



# Code of Practice on Admissions

Second Edition

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This Code of Practice has been approved by the Academic Board, and applies equally to SAA-GE and any international partner institution.
- 1.2 This Code of Practice applies to all admissions to SAA-GE pathways irrespective of level or delivery method. It applies equally to all applicants, again irrespective of whether they are Singapore, or international applicants. This Code of Practice also considers admissions to those pathways where the entry criteria must meet the requirements of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRB). Specific information regarding the accreditation of prior learning is contained in the Notes of Guidance on Accreditation of Prior Learning (see Appendix 1)
- 1.3 This Code of Practice seeks to ensure that SAA-GE complies with anti-discrimination and data protection legislation.

## **2. General Principles**

- 2.1 SAA-GE is committed to providing a fair admissions process which embraces widening participation and lifelong learning. SAA-GE ensures that its selection policies and procedures are fairly and consistently applied by all staff involved in the admissions process.
- 2.2 SAA-GE promotes quality and recognises the diversity of background and experience of applicants to higher education. We admit applicants who have the potential to benefit from, and contribute to, our programmes, community and student experience.
- 2.3 Applicants are considered on an equitable basis and no applicant is considered less favourably due to their nationality, race, ethnicity, age, gender, marital status, political or religious beliefs or other unjustifiable grounds.
- 2.4 SAA-GE considers all applicants on an equitable basis with regards to age and sets age limits where PSRB requirements stipulate, otherwise SAA-GE follows local guidelines on the use of age as an entry requirement.
- 2.5 SAA-GE does not act in loco parentis for any student.
- 2.6 In order to meet the requirements of relevant legislation, specific procedures apply to students who are legal minors (under the age of 18) on commencement of their studies at SAA-GE.
- 2.7 The Academic Board (or nominated subcommittee) is responsible for the development and monitoring of SAA-GE's admissions policies and procedures.

## **3. Staff Involved in the Admissions Process**

- 3.1 SAA-GE ensures that all academic and administrative staff are competent to undertake their role and fulfil their responsibilities in the admissions process.
- 3.2 All staff new to the admissions process are provided with training in SAA-GE's admissions policies and procedures. Training is given in relation to their particular roles and responsibilities within the admissions process.

## 4. Recruitment and Selection

### 4.1 The provision of information to prospective students and applicants

- 4.1.1 SAA-GE recognises that importance of timely provision of accurate and accessible information to enable applicants to make informed decisions and their choices. All promotional material provided is relevant and accurate at the time of publication and is reviewed on an annual basis. Any changes to the structure or content of pathways offered is communicated to applicants and updated for prospective applicants at the earliest opportunity.
- 4.1.2 All material can be provided to applicants in alternative formats on request.
- 4.1.3 Relevant information is communicated to applicants by appropriate means such as letter, email, telephone or SAA-GE's website. This information is communicated in accordance with the timeframes outlined in the Procedural Document.
- 4.1.4 Entry profiles and criteria, including English language requirements, are published on SAA-GE's website, in our prospectuses and are summarised in the Academic Regulations. Specific entry requirements for overseas applicants including English Language requirements are published on the SAA-GE website. We reserve the right to update these profiles and/or criteria but ensure that no applicants are disadvantaged as a consequence.
- 4.1.5 Applicants receive information outlining the range, content and structure of their proposed pathway of study. This includes the main learning and teaching methods and assessment information. Any changes are communicated to applicants and updated for prospective applicants at the earliest opportunity.
- 4.1.6 SAA-GE improves potential and current applicants, of pathways recognised and/or approved by PSRBs.
- 4.1.7 Information is available via SAA-GE's website outlining SAA-GE's policies regarding admission through the accreditation of prior learning (APL) or prior experiential learning (APEL) and the processes for admission under these arrangements.
- 4.1.8 Information regarding the range of welfare, guidance and support services available to all students and those with specific special needs can be found on the SAA-GE website.
- 4.1.9 Applicants receive written information outlining all tuition fees and costs associated with their proposed pathway. Information regarding tuition fees can also be found on SAA-GE's website.
- 4.1.10 Information regarding SAA-GE's various scholarship schemes and other sources of financial support available to students is published on the SAA-GE website.
- 4.1.11 Opportunities to gather further information and meet staff and current students (i.e. Information Talks, Open Days) are publicised to prospective and current applicants. This information is also found on the SAA-GE website.

