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Accrediting of Prior Learning (APL)

Accreditation of prior learning (APL) is defined as a system whereby academic credits can be awarded for previous learning that has taken place either through formal courses of study (Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning - APCL) or in other ways (Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)).

Credits gained can be:
- Accumulated - counted towards an award (for example, units of a programme)
- Transferred - to another course of study or to another institution
- Used to grant exemption from part of a course of study

It is the responsibility of Buttercups Training to decide how much specific credit to award you via APCL, based on the level, extent and perceived relevance and currency of the material (both knowledge and skills based) contained within the course/qualification offered by you when compared with your intended course of study with Buttercups.

Exemptions are not awarded for courses/qualifications that were awarded five years ago or longer, prior to the enrolment date for the intended course of study, unless you can provide supporting evidence which gives an account of ways in which learning achieved through the course/qualification has been applied actively and updated within the past five years.

Application process
Your request must be made in writing, enclosing:
- A certified copy of certificate(s)
- A syllabus
- A transcript of the subjects taken, a full record of academic results achieved and contact details of an academic referee at the institution which awarded the qualification

The APL committee will notify you of the outcome in writing.

Buttercups APL Procedure
We do not APL for the Medicine Counter Assistant Course or Level 2 Dispensing Assistant Course where the prior learning has been completed with another training provider. However, if you have withdrawn from a Buttercups course and wish to be reinstated the panel will consider the following:
- Recency of completion
- Currency of information already completed
- Recent and relevant experience
- Potential for retesting

For Level 3 Courses
APL applications will be assessed individually. You must demonstrate that relevant, practical experience has been gained, and compile a portfolio of evidence using:
- where applicable, confirmation by line-manager of job responsibilities and job description;
- a record of achievements
- where applicable, details of specialist training/skills
- contact details of a pharmacist, who can comment on your achievements
- documentation to demonstrate the learning outcomes achieved and your personal reflection of how the experience has furthered your understanding of the relevant subject area
- a completed enrolment form.

You should demonstrate the relationship between the programme specification and your portfolio of evidence, and may ask Buttercups for advice.

The responsibility for assessing APL cases shall be delegated to two members of the Buttercups academic staff who will review the evidence and may interview you. Staff members are Helen Abbott and Emma Seton.
The APL interview may last up to an hour and may be tape recorded to enable interviewers to check the validity of their eventual assessments. The interview will focus on key, relevant learning experiences and you will be invited to give a detailed narrative account of the relationship between your prior learning and your intended course of study. The assessors will forward their joint recommendations to the Director.

Buttercups will retain all records relating to the APL assessment. You should also keep the portfolio of evidence for future reference.

The Director will consider the evidence put forward by you and the recommendations of the assessors. The Director may approve and endorse the APL exemption, inform you in writing and copy the letter to the relevant personnel.

If the Director agrees with the assessors’ judgement that no exemption should be granted, based on the evidence presented, the Director will inform you in writing.

There is no fee charged for review of the portfolio of evidence but if an interview be deemed necessary there is a charge of 120 GBP plus VAT. There may be a reduction in course fee following successful APL but there is no guarantee of this.

### SECTION 2

#### Centre Appeals Procedure

This procedure should be used by learners if they wish to appeal against marking or assessment decisions. Obviously, if you have concerns about our marking decision you will want to contact us immediately. We are available every day by telephone on 0115 9374936.

**Step 1**
We will immediately refer this to the marker (assessor) to see if they feel a mistake has been made. Whatever the outcome this must then be discussed with a senior member of the Buttercups team - called an internal verifier.

**Step 2**
Referral to the Internal Verifier (IV) - The assessor will record all attempts made to resolve the appeal against the decision and present this and the learner's appeal information to the IV within 48 hours. You may be asked to send back your work and feedback. Reimbursement for the cost of postage will be facilitated on receipt.

The IV will review the appeal following receipt of all documentation and discuss with yourself and the assessor. A decision should be made by the IV within 48 hours and a letter detailing their decision will be sent to you and confirmed by telephone.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome or the IV is unable to reach a decision.

