New College Durham is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, as well as vulnerable adults, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.
This Policy applies to all College programmes except those for which the applicable policy is that of a validating Higher Education institution or other Awarding Body.

If you require this document in an alternative format and/or language, please contact Mo Dixon on Ext 4301 or email Mo.Dixon@newdur.ac.uk.

We review our policies regularly to update them and to ensure that they are accessible and fair to all. All policies are subject to equality impact assessments. Equality Impact Assessments are carried out to see whether the policy has, or is likely to have, a different impact on grounds of race, gender, disability, age, religion/belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity or sexual orientation.

We are always keen to hear from anyone who wants to contribute to these impact assessments and we welcome suggestions for improving the accessibility of fairness of the policy.

To make suggestions or to see further information please contact:

Mo Dixon  
Director Curriculum and Quality

Curriculum and Quality Directorate  
Tel: 0191 375 4301  
Email: Mo.Dixon@newdur.ac.uk  
Minicom: 0191 383 2371  
Fax: 0191 375 4222

Equality Impact Assessed:

Footnote

In an effort to keep costs to a minimum a conscious decision has been made not to print out this document and it would be appreciated that you refer to the copy and relevant Appendices available on the Intranet.
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1. **Rationale**

APA is an assessment process that enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any valid assessment methodology. It recognises that learning is continuous – at work, home and at leisure as well as in the classroom and provides a route for recognition of the achievements resulting from continuous learning.

APA has developed over time and a number of different names are used to describe the same process e.g.:

a. Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL);

b. Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL);

c. Accreditation of Prior Achievement (APA);

d. Accreditation of Prior Learning and Achievement (APLA);

e. Students may seek exemption from parts of the course/programme upon which they are registered, on production of evidence of prior certificated learning or prior experiential learning. Evidence submitted must be:

   - authentic
   - current
   - relevant
   - sufficient

APA does not allow exceptional entry to or exemption from a whole programme of study. It focuses on assessment and certification of prior learning which might count as evidence towards parts of the programme upon which a student is registered. *Each validating and awarding body has specific guidance about eligibility for credit included in the Academic or Examination regulations governing the award.*

This policy is a response to the commitment of the College to meet the needs of learners by recognising all relevant and credited prior learning, from a range of activities, in order to facilitate greater opportunities for progression and achievement.

2. **Aim**

The aim of the policy is to provide a route for the recognition of achievements resulting from continuous learning; called Accreditation of Prior Achievement (APA).

3. **Principles on which the policy is based**

The principles which should be applied to APA are;
a. All (FT and PT) students should be able to seek exemption from parts of
the programme they are studying on production of evidence of prior
certificated learning or prior experiential learning in a relevant area;

b. Evidence must be authenticated, current (within the last 5 years), relevant
and sufficient;

c. The assessment and award of credit must take into account the relevant
validating or awarding body regulations pertaining to APA;

d. The rules, regulations and procedures governing the accreditation of prior
achievement should be included in the student handbook given to every
student when joining the programme/course;

e. Staff should encourage and give support to students in preparing the
evidence to submit for exemption;

f. A student should have the right to appeal when an application for credit is
unsuccessful.

4. Student entitlement

a. All (FT and PT) students shall be entitled to apply for APA providing they
meet the specific requirements of the validating /awarding body governing
the qualification for which they are studying;

b. A student who makes an initial enquiry about APA should be given timely
and appropriate guidance and support on the rules, regulations and
processes involved in accreditation;

c. A student may appeal against the credit points awarded but only on the
grounds of non-observance of agreed procedures and/or improper
application of those procedures.

5. Student responsibilities

a. The student must complete a credit claim form, and provide evidence to
show that the requirements of the unit, module or part of a unit, or module
have been covered;

b. The student must consult with the agreed subject specialist in the
preparation of his/her evidence;

c. Students applying for credit must agree an action plan to enable him/her
to obtain the award s/he is aiming for;

d. Students must agree to attend any further oral assessments or
appropriate assessments if initial evidence is deemed to be unsatisfactory
by the APA Committee;
e. The student must forward the completed Credit Claim Form and all necessary paperwork to the Director Curriculum and Quality (Higher Education Developments) who will convene an APA Committee to consider the application.

