

Recognition Of Prior Learning Policy

Valid from: September 2026

Date of next review: September 2029 or as required

1. Glossary

APCL	Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning
APEL	Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning
FHEQ	Framework for Higher Education Qualifications
ILO	Intended Learning Outcome
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
ToL	Transfer of Learning

2. Introduction

- 2.1 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is appropriately evidenced learning that has normally been achieved outside the formal education system offered by Metanoia Institute (the Institute) and can consist of the following:
- 2.1.1 **Accredited Prior Certificated Learning (APCL)** is learning which has been recognised previously by an education provider, evidenced by formal certification, and assessed and recognised for the award of credit by the Institute. The previous learning must be relevant to the programme for which a student is applying, and if their application is successful the credit will count towards their chosen programme of study.
- 2.1.2 **Accredited Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)** is learning which has been achieved through experiences outside the formal education and training systems normally associated with a working environment, which has been assessed and recognised for the award of credit by the Institute.
- 2.2 The Institute will consider applications for both APCL and APEL. This document sets out the policy for RPL at the Institute.
- 2.3 The PhD and Doctorate in Psychotherapy by Professional Studies degrees are outside the scope of the policy because they are awarded, by a validating partner, solely on the basis of assessment of the thesis and there are no credit values attached to such programmes.
- 2.4 The Institute has sought to balance the recognition of prior learning with a desire to ensure that awards from the Institute or a validating partner reflect sufficient evidence of study having been undertaken within the Institute.
- 2.5 No APCL award may be given which implies partial completion of a course unit. Credit can only be given for whole units/modules, where consideration has been given to mapping the intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) of the unit to the evidence of prior learning provided.
- 2.6 APEL will normally only be granted in the case of programmes with a practical or vocational element.

Maximum Credits for APCL

- 2.7 Applicants may apply for admission with advanced standing, having undertaken study or learning elsewhere, or previously at the Institute. The maximum number of credits for which exemption may be given are as follows, subject to Professional and Statutory Bodies requirements:

Undergraduate Level	
Certificate of Higher Education	Up to 80 credits (a minimum 40 credits at HE level 4 must be achieved at the Institute)
Diploma of Higher Education / Foundation Degree	Up to 160 credits (a minimum 80 credits at HE level 5 must be achieved at the Institute)

BA/BSc Honours Degree	Up to 240 credits (a minimum 120 credits at HE level 6 must be achieved at the Institute)
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Postgraduate Level	
Postgraduate Certificate	Up to 40 credits (a minimum 20 credits at HE level 7 must be achieved at the Institute)
Postgraduate Diploma	Up to 80 credits (a minimum 40 credits at HE level 7 must be achieved at the Institute)
Master's Degree	Up to 120 credits (a minimum 60 credits at HE level 7 must be achieved at the Institute)

3. Principles

- 3.1 Credits may be given for prior learning where the level, standard, content and relevance of that learning are appropriate to a particular approved programme of study. A maximum time limit of 10 years should normally apply between award and consideration of RPL.
- 3.2 Decisions regarding the number of RPL credits, if any, for which exemption may be given are a matter of academic judgement, with the main consideration being whether the prior learning is broadly equivalent (and sufficient in terms of credit volume) to map onto the learning that would otherwise have been assessed during the course unit.
- 3.3 It is the responsibility of the applicant to make sure that all evidence and supporting application material is submitted in English. Translations into English must be certified, with original documents available on request. Overseas applicants may apply for RPL in the same way as UK applicants. All qualifications and institutions will be checked by the Institute along with all other relevant requirements (such as visa and immigration conditions).
- 3.4 Students can receive an exit award if they have RPL credit in their profile, providing their performance at the Institute also satisfies the award requirements of the Undergraduate or Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations.
- 3.4.1 Special consideration will be given to students who have been granted the full amount of RPL on their entry programme but fail the minimum number of credits for the programme and have to be considered to receive an exit award. The Institute will check that students have completed sufficient credits to leave the Institute with the relevant exit award; this means that at least one third of the taught credits of the exit award have been completed at the Institute (in line with the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations). If the student has not completed enough credits, they may only be eligible to receive a transcript of their results.
- 3.5 Applications for RPL are considered on academic grounds and, as such, no formal rights of appeal exist against the final decision of the Institute, as appeals cannot be made against decisions of academic judgement. Appeals may, however, be made in line with the procedures outlined in the Admissions Policy, on the grounds of procedural irregularity, the emergence of new material information or evidence of bias or prejudice.
- 3.5.1 Applications for RPL must normally be made prior to entry and applications after enrolment will only be considered on an exceptional basis. The deadline for applications is mid-June, except in cases where a candidate is still waiting for an interview. In which case the deadline for application is two weeks from interview outcome receipt. All applicants are encouraged to apply as early as possible to allow sufficient time for the consideration of their request. Late applications can be allowed at the discretion of the Registrar, in consultation with HoPs and Admissions, by the last

