

# ARPL POLICY FOR THE FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

## 1. BACKGROUND

Assessment and Recognition of Prior Learning (ARPL) is the assessment of learning, already undertaken by an individual (learner), done by experts through a valid and reliable process as measured against the learning outcomes of a qualification, learning programme or module/learning unit for the purposes of admittance to, or recognition for, a specific learning programme.

The purpose of this document is to outline the procedures and guidelines for the assessment and recognition of prior learning in the Faculty of Health Sciences.

This policy, which includes faculty-specific guidelines for the assessment and evaluation of prior learning, must be read in conjunction with the ARPL policy of Stellenbosch University.

## 2. OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this policy is to make specific provision for prospective students who:

- do not meet the specified admission requirements for a programme, but offer evidence of alternative experience/qualifications
- have undergone prior learning and have requested that it be recognised in place of certain prescribed modules
- have undergone prior learning at institutions outside SA and where the standard of this prior learning needs to be determined
- have undergone prior learning and where it is necessary to establish at what level such student can slot into the relevant programme.

## 3. UNDERGRADUATE APPLICATIONS

ARPL is applied on a limited scale at undergraduate level in cases where applicants request that certain modules of the programmes for which they were previously enrolled, are recognised in place of modules of, for instance, MBChB I.

Such applications must include proof of successful completion of an equivalent module as well as the full outline of the curriculum of this module, before the request can be considered by the module chairperson.

### **Phase 1: Submission of the application**

The application is to be submitted to the Faculty Secretary.

The applicant's full study record must be included and must reflect the marks/results attained for the module(s) for which the applicant seeks recognition.

Recognition will be accorded per module. Modules will be recognised where the curriculum, outcomes and credits of the relevant module broadly match those of the required module in the programme for which the applicant wishes to enrol. Recognition will also be accorded to modules where the content included additional work that exceeds the requirements of the envisaged programme.

### **Phase 2: Evaluation of the application**

An application will be firstly considered, and can be finalized administratively, on the basis of existing precedents, where such precedents exist. The relevant programme committee will consider applications for which no precedent exists, in consultation with the Vice Dean (Teaching), the relevant module chairperson, the Faculty Secretary and the International Office.

### **Phase 3: Outcome and recommendations**

The recommendations of the relevant programme committee will be submitted to the Committee for Undergraduate Teaching (CUT), via the Faculty Secretary, for further processing and submission to the Faculty Board, Executive Committee (Senate) and Senate. Applications may, however, be finalized on the basis of delegated powers.

The Faculty Secretary will inform the candidate of the outcome of the application by means of an official letter that will include the report back or comments of the various structures where the application was considered.

The Faculty Secretary will keep a record of all applications as well as of the outcome of the assessment and recognition of prior learning.

The chair of the relevant undergraduate programme committee has the authority to consider and approve urgent cases and will report such cases to the relevant programme committee for ratification.

## **4. POSTGRADUATE APPLICATIONS**

In the case of postgraduate applications, the ARPL process will also be conducted in three phases:

### **Phase 1: Submission of the application**

The application must be submitted to the Faculty Secretary.

## **Phase 2: Evaluation of the application**

The relevant postgraduate programme committee will consider the application in accordance with existing guidelines.

## **Phase 3: Outcome and recommendations**

The recommendation of the programme committee will be submitted to the Committee for Postgraduate Teaching (CPT), via the Faculty Secretary, for further processing and submission to the Faculty Board, Executive Committee (Senate) and Senate. Applications may, however, be finalized on the basis of delegated powers.

The Faculty Secretary will inform the applicant of the result of the ARPL process by means of an official letter that will include the report back or comments of any of the various structures where the application was considered.

The Faculty Secretary will keep a record of all applications and of the outcome of the assessment and recognition of prior learning.

The chair of the relevant undergraduate programme committee has the authority to consider and approve urgent cases and will report such cases to the relevant programme committee for ratification.

## **5. ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS THAT MAY BE USED IN THE ARPL PROCESS OF THE FHS**

Departments and programme committees are at liberty to make use of one or more of the following assessment instruments, or of similar assessment instruments, when considering applications:

- 5.1 Admittance assessment instruments (for example, entrance or placement tests, and special examinations, especially those that are assessed quantitatively)
- 5.2 Learning portfolios (for example, the candidate may present a comprehensive set of documents and/or other evidence to illustrate his/her prior learning - such documentation will be evaluated qualitatively by expert academic staff of SU)
- 5.3 "Conditional" admittance (for example, a student may be accepted as a special student and then be allowed to "perform himself or herself into" a learning programme)
- 5.4 Prior supplementary work (for example, a student may be provisionally admitted to a learning programme on condition that he/she completes supplementary work that meets set requirements before being formally entered into the learning programme)
- 5.5 Supplementary work during the learning programme (for example, a student may be admitted on condition that he/she successfully completes supplementary work during the course of a learning programme)

- 5.6 Recognition of formal learning in the form of parts or the whole of learning programmes which were offered or completed at other institutions (for example, relevant diplomas or degrees)
- 5.7 Recognition of formal learning completed in the form of professional short courses or in-service training courses (for example, learning that is not certified as a qualification, or part thereof, by another institution of higher learning)
- 5.8 Recognition of non-formal or informal learning (for example, learning that took place in the workplace or in another appropriate environment on the initiative of the individual).

## **6. APPEAL PROCEDURE**

An applicant may submit a fully motivated appeal in writing, within 14 days after receipt of the formal response to their application. The appeal will then be considered by an appeal committee consisting of:

- the Vice Dean (Training)
- the chairman of the department or the relevant programme coordinator

The appeal committee will take all the existing evidence into consideration, together with any additional information submitted or subsequently gathered. The decision of the appeal committee is final.

## **7. QUALITY ASSURANCE**

The ARPL is subject to the usual quality assurance processes of the Faculty. Responsibility for such processes resides in the Dean and his/her Management Committee. Input may be solicited from the relevant programme committee.

The Faculty Secretary will submit an annual report to the CUT and CPT on the number of applications that were received and on any problems that may have been encountered. The Faculty submits its report on ARPL matters, in the prescribed manner, up to the level of Senate.

## **8. RECORD-KEEPING, CORRESPONDENCE AND APPLICATIONS**

As the ARPL process is an academic matter, applications must be submitted to the Faculty Secretary, acting on behalf of the Division for Academic Administration, where all records will be kept.

## **9. FEES**

The fees for ARPL applications will be decided upon by the Faculty's Management Committee who will notify the Faculty Secretary accordingly.