

APEL.A LEARNERS' HANDBOOK

Your Guide to Application,
Assessment and Certification



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**Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning
for Admission**



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Table of Contents

A. Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning

A1. Introduction.....	2
A2. Definition of APEL	4
A3. Purpose and Objective	6

B. Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning for Admission

B1. Introduction to APEL.A	8
B2. Why APEL.A?.....	8
B3 APEL.A General Policies	10
B4 Admission Criteria via APEL.A.....	10
B5 Learner's Competencies.....	12
B5.1 Knowledge and Understanding	12
B5.2 Cognitive Skills	13
B5.3 Functional Work Skills	13
B5.3.1 Practical Skills.....	13
B5.3.2 Interpersonal and Communication Skills	13
B5.3.3 Digital and Numeracy Skills.....	14
B5.3.4 Leadership, autonomy and responsibility	14
B5.4 Personal and Entrepreneurial Skills	14
B5.5 Ethics and Professionalism	15

C. Assessment Methods

C1 APEL.A Assessment Types and Weightage	17
C2 APEL.A Assessment Instruments.....	18
C2.1 Aptitude Test	18
C2.2 Portfolio.....	19
C2.3 Interview Assessment	21
C2.4 APEL.A Assessment for MQF Level 6 (Bachelor, Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate).....	21
C2.4.1 Aptitude Test	22
C2.4.2 Portfolio Assessment	23
C2.5 APEL.A Assessment for MQF Level 7 (Master, Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate).....	23

C2.5.1 Aptitude Test	24
C2.5.2 Portfolio	25
C2.5.3 Interview Assessment.....	26
C2.5.4 Research Intent and Presentation	26
C3 APEL.A Application and Certification Process	27
C3.1 APEL.A Fees	28
C3.2 Document Verification	29
C3.3 Application Flow.....	30
C3.4 Results.....	31
C3.5 Appeal or Resit.....	32
C3.5.1 Appeal	32
C3.5.2 Resit	32
C3.6 Conferment of APEL.A Certificate	32

D. Panel of Experts

D: Panel of Experts	35
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Appendices

Appendix 1: Portfolio Submission Form for APEL.A	38
Appendix 2: Portfolio Assessment Rubrics.....	45
Appendix 3: Interview Score Sheet	47
Appendix 4: Sample of MQA Certificate	48



PART A: Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)

A1. Introduction

The Malaysian Government places emphasis on the importance of lifelong learning as the main agenda in achieving the nation's human capital development. To support this national agenda, the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) introduced the provision of Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) for the purpose of providing access to higher education, which gave birth to the APEL for Access (APEL.A) in 2010. The APEL.A has created an alternative pathway and provided a second chance for those who were denied the opportunity to pursue a tertiary education for various reasons in the past.

Following the successful implementation of the APEL.A for the Certificate, Diploma, Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes of study in 2011, MQA has undertaken the subsequent step to embark on the APEL for Credit Award, or APEL.C, in 2016. APEL has been further expanded from providing access and awarding credits for individual courses to the awarding of academic qualifications with the introduction of the APEL for Award of Academic Qualifications [APEL.Q] in 2021.

The APEL in Malaysia is underpinned by the following core principles:-

- ① Prior experiential learning should be recognized regardless of how and where it was obtained, provided it is related to learning or a form of competency acquisition.
- ① Assessment will be based on authentic, flexible, current and reliable evidence.
- ① Assessment will be conducted by practitioners/ experts in the subject or related field.
- ① The method of assessment will be tailored to the level and experience of the learners, thus, providing an opportunity for learners to demonstrate their acquired competencies.
- ① Decisions of the APEL assessments should be transparent and subject to appeal and review.
- ① Information and support services will be actively publicized, taking into account the diversity of the students.
- ① Quality assurance mechanisms should be clear and transparent.

With the complete growth of the APEL family (APEL.A, APEL.C and APEL.Q) in Malaysia, MQA has reviewed its policies and procedures of the APEL.A implemented a decade ago. Following to the review, APEL.A is now extended to international applicants, fully research-based programmes at the Master's level and the different modes of programmes at the Doctorate level.

In response to the globalised and rapidly changing nature of the knowledge economy which demands continual lifelong and life-wide learning from all adults, MQA has also introduced the APEL for Accumulation of Micro Qualifications (APEL.M) to facilitate learners who have acquired the stackable micro-credentials which will lead to the award of an academic qualification.

A2. Definition of APEL

Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL):

APEL is a systematic process that involves the identification, documentation and assessment of prior experiential learning, i.e., knowledge, skills and attitudes, to determine the extent to which an individual has achieved the desired learning outcomes, for access to a programme of study and/or award of credits.



Accreditation of prior experiential learning for the purposes of admission/ access into a programme of study under the various Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF) levels.



Accreditation of prior experiential learning for the purposes of awarding credits for courses within a programme of study.



Accreditation of prior experiential learning for the purposes of obtaining the award of qualifications under the various Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF) levels through the completion of unbundled or stand-alone micro-credentials.



Accreditation of prior experiential learning for the purposes of awarding qualifications under the various Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF) levels.

APEL process generally involves the assessment of experiential learning, including those which have not previously been assessed or credit rated. This learning may be acquired through formal, non-formal and informal means, including formal schooling, work and life experiences, training, independent study, voluntary work, hobbies and family experiences.

Formal Learning

“Intentional learning/ programme of study delivered within an organised and structured context (pre-school, primary school, secondary school, technical college and University) that may lead to formal recognition or a recognised qualification”

Non-Formal Learning

“Learning that takes place alongside the mainstream systems of education and training. It may be assessed but does not normally lead to formal certification.”

InFormal Learning

“Learning which takes place continuously through life and work experiences. It is often unintentional learning.”

Source: MQA. (2023). *Guidelines to good practices: Accreditation of prior experiential learning for Access (APEL.A) and Accreditation of Prio Experiential Learning for Micro-credentials (APEL.M)* (1st ed.). Malaysia Qualifications Agency. p. iii

Examples of prior experiential learning include the relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes gained through:

- ☞ Work experience: fulltime, part-time or casual
- ☞ Voluntary and community work
- ☞ Family duties
- ☞ Hobbies or leisure activities
- ☞ Coaching and mentoring others
- ☞ Attending and participating in seminars, conferences and workshops
- ☞ Attending short courses
- ☞ Fluency in other languages
- ☞ Private study and research any other life experiences

A3. Purpose and Objective

This document has been developed to provide learners with a clear view of APEL.A and to guide them in navigating the process in accordance with the Guidelines to Good Practices (GGP) issued by the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA). It contains essential information on the principles and policies of APEL.A at Asia e University (AeU) and outlines the procedures for APEL.A application.