Friday in September.

- 3.5.2 Applications should consist of a written request using the relevant form(s) provided by the Admissions Office, along with documentary evidence of the prior learning. This can be in the form of transcripts, certificates, or other suitable evidence. Module/unit descriptors or equivalent documents indicating the ILOs of the modules/units previously studied must be supplied if applying for APCL.
- 3.5.3 Applicants will be charged the current RPL application fee to cover administration costs.

4. Applications

- 4.1 Consideration of the applications should include a detailed and documented discussion of how the ILOs of each module/unit, where RPL is to be applied, have been met through prior learning or equivalent experience. This will be included in the RPL Feedback Form.
- 4.2 If the subject assessor decides that they wish to see the applicant to ascertain additional information in support of the application, arrangements for an interview should be made as soon as possible.
- 4.3 When assessing the evidence against the requirements of the ILOs of the programme and particular course unit, the assessor should consider the following:
- Subject content and knowledge
 - Volume of learning
 - Level of learning
 - Evidence of achievement
 - Any particular restrictions imposed by Professional or Statutory Bodies, if applicable
- 4.4 The assessor should refer to the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications to assess whether the level of the prior learning is acceptable.
- 4.5 The Programme Lead is expected to provide advice and guidance to current students considering applying to another institution for APCL, in relation to the programme ILOs and evidence required for an application.

Applications for APEL

- 4.6 The Institute recognises that students, particularly mature students, enter higher education with an extensive range of expertise, skills and knowledge derived from a variety of professional, vocational, community, leisure and personal contexts. APEL provides students with the opportunity to have their prior experiential learning assessed and included within their programme.
- 4.6.1 APEL does not exempt a student from study but allows the use of different routes to the award of credit. All students must meet the learning outcomes as set out in the programme specification in order to qualify for the award.
- 4.6.2 For cases of APEL, assessment must be rigorous in ensuring that the learning that has taken place through experience is equivalent to the learning that would occur from following those elements of the study which the student is seeking exemption from. Credit must only be given for demonstrated learning, where equivalence of learning outcomes can be demonstrated. Examples of experiential learning may include:
- Work experience (paid or unpaid/voluntary)
 - A task or project undertaken, a report written, or a course run
 - Non-accredited courses taken, e.g. in-house training
 - Life experience
 - Reading and research

- 4.6.3 For cases of APEL, applicants must complete the relevant form provided by the Admissions Office to indicate what is being submitted against which ILO, alongside a personal statement and portfolio of evidence demonstrating the learning achieved. The portfolio might include:
- Practice-based documents
 - Published articles and manuscripts
 - Video/audio recordings or other electronic files, with commentary and analysis related to achievement of learning outcomes
 - Analytical and evaluative description of practice
 - Awards and honours
 - Statements from supervisors or managers in relation to aspects of practice
 - References from colleagues, employees, voluntary organisations, professional bodies
 - CV
 - Book lists
- 4.6.4 The subject assessor will review the portfolio and discuss with the applicant any revisions or supplementary material that might be required.
- 4.6.5 Applicants may also be interviewed to discuss their experiential learning so that assessors can map their learning against the ILO of the relevant unit/level. Applicants should note that it is the level and depth of the experiential learning measured against the learning outcomes for the unit that attracts the credit, not simply the experience.
- 4.6.6 All decisions to grant APEL will be considered, assessed, recorded and communicated according to the principles and processes laid down within this document.