6. Teaching staff’s responsibilities

a. To provide support and encouragement to all students wishing to claim credit for prior achievement;

b. Following initial enquiries by any student the member of staff should place the student in contact with a subject specialist;

c. The subject specialist should develop, with the student, an action plan to address the learning outcomes of the programme;

d. The subject specialist should identify the evidence needed to support the claim for credit and explain how this evidence will be assessed and by whom;

e. Ensure that the student claiming credit is enrolled with the College for a specific award/qualification.

7. Management responsibilities

College management should ensure that;

a. All College staff are fully conversant with this policy and the demands it places on them;

b. All appropriate staff are competent to undertake their roles and responsibilities in the procedures for verification and accreditation of credit;

c. Staff development is made available to those staff not conversant with or competent to undertake the procedures for APA and all newly appointed staff, including agency staff, to the College;

d. All other teaching staff, including agency staff, receive training and development which enhances competence and skill in the APA process.

8. Standards by which the success of this policy can be evaluated

a. Student feedback, including questionnaire responses, showing high levels of satisfaction with the advice and help received in preparing to claim APA;

b. Staff feedback on the quality of support provided by the College to enhance skills and competence to undertake the procedures for APA;
c. External examiner/verifier comments on the rigour and consistency applied to APA procedures across the College.

9. **Responsibility for implementing this policy**

The Deputy Principal and Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy. Other key posts of responsibility include:

a. Directors

b. Heads of School

c. Curriculum Leaders

d. Programme/Course Leaders

e. All staff who might be approached by a student for guidance and help in seeking credit for prior achievement

10. **Review of this policy**

a. Academic Board is responsible for the periodic review of this policy.

b. The Policy is due to be periodically reviewed in September 2012. This mechanism recognises the changes to legislation, good practice and may prompt a review before the date stipulated.

c. The effectiveness of the policy will be monitored annually through consultation with students and staff. The monitoring reviews will be considered by Academic Board as part of the periodic review process
Appendix 1

CREDIT CLAIM FORM (complete all sections as fully as possible)

If you have been offered a place on a programme of study at New College Durham or are already registered on a programme you may be eligible for credit from previously acquired qualifications, vocational training and/or learning which is uncertified. If you wish to make a claim for prior achievement please complete this form.

PERSONAL DETAILS

Name: ………………………………………………………………………………………………………
Address: …………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
Post Code: …………………………… Telephone: ………………………………………

CREDIT CLAIMED

Before you complete this section consult Section 5.0 Student Responsibilities. You should also discuss the possibility of credit awards with your course tutor who will advise you on the completion of this form.

Programme/Course on which you are registered, or have been accepted at New College Durham;
………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

a) Module(s)/Unit(s) for which credit is claimed:

Course/Module/Unit Code ………………….. Title …………………………………..
Course/Module/Unit Code ………………….. Title …………………………………..
Course/Module/Unit Code ………………….. Title …………………………………..
Course/Module/Unit Code ………………….. Title …………………………………..
Course/Module/Unit Code ………………….. Title …………………………………..

b) Programme learning outcomes/objectives for which credit is claimed if they do not relate to specific individual modules or units of study.
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

BASIS FOR CREDIT CLAIM (Attach separate sheets)

In this section outline the achievements, experience and previously acquired qualifications and certificates you wish to use as the basis for your claim. Refer to the details of the relevant modules or units in the student handbook for the programme or course in question. You should attach photocopies of supporting documents wherever possible e.g. syllabus outlines, course structures, examination certificates.

On completion forward this form to the Director Curriculum and Quality (Higher Education Developments) for consideration.