

Guidance on Making an APL Claim

Supporting and guiding learners to submit an APL claim is crucial. Most learners will be unfamiliar with the process of putting in an APL claim. It is imperative that learners receive adequate advice and guidance on how to proceed.

This will include:

- Helping the learner understand the opportunities that APL provides.
- Encouraging reflection and self-evaluation.
- Helping to identify sources of achievement and evidence.
- Advising on the structure and presentation of evidence i.e. portfolio of evidence.
- Explaining the APL assessment process.
- Explaining the assessment requirements associated to the unit(s) or parts of the unit(s) that they are claiming for APL.

Producing APL Evidence

The starting point for any learner is to reflect on their experience in order to identify relevant achievement. They should think about experience gained:

- At work.
- In any relevant voluntary work.
- In formal or informal education and training – i.e. in house training, adult education courses.
- From independent study.
- From home-based activities, such as care of the young, the elderly or sick.
- Involvement in family business.

A useful starting point would be to compile a selective autobiographical account of the learner's experience, a curriculum vitae and a portfolio of practical work. This exercise can help support staff and assessors to gain a broad overview of the learner's experience. In addition, the exercise will encourage the learner to identify:

- The key components of their experiences.
- What they needed to know or do.
- What actions have been successful or unsuccessful
- What has been learnt and achieved.
- How this achievement relates to requirements of the unit(s) of part(s) of a unit they wish to APL.

APL learners will also need to fully understand the assessment methods associated to the unit(s) or part of unit(s) they are claiming. Listing the learning and assessment requirements of qualification units clearly will aid this process. Learners will then be able to work towards assembling evidence to support these claims.

APL Portfolio

The portfolio, prepared by the learner should set out the qualification assessment requirements claimed, together with any supporting evidence.

Most portfolios will require at least:

- A statement of the claim for accreditation.

- A statement of authenticity.
- A brief curriculum vitae or autobiography, to put the claim into context.
- A summary of the learning and assessment requirements claimed.
- A commentary that identifies prior achievement against individual learning and assessment requirements.
- A list of evidence against each assessment requirement.
- The evidence that supports their APL claim.

Learners should be encouraged to present concise, detailed evidence that demonstrates achievement of a number of units rather than separate evidence for each qualification assessment criterion.

Assessing an APL Claim

To assess the evidence of prior achievement of APL learners, assessors should make use of a wide range of assessment methods. These methods should relate to the assessment criteria of the qualification/unit that APL is being applied for.

At all times the assessor needs to consider that the evidence is authentic, current, relevant and sufficient.

If on any account the assessor is not satisfied with the evidence submitted, it will be necessary to seek additional evidence or learners could:

Undertake a skills scan and then....

- Undergo an oral assessment/ professional discussion.
- Complete an appropriate assignment.
- Complete a written test.
- Carry out a demonstration.
- Provide a witness statement.
- A combination of the above.

IQA/moderation/standardisation

NTCALs will ensure that APL decisions are uniform in interpreting and applying the standards set out in qualification specifications. APL evidence should be considered equally as other traditional evidence.

Accreditation

APL evidence for external verification/moderation will follow the customised guidance on procedures provided in qualification specifications. This evidence will be considered in the same way as traditional evidence for the same qualification.

Working with awarding bodies

If an awarding body has its own internal APL process then that process must be adhered to.