Agensi Kelayakan Malaysia
Malaysian Qualifications Agency

GUIDELINES TO GOOD PRACTICES:

ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING FOR SPECIALISED SKILLS (APEL.S)

2026

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, copied, stored in any retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including but not limited to electronic, mechanical, photocopying or recording, without prior permission in writing from the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA).

Guidelines to Good Practices: Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning for Specialised Skills (APEL.S) 2026

Published by:

Malaysian Qualifications Agency
Mercu MQA
No. 3539, Jalan Teknokrat 7
Cyber 5, 63000 Cyberjaya
Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia
Tel: 603-8688 1900
Website: www.mqa.gov.my

© Malaysian Qualifications Agency (2026)

Citation Format: Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA). (2026). Guidelines to Good Practices: Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning for Specialised Skills (APEL.S)

All the Agency's publications are available on our website: www.mqa.gov.my

CONTENTS

FOREWORD ..... **v**

ABBREVIATION ..... **vii**

1.0 INTRODUCTION **1**

1.1 Definition of APEL.S 4

1.2 Justifications for APEL.S 4

1.3 Identified MQF Level for APEL.S and its Rationale 6

1.4 Objective and Rationale of APEL.S 7

1.5 Core Principles of APEL.S 8

1.6 Purpose and Objective of the Guideline to Good Practices (GGP) 11

1.7 Scope of GGP APEL.S 11

2.0 POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR APEL.S **13**

2.1 Policy Objectives 13

2.2 Policy Scope 13

2.3 Guiding Policy Principles 13

2.4 Eligibility Criteria 14

2.5 Award of APEL.S Qualifications 15

2.6 Implementation Process 15

3.0 APPLICATION, ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS AND PROCEDURES **18**

3.1 Application Process for Learners 18

3.2 Assessment Instruments and Procedures 19

3.3 Portfolio 22

3.4 Overview of Competency-Based Validation (CBV) 23

3.5 Panel of Experts 31

3.6 Competency Enhancement Modules 36

3.7 Appeal and Resit 38

3.8 Criteria for Award 39

4.0 APPROVAL TO IMPLEMENT APEL.S: FOR HEPs **40**

4.1 Application Process 40

4.2 Application Criteria 42

5.0 ROLES OF MQA AND HEPs **43**

5.1 Role of the MQA 43

5.2 Role of HEPs as APEL.S Assessment Centres 44
5.3 Role of Industry in APEL.S 46
5.4 Summary: Roles of MQA, HEPs and Industry in Safeguarding APEL.S Quality 47
6.0 QUALITY ASSURANCE 49
6.1 Monitoring Process and Periodic Review of APEL.S Processes and Procedures 49
6.2 Integration of APEL.S Provision within the HEP's Quality Assurance Framework and Systems 50
REFERENCES 51
APPENDICES 52
APPENDIX 1: LIST OF PANEL MEMBERS 52
APPENDIX 2: MALAYSIAN QUALIFICATION STATEMENT 53
APPENDIX 2A: APEL.S SELF-ASSESSMENT FORM FOR LEARNERS 55
APPENDIX 2B: APEL.S APPLICATION FORM 58
APPENDIX 3: APEL.S ASSESSMENT FLOWCHART 60
APPENDIX 3A: PORTFOLIO SUBMISSION FORM FOR APEL.S 61
APPENDIX 3B: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF APEL.S ASSESSORS AND SKILL ASSESSORS 68
APPENDIX 3C: VARIOUS FORMS OF VALIDATION INSTRUMENTS 70
APPENDIX 3D: SAMPLE OF ASSESSMENT RUBRIC (PORTFOLIO) 76
APPENDIX 4: COMPETENCIES OF THE FIVE CLUSTERS OF LEARNING OUTCOMES 78
APPENDIX 5: RISK IDENTIFICATION AND MANAGEMENT LEARNING OUTCOMES 83
APPENDIX 6: SAMPLE OF COMPETENCY-BASED INTERVIEW (STAR ASSESSMENT) 84
APPENDIX 7: SAMPLE OF ASSESSMENT RUBRIC (BEHAVIOURAL) 86
APPENDIX 8: SAMPLE OF ASSESSMENT RUBRIC (PERFORMANCE) 88
APPENDIX 9: SAMPLE OF TESTIMONIAL STATEMENT / REFERENCE LETTER WITH TASK-BASED EVIDENCE 90
APPENDIX 10: GUIDELINES FOR APEL.S ADVISOR 91
APPENDIX 11: APEL.S-01 FORM FOR HEPs 93
GLOSSARY 97

FOREWORD

Lifelong learning is recognised as an essential component in driving Malaysia's progress towards becoming a high-income and developed nation. In support of this national goal, the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) established the Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) framework to facilitate access to higher education and to formalise the recognition of knowledge and competencies gained through non-formal and informal learning. This framework enables individuals to convert their work and life experiences into access and credit within the Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF).

