



MASTERS PROGRAMMES HANDBOOK

2011/2012

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the University of Worcester. You are now part of a University which has over 9,500 students, of which around 1,650 students are studying at taught postgraduate level.

Graduate study at the University of Worcester can be undertaken in the form of a taught course or by research. This handbook has been devised for both full-time and part-time students undertaking a taught course which can lead to three qualifications:

- Postgraduate Certificate
- Postgraduate Diploma
- Masters Degree.

Please refer to the handbook throughout your period of study here – it will answer many of your initial questions and provide you with information about whom to contact within the University for advice on specific issues.

If, after reading this Handbook, you need any further information on any aspect of being a postgraduate student, please:

- Speak to your Masters Course Leader
- Speak to your Personal Tutor
- Contact staff in Registry Services.

Names, locations and extension numbers are provided in the contact list which can be found at the end of this section.

The Handbook is arranged as follows:

- Section One:** Describes the essential steps involved in registration
- Section Two:** Covers all aspects of the taught programme and refers you to important regulatory information. This section should be read in conjunction with the Course Handbook and Module Contract which will supply more detailed information about the specifics of the course, such as guidelines on essay writing and referencing
- Section Three:** Provides information about Progress Files for taught postgraduate students
- Section Four:** Describes the facilities that are available to postgraduate students at the University. This includes information about the Library and IT services but also covers general support and guidance that can be offered to students, such as support available to International students or students with disabilities
- Section Five:** Contains information about Health & Safety and Ethical Issues which are particularly relevant to students carrying out their Dissertation
- Appendices:**
- 1 A Guide to the Accreditation of Prior Learning
 - 2 Proposed Assessment Criteria at Level M

CONTACT LIST

Registry Services – Recruitment & Admissions

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Registry Services – Student Records

Postgraduate Team

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Dr Wayne Richards	w.richards@worc.ac.uk	855126	MA Systemic Youth Work
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Ms. Tess Parkinson	t.parkinson@worc.ac.uk	855470	MSc Cognitive Behavioural Interventions
Ms. Sally Smith	sally.smith@worc.ac.uk	542164	MSc Sports Therapy

Please use the Worcester dialling code (01905) before all these numbers, unless an alternative area code is already provided.

To talk to a member of Reception staff (switchboard) please dial (01905) 855000 (external calls) or dial 0 (internal calls).

SECTION ONE

REGISTRATION AND THE PAYMENT OF FEES

Registration

Depending when you start your course, the Masters Programmes registration usually takes place at the beginning of Semester 1 (September). However, for those courses starting in January/February (semester 2) registration will normally take place around that time. Please be aware that semester dates for postgraduate students may vary from those of undergraduate students.

All eligible students are advised to register for the Masters award unless you specifically wish to obtain the Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma award. This will not preclude you from leaving the scheme with the Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma at a time of your choice.

Registry Services will send details of how to re/register to all (continuing) students' usually the month before teaching is due to start. You will be required to complete your registration and module selection via your on-line SOLE pages. It is important that you carefully check and complete all relevant details as you proceed and ensure you have also selected your modules for the academic year only. **If you are in any doubt which modules to chose please contact your Course Leader.** Please note, selecting modules only forms part of the whole registration process and if you are unsure how to complete the process please contact Registry Services for further information. Payment will usually be taken as part of the registration process, if you believe you do not need to pay for module/s then please contact Registry Services. If you have any specific finance issues or questions please phone the Finance Department on 01905 855119 who will be able to assist you.

Total Registration Time Allocated for an Award

The normal expectation is that a full-time student will complete an award within the following periods:

- Postgraduate Certificate 1 semester (15 weeks)
- Postgraduate Diploma 2 semesters (30 weeks)
- Masters 3 semesters (45 weeks)

The maximum registration period for a full-time student shall be:

- Postgraduate Certificate 1 year
- Postgraduate Diploma 2 years
- Masters 3 years

The maximum registration period for a part time student is:

- Postgraduate Certificate 2 years
- Postgraduate Diploma 4 years
- Masters 6 years

Student Induction Programmes

You will normally receive an induction specific to your course; for further information please contact the Course Team.

SECTION TWO

LEARNING AND TEACHING

The Masters Programme will be delivered through modules of learning and teaching which are designed to challenge and extend your knowledge and which facilitate independence.