## 4.2 Selection

- 4.2.1 Applicants are assessed individually, taking into consideration their abilities, aptitudes, skills, qualifications and experiences which indicate their potential to complete their studies successfully.
- 4.2.2 Applicants are admitted to SAA-GE based on an assessment that:
- They are able to benefit from the study involved
  - They have the capacity to complete the pathway on which they are registered and to achieve the prescribed standard for the award
  - They satisfy the specific entry requirements for the pathway
  - Places are available on the pathway
- 4.2.3 SAA-GE may seek alternative evidence of suitability for the pathway, which may include academic performance, a personal statement, references, samples of work and an interview, as appropriate.
- 4.2.4 To ensure fair and equitable treatment of all applicants, the entry requirements and selection criteria for all pathways are monitored annually by the Academic Board.
- 4.2.5 Applications from candidates with a disability and/or additional learning or medical requirements are considered using the same entry requirements as all other applicants. As part of the admissions process, such applications are referred to Student Admissions and Services for an assessment of their individual needs and are considered in accordance with SAA-GE's Academic Regulations.
- 4.2.6 Wherever possible, an offer on an alternative pathway is considered for any applicant who, though considered capable, cannot be offered a place on the pathway of their choice.

## 4.3 Operational procedures

- 4.3.1 Applications to all pathways are dealt with equitably and expeditiously in accordance with SAA-GE's admissions procedures.
- 4.3.2 Applicants must complete the appropriate application process for the proposed pathway.
- 4.3.3 The majority of admission decisions are devolved to Student Admissions and Services working to particular criteria. They consider those applications within their remit and make decisions within defined parameters. Student Admissions and Services consult with Programme Directors regarding applications outside their remit and the defined parameters. On occasions and under specific arrangements, admission decisions may be delegated to certain named international agents/consultants working on behalf of SAA-GE.
- 4.3.4 Programme Directors (PDs) are responsible for those admissions decisions which are outside the remit of Student Admissions and Services.
- 4.3.5 Applications for accreditation of prior learning (APL) are initially considered by Student Admissions and Services using the SAA-GE pathway tariff system. Those applications where a tariff has been approved are processed by Student Admissions and Services and appropriate decisions are communicated to the applicants.

- 4.3.6 Applications for accreditation of prior learning where a tariff has not been approved are considered by the Programme Director. The PD assesses the suitability of the application and submits a recommendation to Student Admissions and Services.
- 4.3.7 Where an interview forms part of the selection process, Student Admissions and Services consult Programme Director to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made and applicants informed.
- 4.3.8 Decisions on applications including APL applications are recorded by Student administration onto the SMS and are communicate promptly to applicants. SAA-GE aims to inform applicants of decisions within 24 hours for straightforward applications and within 7 days for complex applications. Applicants who are unclear about the conditions of any offer are advised to contact Student Admissions and Services.
- 4.3.9 Successful applicants receive a formal offer letter. This letter includes the following information:
- Name of Programme/Course
  - Any conditions of the offer
  - Fee Structures
  - Number of Modules
  - Course Duration
  - Intake
  - Course Commencement Date
- 4.3.10 Offers may be made conditional on subsequent achievement in academic examination, and/or on receipt of certificates and other relevant documentation. The specific conditions of each offer may vary between applicants to reflect their prior academic performance and preparation.
- 4.3.11 SAA-GE does not respond to queries from third parties for information regarding an application or applicant, unless the applicant is a minor or the application has come through an authorised agent.

## 5. Obligations of Applicants

- 5.1 Applicants are responsible for providing full, accurate and honest statements of their qualifications, experience and any additional information relevant to their application.
- 5.2 If an applicant is found to have omitted any information requested or has made any misrepresentation or given false information, SAA-GE reserves the right to withdraw an offer of a place and/or reject their application.
- 5.3 Applicants are required to communicate their response to an offer to Student Admissions and Services.
- 5.4 Applicants are allowed to request a deferral of entry. All such requests are formally considered. However, it should not be assumed that they are accepted. The decision to grant or decline a request for deferred entry is made by Student Admissions and Services. Applicants wishing to defer entry should contact Student Admissions and Services for advice and support.
- 5.5 Applicants must notify SAA-GE of the outcome of any pending academic qualification or other factors which may have been a requirement of their offer.
- 5.6 Applicants who do **not** achieve the stated qualifications or meet the requirement of their offer should contact Student Admissions and Services. In some circumstances it may be possible to offer the applicant an alternative pathway.