The implementation of APEL for Access (APEL.A) began in 2011, providing alternative pathways for entry into Certificate, Diploma, Bachelor's and Master's programmes. Building on this, MQA introduced APEL for Credit Award (APEL.C) in 2016 to extend recognition to course credits. In 2021, APEL for Award of Academic Qualifications (APEL.Q) was established, enabling the conferment of full academic qualifications. In 2023, APEL.A was enhanced and APEL for Micro-credentials (APEL.M) was introduced to recognise and facilitate the accumulation of micro-credentials towards formal qualifications.

In line with the current educational and industry trends, MQA introduces APEL.S (Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning for Specialised Skills) to formally recognise specialised skills and knowledge acquired through work and life experiences. APEL.S offers a structured and transparent mechanism to evaluate and certify specialised practical competencies developed outside traditional academic pathways. This initiative supports lifelong learning, upskilling and employability, while also contributing to Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) by promoting inclusive and sustainable learning opportunities for all.

This guideline serves as a practical reference to support the consistent and high-quality implementation of APEL.S across higher education institutions in collaboration with industry partners. It outlines the key requirements, roles and responsibilities of all involved parties, as well as the assessment process. It is hoped that this guideline will assist higher education providers, learners and stakeholders in effectively applying APEL.S within their respective settings.

The MQA extends our sincere appreciation to all those who have contributed to the development of this GGP: APEL.S. Special appreciation goes to the panel members and stakeholders whose valuable feedback and expertise greatly enriched this guideline. Their dedication and insights have been essential in ensuring the quality and relevance of this document.

DATO' PROF. DR MOHAMMAD SHATAR SABRAN (DIMP, DPMP)
Chief Executive Officer
Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA)
2026

ABBREVIATION

APEL	Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning
APEL.A	APEL for Access
APEL.C	APEL for Credit Award
APEL.M	APEL for Micro-credentials
APEL.Q	APEL for Award of Academic Qualifications
CBI	Competency-Based Interview
CBV	Competency-Based Validation
CGPA	Cumulative Grade Point Average
DSD	Department of Skills Development (Jabatan Pembangunan Kemahiran, JPK)
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
FMM	Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers
GGP	Guidelines to Good Practices
GITC	Government-Industry TVET Coordination Body
HEP	Higher Education Provider
MEF	Malaysian Employers Federation
MOHE	Ministry of Higher Education
MQA	Malaysian Qualifications Agency
MQF	Malaysian Qualifications Framework
MQS	Malaysian Qualification Statement
NOSS	National Occupational Skills Standard
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
PLO	Programme Learning Outcomes
POA	Panel of Assessors
RPA	Recognition of Prior Achievement
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
WBL	Work-Based Learning

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) is committed to recognising the value of learning acquired through different phases of life. This is stipulated in the MQA Act 2007 [Act 679 Part VIII (Accreditation): Chapter 7 Prior Learning and Credit Transfer] where prior learning is an integral part of higher education. This process is known as Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) and is embedded in the Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF). Through APEL, it recognises lifelong learning and enhances social inclusion by providing access to academic qualifications for those who might otherwise be excluded by a lack of formal qualifications or work demands. Increasingly, what makes universities unique is that they are no longer confined to teaching or research but their function and ability to formally recognise prior experiential learning. APEL widens the mobility of student participation, particularly adult learners.

APEL was first introduced in 2011 to assess the readiness of learners to undertake tertiary studies based on their formal, informal and non-formal learning through a specially designed instrument. This mechanism was referred to as APEL for Access (APEL.A). Subsequently in 2016, the APEL for Credit Award (APEL.C) was introduced to recognise informal and non-formal learning, which aims to eliminate the redundancy of learning. APEL.C is the award of credit towards a specific course or courses of a programme.

