

Joint Awarding Body Guidance for Close Protection Qualifications

The Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)

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Developed in support of Security Industry Authority
licensing of close protection operatives

GUIDANCE PRODUCED BY City & Guilds, Buckinghamshire Chilterns University
College, Edexcel and the Security Industry Authority

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Section I: Guidance

1 Introduction

This guidance document provides information for centres approved to offer the qualifications developed in support of Security Industry Authority (SIA) licensing of close protection operatives (CPOs). It should be read in conjunction with the standard guidance on the accreditation of prior learning (APL) available from each awarding body. The contact details for each awarding body are listed in appendix 1.

It has been compiled by the three awarding bodies currently offering the qualifications developed in support of SIA licensing of close protection operatives. The approach to the concept, conduct and recording of the APL contained in this guidance is to be endorsed by the SIA.

2 Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)

The APL is a process which recognises that some of the learning that can contribute to the award of the close protection qualification has already taken place. The approach is that wherever and whenever the experience occurred, the evidence of the learning must be proven. It enables the recognition of achievement resulting from a range of activities using valid assessment methodology.

For this recognition to be acceptable to the awarding bodies and regulatory authorities evidence must be:

- Authentic - *clearly relates to the learners own efforts e.g. original certificates*
- Current - *within the last 3 years or evidence of updating or CPD*
- Relevant - *the evidence, which must comprise of more than prior experience, needs to correspond to the SIA approved qualifications for licensing.*
- Sufficient - *is everything covered in enough detail that you can be confident in your decision?*

There are a number of other terms that are used to describe the APL (e.g. Accreditation of Prior Achievement; APA, Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning; APEL). In this guidance APL is the term used to cover this range of broadly similar processes. It is used to encapsulate the range and approaches to formally acknowledge learning.

3 The Security Industry Authority (SIA) approach to APL and licensing of Close Protection Operatives

Centres are advised to obtain a copy of the SIA Specification for Core Competency Training and Qualifications for Close Protection Operatives on: http://www.the-sia.org.uk/home/licensing/close_protection/close_protection.htm Section 1.3 details the SIA's approach to the licensing of Close Protection Operatives and outlines common features of the training arena identified during the consultation process. It was acknowledged that some existing training could provide exemption from the full 150 hours of mandatory training. Provision was also made to allow for a shorter three day programme for experienced CPOs with formal training since 1 January 2002. Please note that this will change to within the last 3 years from 1 April 2006 on the introduction of the sector wide exemption policy. Details are on the website. In the same document Appendix 3 provides guidance on exemption from the Core Competency Training and some training courses are listed. This list is not exhaustive and it is recognised that training takes place across a large number of organisations and diverse contexts and there is a need to provide a framework for the APL.

4 Joint Awarding Bodies approach to APL

This guidance is provided to promote shared understanding and good practice in the approach to the concept, conduct and recording of the APL. Common documentation is provided to ensure consistency across the awarding bodies in support of the achievement of the qualifications that are a pre-requisite for a licence application to the SIA. It also serves to support those awarding body personnel involved in the external auditing of the qualifications.

5 Establishing an APL process

5.1 APL policy

Training providers and employers intending to enable candidates to claim APL will be required to provide a policy demonstrating their commitment to its implementation within their provision. Awarding bodies will usually require a copy of this policy to be submitted as part of the approval process and check that it is reviewed regularly. Any restrictions should be detailed and the policy communicated to trainers and other relevant personnel.

5.2 Pre-course information

Training providers and employers offering APL will need to provide prospective candidates with instructions on what they need to bring with them to enable authentic, current, relevant and sufficient evidence to be presented to the trainer/APL assessor. Additionally, prospective candidates will require information where there is to be an APL “interview”.

5.3 The selection of the APL team

Centres are required to give due regard to the selection and preparation of those engaged in the APL scrutiny and decision making process. Trainers should demonstrate a broad understanding and knowledge of protective security work and the different training approaches. Centres should consider who will make a decision if there are nuances which need expert interpretation. Ideally they possess the personal skills that enable them to support the candidate to present the best evidence of their skills and acknowledge diversity.

Centres are to identify a named individual responsible for APL and the APL team to have access to flexible learning resources to enable additional learning where required. A staff development programme for the APL team is recommended.