## **6. Information to Successful Applicants**

- 6.1 Successful applicants are informed of any significant changes to the pathways on which they been offered a place. Examples of such changes may be the discontinuation of a pathway, significant amendments to the content, status, the cost or delivery location of a pathway or other relevant change.

## **7. Information to Unsuccessful Applicants**

### **7.1 Feedback**

- 7.1.1 SAA-GE provides written feedback to unsuccessful applicants on request.
- 7.1.2 Where the application has been made through an authorised third party, feedback is provided to that third party. The request must be made to the Student Admissions and Services within 10 working days of the applicant being informed that his/her application was unsuccessful.
- 7.1.3 The feedback informs the applicant why the application was unsuccessful and refers directly to the selection criteria or interview outcome. Feedback enables applicants to reflect on their applications and does not result in a reconsideration of the decision.
- 7.1.4 The form and depth of feedback may vary between different pathways and is dependent on the selection methods used.

### **7.2 Re-applications**

- 7.2.1 Applications from candidates who have previously applied but were unsuccessful in securing a place are considered for alternate pathways for which they are suitably qualified before their application is rejected. There may be some pathways where re-applications are not accepted.
- 7.2.2 Applicants wishing to subsequently re-apply are individually informed of their respective position by Student Admissions and Services.
- 7.2.3 Where permitted, a re-application is considered on the same criteria as other applications.
- 7.2.4 Students who are already registered with SAA-GE and who have failed to satisfy the credit requirements of the pathways for which they have registered and the Programme Director recommends transfer to a framework award as set out in SAA-GE's Academic Regulations, are not required to undertake a formal application process. The transfer is managed by Student Admissions and Services. Students who are required to make such a transfer should refer to the SAA-GE Academic Regulations.
- 7.2.5 Students who have been discontinued from a pathway by the Examination Board because of academic failure are not permitted to apply for re-admission to the same pathway unless all the criteria as set out in SAA-GE's Academic Regulations have been met.

## 8. Registration, Induction and Orientation of New Students

### 8.1 Registration

Applicants must complete SAA-GE's registration process before the commencement of their studies in order to become an SAA-GE student.