**Step 3**
Referral to the Appeals Panel - The IV will refer to the Lead IV and Centre Manager and request a meeting. This must take place within 21 days from IV referral. The IV will make you aware of the date of the appeals meeting and explain who will be present. The appeals panel will always consist of:
- Lead IV
- Centre QA Manager
- Your chosen representative
- Your employer’s representative

(Either the student liaison officer can represent you at the meeting, or you can attend yourself or you can appoint another representative).

Following the meeting the Centre Manager will confirm in writing the decision of the panel within 5 working days. In addition to this every attempt to provide the decision verbally to you will be made.
Confidentiality Policy

This policy relates to Buttercups Training and any information we receive about you. At Buttercups Training we actively encourage individuals to let us know about any reasonable adjustments we may make in order to support students as effectively as possible. There are a number of stages at which you may be asked to disclose personal information, such as:

• When contacting Buttercups Training for information
• During enrolment
• Registration and certification

Enclosed within the enrolment pack is the Data Protection Consent form. This details how your information will be used, you are asked to sign a disclosure form, confirming your agreement to data being held in an electronic database file. You can decide how much detail you wish to provide. For example, you may wish to disclose only that you have a disability, rather than the nature of the disability itself or any other details. If you do not have a Data Protection Consent form, click here to download a Microsoft Word copy (Click here for the PDF version).

It is important to remember that, without your specific consent, information about you will not be passed on. It is your responsibility to decide what Buttercups Training knows about you. Without full information, however, it may be difficult or impossible to support your individual needs fully. Buttercups Training will proactively make arrangements for support to be put in place for students. There may, however, be additional requirements specific to your individual needs of which we ought to be informed in order to be of most help to you.

Keeping Records
Buttercups Training can provide support and advice to students by liaising with your funding body to help with your application, to organise support strategies and assist with a needs assessment. Listed below are details regarding information that may be needed and how this information may be used in order to support you effectively:

1. Course details and academic records:
   • To make your needs assessment we will need these to provide an accurate assessment of your study and technological needs.
   • Your employer will receive reports on your progress.

2. Previous or current needs assessment report:
   • This information is held by Buttercups Training to provide advice and support on study aids and strategies. We may forward relevant sections of this to appropriate personnel in your Workplace or Department to ensure support is provided if so required.
   • A copy is also sent to your funding body to ensure funding is provided if applicable.

3. Personal details (including contact details):
   • It is our policy to empower students to contact relevant internal and external services themselves. If parents, guardians or relatives contact us to discuss an individual's disability and support needs, it is not our policy to contact directly that individual to offer support; students are encouraged to contact us themselves, in complete confidence.

This information belongs to you and is not passed on to anyone either internally to Buttercups Training or externally, without your written consent. If consent is provided, the information is then only shared with relevant professional staff that have a need to see it in order to support you further.

Exceptional Circumstances
Please note that staff will take reasonable action if they believe that you are at risk to yourself or others. This may involve informing relevant authorities or other professionals.

In addition, in some situations staff are obliged by law to supply records to lawyers or the police. Please ask us about this if you are anxious or uncertain.
Storing and Accessing Information
As stated, the information listed belongs to you. If you wish to access your information held at Buttercups Training for any reason, please write to us stating your name and contact details and the information required. Please allow up to 21 days for the office to respond to your request.

In line with legal requirements, information will be kept for a period of seven years. After this time all notes are destroyed or shredded.

If you have any questions about this policy or you wish to discuss these issues further please contact us.

Dealing with Malpractice

Scope of the Policy
This policy is aimed at our customers, including learners and mentors, and staff who are using or delivering the training services listed and who are involved in suspected or actual malpractice.

• National Qualifications
• Buttercups devised courses accredited by GPhC
• Buttercups devised courses

Purpose of the Policy
The purpose of this policy is to set out the steps you, your learners or other personnel follow when reporting suspected or actual cases of malpractice and our responsibilities in dealing with such cases. It is also in place to review those processes which led to the suspected or actual case of malpractice and to support you in any investigations. We will act upon any reports of suspected or actual cases of malpractice we receive about your activities, your personnel or your learners which may affect the integrity of the training programme(s) and quality assurance systems.