PART B: APEL for Admission - APEL.A

B1. Introduction to APEL.A

- 🌀 The APEL.A was initially offered to Malaysians seeking recognition of their prior learning for purposes of gaining admission into tertiary studies. After the implementation of the APEL.A for the purpose of admissions to the Bachelor's programme (Level 6, MQF) on 1st September 2011, MQA continued to implement the APEL assessment for the admissions to the Certificate (Level 3, MQF) and Diploma (Level 4, MQF) programmes beginning 1st February 2013. The implementation of the APEL was then extended for student admissions to the Master's programme by coursework and mixed mode (Level 7, MQF) beginning 18th February 2014.
- 🌀 In 2020, APEL.A was expanded to include expatriates working in Malaysia and their family members. Access to tertiary studies via the APEL.A is also now extended to MQF Level 7 (Master) research-based programmes and MQF Level 8 (Doctorate) coursework, mixed mode and research-based programmes. The APEL.A certification indicates the competencies and readiness of the applicant to pursue a particular programme. However, applicants are still subject to the procedures and requirements set by AeU.
- 🌀 As the APEL.A is also accessible for international applicants, they are responsible for ensuring the recognition of prior experiential learning is acceptable to the regulatory bodies in their home countries.
- 🌀 For programmes bound by professional body standards, AeU will notify of the acceptance of students through the APEL.A route from time to time via the AeU website (<https://aeu.edu.my>) and APEL portal (<https://apel.aeu.edu.my>).

B2. Why APEL.A?

- 🌀 The APEL has been identified as a powerful tool for bringing adult learners into the mainstream of higher education by recognizing the relevant skills and competencies that they have previously acquired. The growing body of research on the subject has revealed evidence that the APEL has benefitted various stakeholders, i.e., learners, institutions, employers and the nation.



Figure 1

B3 APEL.A General Policies

- ① The APEL.A is applicable to local and international applicants who do not meet the regular entry requirements imposed by academic programmes at any MQF level.
- ① Applicants applying for entry via the APEL.A must meet the minimum age requirements stipulated for the various levels of qualifications.
- ① Applicants must fulfil the minimum formal qualifications stipulated, for the Master's and Doctorate levels.
- ① Applicants applying for entry via the APEL.A must have prior experiential learning.

B4 Admission Criteria via APEL.A

- ① All applicants are required to successfully complete the APEL.A assessments conducted by the APEL Assessment Centres (Pusat Penilaian APEL, PPA).
- ① Applicants are eligible to apply for admission into a programme of study offered by any Higher Education Provider (HEP) in Malaysia based on the relevant Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF) level of the APEL.A certification. Currently, AeU offers APEL.A assessments for MQF level 6 and MQF level 7.
- ① Applicants must meet the admission criteria for MQF level 6 and level 7, as stated in Table 1, for entry via APEL.A at AeU.

Table 1: Admission Criteria through APEL.A for MQF Level 6 and Level 7

MQF Level	Admission criteria
<p>Level 6 [Bachelor, Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 21 years of age in the year of application. • Possess relevant work experience. • Pass the APEL.A assessment for Bachelor's degree level.
<p>Level 7 [Master (by Coursework, Mixed Mode and Fully Research-based), Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 30 years of age in the year of application. • Possess at least an STPM/Diploma/ equivalent qualification* (or those with higher qualifications, e.g., Advanced Diploma, Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma); • Possess relevant work experience. • Pass the APEL.A assessment for Master's level. <p><i>*For International Qualifications Equivalency, learners may refer to the document entitled "The List of Entry Qualifications for International Student" on the MQA website https://www.mqa.gov.my/pv4/nilai_taraf.cfm</i></p>

B5 Learner's Competencies

The required competencies for the APEL.A assessments are guided by the MQF's five clusters of learning outcomes. Therefore, the assessments conducted aim to ensure that applicants will have the following minimum competencies to pursue higher education:



Figure 2: Malaysian Qualification Framework

B5.1 Knowledge and Understanding

- Knowledge and understanding refer to a systematic understanding of facts, ideas, information, principles, concepts, theories, technical knowledge, regulations, numeracy, practical skills, tools to use, processes and systems.
- It may relate to a subject, a field of study or discipline, as well as to technical and occupational or workplace aspects of knowledge and understanding. It starts with basic general knowledge and progresses to varied, broader, specialised and advanced knowledge, including those relating to sustainable practices, rules and regulations, health and safety, and especially relevant to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and even professional types of programmes.
- The scope of knowledge should include the common everyday knowledge within the environment of learners. This may also be acquired through formal, informal and non-formal learning circumstances-experiences.
- Developing personal values and ethics may derive from knowledge and experiences. Knowledge and understanding enable the learners to relate their prior knowledge in the course of learning and/or work, as well as to expand to related fields. Knowledge provides the basis for applications of all other competencies.

B5.2 Cognitive Skills

- ☉ Cognitive skills relate to thinking or intellectual capabilities and the ability to apply knowledge and skills. The capacity to develop levels of intellectual skills progressively begins from understanding, critical/creative thinking, assessment, applying, analysing, problem-solving and synthesising to create new ideas, solutions, strategies or new practices. Such intellectual skills enable the learner to search for and comprehend new information from different fields of knowledge and practices.

B5.3 Functional Work Skills

B5.3.1 Practical Skills

- ☉ These are generally work skills and operational skills applicable to a common employment environment, such as planning, organisational skills, selection of tools, material, technology methods and procedures. In the study context, it may include study skills and preparations, undertaking procedures, scientific skills, designs, research and so forth.
- ☉ It also includes specialised skills set by specific subject, discipline, technical or occupation-related work skills and professional practices which enhance professional competence. It should include safe and sustainable practices as well.

B5.3.2 Interpersonal and Communication Skills

- ☉ Interpersonal skills refer to a range of skills which, amongst others, include interactive communications, relationships and collaborative skills in managing relationships in teams and within the organisations, networking with people of different cultures, as well as social skills/etiquettes.
- ☉ Communication skills refer generally to the ability to communicate/convey information/ideas/reports cogently and professionally in an appropriate language. The communication must be effective and in appropriate forms, in various mediums, and to a range of audiences and different situations. The ability to communicate in more than one language is encouraged.

B5.3.3 Digital and Numeracy Skills

- ② Digital skills generally refer to the ability to use information/digital technologies to support work and studies. The skills include sourcing and storing information, processing data, using applications for problem-solving and communication, as well as ethics in applying digital skills.
- ② These are the quantitative skills that require learners to acquire increasingly higher levels of numerical abilities. It is acknowledged as an important living skill relevant to study, work and daily life. It may include an understanding of basic mathematics, symbols relating to statistical techniques and so forth.

B5.3.4 Leadership, autonomy and responsibility

- ② This cluster of skills refers to the ability of an individual to build relationships and work with teams made up of peers, as well as the capability of the individual in managerial capacities with varying degrees of autonomy to make decisions or set goals at organisational/unit/team levels.
- ② The individual is also expected to take responsibility and provide accountability, to be confident, knowledgeable, articulate, honest, professional, concerned, resilient, to be a risk taker and to possess other intrapersonal skills including working in and leading teams.

B5.4 Personal and Entrepreneurial Skills

- ② Personal skills are life skills that learners are expected to use daily. They are normally portrayed through enthusiasm for independent learning, intellectual and self-development, or by demonstrating confidence, self-control, social skills, proper etiquette and commitment to professionalism in the workplace. It also includes the capability to plan for career development or further education.
- ② Aspects of character, such as honesty, punctuality, time management, and keeping to and maintaining important deadlines in a work environment, are also important personal skills.
- ② Entrepreneurial skills require relevant knowledge, skills and expertise in key areas of an enterprise. Important personal qualities will include creativity, grit and drive. The drive to be an entrepreneur is considered a personal skill but also requires the requisite relevant knowledge, cognitive skills and

functional skills.