In 2021, APEL was taken to a higher level in the education world where the learning acquired through life experiences as a source for the growth of knowledge and competencies, when evaluated, can be deemed equivalent to an academic qualification acquired through traditional pathways. This APEL for Award of Academic Qualifications is referred to as APEL.Q. APEL.Q recognises that the learning outcomes associated with higher education can also be acquired from non-formal and informal settings in addition to the formal learning pathway. APEL.Q fits well with aspirations of learner autonomy and the high-level cognitive skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation that are typically associated with working adult learners.

Another development on APEL was the introduction of APEL for Micro-credentials (APEL.M) in 2023. APEL.M is the accreditation of prior experiential learning for the purposes of fulfilling the entry requirements for the award of qualifications through the completion of unbundled or standalone micro-credentials. APEL.M is also an initiative to respond to the globalised and rapidly changing nature of the knowledge economy which demands continual lifelong and life-wide learning of all adults to remain employable, adaptable and productive.

As part of this evolving educational landscape, MQA now introduces Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning for Specialised Skills (APEL.S) as a forward-looking initiative that specifically recognises high-level competencies and tacit knowledge acquired through formal, informal and non-formal learning in workplace and community settings. APEL.S addresses the growing need to formally assess and certify practical, hands-on expertise that may not be captured through traditional academic routes. It aims to empower individuals, particularly skilled workers, technicians, and practitioners, by validating their capabilities through robust and credible assessment processes. APEL.S enhances workforce readiness and supports national aspirations for lifelong learning, upskilling, and improved employability across sectors. In addition, APEL.S supports the goals of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) by fostering inclusive, lifelong learning that equips individuals with the skills and knowledge needed for a sustainable future.

APEL.S is designed to:

a. Strengthen national efforts toward **inclusive lifelong and life-wide learning** by enabling the **formal recognition of skills, including tacit and experiential knowledge**, acquired through formal, work, community engagement and non-formal and informal learning contexts. This includes recognition of high-level, occupation-specific competencies that are often undervalued or undocumented in formal systems.

b. Serve as a mechanism for **bridging the divide between informal skill acquisition and formal qualification systems**, thus promoting **equity, employability and mobility** within the labour market. APEL.S supports transitions from informal to formal employment, particularly for skilled workers, craftsmen, technicians and community practitioners.

c. Provide **alternative and flexible qualification pathways** by certifying skills and competencies using structured assessment methods such as portfolios, practical demonstrations and industry-aligned validations thereby facilitating **entry into higher education, upskilling initiatives and professional licensing frameworks**.

d. Encourage **employer, industry, and professional body collaboration** in co-defining the standards, assessment criteria and benchmarking of high-skill competencies, thus ensuring that APEL.S certification holds value and recognition in both education and workforce systems.

e. **Support national productivity and economic resilience** by recognising and unlocking the value of hidden skills, especially in critical and emerging sectors,

through a system aligned with Malaysia's human capital development goals and global benchmarks for skill validation.

Comparative overview of APEL.Q and APEL.S

Table 1: Comparison of APEL.Q vs APEL.S

Aspect	APEL.Q	APEL.S
Purpose	Recognise prior learning for award of academic degree qualifications	Recognise prior learning for award of skills-based qualifications
MQF Levels	Level 3 (Certificate) to Level 8 (Doctorate)	Level 5 (Advanced Diploma) Level 6 (Graduate Certificate/Graduate Diploma) Level 7 (Postgraduate Certificate/ Postgraduate Diploma)
Assessment Basis	Academic knowledge	Practical skills, technical competence and tacit knowledge
Instruments	Portfolio, Field and Validation Visit, Challenge Test and Capstone Course	Portfolio and Competency-Based Validation (CBV)
Panel of Experts	Academic Experts	Academic Experts and Industry Practitioners
Target Learners	Professionals seeking academic qualification pathways	Skilled workers seeking formal skills qualification

Differentiating APEL.S and Work-Based Learning (WBL)

WBL and APEL.S are both mechanism under the MQF aimed at bridging learning and work, but they differ significantly in structure, purpose and implementation. WBL is *a* **structured learning approach based on work**, while APEL.S **focuses on recognising competencies acquired through** past work experiences.