The Postgraduate Regulatory Framework

All taught postgraduate awards must follow the guidelines set out in the Postgraduate Regulatory Framework (PRF). You are advised to familiarise yourself with these regulations by following the attached link.

<http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/documents/PostgraduateRegulatoryFramework2007entry.pdf>

2. The Study Programme

You are expected to negotiate your own programme of modules with the help of your Course Leader. All courses shall provide, where possible, for study in both part and full-time mode, or any acceptable combination of full-time and part-time study. Study Programmes may lead to each of the following awards:

Award	No. of modules to be completed	No. of credit points
Postgraduate Certificate	3 *	60
Postgraduate Diploma	6 *	120
Masters Degree	9 *	180

The table displays the number of modules that must be completed before an award will be offered. Most modules take place in the evening between 6.15 pm-9.15 pm, although some are offered at other times during the day. Up to 50% of taught elements of the award for which you are registered may be achieved through Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL/APEL - Appendix 1).

* **Based on 20 credit points at CATS level M (FHEQ L7)**

Accreditation of Prior Learning/Prior Experiential Learning

In many cases it is possible to gain credit for previous study or experience. You can enhance your prospects of gaining entry to the Masters Programme and could also accelerate your achievement of gaining an award within your individual course. Once within the Programme, credit could be applied where there is sufficient evidence of the completion of prior experiential or academic work.

In order to claim APL/APEL please consult with your course leader and use the Guide to the Accreditation of Prior Learning (Appendix 1). All claims must be forwarded to Registry Services (Recruitment and Admissions office) and approved by the Postgraduate Credit Admissions Committee. As a rule, the Committee will consider claims at the end of every month. Students will receive written confirmation of approval or rejection of a claim from Registry Services.

Module Selections

The number of modules offered for each Masters programme will depend on the level of student recruitment. A standard module will normally last for one semester and attracts 20 credit points at CATS level M (FHEQ L7) within the recognised arrangements for credit accumulation and transfer. The word limit for a standard module will be between 3,000 - 5,000 words and the student workload for each standard module should normally be 200 hours of which normally 30-40 hours may be in the format of tutor contact.

Modules may be linked in such a way that completing or passing one module is a pre-requisite for taking another module. A Dissertation is an integral component of the Masters Degree programme and may be regarded as equivalent of 2, 3 or 4 modules depending on the course and volume of learning outcomes required. Individual modules from the Undergraduate Modular Scheme may be adapted into the postgraduate framework but normally only one such module may be incorporated within a student's approved programme of 9 modules.

Prior to the start of a new academic year, all continuing students will be required to select their modules on-line via their SOLE pages. If you do not select modules we will be unable to inform you if a module is withdrawn or if a module's start date changes. Your initial module selections are to enable us to produce class lists, book suitable rooms and prepare reading lists; you will not be able to access on-line resources such as 'Blackboard' if you have not selected your module/s.

For details about withdrawing from a module, please refer to the PRF (Link above).

The Dissertation

All Masters Students must take a Dissertation. The successful completion of the Dissertation characterises the Masters award and must be undertaken with due preparation; this will normally entail the prior completion of a mandatory 'methodology' module. The Dissertation is normally the final two/three/four modules studied and is equivalent in weighting to two, three or four taught modules at Masters Level. You should consult your Course Handbook and the Dissertation Guide for further details.

The Dissertation Proposal

The 700-word proposal and ethics check list for the dissertation must be submitted by the end of the teaching week (usually week 12) of the semester preceding the commencement of the Dissertation. You are strongly advised to seek support from your course tutors before formal submission of the Dissertation Proposal. Please submit your Proposal on the Dissertation Proposal Form.

The proposal should be based on a topic in which you have a strong interest and can be drawn from any area of the course, subject to staff expertise and availability. This will be considered by the course team, the External Examiner and the Dissertation tutor appointed. The proposal should be a clear statement of your intended focus. Any changes to the proposal, such as the proposed length of the dissertation, should be submitted to the Board of Examiners on a Dissertation Proposal Form. The Board of Examiners meets at the end of each semester.

From the point of registration, you normally have to complete your dissertation within one year, depending on your programme of study; this will be conditional on you having two of your total six registration years remaining. The Board of Examiners dates are different for every Masters Programme; please consult your Course Leader or supervisor as to the exact date. Please be aware that you should normally proceed with the Dissertation without interrupting your studies.

