Accreditation Handbook 2018/19

For help or advice contact nightingale@kcl.ac.uk
SECTION 1

Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

1.1 This handbook provides information about the Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (CATS), and the process of making a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) claim. This can form an important part of your studies with us.

1.2 Accreditation Terminology

The term 'recognition of prior learning' (RPL) is used to encapsulate the range of activity and approaches used formally to acknowledge and establish publicly that some reasonably substantial and significant element of learning has taken place (QAA 2004).

This incorporates:

- Recognition of prior certificated learning (RPCL)
- Recognition of prior experiential learning (RPEL)

The basis of accreditation is the Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (CATS). CATS works by assigning each academic module a credit rating at a particular academic level. The credit rating reflects the length of the module or hours of study required, and the academic level is determined according to the standard required for assessment.

- **Level 4** - Equivalent to the first year of a full-time honours degree - 120 credits
- **Level 5** - Equivalent to the second year of a full-time honours degree - 120 credits
- **Level 6** - Equivalent to the final year of a full-time honours degree - 120 credits
- **Level 7** - Equivalent to masters level study - 180 credits

120 credits at Level 4 and 120 credits at Level 5 are required for a Diploma of Higher Education (Dip HE).

In the current academic year (2018/19) up to 30 level 6 credits can be brought into post-qualification undergraduate degree programmes and up to 120 level 7 credits can be brought into masters programmes of study via accreditation of prior learning.

CATS therefore enables you to utilise prior learning to count towards your current programme of study. In order to do this, you must demonstrate how a previously completed module (or modules) or experiential learning can be mapped against the learning outcomes of your current programme of study and how the prior learning could be potentially useful to you as a registered practitioner.

1.3 The Accreditation Panel decisions about the level and amount of credit to be awarded for prior learning are made by the Accreditation Panel, based on the evidence that you can provide about the learning from your previous modules or other relevant experiences. The Accreditation Panel meets once per term to review recommendations of the accreditation assessors and award credit accordingly.
1.4 Where your claim is for credits awarded by another UK university within the last 5 years and is relevant to the programme and your area of practice, submission of the completed application form along with the evidence that you undertook and passed the module(s) should be included.

For claims for modules undertake more than 5 years ago either at King’s College London or another Higher Education Institute (HEI) the claim must include evidence to show how you have updated and developed the knowledge and skills from the module and how you use this in practice. This evidence may be conferences or study days attended and learning as a result, evidence that you have updated the knowledge and skills via ‘in house’ programmes or any other evidence which clearly shows this development.

1.5 Advanced Standing Entry to Level 6 or Level 7 Study

RPL may also be utilised to gain entry into level 6 or level 7 study as an advanced student e.g. direct entry to the final year of a post-qualification degree programme of study, or entry to a masters programme without an undergraduate degree.

Advanced Standing applicants are required to submit a portfolio of evidence to the Accreditation Panel that demonstrates both the ability to study at Level 6 or Level 7, depending on the programme being applied for, and that prior learning undertaken (RPCL or RPEL) equates to the required number of credits.

In the portfolio, applicants are expected to be able to demonstrate evidence that they are:

- Able to develop their own professional practice, e.g. extending the scope of professional practice. This may include attendance at appropriate conferences, study days, in house learning. This must be accompanied by evidence of undertaking the activity and the learning derived from it.
- Experienced in clinical practice initiatives, such as involvement in an audit of clinical practice
- Actively integrating contemporary nursing/midwifery knowledge with practice e.g. changing an aspect of clinical practice
- Able to utilise research to provide evidence-based practice

Applicants could also provide evidence of prior certificated learning that informs professional practice e.g. certificate in management studies or post-qualification modules studied at another higher education institution.

The Accreditation Panel will utilise a range of criteria to assess the portfolio, seeking evidence of the ability to critically analyse practice.