WBL is a planned, structured learning experience that takes place within the workplace as part of a current academic programme. It is integrated into the curriculum, allowing learners to achieve academic credits by applying classroom learning in real work settings. The learning outcomes are aligned with programme learning outcomes and the curriculum is jointly designed, delivered and assessed by Higher Education Providers (HEPs) and industry partners. WBL is fundamentally about learning in the workplace, leveraging real-time industrial exposure to develop employability and professional skills.

In contrast, **APEL.S** recognises and formally certifies past experiential learning, particularly technical and practical competencies gained through informal, non-formal or formal work experience. It is designed for skilled individuals especially adult candidates or workers without formal academic qualifications who can demonstrate that their competencies meet the standards of qualifications at prescribed MQF Levels 5, 6 and 7. Unlike WBL, APEL.S does not require enrolment in a structured coursework based academic programme. Instead, it involves assessment through portfolios and Competency-Based Validation (CBV), including workplace endorsements and practical demonstrations, to award skills-based qualifications without traditional study routes.

1.1 Definition of APEL.S

Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning for Specialised Skills (APEL.S) is designed to formally recognise prior experiential learning, particularly competencies acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts. These include workplace experience, industry training, community engagement, self-directed learning and other structured or unstructured activities for the purpose of awarding formal qualifications under the MQF at:

i. Level 5 (Advanced Diploma)
ii. Level 6 (Graduate Certificate/Graduate Diploma)
iii. Level 7 (Postgraduate Certificate/Postgraduate Diploma)

1.2 Justifications for APEL.S

The justifications for the implementation of APEL.S are as follows:

i. **Supporting Lifelong Learning and Human Capital Development**
   APEL.S aligns with the Malaysia Higher Education Blueprint (2026-2035) and the National Skills Development Policy under the Ministry of Human Resources. It promotes a lifelong learning culture by recognising the skills of workers, especially those who may not have formal academic credentials but have gained mastery

through real-world experience. Therefore, APEL.S is applicable to the designated MQF levels. This initiative opens up new opportunities for career mobility, access to formal qualification recognition and personal advancement, upholding the key pillars of a knowledge-based, inclusive society.

ii. **Addressing Gaps in Skills Recognition**

In Malaysia, many skilled professionals in emerging fields such as the gig economy, caregiving, digital services and green technology remain unaccredited despite playing vital roles in the economy. APEL.S enables these individuals to receive formal recognition through a structured, competency-based assessment process mapped against the MQF. This addresses skill gaps and promotes equity in access to education and training.

iii. **Enhancing National Workforce Productivity**

For employers, APEL.S helps identify and retain high-performing staff by facilitating recognition of workplace competencies. It also encourages investment in employee upskilling. For the country, this contributes to talent optimisation and greater workforce productivity, which are strategic targets in the Malaysia Higher Education Blueprint (2026-2035) and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Empowerment Agenda.

iv. **Creating Inclusive Pathways for the Underserved**

APEL.S empowers those who are often left behind in the traditional education system including adult candidates, returning workers, retirees, and marginalised groups to gain nationally recognised qualifications and contribute meaningfully to the economy. This supports social inclusion, intergenerational mobility and economic resilience.

v. **Aligning with Global Standards and Competitiveness**

Globally, countries like Australia, the United Kingdom and South Korea have institutionalised Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) systems to certify informal and non-formal skills. APEL.S positions Malaysia in line with UNESCO, ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQRF) and International Labour Organization (ILO) recommendations on lifelong learning, employability and mobility of skills, which are key to attracting foreign investment and strengthening international education partnerships.

1.3 Identified MQF Level for APEL.S and its Rationale

The MQF Level 5 (Advanced Diploma), 6 (Graduate Certificate/ Graduate Diploma) and 7 (Postgraduate Certificate/ Postgraduate Diploma) are selected as they are aligned with skills-based and occupational competencies. In a nutshell these levels:

i. Correspond to technical and para-professional qualifications that bridge the gap between academic levels and specific occupational roles.
ii. Prioritise specialised, applied competencies with a direct emphasis on practical performance and industry standards.

MQF Levels 1 to 4 are intentionally excluded to maintain the focus of APEL.S on advanced and specialised competencies that extend beyond the fundamental technical skills. In addition, qualifications awarded through APEL.S serve as a pathway for academic progression, enabling learners to pursue higher qualifications, including Master's and Doctoral degrees, subject to existing MQA admission frameworks. Concentrating on MQF Levels 5 to 7 ensures that APEL.S remains focused on workplace relevance, applied expertise and lifelong learning, strengthening the bridge between industry experience and formal qualification.

