

## BACP Course Accreditation Scheme

### Delivery Guidance - B9

#### B9. ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR LEARNING (APL) PROCEDURES

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Some courses have an Accreditation of Prior learning (APL) admissions procedure whereby student applicants are credited for their previous learning and/or experience. APL is an academic process that recognises a student applicant's previous training and/or work experience to save them repeating similar or past study when enrolling onto a course. This means that students can omit the equivalent part of the training and join it at a later stage, e.g. be admitted straight onto year two of a three-year training.

APL is sometimes referred to by other titles such as Recognition of Other Learning, Credit of Prior Learning, Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning or Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning or credit transfer.

**It is important for courses to have any APL procedures approved by BACP under the course accreditation scheme's B9 criteria. Otherwise, there will be implications for APL'ed graduates who wish to join BACP as a Registered Member and subsequently when they come to apply for their individual BACP counsellor/psychotherapist accreditation. Non-approved APL procedures may also jeopardise the accredited status of a course. Please see the 'NOTES' below for further detailed information.**

##### B9.1

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If the course admits students after the start of the course via APL procedures, it must submit evidence to show that there are ***'clear, written and published procedures for the admission of students via APL'***

Evidence may include a formal 'stand-alone' document or a relevant section in the course handbook and/or programme document which sets out all the requirements and procedures for the admission of APL students. This information should be made readily accessible to both staff and prospective APL students.

The procedure may have already been included in the portfolio of evidence in support of the Eligibility Criterion **A10** and if so, the course can cross-reference to it again here.

##### B9.2

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Within the APL procedure, the course will need to make it explicit at which stage of the course they will allow students to join via APL e.g. no later than the end of term two (**B9.2 i**); the numbers of APL students allowed in any one cohort e.g. no more than 10% of the existing group size (**B9.2 ii**), and show how ***'internal consistency within the course will be maintained'*** (**B9.2 iii**).

An explanation of the course's reasoning behind the response to each of the B9.2 sub-criteria is required. Consideration should be given to the potential impact on the existing learning group that any new students joining the course may have once the course has started and how this is/will be managed.

*All courses which admit students via APL procedures should address B9.2 in their application, please see 'APL procedures and accredited courses/course accreditation' below.*

### **B9.3**

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This criterion concerns how APL students are assessed as being suitable for the course and so evidence showing how each of the sub-criteria are being met will need to be submitted.

### **B9.4 & B9.5**

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These criteria stipulate the requirements for APL'd taught hours and supervised client practice hours in order for such students to be eligible for a BACP Accredited award.

Again, supporting evidence that clearly states these requirements is necessary. Such evidence could be embedded within the APL documentary evidence already referred to above.

## **NOTES ON ACCREDITED COURSES AND APL PROCEDURES**

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### **Accredited course students and graduates - BACP membership**

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Only students joining an accredited course via an APL procedure which has been approved by BACP under the course accreditation scheme may claim to be on an accredited course and may claim to have completed a BACP accredited course upon graduation.

Students who join a course via an APL procedure which has not been approved by BACP cannot claim to be studying on a BACP accredited course and will not be able to claim completion of an accredited course when they graduate even if the procedure appears to meet the requirements of the course accreditation scheme.

Course graduates who have completed the whole of a BACP accredited course or who APL'ed onto the course via BACP approved APL procedures may transfer directly from Individual Member to Registered Member MBACP. Individual Member and Registered Member MBACP applications from accredited course graduates will be screened to check if the applicant was admitted to their course via APL and the following criteria will apply:

Applicants who have been admitted to an accredited course via an APL procedure which has been approved by BACP may transfer directly from Individual Member to Registered Member MBACP.

Applicants who cannot claim a BACP accredited course upon graduation must pass BACP's Certificate of Proficiency 'CoP' in order to transfer from Individual Member to Registered Member MBACP.

It is the course's responsibility to inform APL students of these criteria and of those which will have a bearing on their application for individual accreditation (below)

### **Accredited course graduates - BACP counsellor/psychotherapist accreditation**

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BACP Registered Members will not have to resubmit all of the course evidence that they previously submitted as part of their application for Individual Membership/Register when they apply for individual counsellor/psychotherapist accreditation\*. A certificate from the accredited course is acceptable evidence for all applicants.

Accredited course graduates who became Registered Members via the CoP (having been unable to claim completion of an accredited course due to APL reasons) must apply for accreditation via the non-accredited course route which requires a breakdown of all practitioner training submitted in the application (currently Criterion 4.2).

### **APL procedures and accredited courses/course accreditation**

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If courses wish to admit students after the start of the course, they should develop an APL procedure in line with the requirements at B9 and have these procedures approved by BACP.

Accredited course status may be placed at risk where courses have APL procedures that cannot meet the course accreditation requirements at B9. Such procedures may have a detrimental impact on the dynamics of the existing learning group for both new and existing students and cause disruption to the consistency of the course in general. Courses under significant pressure to introduce APL procedures outside of B9 should contact BACP course accreditation as soon as possible.

If accredited courses wish to APL students via a procedure outside of BACP's course accreditation requirements, they must pay careful attention to how the course meets sub criterion B9.2iii, given that the internal consistency of the course must be maintained. Specific attention must be given to how the course ensures that the existing students and any new students joining the group are not being negatively impacted upon.

In exceptional circumstances where non-approved APL routes have been considered acceptable by BACP, it is the courses responsibility to inform any relevant APL students that they will not be eligible for a BACP Accredited Award and that when they apply for Individual Membership/Registration they must successfully complete the Certificate of Proficiency (CoP) as part of their application. In addition, if such graduates wish to apply for individual accreditation they will need to do so via the non-accredited entry route (currently Criterion 4.2).

### **BACP Membership and Registration**

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If BACP has approved the course's APL procedure as part of the course accreditation process, graduates who have been admitted to the course by this procedure may claim to have completed a BACP accredited course. Graduates of BACP accredited courses may join BACP as an Individual Member (or transfer to this category from Student Member) and then become a Registered Member MBACP once they sign the terms and conditions for the BACP Register.

If BACP has not approved the APL procedure through which a student has been admitted, then they will not be regarded as an accredited course graduate by BACP upon qualification. They may be eligible to join BACP as an Individual Member upon graduation, however they will need to pass BACP's Certificate of Proficiency within two years of joining in this category to proceed to Registered Member MBACP. Once they have passed the CoP, they may sign the terms and conditions for the BACP Register and become a Registered Member MBACP.

### **BACP Counsellor/Psychotherapist Accreditation for individuals**

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Only BACP Registered Members may apply for individual accreditation.

BACP Registered Members will not have to resubmit all their course evidence for Individual Member/Register when they apply for their accreditation\*. A certificate from the accredited course is acceptable evidence for all applicants.

Accredited course graduates who became Registered Members via the Certificate of Proficiency 'CoP' (having been unable to claim completion of an accredited course due to APL reasons) can apply for accreditation via the non-accredited course route which requires a breakdown of all practitioner training submitted in the application (currently Criterion 4.2).

\*BACP Board of Governors decision September 2015