We also have a professional responsibility to report non adherence to the GPhC code of conduct.

Location of the Policy
You can download copies of this policy from our website: www.buttercups.co.uk or request copies from our Professional Services Team on 0115 937 4936 or by emailing training@buttercups.co.uk.

We have also signposted the policy in our Student Handbook which is available to use for each of our courses.

Communication of the Policy
It is important that both personnel involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of our programmes and your learners studying our programmes are fully aware of the contents of the policy. Please ensure that you have made your learners aware of the policy.

Review of the Policy
We will review the policy annually and revise it as and when required in response to customer and stakeholder feedback, changes in our practices, actions required by the GPhC or external agencies or changes in legislation. Our review will ensure that our procedures continue to be consistent with the regulatory criteria and are applied properly and fairly in arriving at judgements.

Definitions
Malpractice is essentially any activity or practice which deliberately contravenes regulations and compromises the integrity of the assessment process and/or the validity of certificates. For the purpose of this policy this term also covers professional misconduct.
The categories listed below are examples of centre and candidate malpractice. Please note that these examples are not exhaustive and are guidance on our definition of malpractice:

• Forgery of evidence
• Plagiarism of any nature by learners
• Submission of false information to gain a proxy or a qualification
• Discriminatory, bullying or harassing behaviour
• Unprofessional conduct
• Behaviour likely to endanger the health or safety of the public
• Breach of confidentiality of patients, learners or organisation
• Failure to meet the awarding body or regulator’s requirements
• Falsifying assessment records

**Reporting Procedure**

Anybody identifying cases of malpractice should report them to our Professional Services Team and ask to be contacted by the Managing Director regarding a claim of malpractice. We have to investigate all cases of malpractice in liaison with the parties concerned. If an investigation finds evidence of maladministration, we will have to take the necessary steps to ensure that the learners’ interests are protected as far as is reasonably possible. This may include making arrangements for re-assessment. If the investigation reveals that certification is inappropriate we will have to take the necessary steps to revoke the certification in order to protect the health and safety of the public.

Following contact by telephone, you should submit your own report accompanied by supporting evidence. Reports must include:

• The learner’s name
• Buttercups personnel's details (name, job role) if they are involved in the case
• The title of the Buttercups programme affected or nature of the service affected
• The date(s) suspected or actual malpractice occurred
• The full nature of the suspected or actual malpractice
• Post, email or fax your completed form or report to our Centre Support Team as soon as possible.

Then:

• We will acknowledge your report within 3 working days of receipt
• We will arrange for appropriate Buttercups personnel to review the report and commence the investigation
• We will aim to action and resolve all investigations within 10 working days of receipt of the report
• We will advise you of the outcome of our investigation within 2 working days of making our decision

When we receive your report, we will allocate a panel comprising Buttercups senior personnel and, where appropriate, external advisors such as external verifiers. The panel will review the report and supporting evidence and carry out the investigation.

**The Investigation Process**

During the investigation the panel’s review may involve:

• A request for further information
• Interviews (face to face or by telephone) with personnel involved in the investigation
• Arranging for Buttercups staff to carry out a workplace visit
• Informing the Regulatory/Awarding body. Where applicable, we’ll inform the appropriate regulatory authorities of any investigation into suspected or actual cases of serious malpractice and will agree the appropriate course of remedial action with them. Please note that in exceptional cases, the regulatory authorities may lead the investigation

We will make informed decisions based on the evidence.

We will protect the identity of the ‘informant’ as required.

We will also share information with other external parties, as required.
**Learner Malpractice**

If the investigation confirms that learner malpractice has taken place, we may have no alternative but to impose one or more of the following sanctions on the candidate. Please note that this list is not exhaustive:

- Disallowing all or part of the candidate's assessment evidence
- Disallowing all or part of the candidate's external assessment marks
- Not issuing the candidate's certificate(s)
- Not accepting any further registrations for the candidate
- Disqualification from the programme

In cases of malpractice by learners, you should make your learners aware that their final results may be void if the case is proven and any certificates which have already been issued may be deemed to be invalid and will need to be returned to the awarding body.