B5.5 Ethics and Professionalism

- ① Ethics and values are important in personal, organisational, societal/community and global settings as they guide personal actions and interactions at work and within the community at large.

- ① Awareness/understanding and respect of ethical, social and cultural differences and issues are important in the exercise of professional skills and responsibilities comprising integrity, professional conduct (professionalism) and standards of conduct (e.g., upholding regulations, laws and codes of good practices or code of professional conduct). A sensitive approach in dealings with other cultures adds value to this learning domain.



PART C: Application, Assessment Instrument and Procedures

C1 APEL.A Assessment Types and Weightage

- ① The assessment instruments that will be utilised to assess the prior experiential learning of the learners for admission into an academic programme comprise a combination of instruments from the following components, depending on the MQF level.
 - Aptitude Test
 - Portfolio
 - Interview.
 - Research Intent and Presentation

Note:

- *Based on research proposal or area of expertise.*
- *Applicable for the MQF Level 7 research-based programmes and various MQF Level 8 programmes modes.*

- ① The assessment instruments carry different weightages that contribute to the overall assessment. The weightage of each assessment instrument for MQF level 6 and level 7 is depicted in Table 2.

Table 2: Assessment weightage for APEL-T6 and APEL-T7

MQF Level Instruments	APEL-T6	APEL-T7	
		Coursework/ Mixed-mode	Fully Research- based
Aptitude Test	30%	40%	-
Portfolio	70%	40%	50%
Research Intent + Presentation	-	-	30%
Interview	-	20%	20%

- ① Learners have to pass each stage of the assessment depending on the instruments adopted for the respective MQF level.

C2 APEL.A Assessment Instruments

C2.1 Aptitude Test

- ☉ A test to assess the readiness of the learner to commence his/ her tertiary education and not whether he/ she is able to follow through with the entire programme of study.
- ☉ The Aptitude Test assessment components comprise the Bahasa Malaysia language, English Language, Numerical Literacy, General Knowledge, Critical Thinking, and digital Literacy of the applicant.
- ☉ Applicants are required to sit for the Aptitude Test at the time, date and place scheduled by the selected APEL Assessment Centre (AeU APEL Centre).
- ☉ For international applicants, expatriates and their family members:
 - the Bahasa Malaysia Language component will not be tested. The number of questions omitted under the Bahasa Malaysia Language component will be added to the English Language component.
 - under General Knowledge, the section on current issues will focus on issues in the global context.

Table 2: Summary of Aptitude Test (Local Vs International)

LEVEL	Category	Components	Questions	Total
APEL-T6	LOCAL	Bahasa Malaysia Language	10 MCQs	40 MCQs
		English Language	10 MCQs	
		Numerical Literacy	10 MCQs	
		General Knowledge, Critical Thinking and Digital Literacy <i>*Local Context</i>	10 MCQs	
	INTERNATIONAL	English Language	20 MCQs	40 MCQs
		Numerical Literacy	10 MCQs	
General Knowledge, Critical Thinking and Digital Literacy <i>*Global Context</i>		10 MCQs		
APEL-T7	LOCAL	Bahasa Malaysia Language	13 MCQs 1 Structured	75 MCQs 5 Structured
		English Language	12 MCQs 1 Structured	

LEVEL	Category	Components	Questions	Total
		Numerical Literacy	25 MCQs 1 Structured	
		General Knowledge, Critical Thinking and Digital Literacy <i>*Local Context</i>	25 MCQs 2 Structured	
	INTERNATIONAL	English Language	25 MCQs 2 Structured	75 MCQs 5 Structured
		Numerical Literacy	25 MCQs 1 Structured	
		General Knowledge, Critical Thinking and Digital Literacy <i>*Global Context</i>	25 MCQs 2 Structured	

C2.2 Portfolio

- 🚫 A portfolio is a formal document that contains a compilation of evidence documenting prior experiential learning of a learner acquired over a period of time.
- 🚫 This type of learning may be in the form of formal, informal or non-formal learning. The portfolio is prepared by the learner to demonstrate that the learning acquired is relevant and specific to the five clusters of learning outcomes outlined in the MQF.
- 🚫 Any forms of learning claimed and acquired by the applicant must be substantiated with documentary evidence, be it direct or indirect evidence as outlined in Figure 2.



Figure 2: Types of Evidence

- 🚫 Applicants should be selective in choosing clear and concise evidence which have direct relevance to the learning acquired. All evidence must be organised and presented based on the identified formal, informal and non-formal learning in a portfolio form following the format as indicated in Appendix 1.
- 🚫 In the portfolio form, applicants must carefully match their prior learning to the stated MQF competencies as described in section B5: Learner’s Competencies.
- 🚫 The completed Portfolio form and its associated evidence should be submitted in a softcopy format via AeU APEL portal (<https://apel.aeu.edu.my>) using the username and password that will be provided by the APEL Centre of AeU.
- 🚫 In addition to the email login credentials, the applicant will receive a step-by-step guide on how to submit the portfolio online. All Portfolios submitted

will be assessed using the rubric in Appendix 2.

C2.3 Interview Assessment

(For coursework, mixed mode and fully research-based programmes)

- 🕒 This is a structured oral interview-based assessment to assess the applicant's skills and knowledge or competencies to undertake tertiary studies.
- 🕒 The interview assessment contributes to 20% of the total APEL.A assessment for all three modes (i.e., coursework, mixed mode and fully research-based) of postgraduate studies at MQF level 7. The interview score sheet is presented in Appendix 6.
- 🕒 Learners will be contacted by the APEL Centre to set the date of the interview.

C2.4 APEL.A Assessment for MQF Level 6 (Bachelor, Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate)