This allows for flexibility in presentation and content of the portfolios in order to allow the submission to be tailored to the individual’s clinical experience. In some circumstances the portfolio entries will need to be supported by a letter from an appropriate manager.
Students seeking advanced standing for entry to a masters programme should be aware that admission to the programme is not automatic on successful completion of an accreditation claim and should discuss other entry requirements with the appropriate programme/pathway leader.

Students without an undergraduate degree will normally be expected to show evidence of passing a research methods module at level 6, for example, or may be required to undertake their first level 7 module on a free-standing basis, before transferring onto the programme.

1.6 Accreditation Fees

Fees for making accreditation claims are as follows:

- £180 per 15 credits
- £720 for advanced standing accreditation (equivalent to 120 credits)

In many cases fees are paid by the applicant’s employer by arrangement with the university. If your Trust is not a King’s contracted Trust, then an invoice will be sent to your manager after the Accreditation Panel Meeting. However, if you wish to self-fund your accreditation claim, you can pay online at http://estore.kcl.ac.uk/

**Note that fees are non-returnable if the application for accreditation is not successful.**

**SECTION 2**

**Preparing and Submitting an Application for Accreditation**

2.1 The first step to making a claim is to carefully read the information within both this handbook and on the website.

Accreditation consultations may be offered if the applicant requires particular support to apply for accreditation. This is often the case for an advanced standing claim.

2.2 Completion of the Accreditation Claim Form

This forms your claim and you must ensure that the form is completed accurately. The form is largely self-explanatory and should be filled in as fully as possible.

2.3 Compiling an Accreditation Profile

The accreditation claim form must be accompanied by detailed documentary evidence of prior certificated or experiential learning. This may include certificates and other documentation that shows your learning. Examples are given in the relevant sections on the application form.

The claim must demonstrate how your certificated learning and/or experience is appropriate in terms of content and academic level to the module against which the claim is made. If the claim is for a module undertaken at another HEI where the equivalent is not run by King’s you should clearly demonstrate how the content of the module meets the learning outcomes of your programme and is appropriate for your current role in practice.
The application should include the following:

- A completed accreditation claim form.
- Documentation in support of each module of certificated prior learning to be considered. This may include examples of your own written work, module handbooks etc.
- Please note original certificates may need to be seen by the Panel; these should be scanned and attached to the claim.

Information about modules and programmes of study is available in module and programme handbooks, which can be accessed online.

2.4 Submitting an Accreditation claim

Before submitting a profile, please make sure that the accreditation claim form and profile of supporting evidence are complete and accurate and that all the required information has been provided.

Claim forms and appropriate evidence should be submitted as one email and ideally as one document to nightingale@kcl.ac.uk The subject should read RPL claim form.

If your form is not fully completed, you will receive an email asking you to review the form before it is submitted to the panel.

Please do not hesitate to contact the accreditation administrator should you have any queries about the progress of your claim: nightingale@kcl.ac.uk

Accreditation panel meeting dates

- Accreditation Panel: 4 September 2018. Submission deadline: 27 August 2018
- Accreditation Panel: 5 March 2019. Submission deadline: 19 February 2019
- Accreditation Panel: 17 September 2019. Submission deadline: 3 September 2019

2.6 The Assessment Process

Each application form will be reviewed by accreditation panel member(s) using the relevant learning outcomes and a recommendation is made which is reviewed and approved by the Accreditation Panel at the next meeting.

The panel may agree to award all or some of the credits that you have applied for or if the claim does not meet the criteria the panel may decide not to award the credits.

The results of accreditation claims are reported to the appropriate (undergraduate or postgraduate) Faculty Assessment Board. The credits will then be added to your student record.

Written confirmation of the outcome of the accreditation claim will normally be sent to you within one week of the Panel meeting.
If your claim is not successful you should request a consultation with a panel member to discuss how to improve the claim prior to resubmission. To arrange this email nightingale@kcl.ac.uk

Under normal circumstances there is a period of 3 months to re-submit a claim if it has been rejected on the first submission. If this deadline is not met, then you will need to inform the administrator why you were unable to meet this deadline. Only two attempts will be permitted to gain successful accreditation of any particular claim.