Classes and Attendance

The teaching associated with each taught module will usually run for 10-12 weeks. Modules for the majority of the Masters Programmes run during the evening but there may be variations on this pattern. Attendance at lectures, seminars, workshops or other specified forms of learning is required according to the demands of the appropriate module. Some teaching sessions may be designated as compulsory.

You must attend all sessions in the modules that have been designated as compulsory. If you fail to meet the attendance requirement you will have to retake or substitute the module in a future term/semester. If you miss a compulsory session because of illness or other circumstances, you are required to notify the module leader within 6 days after the session to explain the absence.

If you fail to meet the attendance requirements for a module, this will render your grades for all assessment items in that module null and void. A grade '0' and non-submission (NS) will be recorded. Unless your module notifies you of any different arrangements, attendance records are kept by your tutor, so you need to make sure that you sign the attendance list in each seminar.

If you have to miss a session because of illness or for another valid reason, each time this happens notify the tutor within 6 days after the session to explain the absence. Some modules require you to do this by e-mail and your e-mail will be kept as a record. You will only be asked to provide proof of authorised absences if you have already taken unauthorised absences. If you have a query about something you missed through an authorised absence, e-mail the tutor. Staff time does not normally permit catch-up tutorials for this but they will give you whatever help they can.

It is, of course, worth noting that absence from classes may make it harder to complete the assessment for the module and, in the event of failure, may make it harder to support an application for special consideration. Your absence may also disadvantage other members of the class: in many types of learning - seminars, practical sessions, discussions and so on - learning is a co-operative, interactive process, and your absence may disrupt the work of the group.

Coursework and Assessment

Within each Masters Programme, students will have a variety of assessment experiences. Much of the assessment will be of a written nature, requiring you to read and research widely, reflect upon the material gathered and structure the synthesised ideas into critical coherent essays of varying type and length. For guidelines on how to write and present your coursework, please refer to your course handbooks or module contract. For a template of generic assessment criteria at Masters Level please refer to Appendix 2.

Submitting Assessed Work You will normally be required to submit one or two copies of each item of assessed work. You are strongly advised to keep a copy of all work submitted for assessment. Assessed work should be attached to a Student feedback form and Assessment Tracking Sheet. Student Feedback Forms can be obtained from the Registry Services enquiries counter; the Assessment Tracking Sheet is available via your SOLE page. **Work should not be submitted to the tutors directly.** Details about where to hand in work should be supplied by the module tutor.

Assessment will be marked out of 100%. The pass mark will be 50% and failure to attain 50% overall will normally entail failure of the module. If a module comprises more than one method of assessment, the weighting of each item will be given. The average mark for all items of assessment associated with a module will be calculated to give an overall module mark, unless the module contract specifies that a pass mark must be achieved in each individual item of a module's assessment. Work of 60% - 69% will be awarded a Pass with Merit and work 70% or over will be awarded a Pass with Distinction. To provide feedback to you on the quality of your work, tutors will complete the Student Feedback Form. A copy of this will be retained by the tutor. For more details about the University Marking Scheme, please refer to the PRF (link above).

Collecting Assessed Work

The collection date, time and collection point for all assessed work should be included in the module contract or this information should be made available at the beginning of the module by the module tutor. Where possible, work should be collected in person. Your copy of the completed Student Feedback Form may be available for collection before the official return of work (please consult your module tutor for more details). However, you should be aware that the mark on the Student Feedback Form is provisional and is subject to change by the External Examiner and course team.

Board of Examiners

Marks are received and agreed at Boards of Examiners meeting held after the end of each semester and a further Board held in September of each year.

Late Submission of Coursework

Work handed in after the submission time (3.00 pm) and date but within five calendar days will be marked; however, unless an exceptional mitigating circumstances claim has been submitted (usually within 7 days of the assessment hand-in date) and accepted, the mark will be capped at the minimum pass mark.

Work submitted after the expiry of 5 days will not be marked and may be treated as a non-submission unless a mitigating circumstances claim has been accepted. If the claim has been upheld, the work submitted will be marked. Late assignments should, whenever possible, be handed in between 9.00 am and 3.00 pm at the usual collection point.

Second Attempt Reassessment

Assessment has been submitted on time but has received a fail grade

If you fail items of re-assessment, resulting in an overall fail (at first attempt) for the module, you will be offered a re-assessment at second attempt. The maximum pass mark of 50% will be awarded for all second attempt reassessment. If you fail to meet a deadline for a second attempt reassessment you will be deemed to have failed the items of coursework in question and the module.