If you have any queries about the contents of the policy, please contact our Centre Support Team.

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**SECTION 5**

**Equal Opportunities**

Buttercups Training Limited is committed to a policy of equality of educational opportunity regardless of age, creed, disability or learning difficulties, gender, marital status, race, religious belief or sexual orientation.

Students come from many cultural and educational backgrounds, with a range of differing abilities. We believe in equal opportunities for everyone.

We constantly review our practices and procedures to enable us to ensure real equality of opportunity.

If you suffer because of racism, sexism or disability or if you wish to raise an equal opportunities issue then you can follow our grievance procedures. We also welcome suggestions of where you think improvements can be made.

In order to enrol with Buttercups as a student you need to be working at least part time, as a medicine counter assistant in a pharmacy. Sometimes it just is not possible to undertake the qualification in your field of work and we would hope to be able to give you guidance on alternative courses to help your career development.

Physical disability is unlikely to be a problem for students as long as they are able to work as a medicine counter assistant. If we can help by completing assessments orally or by accepting e-mails then please let us know.

To complete the course you need to be able to communicate well and be able to be understood by patients, colleagues and other health care professionals. You need also to be able to interpret questions clearly. We can help with vocabulary problems and strongly recommend the use of a good dictionary e.g. Collins, Chambers or Oxford. Language difficulties can be overcome by the help of local Further Education Colleges. If you receive additional help in this area we can talk directly to tutors to help them to assist you or investigate the availability of an ESOL adviser.

If you know you have writing problems such as dyslexia or spelling difficulties then please let us know.

Finally, students who leave their employer part way through the course often ask us if they can continue. Unless all assessments within the workplace are already completed then students need to find a suitable placement with a willing pharmacist to continue. Financial matters need to be agreed with the employer if they are paying for the course as most will expect an appropriate credit from Buttercups and this will leave a fee to be paid. You should also be aware that the fee may vary according to geographical area. In the unlikely event of students being dismissed for gross misconduct, Buttercups reserves the right to cease training the student.

Hopefully all this does not sound too complicated - we are here to help and one of our consultants is available for any discussion regarding suitability of the course over the phone.
Equality and Diversity Policy

Our Policy
Buttercups Training Limited is fully committed to implementing policies to eliminate discrimination and promote diversity in our workplace and also for our learners. Our vision is to have a workforce that reflects the diverse make up of modern Britain. Our aim as a training provider is to have students that come from all sections of society in order to be fully representative of society as a whole. Through our internal and external policies, we ensure all staff and learners are respected and given the opportunity to do their best. The right for all people to be free from discrimination gives them a fair chance to do well in society.

We define equality as when people are treated equally in rights, status and advantages according to their needs. We see diversity as embracing people’s differences. We regard discrimination as when people are treated less favourably than others.

In line with our equality and diversity purpose, we will not discriminate on the basis of age, disability, gender, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race, religion, belief or non-belief; and sexual orientation. We believe in equality and fairness for all our employees and learners. If our learners feel they are being discriminated against, they are strongly advised to follow our grievance procedures.

All learners, no matter their length of study, will be treated equally and with respect. The same is true for our staff - be it full-time, part-time or temporary. Our recruitment and also our learner enrolment procedures promote diversity. Selection for both is on the basis of aptitude and ability. Where appropriate, positive action is considered, following the recent changes put in place by the Equality Act (2010).

Our Commitment
• Treat all with respect
• We will not tolerate bullying, harassment or intimidation
• Have all company policies available in a variety of formats
• Train and develop staff and managers - to give them more knowledge of diversity
• Learn about diversity to aid staff development through our association and partnerships with external bodies
• Equality of opportunity - equal pay for equal work, equal treatment, access to employment and training for all
• Fair conditions for working and studying
• Provisions regarding: extended leave, flexible hours, job share, working from home, compressed working week, religious holidays, care responsibilities and career breaks
• We will monitor and annually review our policy to update it due to law changes and make sure fairness is maintained

Law
We will keep up to date with changes in legislation and the policy is based on the new Equality Act (2010) which has unified and simplified UK equality and diversity law. We also pay attention to all relevant legislation that still applies, prior to the complete implementation of the new Equality Act.