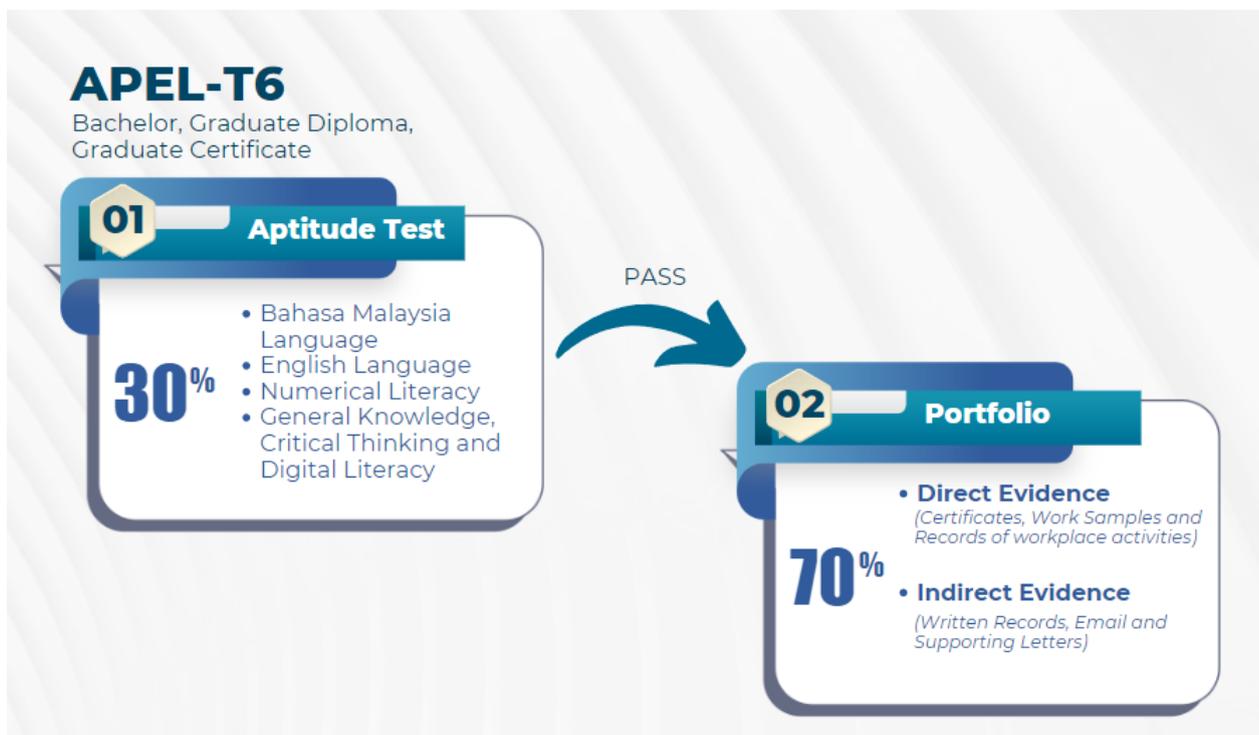


Figure 3: APEL.A Assessment Types for APEL-T6

C2.4.1 Aptitude Test

- 🕒 Aptitude Test is a form of assessment to evaluate the prior learning of the applicant and carries 30% of the total APEL.A assessment for the Bachelor's, Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate levels of programmes of study.
- 🕒 The Aptitude Test will take two (2) hours and the structure of the test is as presented in Table 3. Upon successful completion of the Aptitude Test, applicants will then proceed to the next stage of assessment, which is the submission of a Portfolio.

Table 3: Structure of Aptitude Test for MQF Level 6
(Graduate to Certificate, Graduate Diploma and Bachelor's Level)

Components	Test Content	Structure of Assessment
Bahasa Malaysia Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading and Comprehension • Vocabulary • Grammar and Tenses • Error correction • Spelling 	10 MCQ questions
English Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading and Comprehension • Vocabulary • Grammar and Tenses • Error correction • Spelling 	10 MCQ questions
Numerical Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic descriptive statistics • Basic numeracy • Basic algebra • Problem-solving 	10 MCQ questions
General Knowledge, Critical Thinking and Digital Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General knowledge: current issues, digital literacy and information sourcing • Critical thinking: logic reasoning, classification skills and pattern recognition. 	10 MCQ questions

C2.4.2 Portfolio Assessment

- 🕒 In addition to the Aptitude Test, the applicant will be required to submit a portfolio (either in Bahasa Malaysia or English), which will be assessed by the appointed assessors in the APEL Assessment Centre (APEL Centre of AeU).
- 🕒 If the assessors are uncertain about the authenticity, sufficiency or relevancy of the evidence presented in the portfolio, they may request to meet the applicant for verification or validation purposes in the form of an interview, presentation, demonstration, etc.
- 🕒 The Portfolio assessment contributes to 70% of the total APEL.A assessment for the Bachelor’s, Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate levels.

C2.5 APEL.A Assessment for MQF Level 7 (Master, Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate)

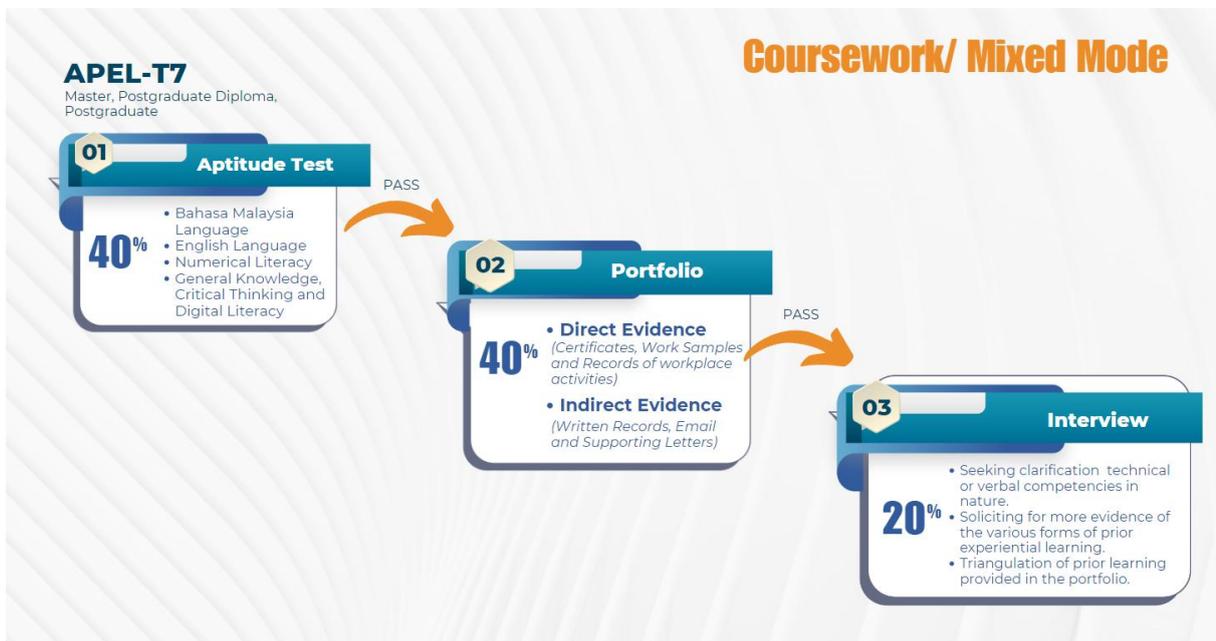


Figure 4: APEL.A Assessment Types for APEL-T7 (Coursework/ Mixed-Mode)

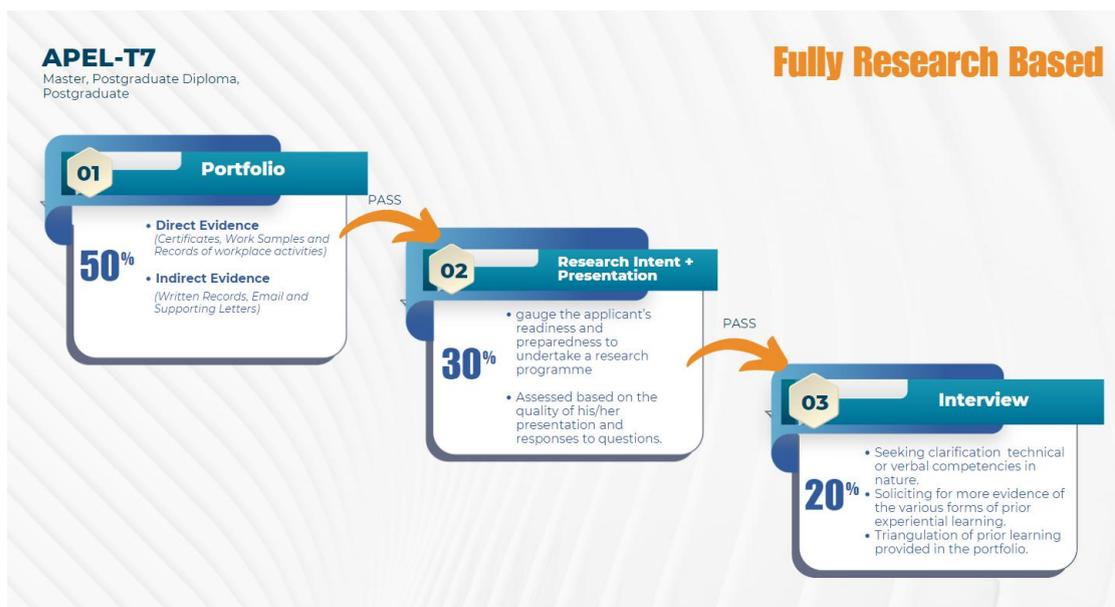


Figure 5: APEL.A Assessment Types for APEL-T7 (Fully Research Based)