If you fail items of re-assessment, resulting in an overall fail for the module, you will also be offered a third and final attempt. A maximum pass mark of 50% will be awarded for all third attempt reassessment.

Assessment has not been received on time

If coursework is not received by the designated time (3.00 pm) and submission date, the work may be recorded as a **non-submission**. In these circumstances, Registry Services will notify you after the Board of Examiners meeting that you may have no further opportunity to re-assessment or to retake the module. If the failed module is classed as 'Optional' you may be entitled to take a substitute module; however, this will be capped to a maximum Pass and will need to be paid for. If the module is classed as 'Mandatory' you will have no opportunity to take a 'Substitute' module.

If you are offered reassessment in a particular module, you may choose not to be reassessed and (subject to programme approval) to retake the module or substitute another module. A substitution may only occur on one occasion. In the event of further failure on reassessment, or in the case of failure in a substitute module, the Board of Examiners will require you to withdraw from your programme of study. In such a case, you are entitled to receive the highest award for which you are already qualified.

For more details on procedures in the event of failure, please refer to the PRF (Appendix 1).

Third Attempt Reassessment

Assessment has been submitted on time but has received a fail grade

If you fail items of the re-assessment at second attempt, resulting in an overall fail for the module, you may be offered a third (and final) attempt. A maximum pass mark of 50% will be awarded for all third attempt reassessment. If you fail to meet a deadline for a third attempt reassessment you will be deemed to have failed the items of coursework in question and the module with no further opportunity to re-take it.

If you are offered reassessment in a particular module, you may choose not to be reassessed and (subject to programme approval) to retake the module or substitute another module. **A substitution may only occur on one occasion.** In the event of further failure on reassessment, or in the case of failure in a substitute module, the Board of Examiners will require you to withdraw from your programme of study. In such a case, you are entitled to receive the highest award for which you are already qualified.

For more details on procedures in the event of failure, please refer to the PRF (link above).

Assessment has not been received on time

If coursework is not received by the designated time (3.00 pm) and submission date, the work may be recorded as a **non-submission**. In these circumstances, Registry Services will notify you after the Board of Examiners meeting that you may have no further opportunity to re-assessment or to retake the module.

First Attempt Reassessment and Mitigation

In certain circumstances where your ability to submit work (or the standard of work you have submitted) has been affected by circumstances outside of your control e.g. illness, you may wish to make a claim to the Mitigations Committee. Full details of the grounds for a claim, relevant procedures and the nature of evidence that will be required to support a claim are published in the general University Student Handbook. Students will be notified of the outcome in writing and, where a claim is upheld, students will be offered the opportunity to re-take the assessment as if for the first time. The relevant forms and guidelines to the process are available from the SOLE page.

Please consult the Complaints & Appeals Officer in Registry Services if you are in any doubt. Please note also that any information you provide as part of a claim for Mitigating Circumstances will be treated as confidential.

Appeals

Should you wish to appeal against an academic decision made by a Board of Examiners, the grounds and procedures to follow are laid out in the general University Student Handbook.

You may make an appeal to the Appeals Committee if you feel that there has been:

- A material administrative error in the conduct of the assessment;
- An error by the University in the application of the assessment regulations
- Some other material irregularity relevant to the assessment(s) concerned which has substantially prejudiced the results of the assessment.

Disagreement with the academic judgement of an Examination Board in assessing the merits of an individual piece of work, or in reaching any assessment decision based on the marks, grades or other information relating to your performance cannot in itself constitute grounds for appeal.

Cheating

Cheating is a serious offence and takes many forms including:

- Plagiarism – passing off the work of someone else as if it is your own.
- Collusion – working closely with someone else to produce an assignment that is meant to be the work of an individual

The Internet is frequently used to download material to use in assignments. The University deals severely with students who cheat and penalties extend to suspension and withdrawal for a second or particularly serious first attempt. In order to avoid an allegation of cheating make sure that you follow the guidance you will have been given on conventions for referencing and for use of quotations. If you are in any doubt, check with your tutors who will be happy to advise you.

Suspension of Studies (Intercalation)

For many reasons, Masters Students often find that it is impossible to study a module every semester. When this occurs because the module required is not running, or because work or home commitments make study difficult, your studies may be suspended (intercalated), subject to when the intercalation is requested and the maximum enrolment period of six years.