These laws include:
1970 - Equal Pay Act
1975 - Sex Discrimination Act
1975 - Equal Pay Act (Amendment)
1976 - Race Relations Act
1982 - Sex Discrimination Act (Amendment)
1984 - Equal Pay Act (Amendment)
1989 - Employment Act
1991 - Disability Living and Disability Working Allowance
1993 - Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act
1994 - Race Relations Remedies Act
1995 - Disability Discrimination Act
1996 - Employment Rights Act
1996 - Asylum and Immigration Act (Amendment)
1997 - Protection from Harassment Act
1998 - Human Rights Act
1998 - National Minimum Wage Act
1999 - Employment Relations Act
1999 - Asylum and Immigration Act (Amendment)
1999 - Sex Discrimination: Gender re-assignment
1999 - Maternity and Parental Leave Regulations
2000 - Race Relation Amendment Act
2000 - Disability Rights Commission Act
2001 - Special Educational Needs and Disability Act
2003 - Race Relations Act (Amendment)
2003 - Employment Equality: Sexual Orientation
2003 - Employment Equality: Religion and Belief
2004 - Civil Partnership Act
2004 - Gender Recognition Act
2005 - Disability Discrimination Act (Amendment)
2005 - Employment Equality: Sex Discrimination
2006 - Employment Equality: Age
2006 - Equality Act
2006 - Racial and Religious Hatred Act
2010 - Equality Act

**SECTION 7**

**Plagiarism**

All work completed must be that of the student. All word processed documents should be signed and dated. The pharmacist should make use of oral / written questions to identify work sent to Buttercups as authentic.

Candidates may study together but all assignments should be completed independently. Copying of other candidate’s work or plagiarism will be considered as malpractice and Buttercups Training Ltd will investigate any potential cases.

Should malpractice be proved the candidate will be withdrawn from the course.

**Student Guidance on the Avoidance of Plagiarism**

Sometimes students unintentionally break rules about plagiarism because they have not fully understood what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. Even if it is unintentional, plagiarism can still be a disciplinary matter. You will be expected to acknowledge your sources and to develop your own ideas and material rather than copy others, and this can lead to uncertainty.

This guide is intended to clear up any misunderstandings that you may have about plagiarism and direct you to further sources of support if you are still concerned, or have questions about your courses.

**Definition**

Plagiarism is the act of copying or including in one’s own work, without adequate acknowledgement, intentionally or unintentionally, the work of another, for one’s own benefit.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating.

It is perfectly acceptable to make use of another person’s ideas or opinions in formulating your own. In fact, building your knowledge and using it to inform and enhance your work is encouraged. But to use another person’s work without acknowledging it, or under the pretence that it is your own, is plagiarism.
**Safeguarding Policy**

Buttercups Training Ltd is committed to promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults as defined in the Children's Act 1989* and the Protection of Vulnerable Adults Scheme 2004**. It is the duty of its staff members to play an active role in ensuring this.

All our staff members are expected to be aware of their duty to report concerns, the guidance for identifying child abuse, what to do if a child makes an allegation of child abuse and issues about confidentiality.

Our Safeguarding policy and procedure is based on the following principles:

- an ethos that promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment where learners feel valued
- liaison with other agencies that support learners, such as social/children's services
- all allegations and suspicions of abuse taken seriously, and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- There are five main elements to the policy:
  - ensuring that Buttercups Training Ltd practises safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and to work with young people
  - raising awareness of child protection issues amongst staff
  - developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases or suspected cases, of child abuse
  - supporting the young person who has been abused
  - establishing a relationship where young people can feel encouraged to learn and develop, so they are able to talk to us and be listened to

*Child or Children:
The Children Act 1989/2004 defines a child as a person under eighteen for most purposes.

**Vulnerable Adult or Adults:**
The Protection of Vulnerable Adults Scheme (PoVA 2004) defines a vulnerable adult as a person aged 18 or over who has a condition of the following type:
- a substantial learning or physical disability
- a physical or mental illness or mental disorder, chronic or otherwise, including addiction to alcohol or drugs
- a significant reduction in physical or mental capacity.