MQF Level 5 (Advanced Diploma)

The MQF 2024 describes Level 5 as providing "learners with advanced specialised knowledge… and leadership skills… to deal with wide and unpredictable work contexts*"*. In the context of APEL.S, this level:

i. Emphasised advanced technical and vocational skills, with learners expected to handle complex and unpredictable work environments.
ii. Suitable for recognising supervisory-level skills and advanced responsibilities often acquired in skilled trades, industry roles and vocational fields.

MQF Level 6 (Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma)

The MQF 2024 describes Level 6 as providing "Intended for professional development, change of field or expertise, or entry into a higher qualification." In the context of APEL.S, this level:

i. Designed for learners seeking technical upskilling or entering a new field with a shorter duration of study than a full degree.
ii. Suitable for mid-career professionals and industry practitioners seeking formal recognition for specialised training or domain-specific knowledge.

MQF Level 7 (Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma)

The MQF 2024 describes Level 7 as providing "Enable learners to acquire or extend knowledge and skills for career development or further study." In the context of APEL.S, this level:

i. Allowed advanced professional specialisation, but with less research intensity than a full master's degree.
ii. Enable skilled professionals with extensive experiential learning to be assessed and awarded qualifications aligned to their actual competencies.

1.4 Objective and Rationale of APEL.S

The objective of APEL.S is to provide a structured process that enables individuals to obtain formal qualifications at MQF Level 5 (Advanced Diploma), Level 6 (Graduate Certificate/Graduate Diploma) or Level 7 (Postgraduate Certificate/Postgraduate Diploma). This is based on demonstrated skills and competencies, without the need to undergo conventional structured education or training.

The rationale for APEL.S is as follows:

i. **Recognition of Competency-Based on MQF Standards**

APEL.S enables individuals to gain formal qualifications not by attending a full academic programme but by demonstrating competencies that match the learning outcomes and level descriptors prescribed by the MQF. Assessment instruments are designed to validate real-world skills and knowledge aligned to the target qualifications level.

ii. **Emphasis on Practical Skills Over Theoretical Knowledge**

Unlike traditional academic qualifications that emphasise theoretical understanding, APEL.S places strong emphasis on the demonstration of applied skills, problem-solving abilities and practical know-how particularly in fields where tacit knowledge and hands-on experience are essential. APEL.S recognises that practical skills must be underpinned by theoretical knowledge.

iii. **Assurance of Academic and Industry Relevance**

A unique feature of APEL.S is its two-tiered quality assurance approach:

a. Academic validation ensures that the demonstrated competencies meet the expected learning outcomes of the MQF level; and

b. Industry validation confirms that these competencies are current, relevant and recognised by sector professionals and employers.

This ensures that qualifications awarded through APEL.S are both academically sound and professionally meaningful.

iv. **Strengthening TVET and Skills-Based Mobility Pathways**

APEL.S provides a structured mechanism to uplift skilled individuals especially those in the high TVET sectors by recognising their contributions and enabling upward mobility. It also supports the national TVET agenda and the transition to more advanced, industry-responsive competencies.

Note: **High TVET** refers to advanced-level TVET that equips learners with complex, specialised and future-relevant competencies to meet the needs of high-skill industries, particularly those aligned with IR4.0, digital transformation and sustainability agendas.

v. **Maintaining Rigour and Qualification Standards**

While APEL.S offers an alternative route to formal qualification, it upholds the same standards as conventional programmes. Only individuals who can successfully demonstrate achievement of all required learning outcomes will be awarded the qualification.

vi. **Alignment with National Education and Workforce Policy**

APEL.S is aligned with the Malaysia Higher Education Blueprint 2026–2035, particularly under Shift 3: Advanced TVET Competency and supports broader national objectives to enhance employability, lifelong learning and recognition of workplace-based learning.