When the decision to intercalate is made, it is essential that you inform both Registry Services and the Programme Leader in writing. This can be done by letter, e-mail or by the completion of a request to withdraw from study form (available from Registry Services). Where possible, the reason for intercalation should be given with an intended date of return. This will allow Registry Services to contact intercalating students intending to resume their studies the following semester/term. Please be aware that the total registration time for the award includes all periods of intercalation. Requests to extend the maximum registration period will only be considered in exceptional circumstances with full supporting evidence and will need to be made in writing to the Head of Registry Services.

Interim Awards

Students registered on a Masters Programme are not eligible for the interim awards; however, if a student withdraws from a course and has sufficient credits (subject to conditions of the Programme Specifications) then the award of Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma may be awarded.

Award Ceremonies

Postgraduate students are invited to attend an awards ceremony held at Worcester Cathedral in November immediately following the successful completion of a postgraduate qualification. At graduation you will be presented with your certificate. The Exams and Assessment Officer in Registry Services will send graduation information out to all potential graduands.

One copy of your Dissertation should be available for collection at the time of the graduation ceremonies, this can be collected either prior to or upon return from the Cathedral.

If you are unable to attend graduation, you will be able to collect your certificate or request it to be posted out (a small charge will apply).

In all cases please check your SOLE pages for information.

SECTION THREE

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

What is Personal Development Planning?

Personal Development Planning [PDP] is defined in Higher Education as:

'A structured and supported process undertaken by an individual to reflect upon their own learning, performance and/or achievement, and to plan for their personal, educational and career development.'

PDP provides an effectively structured process to support you to think explicitly about yourself, your studies and your learning. Engaging in it helps you:

- Think about your personal goals and what you want to get from your studies
- Gain greater insight into what and how you are learning
- Adopt effective purposeful personal lifelong learning strategies
- Document and monitor your progress through PG study
- Make connections between your learning on different modules and in different situations
- Learn effectively from reflection on feedback
- Make the outcomes of your learning more explicit and communicate your achievements and abilities effectively
- Prepare for life after University study

The processes involved can be presented by the following diagram:



The University of Worcester has a national reputation for its work in supporting student PDP and it does particularly well in the National Student Survey for student personal development.

The University of Worcester provides support for student engagement in PDP by three different routes:

- Independent student PDP – is supported through the provision of materials and resources direct to students via the student web pages.
 - Progress File' documentation to support the PDP process has been developed by previous Masters students, in consultation with tutors, and is available via the SOLE page.
 - The PebblePad ePortfolio system is also available from the SOLE page as a means of developing your own electronic PDP records.
- Through the personal tutorial system – The primary role of the personal tutor at Worcester is to support student PDP.
- Through the curriculum – all programmes at the University are designed to support student PDP through appropriate inputs, discussions and assignments. For further information please contact your course leader.

SECTION FOUR

FACILITIES AVAILABLE TO MASTERS STUDENTS

Information and Learning Services (ILS) support your study and research by providing library, ICT, e-learning and print services across all University sites. This academic year will be particularly exciting as we prepare to move the Library into the new building next to the City Campus. This unique new facility will open in 2012 and will offer an amazing variety of resources and opportunities.

For full information about the services provided by Information and Learning Services (ILS) please refer to the ILS web pages at www.worcester.ac.uk/ils

Introductory Booklets are also provided for staff and students and can be picked up throughout the campus...

'A Student Guide to Information and Learning Services' for Post Graduate Students.

'A Staff and Researchers Guide to Information and Learning Services' for all Staff and Researchers.

SECTION FIVE

LEGAL, ETHICAL AND RELATED ASPECTS

Health and Safety

The Health and Safety at Work act places a duty on all those who work in the University to take reasonable precautions to ensure the Health and Safety both of themselves and other Colleagues. The health and safety of Masters Students rests with the appropriate authority as specified in the University Health and Safety policy. Students should contact their personal tutors in the first instance, for advice on Health and Safety matters. The full Health and Safety policy can be found in the general University Handbook

Ethical Issues/Health and Safety requirements

It is the responsibility of every student and member of staff to ensure that the work they carry out is within the University Guidelines for Ethical Conduct (see below).

All students must complete the ethics checklist attached to the proposal form. If your dissertation will involve you working with other people, for example conducting a survey among other students or members of the general public, or investigating an organisation, you must respect their rights; this includes the right to confidentiality and the right to give and withdraw consent to participate in the study. If your work involves you in gathering data from those in positions of vulnerability, such as clients in care, prisoners, ex-offenders or children, consider carefully how voluntary consent might be achieved. Can you ensure that participants will not be worse off following your study than they were before they agreed to help? Can you ensure that any problems they might have will be treated with the necessary sensitivity? Similarly, if your work impacts on the environment, involves research into illegal activities, or working with animals, you must consider the ethical implications very carefully.