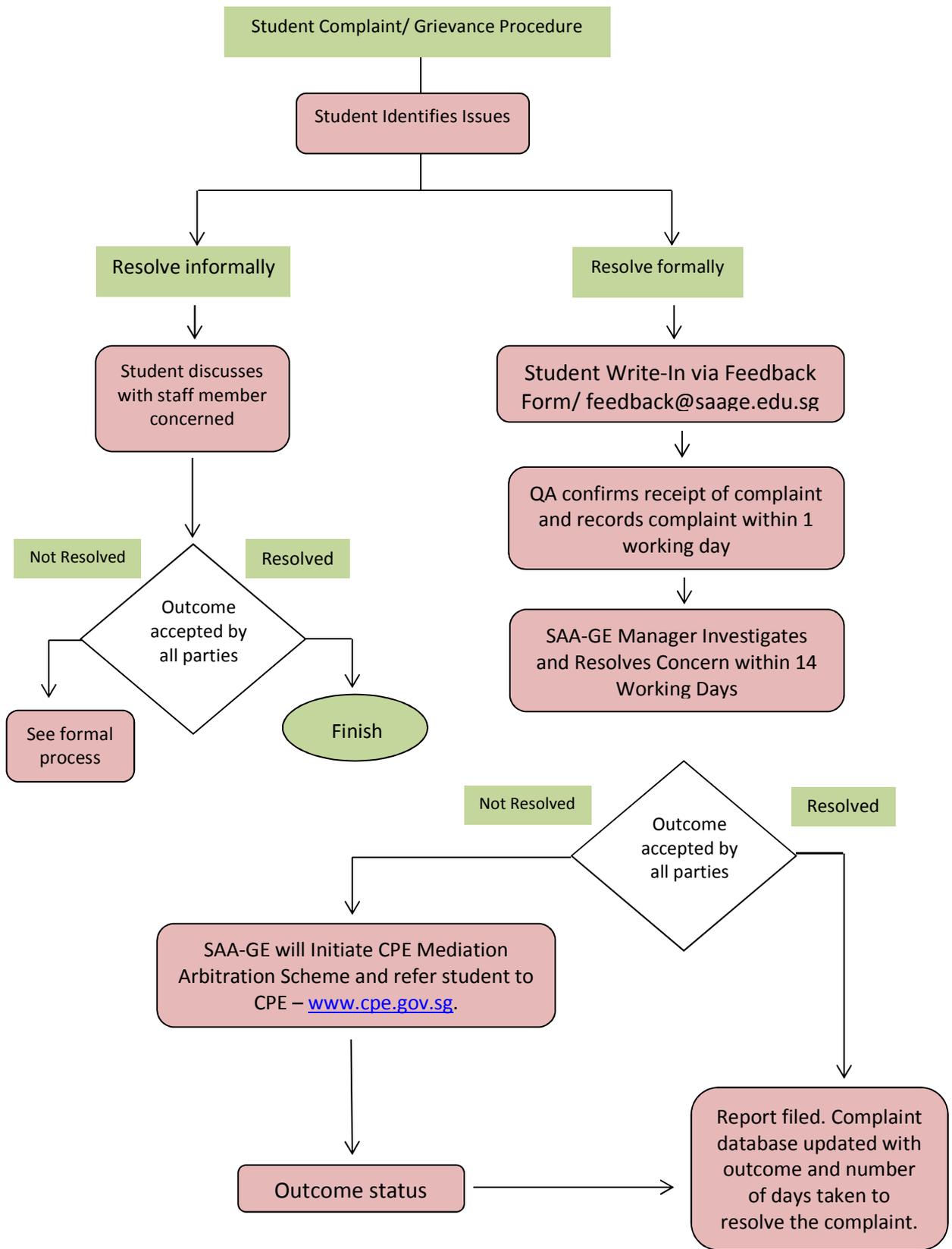
### 8.2 Induction and orientation

- 8.2.1 All international students are required to attend an Orientation Programme. The Orientation Programme is specifically designed to support the effective integration of international students at SAA-GE. We are committed to providing all new students with opportunities to integrate and engage with others. The diverse needs of particular student groups within SAA-GE, are considered when planning induction and orientation activities.
- 8.2.2 Students unable to attend formal induction programmes are advised to contact Student Registry to receive individual advice and guidance.

## 9. Complaints and Appeals on Admissions

### 9.1 Complaints

- 9.1.1 SAA-GE responds to all complaints received from applicants.
- 9.1.2 A complaint is defined as a specific concern relating to the service or facilities offered by SAA-GE or by any of our employees.
- 9.1.3 An applicant wishing to make a complaint must do so in writing to [feedback@saage.edu.sg](mailto:feedback@saage.edu.sg).
- 9.1.4 Complaints must be received before the pathway on which the complainant has applied commences.
- 9.1.5 The applicant must provide the following information:
- Name, address, phone and/or email contact
  - The grounds for the complaint. All relevant information must be included at the time of submission of the complaint
  - The remedy which the applicant considers appropriate.
- 9.1.6 Complaints from third parties are not considered unless written authorisation has been received from the applicant or the applicant is a minor.
- 9.1.7 The applicant receives a letter/email acknowledging receipt of the complaint with 1 working day.
- 9.1.8 The complaint is investigated and the complainant receives a written response within 14 working days of the receipt of the complaint.
- 9.1.9 The SAA-GE Student Feedback & Grievances Flowchart is shown as follow:



## 9.2 Appeals

9.2.1 Applicants may appeal against an admissions decision only if the appeal relates to:

- A procedural irregularity i.e. SAA-GE is considered not to have adhered to its procedures
- The emergence of new information i.e. new information has emerged which was not available at the time of application and which, if available, may have resulted in a different decision. The reasons why this information was not available at the time of application must be given
- Evidence of unfair discrimination or bias

9.2.2 Applicants wishing to appeal against an admissions decision must do so in writing to Student Admissions and Services.

