



**Northern Ireland Post Qualifying
Education and Training Partnership**

**Making an APL Claim –
Guidance for Candidates**

August 2009

Produced by:

Northern Ireland Post Qualifying Education and Training Partnership
Unit 2a
2 River's Edge
13-15 Ravenhill Road
Belfast
BT6 8DN

Tel: 028 90 461495

Fax: 028 90 731516

Web: www.nipqetp.com

Email: info@nipqetp.com

August 2009

CONTENTS

Making an APL Claim within the NI PQ Framework	5
Claim Form for APL within the NIPQ Framework	6
Guidance Notes for Candidates Making an APL Claim within the NI PQ Framework	9
Mapping Matrix for APL Claims - Suggested Template	11

Making an APL Claim within the NI PQ Framework

Background

The review of the PQ Framework in Northern Ireland in 2003 highlighted the need for greater recognition of prior learning in all of its forms. Consequently the NI PQ Framework which was developed and introduced in April 2007, makes provision for candidates to obtain credit for and formal acknowledgement of learning and/or achievement already gained elsewhere. This process is known as Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) and can involve either learning that has been gained through experience (Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning -APEL) or through a formal, certificated programme of learning (Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning – APCL). An APL claim can be made for any Requirement in any of the Awards within the NI PQ Framework

Standards/Arrangements for Accreditation of Prior Learning

NIPQETP has in place a structure and processes for managing APL submissions which are quality assured in line with all aspects of the NI PQ Framework. These are detailed in the **Guiding Principles and Arrangements for Accreditation of Prior Learning within the NI PQ Framework**, NIPQETP, October 2007. It is important that candidates wishing to make an APL claim refer to this guidance document.

Guidance for Candidates

This **Guidance for Candidates** document has been developed to assist candidates with completing the required paper work associated with making an APL claim. It contains the following templates:

- A claim form for APL within the NI PQ Framework
- Guidance Notes for Candidates Making an APL Claim
- A Mapping Matrix

These forms are all downloadable from the NIPQETP website at:

www.nipqetp.com



Claim Form for APL within the NIPQ Framework

(Please refer to the Guiding Principles and Arrangements for Accreditation of Prior Learning within the NI PQ Framework, NIPQETP , October 2007 and Guidance Notes for Candidates Making an APL Claim, October 2007, before completing this form)

Section One (to be completed by all candidates)

Candidate Name (in full):

PQID No:

Employer:

Job Role:

Section Two (to be completed by candidates making an APEL claim, i.e. accreditation of prior *experiential* learning)

Please identify within which Award you wish to seek accreditation:

NI Specific Award in Social Work	
NI Specialist Award in Social Work	
NI Leadership & Strategic Award in Social Work	

Please identify which Requirements you are claiming:

Do you have existing Requirements within the NI PQ Framework? Yes/No
If yes, please specify along with corresponding Award:

What presentation format do you wish to use?

(see Guiding Principles and Arrangements for Accreditation of Prior Learning within the NI PQ Framework, NIPQETP, October 2007, p11, point 17)

What is the focus of the APEL work you are submitting? (e.g. mental health, child care, education and training, management)

Section Three (to be completed by those candidates making an APCL claim, i.e. accreditation of prior *certificated* learning)

Please identify within which Award you wish to seek accreditation :

NI Specific Award in Social Work
NI Specialist Award in Social Work
NI Leadership & Strategic Award in Social Work

Please identify which Requirements you are claiming:

Name of Certificated Programme of Study Undertaken:

Focus of Programme of Study (e.g. mental health, management, research)

Academic Institution (or other) in which Programme was undertaken:

Duration of Certificated Programme:

Completion Date:

Academic Level of Certificated Programme:

Awarding Body/Bodies:

What presentation format do you wish to use?

(see Guiding Principles and Arrangements for Accreditation of Prior Learning within the NI PQ Framework, NIPQETP, October 2007, p11, point 17)

What Evidence are you Submitting to Support your Claim?

Section Four: Signatures (to be completed by all candidates)

Signed: _____ (candidate)

_____ (line manager)

_____ (date)



Guidance Notes for Candidates Making An APL Claim within the NI PQ Framework

Making an APEL Claim (Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning)

APEL claims can be made in respect of learning achieved through experience and critical reflection outside of education or training systems. Examples of experiential learning and development are wide and varied and may include for example, involvement in the improvement or development of practice, policies or service provision, publication of material or articles or research or evaluation.

Claims can be made for any requirements within any of the Awards of the NI PQ Framework. APEL can however only be used for two thirds of an Award.

To make an APEL claim, candidates must submit the following documentation:

- a completed Claim Form (sections 1 & 2), countersigned by their line manager
- a brief introductory statement on the context of the work, including the candidate's job role and responsibilities
- a mapping matrix identifying where within the body of work the PQ requirements are evidenced
- a brief commentary (of no more than **600** words per requirement) identifying how the work produced and subsequent learning achieved meets the PQ requirements being claimed
- the body of work, or a sample of the work previously produced which evidences the learning that has occurred

Please note: where the experience the candidate is drawing on has taken place more than 5 years ago, the submission must demonstrate currency and coherence and be supported by a line manager verification of currency report.

Making an APCL Claim (Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning)

APCL claims can be made in respect of learning that has been previously assessed and certificated by an academic or other equivalent institution. The certificated programme must have been at postgraduate level, e.g. masters degree, doctorate, higher level professional award.

Claims again may be made for any of the PQ requirements within any of the Awards. In some instances, APCL may be used for achievement of a full Award.

To make an APCL claim, candidates must submit the following documentation:

- a completed Claim Form (sections 1 & 3), countersigned by the line manager
- a copy of the certificate issued by the awarding body
- a sample of the original work submitted for assessment and/or or a copy of the course/programme handbook
- a mapping matrix which identifying where within the body of work the PQ requirements are evidenced
- a short commentary (of no more than **300** words per requirement) which identifies where/how the PQ requirements are demonstrated

Where the certificated programme was undertaken more than 5 years ago, the commentary must address how the learning has been updated and remains current in its application. This should be supported by a line manager verification of currency report.

It s important to note that, in all of the above circumstances, it is not just the experience of the activities alone, but more importantly, the achievement of learning or the outcome of that learning, that is being assessed.



Mapping Matrix for APL Claims Suggested Template

Target Award	Requirement/s being claimed	Source of Evidence	Location of Evidence
NI Specialist Award in Social Work	2	Masters Dissertation Literature Review & Methodology Sections	Chpts 1 & 2 pp 7-34
	4	Masters Dissertation Findings, Analysis & Recommendations Sections	Chpts 5, 6 & 7