This statement should be included on any information you distribute to research subjects:

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study you should ask to speak to the researcher(s) who will do their best to answer your questions. If you remain unhappy and wish to complain formally about any aspect or about the way you have been dealt with during the study, you can do this through contacting the head of Registry Services, Mr. Kevin Pickess, on (01905) 857536.

For dissertations coming within the regulations regarding Criminal Record Check (for example if you need to visit a crèche, nursery, school or work with any agency involving children or vulnerable adults), it is a requirement that you apply for a Check through the Criminal Records Bureau. Guidance notes on how to obtain a Disclosure package are available from the Student Records Office, Registry Services.

For dissertations involving experimentation, there will be Health and Safety considerations to be taken into account. It may be necessary to complete a Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) assessment before commencing. (Your supervisor will advise you if he/she feels this is necessary). Students should give consideration to their own safety and well being, with specific regard to any risk factors that may be incumbent within the proposed study.

Referring Dissertation Proposals to Ethics Committee

In the event that staff or students are concerned about ethical issues raised by research, *and where it has not been possible to resolve ethical issues via departmental scrutiny*, the proposal should be referred to the University Ethics and Research Governance Committee. The Committee aims to ensure that research procedures do not endanger the safety or well-being of the subjects/researchers, or undermine public confidence in the conduct of research. It also aims, therefore, to safeguard volunteers and the reputation of the University.

Ethics and Research Governance Committee can be contacted in the first instance via the Student Records Office, Registry Services. Proposals being referred to this Committee for consideration should be accompanied by the *Ethics Committee Consideration of Research Proposal* proforma, where you should give full details of the proposed study.

(These forms can be obtained from the Student Records Office, Registry Services, or the Registry Enquiries Desk). The proforma should be completed by the student/staff member conducting the research, signed by the Supervising Tutor, and returned to the Registry Enquiries Desk. This should be accompanied by a department referral form, to be completed by the appropriate department, indicating why the research proposal is being forwarded for consideration by the University Ethics and Research Governance Committee. (Departments can obtain this form from the Student Records Office, Registry Services). These papers will be forwarded to members of the Ethics and Research Governance Committee in time for consideration at the next scheduled meeting (see University Calendar).

The proposal will be discussed by the Committee, and the Supervising Tutor may be invited to attend to assist the Committee in its deliberations. Comments and suggestions, which may include requests for further information or modifications to the proposal, will be forwarded to the Supervising Tutor and the student in writing. Supervising Tutors should ensure that proposals are submitted to the scheduled Committee meetings. In exceptional circumstances the Committee will consider proposals via Chair's Action.

To appeal against a decision made by the Ethics and Research Governance Committee regarding a research proposal, you should submit an appeal in writing (within 10 days of hearing from Ethics and Research Governance Committee) and forward it, together with any new supporting material, to the Secretary of the Ethics and Research Governance Committee (via Registry Services). This will be examined by the Registrar and the Chair of the Ethics and Research Governance Committee, and a final and binding decision will then be made.

Safety and Security on Campus

For your security please:

- Have your ID card with you at all times
- Contact Security in the foyer to let them know that you are working on campus – giving your room number, the part-time student room or other location
- Let Security know when you leave by telephoning ext. 5406, or Reception (press 0 on the telephone keypad), or call Reception as you leave.

For general security:

- Take care of your property and carry valuable items with you
- Close windows and lock the door when you leave the room, even if for a short time In case of difficulty contact Security as above.

APPENDICES

- 1. A Guide to the Accreditation of Prior Learning**
- 2. Assessment Criteria at Level M**

Appendix 1

GUIDANCE NOTES

ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR LEARNING (APL) FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

1.) An Introduction Credit (APL)

It is possible for you to gain credit for relevant previous study or learning experiences. This should normally be negotiated on entry to your Postgraduate Programme.

The University of Worcester has a postgraduate credit assessment system which operates under the current APL regulations.

2.) Academic credit (Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning - APCL)

A claim for credit can be based on the successful completion of appropriate and relevant academic qualifications, training schemes and national qualifications. These must be at Masters Degree level and completed within the past 6 years.

