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Student Transitions: Example of transitions practice



Title: RPL and Transitions at UWS

Transition(s) the practice supports: Recognition of Prior Learning is by its nature a pre-entry activity. Creating a match between a potential students' knowledge, experience and qualifications and their study aspirations is key to providing a meaningful learning experience.

RPL can take 2 forms at UWS, Accrediting Prior Learning (APL) and Accrediting Prior Experiential Learning (APEL). Typically students using APL already have a recognised credit bearing qualification such as an HND and routes to programme are established and supported through articulation hubs and the Associate Student Scheme.

For students basing their entry on experiential learning we offer routes as well. In areas of high demand we offer RPL Bridges. As well as these planned routes for RPL we offer a bespoke route to entry.

The key aims of our RPL activities are to ensure students are placed at the most appropriate point on their chosen programme of study, to eliminate unnecessary duplication in their learning and to provide a formative process that will support their later learning.

Abstract:

RPL is key to providing a personalised learning experience that avoids unnecessary duplication of learning and builds capacity and academic skills for future study.

Description: In order to engage in Experiential Learning an applicant must provide a group of learning outcomes that they can evidence. The evidence takes the form of a portfolio and a piece of written work that links the Learning Outcomes to the Portfolio. The written piece should not exceed 5,000 words regardless of the level or volume of credit being sought.

This process can be bespoke, with the student identifying their own learning outcomes and then completing the report and portfolio or an RPL Bridge can be created. At present UWS operates 2 RPL Bridges, one in Childhood Practice and one in Nursing. We are currently in a test phase with a third Bridge for Commercial Music.

With an RPL Bridge students are provided with a menu of learning outcomes approved through the programme team. Students choose a range of outcomes that match their experience and are offered guidance and support in choosing the appropriate number of outcomes. They are then supported through the portfolio and reporting stages to complete their claim.

Detailed feedback is embedded at every stage so that weaknesses in overall understanding can be supported and worked through. This makes the process very formative, in that the student develops some of the academic skills they need in order to progress and shine.

Feedback from students is strong and echoes that the process supports their formal studies "on programme"

Links:

Some case studies: <http://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/docs/publications/recognition-of-prior-learning---national-framework-for-scottish-higher-education.pdf?sfvrsn=6> Page 21.

Contact details: Iain Maitland, iain.maitland@uws.ac.uk