



Turn experience into a Masters degree

A guide to a flexible
work-based degree

Contact details:

Telephone: 01707 285552/285584

 @HertsBusAcademy

 University of Hertfordshire Business Academy

A fast, flexible way to learn

A university qualification is all about acquiring knowledge and understanding to a particular level. At the University of Hertfordshire, we recognise that some people may already have extensive knowledge and high-level skills gained through experiential learning linked to their work.

With this in mind, we now offer Masters qualifications where seventy-five per cent of the credits can be completed from experiential learning – which means you can gain a high-level university degree much more quickly and more affordably than via traditional means.

How does it work?

To be awarded a Masters degree you need 180 credits. Our approach means that up to 135 of these can be based on experiential learning, or a mixture of experiential learning and other academic credit from previous professional qualifications and other Masters-level study. This leaves you with at least forty-five credits to be gained from formal university study, which may involve completing particular modules or projects.

What is experiential learning?

This is learning associated with knowledge and expertise you already have, perhaps gained through projects you have led or been involved with. You may work in an environment where your knowledge has recently been stretched and as a result you have developed an increased understanding of the complexities of your job. The learning derived from this can now be assessed and used towards a formal qualification.

How is the learning measured?

By its nature, everyone's learning derived from experience is different, so we use a process called the Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL). This evaluates the extent and depth of your learning to establish that what you know is at least equivalent to the knowledge and understanding you would gain from formal university study.

There are two parts to the process. The first is for you to provide documentary evidence that you have done the things you say you have.

For example, if you have created and implemented a staff training and development plan, the evidence might be the programme guide and teaching plans. If you have been involved in new product development, the evidence might be the plans and documents showing your involvement.

Strategic plans, emails, reports, policy documents, photos, websites, audio / video clips and third-party testimony can all be used as proof of your involvement.

The second part is to write about what you have learned from a particular activity, project or role. This reflective piece will link the evidence to the learning, which in turn will be matched against a set of learning outcomes at Masters level.

Your tutor will advise on the most suitable forms of evidence and how best to present what you have learned. If you are able to demonstrate that your personal journey of learning has been at Masters level, academic credits will then be awarded based on the extent of your learning in relation to the requirements of your academic programme.

Want to know more?

If you would like to talk to someone about our flexible work-based masters and your experiences or if you would like more details on APEL-based courses, including how to apply, please call the Corporate & Professional Unit on **01707 285407** or email **cpdu@herts.ac.uk**.

“ The APEL team at the University made it so easy for me to manage my time and coursework. I had many a time when I could not understand the full requirements of the course, and someone was always on the end of either Skype or the phone to encourage me and explain what was expected. I grew immensely as an individual during my course, and I felt supported throughout. I would recommend this route to a Master's degree to anyone, especially if they have busy lives and busy jobs. You feel part of the family very quickly, and someone is always at the end of the email or phone. I am already considering the DBA route with Hertfordshire University. Thank you to the whole team. ”

Joanne Humphreys