C2.5.1 Aptitude Test

(Only for coursework and mixed-mode programmes. Not applicable for fully research-based programmes)

- 🚫 The Aptitude Test carries 40% of the total APEL.A assessment for the Master's, Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate levels of programmes of study. The duration of the Aptitude Test is two and a half (2.5) hours. The structure of the test is presented in Table 4.
- 🚫 As shown in Figure 4 and Figure 5, the aptitude test for MQF Level 7 is applicable for coursework and mixed-mode programmes. However, it is NOT applicable to fully research-based programme.

Table 4: Structure of Aptitude Test for MQF Level 7

(Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma and Master's Level)

Components	Test Content	Structure of Assessment
Bahasa Malaysia Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading and Comprehension • Vocabulary • Grammar and prose • Spelling • Vocabulary • Error correction 	Part A: 13 objective questions Part B: 1 structured question

Components	Test Content	Structure of Assessment
English Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading and Comprehension • Vocabulary • Grammar and Tenses • Error correction • Spelling 	Part A: 12 objective questions Part B: 1 structured question
Numerical Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic descriptive statistics • Basic numeracy • Basic algebra • Problem-solving 	Part A: 25 objective questions Part B: 1 structured question
General Knowledge, Critical Thinking and Digital Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General knowledge: current issues, digital literacy and information sourcing • Critical thinking: logic reasoning, classification skills and pattern recognition. 	Part A: 25 objective questions Part B: 2 structured questions

C2.5.2 Portfolio

(For coursework, mixed-mode and fully research-based programmes)

-  In addition to the Aptitude Test, the applicant will be required to submit a Portfolio (either in Bahasa Malaysia or English) which will be assessed by the appointed assessors in the APEL Assessment Centre (i.e APEL Centre of AeU).
-  If the assessors are uncertain about the authenticity, sufficiency or relevancy of the evidence presented in the portfolio, they may request to meet the applicant for verification or validation purposes.
-  The Portfolio assessment contributes to 40% of the total APEL.A assessment for the coursework and mixed mode programmes, while in the case of fully research-based programmes, it constitutes 50% of the entire APEL.A assessment.

C2.5.3 Interview Assessment

(For coursework, mixed-mode and fully research-based programmes)

- ➊ Upon successful completion of the Portfolio assessment, applicants will undertake an interview assessment. This is a structured oral interview-based assessment to assess the applicant's skills and knowledge/competencies to undertake tertiary studies.
- ➋ The interview assessment contributes to 20% of the total APEL.A assessment for all three modes (i.e., coursework, mixed mode and fully research-based) of postgraduate studies at MQF level 7. The interview score sheet is presented in Appendix 3.

C2.5.4 Research Intent and Presentation

(Only for fully research-based programmes at the Master's level)

- ➊ This assessment mode contributes to 30% of the total APEL.A assessment and only for fully research-based programmes at the Master's level. Applicants will be evaluated on their readiness and preparedness to undertake such programmes by providing details and information related to the areas/disciplines of the research.
- ➋ Applicants are required to submit a brief research intent outlining the information as indicated in Table 6 prior to the presentation/ demonstration.
- ➌ For research related to applied sciences or where it requires laboratory skills, a demonstration of such skills during the presentation will be required at a venue determined by the APEL Assessment Centre (i.e APEL Centre of AeU).

Table 5: Framework of Research Intent

No	Items	Descriptions
1.	The institution (AeU) identified to undertake the research	
2.	Potential supervisor consulted for the research studies	<i>(Supervisor details)</i>
3.	Title of research	
4.	Introduction / Research background a) Provide an introduction encompassing the context, establish the relevance of the proposal and	

No	Items	Descriptions
	<p>provide a discussion of the important studies, theories or frameworks related to the research problem.</p> <p>b) In this section, also briefly provide the research scope, justification and objectives of your research</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Research problem The research problem you will be focusing on and its significance in contribution to addressing an existing gap in the knowledge in the field/making a novel contribution to the said discipline.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Literature review Provide a critical summary of published research literature relevant to your topic under consideration for research. Its purpose is to create familiarity with current thinking and research on a particular topic, and may justify your future research into a previously overlooked or understudied area.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Research plan/methodology Outline the following in brief: a) Methods that you will use to gather your information. b) Theories and techniques you will use to analyse the information. c) Overall research plan from conceptualisation to the writing of thesis/dissertation.</p>	

C3 APEL.A Application and Certification Process

-  An APEL.A certification determines the eligibility of an applicant to apply for admission into any level of MQF qualification at any HEP. Given the fact that the APEL.A assessment may take as long as two (2) to four (4) months, applicants are advised to apply for the APEL.A certification six (6) months prior to the date of admission into the desired Higher Education Provider (HEP).

-  An APEL certification qualifies applicants to apply for admission to any HEP

in Malaysia. However, it does not guarantee admission into the intended programme of study, as each HEP sets its own entry requirements and selection criteria.

- 🔴 To ensure fairness, AeU does not obligate applicants to pursue their studies at AeU. Learners are free to use their APEL certification to apply to any recognized HEP of their choice.
- 🔴 The APEL.A certification processes for APEL-T6 and APEL-T7 are illustrated in Figure 6.

C3.1 APEL.A Fees

- 🔴 The application, processing, re-sit, and appeal fees for all APEL Assessment Centres have been standardised by MQA. Details of these fees, as stipulated in **MQA Circulars 1/2025** and **5/2025**, are summarised in Tables 7 and 8.

Table 6: Fees (Local/ Malaysia)

Fees		APEL-T6	APEL-T7	
			Coursework/ Mixed-mode	Fully Research- based
Processing Fee*		RM 60	RM 60	RM 60
Assessment		RM 310	RM 500	RM 500
Re-sit	Aptitude Test	RM180	RM200	-
	Portfolio	RM100	RM260	RM260
	Interview	-		
	RI & Presentation	-	-	RM200
Appeal (Qualification/ Eligibility Screening)		-	RM100	
Postage Certificate**		RM15	RM15	

Table 7: Fees (International)

Fees		APEL-T6	APEL-T7	
			Coursework/ Mixed-mode	Fully Research- based
Processing Fee*		USD60	USD60	USD60
Assessment		USD310	USD500	USD500

Fees		APEL-T6	APEL-T7	
			Coursework/ Mixed-mode	Fully Research- based
Re-sit	Aptitude Test	USD180	USD200	-
	Portfolio	USD100	USD260	USD260
	Interview	-		
	RI & Presentation	-	-	USD200
Appeal (Qualification/ Eligibility Screening)		-	-	
Postage Certificate**		RM250	RM250	

Note:

1. The fees are effective from **2 January 2025** and may be revised in accordance with subsequent MQA circulars.

* With effect from **15 July 2025**, the processing fee is payable directly to the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA). All other fees are to be paid to the APEL Assessment Centre (AeU).