How many credits can I claim through APCL?

50% of taught elements of the award for which you are registered can be achieved through appropriate APL, subject to the approval of PCAC.

Award	Credit required for the award	Maximum credit allowed	NQF Level
Postgraduate Certificate	60 (M)	30 (M)	7
Postgraduate Diploma	120 (M)	60 (M)	7
Masters	180 (M)	120 (M)	7

You may also top up a relevant Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma, achieved in the past 6 years, to Masters. This is called 'Advanced Standing' and is separate from APL procedures. In the case of the postgraduate diploma, you would be required to take a research methods module and other mandatory module where applicable.

Evidence Required for a Successful APL Claim

You must provide the certificate and/or transcript, which proves you have achieved the award which you are claiming. This must clearly state the number of CATS points achieved and the level at which the module was assessed, for example, level M.

This credit must also have been achieved within the last 6 years.

3.) Learning experiences (Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning - APEL)

Credit can be granted where learning can be demonstrated as a result of professional work you have personally conducted.

Alternatively, if you do not possess the standard entry requirements, you may be qualified to enter on the basis of prior learning and professional experience. If you think this applies to you, you should give details on the course application form and outline the basis of your claim in a covering letter to the Graduate School. Standard entry requirements for admission to all Postgraduate Programmes are set out in the Postgraduate Prospectus.

Applying for APEL

For an APEL claim you should write an evaluative and analytical account of the professional experience and the learning you have achieved as a consequence. This should be in the form of an independent/negotiated study of 3,000 – 4,000 words.

If you are applying for APEL credit against Masters modules, you must submit a separate essay and fee for each module against which you wish to gain exemption. No more than one third of total credit awarded can be experiential.

For all APEL claims, you should arrange a tutorial with a tutor in your programme. You might find it helpful to include as appendices a range of supportive material.

4.) Submission and Assessment of APL Claims

For all APL claims, you should complete the Accreditation for Prior Learning Application Form and submit this to the Registry Admissions Office. The appropriate fee (see below) will be charged at this point and in the case of APEL, a separate fee will be charged for each independent/negotiated study submitted. In cases of APL, the accurate submission of the form with supporting evidence such as certificates, should be sufficient to enable the institution to make a decision. In the case of APEL, you should submit the analytic account of your learning after tutorials with a programme tutor. The decision will be based on assessment of your submission. You will receive written notification as to the success of your claim from the Admissions Office. Admissions decisions are final.

5.) Fees

Fees for the administration of your APL claim:

APL: £50

APEL: the current cost of a standard postgraduate module (the work incurred for an APEL claim is the equivalent of an independent study)

Appendix 2

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR LEVEL M

Level M criteria	0-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70+
	None/little	Adequate	Good	Excellent
1.) Evidence of originality, independent reflection and sophistication of thought; personal initiative expressed with clarity and stylistic accomplishment, using an appropriate register of language.				
2.) Mastery of a range of cognate historical, theoretical and/or empirical material.				
3.) Critical reflection/analysis at a sophisticated level with a high degree of explanatory power rather than descriptive detail.				
4.) Intellectual rigour and coherence in constructing, sustaining and testing arguments and/or hypotheses. Integration/application (identification) of the models, issues and concepts within the debate/discussion.				
5.) Evaluative links made, where appropriate, between theory and practice				
6.) Evidence of research skills and techniques, data collection, analysis, presentation and interpretation of data. Proposes conclusions that are related to the evidence presented.				
7.) Critical use of relevant research literature.				
8.) Standards of presentation which include: the use of appropriate scholarly conventions to cite and list references.				

Personal Development Planning (PDP)

The process supported by the Progress File is commonly called personal development planning [PDP] and it's about you explicitly thinking your way through your studies and recording the process. Engaging in it will help you to gain greater insight into what and how you are learning and to plan, review and take responsibility for your own learning. There is growing research evidence that PDP will help you to:

- become more effective, independent and confident as self-directed learners;
- understand how you are learning and relate your learning to a wider context;
- Improve your general skills for study and career management;
- articulate your personal goals and evaluate your progress towards your achievements;
- evolve a positive attitude to learning throughout life.

The processes which have been developed will enable all students to have the opportunity for PDP at the start of their postgraduate degree programme, as part of the monitoring process and at the end of their period of study. In addition, many Masters Programmes already carry out PDP as part of their teaching programme. For more information, please contact your Course Leader.