9.2.3 Appeals must be received before teaching commences on the pathway to which the appellant has applied.

9.2.4 The applicant must provide the following information:

- Name, address, phone and/or email contact
- The grounds for the complaint. All relevant information must be included at the time of submission of the complaint
  - How SAA-GE procedures were not followed
  - What new information should be considered and reasons why this was not available at the time of application
  - Details of alleged unfair discrimination or bias at the time of application.

9.2.5 Appeals from third parties are not considered unless written authorisation has been received from the applicant or the applicant is a minor.

9.2.6 The applicant receives a letter/email acknowledging receipt of the complaint with 1 working day.

9.2.7 The appeal is considered by the Programme Director.

9.2.8 If the Programme Director considers there are valid grounds for appeal, it is investigated.

9.2.9 The Programme Director informs the applicant in writing of the outcome of the investigation within 7 working days of the receipt of the written appeal. If for any reason the investigation continues beyond this deadline, the applicant is informed of the reason for the delay and when they can expect a decision.

## 9.3 Monitoring and review of complaints and appeals

SAA-GE records the receipt and outcome of complaints and appeals relating to the admission process. They are monitored annually by Student Services.

## **10. Monitoring and Review of SAA-GE's Admissions Policies and Procedures**

- 10.1 The Code of Practice on Admissions is formally reviewed every 3 years by the Academic Board (or nominated subcommittee).
- 10.2 The Procedural Document associated with this Code of Practice is reviewed annually by the Acting Academic Director which submits recommendations for revision to the Academic Board.
- 10.3 The Acting Academic Director with the relevant Programme Directors considers developments within the higher education sector relating to admissions policies and practices and submits recommendations to the Academic Board.
- 10.4 The Admissions Policy Subcommittee (APS) annually monitors entry requirements and selection criteria across all taught pathways.
- 10.5 The APS ensures that SAA-GE offers fair and equitable treatment to all applicants and ensures compliance with anti-discrimination and other relevant legislation in accordance with its protocols and procedures.
- 10.6 The APS develops and reviews the training requirements for staff involved in the admissions process.

# APPENDICIES

# Appendix 1

## NOTES OF GUIDANCE

### Accreditation of Prior Learning

In conjunction with standard admissions process SAA-GE considers applications from students who wish to have previous learning taken into account. A wide span of prior learning is acknowledged within a system of tariffs which are approved for specific programme leading to an award. Alternatively, individuals with learning outside the tariff system may be considered for admission and, where appropriate, the tariff system is expanded to include such learning on future occasions. Experiential learning is also an acceptable form of accreditation of prior learning (APL) with a specific procedure to be followed.

#### 1. Responsibilities

- 1.1 Following identification by Student Admissions and Services, an applicant's proposal for accreditation of prior learning is considered using the APL tariff. Admissions has been given the delegated responsibility for making and verifying decisions on accreditation of prior learning where the Programme Director has set a standard tariff. In all other cases the applicant's proposal for accreditation of prior learning is considered by the relevant Programme Director. The Programme Director has been given delegated authority by the Academic Board and is required to make regular reports to the Academic Board.

#### 2. Academic judgement, transparency and fairness

- 2.1 SAA-GE is committed to ensuring the decision making process and outcomes for admitting students with prior learning are transparent, rigorous and fair. This commitment is supported by the Programme Director(s).

#### 3. Statement of limits

- 3.1 SAA-GE's Academic Regulations prescribes limits on the proportion of learning that can be recognised through the accreditation process. The process requires that students who have successfully completed prior learning must supply clear information regarding the previous general and specific credit to be recognised and granted towards the receiving SAA-GE award which may be at undergraduate or taught postgraduate level. Certificates and/or transcripts must be supplied in support of the application.
- 3.2 Students seeking accreditation of prior learning based on the accreditation of prior certified learning APL may be granted no more than two thirds of the total credit requirement of the pathway for which they wish to register. Students seeking accreditation of prior learning based on the accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL) may be granted no more than half of the total credit requirement of the pathway for which they wish to register.
- 3.3 Students who have successfully completed modules when registered for an SAA-GE programme leading to a named award which has **not** been conferred and who then apply for admission with prior learning to a programme leading to a subsequent SAA-GE award, may transfer to the second award such SAA-GE credits and their associated marks or grades as are permitted by the Programme Specification Form (subject to the provisions of the SAA-GE Academic Regulations).