** The collection of the APEL.A certificate must be arranged directly with MQA. For candidates who require the certificate to be posted, please refer to the procedures outlined in MQA Circular 4/2025.

C3.2 Document Verification

-  Following **MQA Circulars 3/2025**, and to ensure transparency in the APEL.A assessment process, all PPAs are responsible for verifying that applicants meet the basic application requirements through the submission of identification documents and relevant supporting documents for the purpose of information validation and record keeping.
-  Accordingly, the **document verification process for APEL.A applications** must be carried out to ensure the authenticity, accuracy, and validity of the information provided by applicants. Verified documents enable APEL.A Assessment Centre to meet the requirement of valid documentation as a prerequisite for the APEL.A process to help reduce the risk of fraud and document falsification.
-  MQA has established **guidelines for document verification** for both local and international applicants, as outlined in *Lampiran 1* of the following circular: [MQA Circular No. 3/2025](#).

C3.3 Application Flow

Activity	Descriptions	Responsibility
<p>Perform Self-Assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In deciding whether or not to undertake the APEL assessment, applicants will need to consider the fact that it is a highly individualised process which will require the use of their skills, such as self-motivation, reflection and time management. • Applicants must first ensure that the basic admission criteria stipulated in Section B4 (Table 1) of this handbook are met. • Applicants must also assess the relevancy of their prior learning experience. This is to determine whether their prior learning experience correlates with the competencies stipulated in Section B5: Learner’s Competencies. • Upon the personal self-assessment conducted, if the applicant feels that he/she has the capability and is prepared to undertake the tertiary study at the specific MQF level qualification, then the applicant may proceed to apply for the APEL.A on the MQA APEL portal. 	<p>Applicant</p>
<p>Apply in MQA Portal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon successful completion of the Self-Assessment, applicants will apply for the APEL.A on the APEL.A portal of the MQA website: https://www2.mqa.gov.my/APEL/ • Go to ‘Permohonan’ → ‘Permohonan Sebagai Calon APEL.A’. You can click on the ‘Tatacara Permohonan APEL.A’ button for further steps. • Upon receiving the application, MQA will inform applicants of their status based on admission criteria and notify the chosen 	<p>Applicant</p>

Activity	Descriptions	Responsibility
	APEL Assessment Centre (AeU) about applications that meet the criteria.	
Apply at PPA (AeU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AeU will then contact the applicant to proceed with the APEL.A application on the APEL portal of the PPA. 	Applicant
Screening of Application Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once the applicant meets the APEL requirements and completes payment, the APEL Centre will register the applicant in the APEL.A system and issues the login details. • For APEL T-7 applications, applicants who fail the screening at the APEL Assessment Centre (AeU) may appeal directly to MQA, in accordance with the procedures outlined in MQA Circular 5/2025. 	<p>APEL Centre</p> <p>Applicant</p>
APEL.A Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants must undertake the APEL.A Assessment according to their MQF level (APEL T-6 or APEL T-7), as outlined in Section C3: Assessment Instruments. • Results will be notified by AeU after the completion of the APEL.A assessment. • In the event of failure, applicants may appeal for a review or opt to resit (see Sections C3.4 – C3.6). The appeal process is illustrated in Figure 7. 	Applicant/ APEL Centre

C3.4 Results

- 🕒 Upon completion of the APEL.A assessments, the APEL Assessment Centre will notify the applicants of the outcome of the assessment.
- 🕒 At any stage of the assessment process, AeU must ensure that the outcomes and results are announced in a timely manner to the applicants.

C3.5 Appeal or Resit

- 🕒 If an applicant fails any assessment instrument, they may appeal or resit. A fee, set by MQA, applies for each attempt. See Tables 7 and 8 for local and international resit fees.

C3.5.1 Appeal

- 🕒 The applicant who is not satisfied with the decision of the APEL assessment result can submit a written appeal to the AeU APEL Centre by providing the grounds for the appeal. The appeal must be submitted within one (1) week from the date of the official announcement of the result.
- 🕒 A different Assessor will be appointed to evaluate the merit of the appeal.

C3.5.2 Resit

- 🕒 The applicant who failed the aptitude test can only resit the **aptitude test for a maximum of 2 attempts**. If the applicant still fails at the second attempt, the applicant must wait for a minimum of three (3) months before resitting for the third time.
- 🕒 Applicants who have failed the portfolio assessment may resubmit the portfolio for reassessment. However, this resubmission can only be made at least six (6) months after the notification date of the APEL.A result.
- 🕒 Applicants who have failed the **APEL T-7** interview assessment are required to review and resubmit the portfolio for reassessment and are required to resit for the interview.
- 🕒 The decision of the University Exam Board/ Senate of the University shall be final. The APEL Centre shall inform the learner of the outcome of the appeal.

C3.6 Conferment of APEL.A Certificate

- 🕒 The APEL Certificate will be issued by MQA. The collection of the APEL.A certificate must be arranged directly with MQA. For candidates who require the certificate to be posted, please refer to the procedures outlined in [MQA Circular 4/2025](#).
- 🕒 This APEL.A certificate will enable the applicants to apply for admission into the related MQF level of study in **any higher education institution** in Malaysia. The certificate issued by MQA will state the name of the institution, the MQF level of the programme and the related discipline.

