.5. Within 4-6 weeks: Applicant completes the 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 3 - Application Form' and develops the portfolio of evidence. Form and portfolio are returned to the Course Coordinator/Director (*please note applicants will also be asked to complete an APL Application consent form*).
- 9.6. Within 15 working days (during term time) of receiving the 'Application Form' and Portfolio the College APL/RPL Panel assesses the application and scores the evidence against set marking criteria. The application will be deemed: **approved**; **not approved** or has **insufficient evidence**.
- 9.7. Within 5 working days of Panel's decision: Course Coordinator/Director provides the applicant with the outcome of the application.
- 9.8. The final submission from the applicant must be with the College at least 2 weeks before the start date of the programme.
- 9.9. The final submission and timeframes may be changed - **any change must be agreed with the APEL Panel**.
- 9.10. Please note: Enrolment to the programme **must not** be facilitated until the APEL Panel has completed the APEL on Admission process, and a successful APEL outcome is confirmed by the College's APEL Panel and the University.

## 10. Process for Staff for APL/RPL on Admission

APL/RPL on admission allows an applicant who does not have the stated entry requirements (qualifications or points) to apply for a course of study using his/her previous experience and skills in lieu of the formal qualifications required.

### Stage 1: Information and Individual Guidance to Applicant

- All applicants for APL/RPL on admission must be checked with the awarding organisation. For APL/RPL applications for Ulster University programmes, advice and guidance must be sought from the Faculty Partnership Manager (FPM).
- On initial enquiry Course Coordinator/Director explains:
  - the APL/RPL process;
  - the support and guidance available;
  - how long the process takes; and
  - provides the applicant with the an 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 2 - Expression of Intent to Submit Application' form.

### Stage 2: Guidance to Applicant on Planning the Application (within 14 working days)

- On receipt of the 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 2 - Expression of Intent to Submit Application' the Course Coordinator/Director:
  - Explains what the evidence must cover i.e. entry requirements.
  - Explains the types of evidence that could be used.
  - Explains the structure and content of a portfolio.
  - Explains how evidence will be assessed.
  - Explains that an application does not guarantee a successful outcome.
  - Sends the applicant:
    - 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 1 - Application Consent Form'
    - 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 3 - Application Form'
    - 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 4 - Portfolio Guidance' or awarding organisation portfolio guidance if applicable
  - Informs the Quality Manager of any completed 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 2 - Expression of Intent to Submit Application' forms.

**NOTE: Stage 2 should constitute an interview which should be recorded on the APL,**

**RPL, Exe, CAT 5A - Evaluation Form (Ulster University courses use 'Annex C').****Stage 3: Applicant prepares Evidence (within 4-6 weeks)**

Applicant prepares evidence to support their application.

**Stage 4: Assessment of Portfolio**

- On receipt of the 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 3 - Application Form', portfolio of evidence and APL Application Consent Form, the Course Coordinator/Director should upload all documentation and contact the Quality Manager who will form an APL/RPL Panel. See part 8 of this document.
- Within 15 working days of receipt (during term time): the Panel will meet to assess and score the evidence against set marking criteria and decide as to whether the application is **approved**, **not approved** or has **insufficient evidence**.
- The outcomes of the decision will be recorded on the 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 5A - Evaluation Form' (Ulster University courses use 'Annex C'), or any other documentation stipulated by the awarding organisation.

**Stage 5: Disseminating Outcome of Application (within 5 days of Panel decision)**

- Applications for APL/PRL on admission for Ulster University programmes, **MUST** be approved by the Faculty Partnership Manager (FPM) **BEFORE** the applicant is notified.
- Enrolment to the programme **must not happen** until a successful APEL outcome is confirmed by the College's APEL Panel and the University.
- The Course Coordinator/Director must relay the outcome of the Panel to the applicant.
- Where the Panel's outcome is **not approved** or **insufficient evidence** detailed feedback must be provided to the applicant by the Course Coordinator/Director. Where the Panel's outcome is 'insufficient evidence' the applicant will be offered one further opportunity to provide additional evidence to the Panel within 3 working days.
- On receipt of resubmission, the Course Coordinator/Director should revert back to Stage 4 above.

