



HEADLANDS SCHOOL
SINCE 1965

Accreditation of Prior Learning Policy

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Headlands School

Accreditation of Prior Learning

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Introduction

Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) is a means of crediting students for achievements, skills and knowledge that they have already gained. These may have been gained from a course, or self-directed study. In the case of Headlands School this would normally involve the accreditation of the prior achievements of pupils transferring into the school, or for pupils moving courses within the school.

In all cases the requirements of the awarding body (e.g. Edexcel, OCR) must be fully met.

Policy on APL

APL is an assessment process which enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any valid assessment methodology, providing that the assessment requirements of a given unit, or qualification, have been met. The use of APL is acceptable for accrediting part of a unit, unit(s) or a qualification. Evidence submitted for APL must be:

- Authentic
- Current
- Relevant
- Sufficient

APL is a process which recognises that learning is continuous – at work, home and at leisure, as well as in the classroom. APL provides a route for the recognition of the achievements resulting from continuous learning.

Students transferring into the School

The Examinations Officer will liaise with any relevant institution to ensure that information on student achievement, at that institution, is accurately transferred to Headlands.

- If a student transfers into the school then units already accredited by the relevant examination board will be accredited by the school, subject to examination board procedures.
- The Examinations Officer will liaise with the previous school to make sure any units completed have been certificated and forwarded to Headlands.

- Partially completed units, and units that have not been accredited by the examining board prior to the student arriving at Headlands, will be assessed by the relevant subject tutor to make sure that they comply with the APL criteria of being authentic, current, relevant and sufficient. Where a learner's evidence does not fully meet the assessment criteria for the course, we will set additional assignments aligned to the missing criteria.

Moving students from one course to another

If a student is transferred from one course to another within the school, the following must be noted:

- Full APL must be carried out for every learner and every internally assessed unit
- We must show that all the assessment criteria within the new course have been met by each learner
- Where a learner's evidence does not meet the assessment criteria for the new course, centres must set additional assignments aligned to the missing criteria
- When transferring learners from one course title to another we will follow all the normal transfer requirements stated by the relevant examination board.

Claiming a unit/part unit/qualification by APL

After assessment of a learner's previous achievements, registration with the examination board should be made in the usual way and APL achievement may then be reported as normal achievement, graded where appropriate, using the procedures stated by the examination board.

Procedures

- It is the student's responsibility to make the centre aware of prior learning.
- Prior learning will be assessed by the relevant course tutor, and subject to internal verification/moderation in line with normal school regulations.
- In the case of an appeal over the grading of APL work the normal appeals procedures apply.
- In the case of an appeal over whether prior learning is authentic, the student has 14 days in which to appeal directly to the examinations officer. The APL appeals committee will then review the evidence and report back to the student within 14 days.
- The APL Appeals Committee will comprise of at least three staff from the following: Examinations Officer, Quality Nominee, Director for Data & Timetable, Internal Verifier/Moderator for the course.

Guidance on APL

The APL process is **not** concerned with allowing for exceptional entry to, or exemption from, a programme of study. It focuses on assessment and certification of prior learning which may count as evidence towards:

- A part of a unit or unit(s) accumulated towards a full qualification
- Unit or units recognized by an examination board
- A full qualification (under exceptional circumstances).

Terminology

APL policies and procedures have been developed over time, which has led to the use of a number of names to describe the process. Among the most common are:

- Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)
- Accreditation of Prior Experimental Learning (APEL)
- Accreditation of Prior Achievement (APA)
- Accreditation of Prior Learning and Achievement (APLA)

These terms broadly describe the same process but because of its wide acceptance, nationally and internationally, both Edexcel and OCR use the term Accreditation of Prior Learning.