5.4 Assembling an APL claim

Assembling an APL claim demands activities to be undertaken by both the learner and the centre. These activities are to include the presentation of written evidence from the learner; (for example a training or qualification certificate, an authenticated CV, testimonial or job description, assignment instructions) and from the centre a mapping of achievement against the

competencies in the SIA specification and the learning outcomes in the relevant qualification. Examples of acceptable evidence are in appendix 2.

5.5 Assessing an APL claim

The centre scrutinises the claim for authenticity, currency, relevance and sufficiency. Where centres are uncertain evidence meets these four criteria additional evidence can be generated for example through an oral assessment, a written assignment, selective autobiographical account, or a demonstration. Standardisation processes to moderate a claim and ensure consistency are required.

5.6 Accrediting an APL claim

Documentation is completed in line with the requirements outlined in this joint awarding body guidance and the decision recorded and communicated to the candidate. This is to be presented to the awarding body appointed external auditor in line with the individual awarding bodies own external verification/examination procedures.

5.7 Appeals

Training providers and employers offering APL will be required to design an appeals process that enables APL candidates to appeal an APL decision. Existing appeals processes are to be reviewed to accommodate this requirement.

6 Guidance on the use of the recording documentation

APL Application form

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Section 1 Course details

Insert the name of the qualification offered by the awarding body that the candidate will be registered with. Also insert the proposed date of the training programme that they will be attending.

Section 2 Centre details

Ensure that the appropriate awarding body centre code/number is provided.

Section 3 Candidate details

Ensure that the appropriate candidate identification or registration number is provided.

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Section 4 APL Summary

This part of the form summarises the evidence presented by the learner and how it relates to the selected qualification. Each awarding body's qualification has a slightly different structure. It is important to ensure that assessment methodology is relevant within the APL claim. For example, a knowledge based assessment of conflict management would not fulfil the practical skills requirement of the licensing qualification.

In column 4 the outcome of the APL must follow one of the three routes to the achievement of the qualification as prescribed in the SIA core competency specification. Therefore in column 4 the APL assessor must record either a 1, 2 or 3 as described below:

- 1 Knowledge test and practical assessment only
- 2 24 hour (three day) refresher training plus knowledge test and practical assessment
- 3 Full 150 hour training plus knowledge test and practical assessment

A learner who scores a 3 in any of the rows in column 4 will be required to undertake the full 150 hour training. A learner who

seeks to undertake the three day refresher programme must score a 2 or less against every unit/module.

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Section 5 Evidence supplied by the candidate

The evidence supplied must be listed and photocopies attached. All the evidence listed must have been scrutinised by the APL assessor. The documentation must be retained by the centre for the period specified by the relevant awarding body.

Section 6 Signature and date

Both the APL assessor and the candidate must sign and date the APL Application Form. This statement confirms that to the best of their knowledge at that point in time the evidence seen and detailed in Section 5 is valid.

The APL assessor signing the form must hold an appropriate level of expertise and knowledge of the qualification and normally meet the minimum trainer requirements as prescribed in the SIA Core Competency Specification for Close Protection Operatives.

Appendix A: Contact details of the awarding bodies offering the qualifications developed in support of SIA licensing of close protection operatives

City & Guilds

Tom Benson
City & Guilds
1 Giltspur Street
London
EC1A 9DD

Tel: 020 7294 2800

BCUC

Joanne Collins
BCUC
Wellesbourne Campus
High Wycombe
Buckinghamshire
HP13 5BB

Tel: 01494 522141

Edexcel

Jason Clark
Edexcel
One90
190 High Holborn
London
WC1V 7BH

Tel: 0870 240 9800

Appendix B: Examples of acceptable evidence

Evidence:

- Original copies of relevant certificates/diplomas (photocopies to be retained on the trainees record)
- module definitions from applicant's previous educational establishments or training
- portfolio of work/life experiences together with a commentary that explicitly identifies the learning outcomes gained from each experience and the knowledge and skills gained
- supporting letters and/or other supporting evidence cross referenced to the learning outcomes
- CV
- Armed Forces Pampas print out
- Personal Development Plan (PDP)

Indicative and relevant occupational experience:

- Police (specify relevant branch)
- Military; RMP, SAS,
- Ex-doormen
- Entertainment
- Diplomatic
- Witness protection
- Private

Note:

1. Remember to consult the SIA Core Competency Specification for Close Protection.
2. Prior experience alone is not sufficient for exemption against the SIA approved qualifications for licensing under the APL process.