#### **4. Identification of credit using transcripts**

- 4.1 A student's personal student record clearly identifies credit awarded from external HE providers. A copy of the student's transcript is produced at the point of graduation.

#### **5. Access and information**

- 5.1 Applicants are informed of the prior learning accreditation procedure via the SAA-GE prospectus and/or website. This information identifies a contact person should applicants consider they are eligible to apply for accreditation of prior learning.
- 5.2 Information for students relating to accreditation of prior learning is included in the Academic Regulations and is available for each programme on the website.

#### **6. Information and guidance**

- 6.1 Accreditation of prior learning in the programme tariff system is dealt with by Admissions and the relevant Programme Director.
- 6.2 For prior learning which is not covered by the tariff system there is a clear application process using a detailed application form. Guidance notes accompany the form. Applicants are responsible for supplying complete and accurate supporting documentation of prior learning. Once the Programme Director has approved or rejected an application this has to be recorded on a Central approvals List (CAL) which is maintained on the SAA-GE shared Z:Drive. All applications for accreditation of prior learning must be processed and approved prior to registration as required by SAA-GE's Academic Regulations.

#### **7. Range and forms of assessment**

- 7.1 Experiential learning is a further means of accreditation of prior learning and is usually assessed in the form of a portfolio. Students seeking accreditation of prior learning based on the accreditation of prior experiential learning may be granted no more than half of the total credit requirement of the programme for which they wish to register.

## 8. Criteria for judging claims

Currency	Either within the previous 5 year prior to expected start date Or for learning which falls outside this limit evidence of updating and currency of knowledge is sought
Documents to demonstrate completion	1. production of original transcript(s) or certificate(s) 2. production of portfolio
Credits	Clear identification of the volume and level of general and specific credits to be counted towards the credit requirement of the programme
Regulations	APL – applications for prior certified learning to be no more than two thirds of the total credit requirement for the receiving programme APEL – applications for experiential learning to be for no more than half of the total credit requirements for the receiving programme
Mapping	Prior learning credits must be within appropriate level and map onto the modules or staged outcomes of the receiving programme
Credential evaluation	To be sought when evidence of credit level and volume or institutional bona fides is in doubt

## 9. Appropriate Supporting Documentation

- 9.1 Student Admissions and Services, supported by the Programme Director, provides each applicant with a full explanation on how to assess appropriate forms of evidence, thereby ensuring that essential admissions criteria are met in each case.

## 10. Reporting

- 10.1 The Programme Director (s) reports to the Academic Standards and Regulations Committee.

## 11. Training and support

- 11.1 SAA-GE provides staff development sessions for admissions staff and mandatory up dates.

## 12. Timescale information

- 12.1 In order to satisfy the requirements of SAA-GE's Academic Regulations applicants seeking accreditation of prior certified learning based on APL must gain approval in writing before they formally commence their studies.
- 12.2 Students are required to submit applications for APEL at least 2 weeks prior to the commencement of the programme.
- 12.3 Approved credit is added to the student's/applicant's record. Information on students approved by Heads of Programmes is made available on the SAA-GE shared drive. This information should include the qualifications used for approval, and should also include details of students who are not successful.

12.4 If a student wishes to defer their admission for more than one year the decision is reviewed in line with the criteria set out in para 8 above.

### **13. Feedback to applicants**

13.1 It is Student Admissions and Services responsibility to inform the applicant of the approval of prior learning decision.

13.2 If the decision is unfavourable applicants should be given an opportunity to meet with the Programme Director to review this decision.

13.3 Successful applicants have their APL credits added to their student record automatically.

13.4 If an applicant has a complaint regarding the APL decision, the complaint should be referred to the Programme Director who's decision is final.

### **14. Monitoring and review of policy**

14.1 Through the APS and ASRC there is ongoing monitoring and evaluation of policies and procedures. The aim is to support the development and enhancement of current policies, procedures and practices so that they become enshrined within the Notes Guidance and provide students with a responsive accreditation of prior learning process.

## **Glossary**

PSRB Professional, statutory and regulatory bodies