RPL Assessment

- 4.7 A decision regarding whether an application for RPL can be recommended for Transfer of Learning (ToL) will depend on the requirements and specific learning outcomes of the particular programme as well as the details of the individual application. Applications should meet the following criteria:
- Evidence must be current (not more than 10 years from the date of award)
 - Evidence must be authenticated
 - Evidence must be acceptable (according to the Framework of Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ))
 - Evidence must be sufficient (additional evidence can be requested)
- 4.8 The outcome of the assessment will be one of the following:
- Recommended for exemption
 - Rejected on academic grounds
 - Rejected on presentational grounds
 - Referred
 - Partially rejected on academic grounds
 - Partially rejected on presentational grounds
- 4.9 If an application is rejected, then reasons should be clearly documented on the RPL Assessment Form.
- 4.10 If an application is 'referred' then this should be document on the RPL Assessment Form, along with any actions or timescales for resubmission. The Admissions Office should inform the student of any grounds for resubmission, and any further information required from them.
- 4.11 If an application covers several modules/units, RPL may be granted for only some of them. In this instance, the outcome will be partially approved/rejected on either academic or non-academic

grounds. This should be stated on the RPL Assessment Form, and the units/modules which are approved or rejected should be clearly indicated, along with the reasons, so that the student can be informed as such.

- 4.12 Applications for RPL will normally be assessed within seven weeks of receipt.
- 4.13 The Institute reserves the right to terminate an application for study, or withdraw an offer of a place, if the applicant is found to have omitted relevant facts or information in connection with their application, both for initial applications for a place at the Institute or for RPL. If this is discovered after the applicant has been granted ToL, the Institute will require the student to sit the units for which ToL has been granted.
- 4.14 Decisions about RPL applications will be relayed to the Admissions Office. Applicants should be informed of provisional results and the normal processes for an application of study should be followed.
 - Unsuccessful applicants will be advised of the reasons for the decision and, where appropriate, given an indication of any further evidence which might be required to come to a final decision
 - Successful applicants who wish to defer their place should be advised that RPL may not be available if they do so

5. Transfer of Learning

- 5.1 In all cases authorisation of award of credit via RPL is a matter to be determined solely by the Accreditation Panel on behalf of its parent board, the Assessment Board. Accreditation Panels will do so upon consideration of the recommendation from the appropriate subject assessor or Programme Lead.
 - 5.1.1 Registry will record successful applications for RPL as a credit on the student's record on the student information system following ratification of ToL from Accreditation Panels.
 - 5.1.2 Records of all decisions relating to RPL applications will be maintained by Registry for information and reporting purposes (details of numbers of applications received, granted and refused, etc.).
- 5.2 Monitoring will take place by the Institute's Quality and standards Committee (QSC), to ensure that criteria for ToL remain objective and are being fairly and consistently applied; they will also monitor the progress of students admitted with ToL.
 - 5.2.1 The Admissions Office will send RPL monitoring reports to the QSC and to any validating body as required.
- 5.3 Any credit awarded through ToL is treated in the same way as credit awarded through the normal taught route, except that it does not contribute to the calculation of the final award. It will also be represented as 'Exemption' on the student's academic transcript.
- 5.4 Particular consideration will need to be given to the case of students who have been granted the full amount of ToL on their entry programme but fail the minimum number of credits for an award and are consequently considered for an exit award.