**SECTION 9**

**Student Grievance Procedure**

Buttercups Training Ltd is an organisation that encourages students to voice their criticisms or suggestions for improvement.

Everyone has the right to express their views as long as the equal rights of others are respected. If you feel a sense of injustice or dissatisfaction with any aspect of your course or provider then you have the right to raise the issue.

**Introduction**

These procedures are here to help you resolve any problems or complaints you may wish to raise. The main aim is to achieve a satisfactory outcome. There are many people at Buttercups willing to help you. One of our tutors is always there to help you.

**Helpful Hints**

Contact the Student Liaison Officer if you are not sure how to tackle the problem.

When following this procedure, you may choose to take someone with you for support and to act as a witness if necessary.

Keep a note of the discussion you have at each stage along with dates.

Keep copies of any relevant documents.
Procedures

Stage 1:
• Discuss the matter with the person directly involved.
• If no satisfactory outcome

Stage 2:
• Take the issue to your Course Director
• If no satisfactory outcome

Stage 3:
• Make an appointment with your Course Director (Vanessa Kingsbury).
• If no satisfactory outcome

Stage 4:
• Send a written statement of your concern or complaint to the Director, who will respond to you within seven days of receiving your complaint and will investigate the matter and inform you of the outcome of the investigation.
• If no satisfactory outcome

Stage 5:
• You may ask the Director for the matter to be considered by the Strategic Management Team.
• If no satisfactory outcome

Stage 6:
• You have the right to appeal against the decision of the Strategic Management Team to Buttercups Training within 14 days.

SECTION 10

Extenuating Circumstances Form

What are extenuating circumstances?
Extenuating circumstances are circumstances beyond your control which either prevented you from attending an examination, or submitting part or all of your coursework by the due deadline. It could also be the case that you attended an examination, or submitted coursework, but your performance was adversely affected by extenuating circumstances. Although often medical in nature, anything which is unforeseeable or unpreventable may be considered an extenuating circumstance (for example, a family bereavement).

How do I present details of my extenuating circumstances?
This form has been designed to give you the opportunity to set out the details of your extenuating circumstances. Any evidence in support of your claim should be submitted with the form.

When do I present details of extenuating circumstances?
Claims for extenuating circumstances should be made at the time the circumstances occurred and must be submitted not later than the following deadlines:
• Examination - not later than five working days following the examination
• Coursework - by the date on which the work was due to be submitted

To whom do I present details of extenuating circumstances?
The completed form, together with any supporting documentation, must be sent to Buttercups Training via recorded mail.

What will happen to my completed form?
Your submission will be considered through the appropriate channels and the outcome communicated to you. If the evidence is accepted you will be given the opportunity to be assessed on a further occasion in the appropriate examination(s) or coursework.

Please note that a successful outcome will always involve further assessment in the module(s) concerned; the examiners will not give you additional marks to compensate for your extenuating circumstances.
Extenuating Circumstances Form

Before you complete this form please read the Extenuating Circumstances information above. You must complete all information requested and attach relevant documentary evidence. INCOMPLETE FORMS WILL BE REJECTED AND CLAIMS WILL NOT (normally) BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT EVIDENCE.

Learner Name: .......................................................................................................................... ...

Workplace: .......................................................................................................................... ...

Course / Qualification: ..............................................................................................................

Deadline Date (Expected): ........................................................................................................

Please give details of work not going to be completed by deadline:

Please summarise your grounds for extenuating circumstances and attach documentary evidence:

Please state your desired outcome from this submission:

Learner Signature: ................................................................. Date:..............................................

Manager Signature: .............................................................. Date:..............................................

Please return this form, with enclosures to: Buttercups Training, 1-2 The Courtyard, Main Street, Keyworth, Nottingham, NG12 5AW.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY:
Original Submission date: ........................................ New Submission date: ................................

Personal Assessor/Coordinator Name: ........................................................ Date:..........................

Personal Assessor/Coordinator Signature: ................................................ Date:..........................