1.5 Core Principles of APEL.S

All APEL.S provisions should be underpinned by, and operated within, a set of core principles. The aim of the core principles is to ensure an effective, transparent and quality-assured practice that will instil confidence in all stakeholders in the outcomes of the APEL.S process. This is also to safeguard the credibility and integrity of the APEL.S evaluation mechanism and instruments. The core principles guiding APEL.S are as follows:

i. **Learner-centred voluntary process**

APEL.S encourages continuous learning and promotes the positive aspects of individual's learning experience. The core of APEL.S revolves around the process where a learner initiates the application for the **award of specialised skills qualifications** through the assessment of the learner's prior experiential learning. It is the duty and responsibility of the learner to provide the appropriate documentation and evidence for the assessment process and to express the willingness to follow through the whole chain of the APEL.S assessment process. Although the process is undertaken by the learner in a voluntary manner, it must be facilitated by the HEPs concerned.

ii. **Accessibility**

APEL.S should be an accessible and inclusive process available for registered learners undertaking fully accredited/new programmes at Level 5 (Advanced Diploma), Level 6 (Graduate Certificate/Graduate Diploma) or Level 7 (Postgraduate Certificate/Postgraduate Diploma) of the MQF. HEPs must develop and implement clear and comprehensive guidelines for the APEL.S process. There must also be adequate mechanisms and resources (human, infrastructure and infostructure resources) made available to manage and support learners throughout the process. Information on APEL.S should be made readily available and communicated to all stakeholders involved in the processes of APEL.S.

iii. **Flexibility**

A range of different approaches shall be adopted by HEPs in the implementation of APEL.S in terms of both supporting services and the rigorous assessment process. This is to address the diversity of needs, goals and experiences of learners across the various disciplines of study.

iv. **Reliability, validity, transparency and consistency**

The APEL.S processes, procedures, practices and decisions should be reliable, valid, transparent and consistent to safeguard the credibility and integrity of the entire assessment system. This is necessary to ensure that all stakeholders have confidence in the decisions and outcomes of the APEL.S processes.

v. **Clarity of role definition**

The appointment of individuals involved in the APEL.S assessment process must include well-defined roles and responsibilities. The individuals involved include:

a. **Advisor**: internal faculty staff (e.g. programme head, coordinator or senior academic staff) who advises the learner throughout the entire APEL.S process from preparation and submission of the APEL.S application to the assessment and appeal stages.

b. **Academic Assessor**: an academic staff member in the discipline of the programme who develops the assessment items to assess the prior experiential learning of the learner. The Academic Assessor will also be involved in the APEL.S portfolio assessment and CBV evaluation. The role of an Academic Assessor should be clearly differentiated and separated from that of an Advisor.

c. **Skill Assessor**: a professionally qualified individual with occupational or industry-based expertise, designated to develop, administer and evaluate the assessment instruments for APEL.S. The Skill Assessor's primary function is to validate high-level practical skills and tacit knowledge acquired by learners through non-formal and informal means, including on-the-job experience, community engagement and self-directed application of skills.

   The Skill Assessor is responsible for the following:

   - Designing skill-specific assessment tools such as **portfolio evaluation criteria** and CBV that reflect the competencies expected in the relevant occupational standards or National Qualifications Framework (NQF) descriptors.
   - Conducting **field assessments**, workplace-based observations or simulations to evaluate learner competencies.
   - Participating in **validation visits** to ensure that the claimed skills are authentic, current and meet the benchmarks required by the certification level.
   - Collaborating with industry representatives, where applicable, to ensure that the competencies assessed reflect real-world expectations.
   - Maintaining **objectivity and independence** throughout the evaluation process and clearly distinguishing their responsibilities from those of **Advisors**, who support learners in preparing their portfolios or guiding them through the process.

   Skill Assessors may come from diverse sectors including **TVET institutions, industry certification bodies or licensed professionals** from the respective skill

areas. Their involvement is essential to uphold the **credibility, fairness and industry relevance** of the APEL.S system.

d. **Moderator**: an academic staff member in the discipline of the programme appointed to moderate the assessment instruments, as well as to ensure consistency, fairness and accuracy in the marking of the assessments by Assessors. The Moderator can be an internal staff member or an appointed external expert.

vi. **Quality**

All APEL.S processes shall adhere to the same standards, rigorous quality assurance and monitoring mechanism as those used in any other formal learning assessment. This quality assurance process shall be made available for scrutiny by relevant external quality assurance bodies or agencies at all times.

