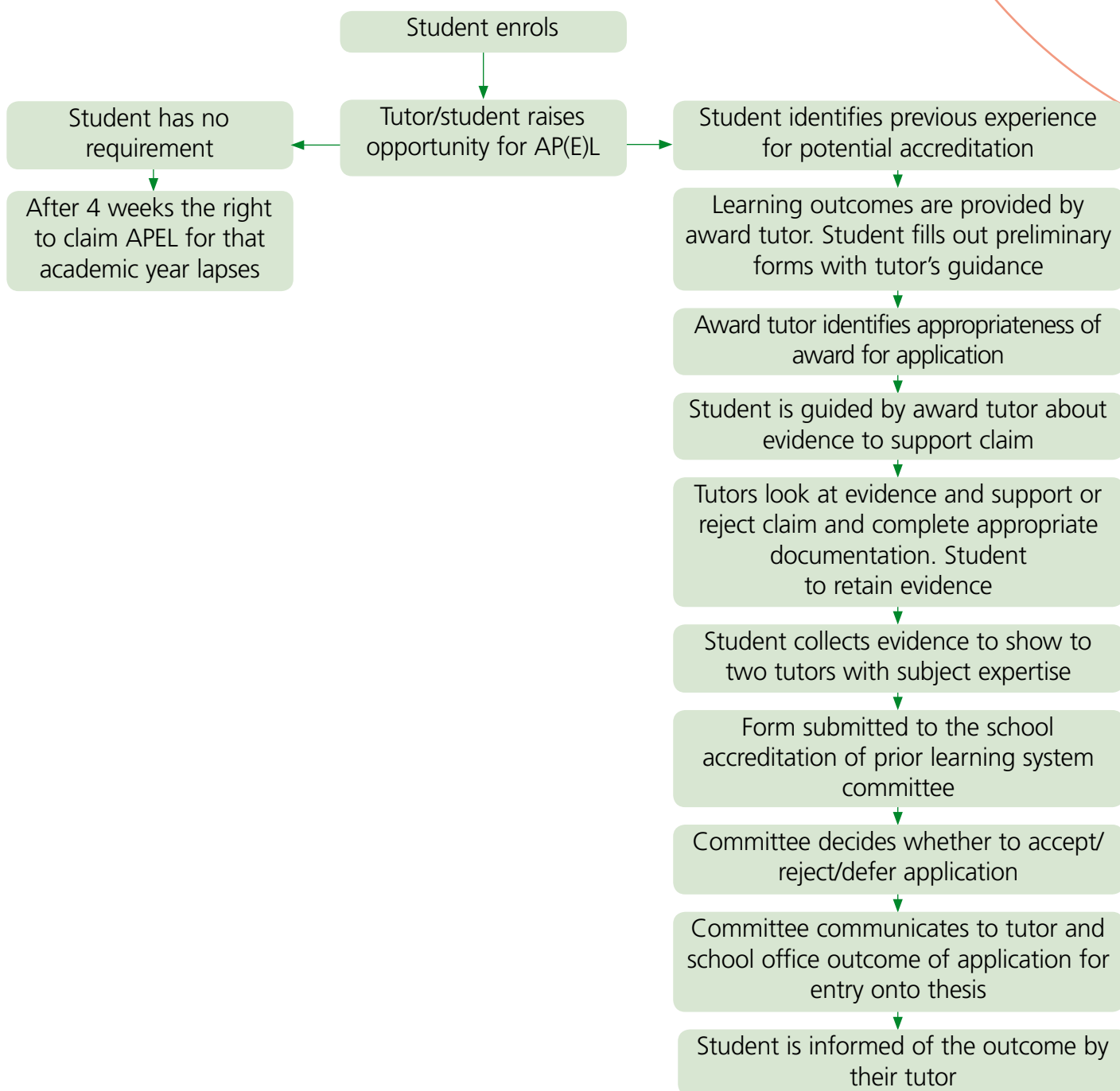


Understanding accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL) procedures

Below is a policy on accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL) procedures for students. This is only an example (provided by Staffordshire University) – different higher education institutions' policies may vary slightly to this. However, this will give you an idea of the procedure and rules that apply to APEL.

APEL procedure

Objective: to identify what prior learning and experience can be accredited towards the achievements of the learning outcomes of an award and to process that accreditation.



Example: A student who wants to use the APEL procedure for her studies at university

Mary is a practice nurse who has worked in practice nursing for about 8 years and has been running a chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) clinic for the past 4 years. She is now doing her degree but does not want to undertake the full COPD module as part of her degree route as she has already done a 10-credit COPD module at another educational establishment, and has considerable experience. She feels she will not learn anything more from the module available. Her COPD module was completed 4 years ago, but was only 10 credits, and the level 3 module at the current university is worth 20 credits. She asks her university tutor what she should do and is advised to use the APEL system. She first has to use the accreditation of prior learning (APL) system to prove that she has undertaken this previous module, and provides her certificate and also the learning outcomes achieved. To fulfil the other 10 credits, she has to use the APEL system to prove that she has undertaken additional learning through managing the patients in the clinics she has been running, and that this has given her the equivalent to 10 credits at level 3. To do this she could provide testimonies from her employer GP to say what she does in the clinics, the level of autonomy she has in running them and how effective they have been. She can also do some reflective writing on patients that she has managed, and bring evidence of the number of clinics she has run, such as examples of clinic sheets that have been anonymised. All this evidence will then be taken to the APEL university board for a decision to be made on whether or not to award the level 3 extra 10 credits from her prior learning and experience, to her current route of studies.