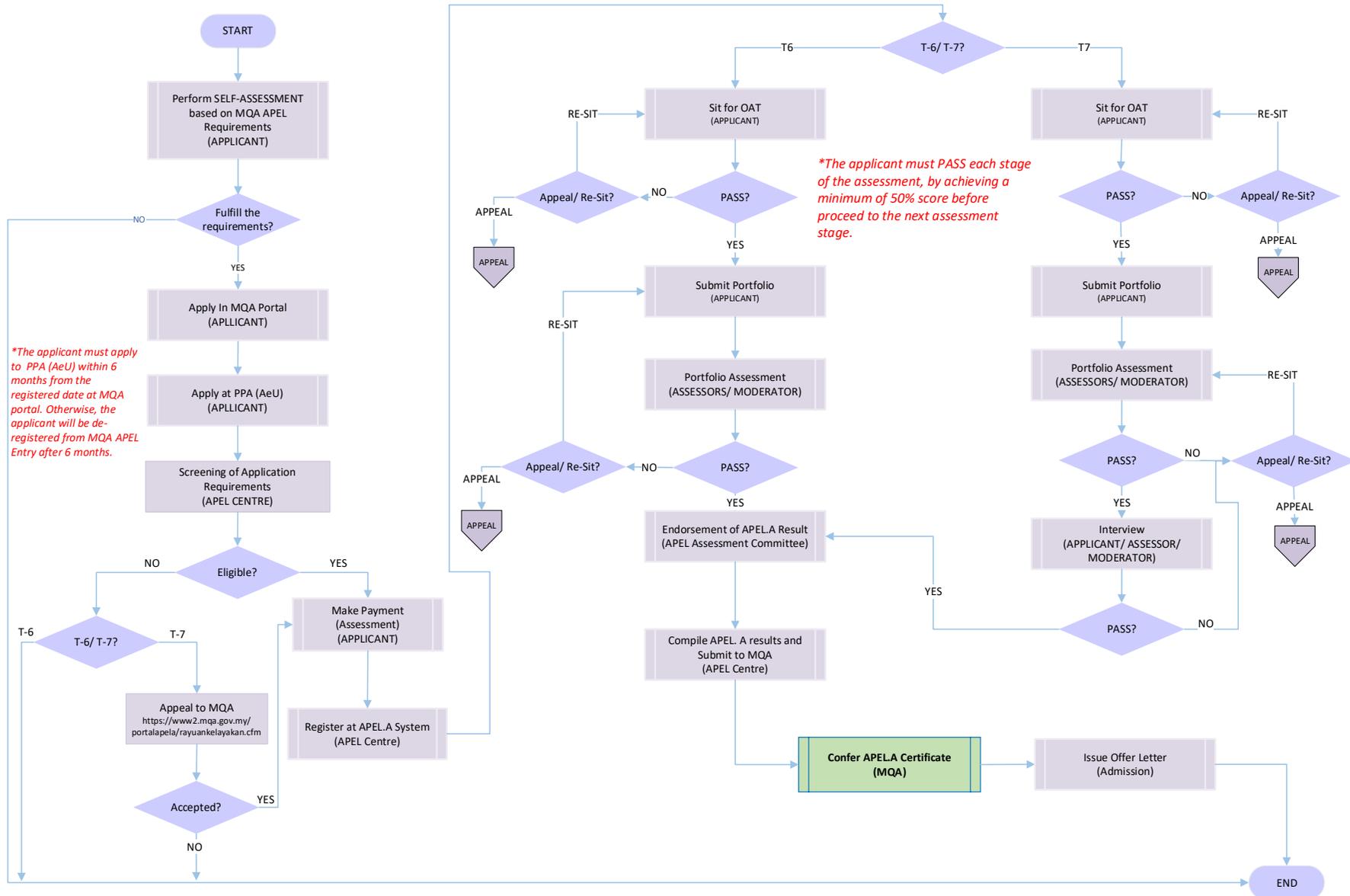


Figure 3: APEL.A Application Process

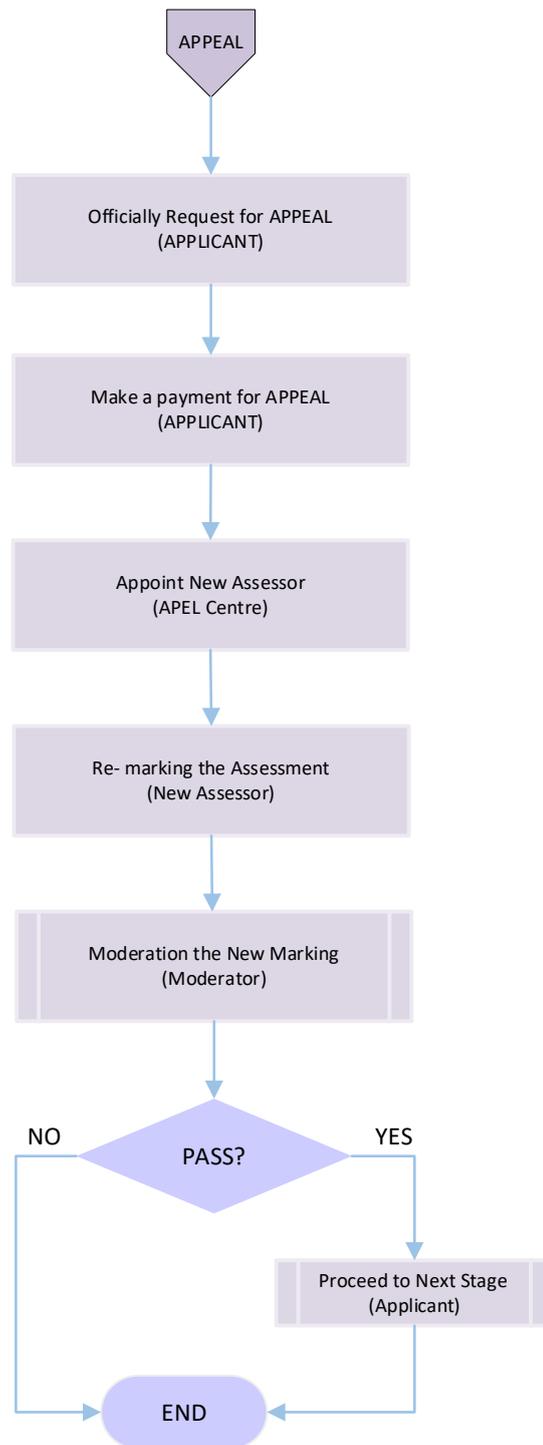


Figure 7: APEL.A Appeal Process

D: Panel of Experts

- ① The panel of experts, consisting of assessors or moderators, are important stakeholders who safeguard the integrity and credibility of APEL.A assessments. These specialists are crucial in developing and executing the respective assessment instruments.
- ① To fulfil their responsibilities, the panel of experts must be well-versed in the procedures and understand the content-related principles and requirements of the assessments. AeU will ensure that they have completed relevant training courses on APEL.A policies, procedures and assessments before assuming their roles as Assessors or Moderators.
- ① According to the established procedure, the assessment instruments for an application for the APEL.A Portfolio, Research Intent (if applicable) and Presentation as well as Interview, must be assessed by two (2) assessors (comprising subject matter expert and instrument expert). This is to ensure the reliability of the assessment instruments.
- ① The main duties of an Assessor are:
 - to perform an objective assessment based on the relevant assessment instruments, learning outcomes and the respective assessment criteria.
 - to ensure and respect the provision of constructive feedback that is understandable to the learners.
- ① Apart from professional and methodical competence, the attitudes and value judgments of the panel of experts may also influence the quality of the assessment. Therefore, the APEL Centre will ensure independent and impartial assessment is carried out. The independence and impartiality of assessors would encompass one or all of the following:
 - The assessor has no direct conflict of interest with respect to the learners, e.g., the assessor is the employer of the learner, or the assessor is a direct competitor of the learner who may obstruct the accessibility to recognise the prior experiential learning of the learner.
 - If the assessor has background information on the competencies/skills of the learner but this information is not provided in the documentation submitted by the learner, then the assessor will need to disregard such prior information in making the decision during the assessment.
 - The assessor is not influenced by his/her personal attitude towards

the activities of the learner (e.g., the learner is a representative of a different school of thought).

