



Accreditation of prior learning (APL)

APL acknowledges that people learn at work and from experiences as well as by studying. If you want a formal qualification for a job or for entry to a higher level course and you already know a fair bit about the topic, you could apply for “accreditation of your prior learning”. This is a formal system to acknowledge experience and count it towards some qualifications so that you don’t have to attend parts of a course that are simply going over something you can already do.

You might come across the following terms – all of which mean roughly the same sort of thing.

- Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)
- Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL)
- Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)
- Accreditation of Prior Learning and Achievement (APL&A)

If you’d like to read more about this, go to the QAA (Quality Assurance Agency) website.

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/apl/default.asp>

What do you do to gain accreditation

It isn’t enough to confirm that you know how to do something already, you have to back it up with evidence. So, for example, you might be asked to put a portfolio of evidence together. The process varies from one institution to another so discussion with the Admissions Tutor for the course you want to do is essential.

Accreditation of overseas qualifications

If you have studied overseas and have qualifications from a university abroad, you can ask for a statement of comparability from the National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC). They will need to see a photocopy of your qualifications. If these are a close match to a British university qualification but do not cover the full scope of the course, you may be able to apply for accreditation and simply study for the modules which did not match. For more information go to:

www.naric.org.uk