**Appeals (within 10 working days of receiving outcome)**

- The decision and outcome of the Panel is final; APL/RPL Appeals can only be

submitted where there has been a procedural irregularity or where the applicant can provide new information that was not available at the time of application. Applicants should refer to the 'Feedback and Admissions Appeal' document if they are unhappy with the outcome of an APL/RPL application for admission to a programme of study.

## 11. Process for Students APL/RPL for Full Unit or Part Unit

- 11.1. Applicants should contact the relevant Course Coordinator/Director for advice regarding the APL/RPL **process** for full/part unit/module.
- 11.2. Course Coordinator/Director explains the APL/RPL process and provides the applicant with the an 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 2 - Expression of Intent to Submit Application'.
- 11.3. Within 5 working days of initial enquiry: Applicant completes an 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 2 - Expression of Intent to Submit Application' and returns to the Course Coordinator/Director.
- 11.4. Within 14 working days of receiving 'Expression of Intent': Course Coordinator/Director provides the applicant with advice and guidance regarding evidence required and sends the applicant the 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 3 - Application' Within 4-6 weeks: Applicant completes the 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 3 - Application Form' and develops the portfolio of evidence. Form and portfolio are return to the Course Coordinator/Director.
- 11.5. Within 15 working days (during term time) of receiving the 'Application Form' and Portfolio:
  - For FE - Course Coordinator/Director assesses the application and decides if the application is **approved**, **not approved** or has **insufficient evidence**.
  - For HE - College APL/RPL Panel assesses the application and decides if the application is **approved**, **not approved** or has **insufficient evidence**.
- 11.6. Within 5 working days of Panel's decision: Course Coordinator/Director provides the applicant with the outcome of the application.

## 12. Process for Staff APL/RPL for Full Unit or Part Unit

### Stage 1: Information and Individual Guidance to Applicant

- All applicants for APL/RPL for full/part unit/module must be checked with the awarding organisation.
- On enquiry Course Coordinator/Director explains:
  - the APL/RPL process;
  - support and guidance available;
  - how long the process takes;
  - costs of the process; and
  - provides the applicant with the an 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 2 - Expression of Intent to Submit Application'.

### Stage 2: Guidance to Applicant on Planning the Application

- On receipt of the 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 2 - Expression of Intent to Submit Application' the Course Coordinator/Director must:
  - Notify the awarding organisation (UU FPM, standards verifier, or external quality assurer), that APL/RPL has been applied for;
  - Explains what the evidence must cover i.e. learning outcomes.
  - Explains the types of evidence that could be used.
  - Explains the structure and content of a portfolio.
  - Explains how evidence will be assessed i.e. assessment criteria.
  - Explains that an application does not guarantee a successful outcome.
  - Sends the applicant an 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 3 - Application Form' and portfolio guidance.
  - Informs the Quality Manager of any completed 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 2 - Expression of Intent to Submit Application' forms.

**NOTE: Stage 2 should constitute an interview which should be recorded on the 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 5A - Evaluation Form' (Ulster University courses use 'Annex C').**

### Stage 3: Applicant prepares Evidence

Applicant prepares evidence to support their application.



**Stage 4: Assessment of Application For FE:**

- On receipt of the 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 3 - Application Form', the APL Application Consent Form and portfolio of evidence, the Course Coordinator/Director assesses the evidence and records his/her evaluation on 'APL, RPL, Exemption and CAT 5A - Evaluation Form'.
- The Course Coordinator/Director may also interview the applicant and record his/her evaluation on the 'APL, RPL, Exemption and CAT 5A - Evaluation Form'.
- As with any other assessment method, assessment decisions **MUST** be internally verified and appropriate IV records maintained.

**For HE:**

- On receipt of the 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 3 - Application Form', the APL Application Consent Form and portfolio of evidence, the Course Coordinator/Director should upload all documentation and contact the Quality Manager who will form an APL/RPL Panel. See part 8 of this document.
- Within 15 working days of receipt (during term time), the Panel will meet to assess the evidence and decide as to whether the application is **approved**, **not approved** or has **insufficient evidence**.