- ② Besides the Assessors, APEL Centre of AeU will appoint Moderators with appropriate competencies to ensure the validity and reliability of the assessment instruments. All the assessments /instruments developed, as well as the evaluated learner's assessments, must be moderated by the appointed Moderator. This is to ensure that the assessment materials/instruments are in line with the level of study,
- ② If the difference in marks between the first and second assessor is 10% or less of the total marks, the final grade will be the average of both assessors' marks.
- ② If the difference exceeds 10% of the total marks, a moderator will be appointed to re-evaluate the assessment. The final grade will then be the average of the marks given by the first assessor, second assessor, and moderator

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Portfolio Submission Form for APEL.A

	
<p>PORTFOLIO SUBMISSION FORM FOR APEL.A</p>	

Recent Photo

PART 1: PERSONAL DETAILS

Full name				
Identify card (IC)/ Passport number				
Intended field of study				
Intended Programme				
MQF Level/ Level of Study		Certificate (L3)		Master's Degree (L7)
		Diploma (L4)		Doctoral Degree (L8)
		Bachelor's Degree (L6)		
Reference Number				

PART 2: DETAILS OF LEARNING ACQUIRED *(start with the most recent)*

(A) FORMAL LEARNING

Intentional learning/ programme of study acquired in a structured context (primary school, secondary school, college or university) that led to a formal recognition/ a recognized academic qualification.

NO.	ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION	AWARDING BODY / INSTITUTION	YEAR AWARDED	COMPETENCY (Please tick)						EVIDENCE OF LEARNING
				1	2	3	4	5	6	
1	Certificate	Majlis Peperiksaan Malaysia (MPM)	1995							e.g AppendixA (STPM certificate)

(B) INFORMAL LEARNING

Learning takes place continuously through life and work experiences. It is often unintentional learning.

NAME OF EMPLOYER /SELF EMPLOYED	CONTACT ADDRESS	DURATION (MONTH & YEAR)		POSITION(S) HELD	WHAT I HAVE LEARNT/ ACQUIRED (Please tick)						EVIDENCE OF LEARNING
		FROM	TO		1	2	3	4	5	6	
e.g 1 : XYZ Company	No. 123, Batu 3, Shah Alam	May 2000	April2005	Floor Supervisor							
e.g 2: XYZ Company	No. 123, Batu 3, Shah Alam	May 2005	Disember 2006	Shift Manager							
3.											
4.											
5.											
6.											

OTHER ACTIVITIES This may include your hobbies/ sports/ recreation/ social/ community service/ training given/ consultancy services or otheractivities which might be relevant to the competencies.	YEAR	WHAT I HAVE LEARNT/ ACQUIRED						EVIDENCE OF LEARNING
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
e.g: Marshall Of Local Cycling Club	1990 - PRESENT							Planning and Managing Club Activities.
2.								
3.								

C) NON-FORMAL LEARNING

Learning takes place alongside the mainstream systems of education and training. It may have been assessed but does not normally lead to a formal certification.

NO	NAME/ TITLE OF TRAINING OR COURSE, etc.	ORGANISER	DATE OF COMPLETION	DURATION (Hours/ Days/ Months)	WHAT I HAVE LEARNT/ ACQUIRED						EVIDENCE OF LEARNING
					1	2	3	4	5	6	
			2.								
			3.								

D) LANGUAGE COMPETENCY

LANGUAGE	LEVEL OF COMPETENCY 1: POOR; 2: AVERAGE 3: GOOD; 4: EXCELLENT															
	LISTENING				READING				SPEAKING				WRITING			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
BM								√				√				√
2.																
3.																
4.																

E) SELF-ASSESSMENT/ REFLECTION

Describe your prior learning experiences prepare you for the intended level of study (at least 500 word)

Questions	Reflection
<p>1. Why do you want to pursue this intended programme of study?</p>	
<p>2. How is your personal prior learning experience applicable to/related to/relevant to your chosen programme and level of study?</p> <p><i>(You may provide your description based on how your prior experiential learning has improved your knowledge, skills set, professionalism, communication, leadership, problem-solving, etc.)</i></p>	
<p>3. How will the completion of this programme help you in your work/personal life?</p>	
<p>4. What are your action plans to ensure the successful completion of your programme? <i>(Commitment, time management, financial resources and support, etc.)</i></p>	

PART 4: REFEREES (*Family members and relatives cannot serve as referees*)

Name		
Position		
Organisation		
Phone number	OFFICE: <i>(compulsory)</i>	MOBILE: <i>(compulsory)</i>
Email address		

Name		
Position		
Organisation		
Phone number	OFFICE: <i>(compulsory)</i>	MOBILE: <i>(compulsory)</i>
Email address		

DECLARATION:

I hereby declare that all the information/ documents provided to support this application are authentic, true and accurate. I fully understand the Terms and Conditions of the application and agree Asia e University reserves the right to reject my application if proven otherwise.

Signature : _____

Name :

Date :

Appendix 3: Interview Score Sheet

APOLA INTERVIEW SCORE SHEET (½ HOUR)

Maximum Score: 20%

Name of Applicant: **Muhammad Bin Abdulah**
 ICJ Passport No: **8200001-7182**
 MQP Level: **T1 Master's Degree**
 Intended Programme: **Master in Information & Communication Technology Management**

Rating scale for scoring	1	2	3	4	5
	Poor	Below Average	Average	Good	Excellent

Objectives:

1. Seeking clarification or competencies that are individual or verbal in nature
2. Seeking for more evidence of the various forms of prior experiential learning
3. Triangulation of prior learning provided in the portfolio

Scoring Criteria MQP Cluster of Learning Outcomes	Sample Questions	Max Score	Score Awarded
CLUSTER 1 Knowledge and Understanding	a) Which experiential learning has been the most valuable to you and why? Please use the strategies and techniques you describe when commenting about you? b) What do you see as the major benefit of your time at study, and have you done any research on this? c)	5	5
CLUSTER 2 Cognitive Skills	a) How are you going to cope with the new assignments or tasks and your personal responsibilities/commitments? b) Do you know what are the requirements to complete the intended c) How do you intend to do any research/engagement in the programme? d) How do you intend to complete the research tasks/proj ect/assignment? e) Tell us about a literature you had to cope with strict deadlines or time demands. How did you resolve this challenge? f) How do you deal with stress in assignments?	5	4
CLUSTER 3 Functional Work Skills	a) Based on your personal work experience, under which conditions you would need to work in teams, and under which circumstances you would need to work independently? b) If you are successful in getting admission into the University, what are your plans to ensure the completion of study? c) How would you take part in the following areas: (i) Reading and Comprehension (ii) Analytical and Digital Skills (iii) Communication – oral, written and listening	5	4
CLUSTER 4 Personal/Entrepreneurial Skills	a) How do you intend to manage your time and other personal commitments, and social and paid work experiences? b) How are you planning life experiences? c) What are your career aspirations? d) How would your commitments in the university affect your programme? e) What research accomplishments or achievements are you most proud of? Please use them to support comments in your file? f)	5	3
CLUSTER 5 Ethics and Professionalism	a) How do you manage stress and competing priorities in your life? b) Please use your work for preparation c) Describe a specific incident where you were asked to do something unethical. Describe on how you handled the situation and why you responded the way you did.	5	4
Total		25	20
Average Score (20%)		16	

Comments:

Panel 1 (Inherent Expert)

Name: _____
Date: _____

Panel 2 (Subject Matter Expert)

Name: _____
Date: _____

Appendix 4: Sample of MQA Certificate





Contact Information:

APEL Centre Asia e University (AeU)

 apel@aeu.edu.my

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Level 1, Wisma Subang Jaya,
No 106, Jalan SS15/4
Subang Jaya, 47500 Selangor
Malaysia

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 <https://apel.aeu.edu.my/>
www.aeu.edu.my

APEL.A LEARNERS' HANDBOOK

Your Guide to Application,
Assessment and Certification

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