**Stage 5: Disseminating Outcome of Application**

- The Course Coordinator/Director must relay the outcome of the assessment to the applicant.
  - Where the outcome is **not approved** or **insufficient evidence** detailed feedback must be provided to the applicant by the Course Coordinator/Director.
- Where the outcome is **insufficient evidence** the applicant will be offered one further opportunity to provide additional evidence within 3 working days.

**Appeals**

APL/RPL Appeals can only be submitted where there has been a procedural irregularity or where the applicant can provide new information that was not available at the time of application. Please refer to the College's 'Student Assessment Appeals Policy and Procedure'.

### 13. APL and RPL Appeals

Where an applicant is unhappy with the outcome of the **APL/RPL for admission to a programme**, they should refer to the College's 'Admissions Feedback and Appeals' document. An Appeals Panel convened at Departmental level will consider appeals.

Where an applicant is unhappy with the outcome of **APL/RPL for full/part unit**, they should refer to the College's 'Student Assessment Appeals Policy and Procedure'. Assessment Appeals are considered by an Appeals Panel where the Chair and will appoint two members of staff who have not been directly involved in the decision-making process.

### 14. Exemption

**Please note** that 'Exemption' is the term used for APL/RPL for a full module – please refer to section 11 and section 12 of this document.

- 14.1. Awarding organisations may have their own rules and regulations regarding 'Exemption' - these should be checked before proceeding with the College's procedure.
- 14.2. Exemption must also adhere to the 'rules of combination' as specified within the qualification's framework.
- 14.3. Considering the awarding organisation's learning outcomes and assessment criteria, the student decides as to whether he/she wishes to apply for Exemption whole/part of a unit/module.
- 14.4. The student should discuss this possibility with his/her Course Coordinator/Director who will advise accordingly.
- 14.5. Student completes 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 3 - Application Form' and presents his/her certificate.
- 14.6. Course Coordinator/Director must be assured and satisfied that the certificate is authentic, genuine and current. In assuring that no further learning is required, the Course Coordinator/Director may have a professional discussion or conduct an observation of the student.
- 14.7. If Exemption is **approved**, Course Coordinator/Director inspects certificate and takes a photocopy as evidence and completes 'APL, RPL, Exemption and CAT 5A-Evaluation Form'.

## 15. Credit and Accumulation Transfer (CAT)

Awarding organisations may have their own rules and regulations regarding 'credit accumulation transfer' - these should be checked before proceeding with the College's procedure.

Considering the awarding organisation's learning outcomes and assessment criteria, the student decides as to whether he/she wishes to apply for credit accumulation transfer for whole/part of a unit/module.

- 15.1. The student should discuss this possibility with his/her Course Coordinator/Director who will advise the student accordingly.
- 15.2. Student completes 'APL, RPL, Exe, CAT 3 - Application Form' and presents this with this/her certificate.
- 15.3. Course Coordinator/Director must be assured and satisfied that the certificate is authentic, genuine and current. In assuring that no further learning is required, the Course Coordinator/Director may have a professional discussion or conduct an observation of the student.
- 15.4. If CAT is **approved**, Course Coordinator/Director inspects certificate and takes a photocopy as evidence and completes 'APL, RPL, Exemption and CAT 5A - Evaluation Form'.

## 16. Quality Assurance

Dissatisfaction with the APL, RPL, Exemption and CAT process should follow the processes as described at Part 13 of this document.

Comments regarding this document will be handled through the College's Quality Unit – more information available by e-mailing [quality.improvement@nrc.ac.uk](mailto:quality.improvement@nrc.ac.uk) . The following processes must be followed to monitor and review this document:

- a. It will be monitored on an ongoing basis and subject to a full review at least every two years.
- b. It may also be updated if changes or improvements in processes or procedures are identified.
- c. In monitoring and reviewing the document, the following will be taken into consideration:
  - feedback regarding the content and format of the document;

- uptake and usage;
- comments or complaints regarding the document; and
- Equality information and monitoring data.

## 17. Links to other Documents

- [Widening Access and Participation Strategy](#)
- [QAA Advice and Guidance, Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access](#)
- [Ulster University Prior Experiential Learning information](#)
- [Pearson Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Process](#)
- [City and Guild's Recognition of Prior Learning Assessment Policy and Guidance Document](#)