1.6 Purpose and Objective of the Guideline to Good Practices (GGP)

The purpose of the Guideline to Good Practices (GGP) is to provide HEPs and relevant stakeholders with essential information on the principles, processes and procedures in the implementation of APEL.S. This GGP acknowledges the different needs or requirements of the various disciplines of programmes. Hence, it is not intended to be prescriptive; rather it provides a range of measures and good practices which HEPs can adopt in assessing prior experiential learning leading to an **Award of Specialised Skills Qualification**. Specifically, this GGP is meant to fulfil the following objectives:

i. To outline the policies on the implementation of APEL.S.
ii. To describe the APEL.S application procedures for candidates and HEPs.
iii. To highlight the various assessment instruments for awarding skills-based qualifications.
iv. To explain the roles of MQA and all the relevant stakeholders of the HEPs in administering APEL.S.
v. To emphasise on the quality assurance aspects of APEL.S.

1.7 Scope of GGP APEL.S

This GGP is only meant for the consideration of the **Award of Specialised Skills Qualification** through recognition of prior experiential learning which may comprise formal, non-formal or informal learning. It is of paramount importance that this document is read

together with other quality assurance documents and policies set by MQA and MOHE. These documents may include, but are not limited to:

i. The Malaysian Qualifications Framework
ii. Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) and MQA Policies on Credit Transfer
iii. Guidelines to Good Practices: Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (GGP: APEL)
iv. Other relevant quality assurance documents developed by MQA and the MOHE from time to time.

2.0 POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR APEL.S

2.1 Policy Objectives

This policy establishes the framework for recognising and accrediting prior experiential learning and work-based training for the award of **specialised skills-based qualifications** under the MQF. It seeks to provide an alternative, structured pathway for individuals to obtain formal recognition of skills acquired outside the traditional academic system.

2.2 Policy Scope

This policy is applicable to:

i. skills-based qualifications, professional diplomas, and TVET-related qualifications accredited under the MQF.
ii. individuals with substantial prior learning gained through formal, informal, non-formal or workplace-based settings including self-directed learning and industry-based experiences.

2.3 Guiding Policy Principles

The implementation of APEL.S shall be governed by the following principles:

i. **Inclusivity**
APEL.S shall be open to all candidates regardless of their educational background.

ii. **Equity and Fairness**
Assessment processes must be evidence-based, unbiased and applied consistently across all institutions.

iii. **Transparency**
Participating institutions shall adopt clear, standardised procedures to ensure applicants understand the requirements and expectations.

iv. **Quality Assurance**
All assessments must be aligned with MQF's level descriptors and adhere to MQA's quality assurance standards and guidelines.

v. **Outcome-Based**

Recognition and award of qualifications shall be based on demonstrated achievement of the programme learning outcomes of the targeted skills-based qualifications.

2.4 Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must meet the minimum eligibility criteria set by the MQA to apply for APEL.S at the designated MQF Levels. These include:

i. Malaysian and non-Malaysian candidates.
ii. Formally registered as an APEL.S candidate at a Higher Education Provider (HEP) in Malaysia.
iii. Fulfil the minimum age and minimum years of working experience in the relevant field as outlined in Table 2.

Table 2: Minimum age and years of work experience in the relevant field required at the following MQF levels

MQF Level	Qualification Award Based on Lifelong Learning	Minimum Age of Applicant Inclusive of Relevant Work Experience	Minimum Years of Relevant Work Experience Included within the Minimum Age Requirement
5	Advanced Diploma	25	4
6	Graduate Certificate Graduate Diploma	27	6
7	Postgraduate Certificate Postgraduate Diploma	32	8

Note:

i. For eligibility purposes, the minimum age specified in Table 2 accounts for the required years of relevant work experience.

ii. Candidates, **who do not meet the minimum age or minimum years of work experience in relevant field** stated above but with exceptional prior experiential

learning or skills, can be considered on a case-by-case basis by the highest academic body of the HEP (e.g. Senate).

iii. This clause is intended to provide limited and strictly regulated flexibility for candidates who demonstrate outstanding, documented, and verifiable competencies, even if they have not met the prescribed minimum age threshold for APEL.S applications.

2.5 Award of APEL.S Qualifications

i. Qualifications under the MQF at Level 5 (Advanced Diploma), Level 6 (Graduate Certificate/Graduate Diploma) and Level 7 (Postgraduate Certificate/Postgraduate Diploma) may be awarded based on demonstrated specialised skills and competencies without the need to undergo structured education or training.
ii. HEPs are required to apply for the APEL.S qualification award from MQA, in collaboration with industries, before the award can be granted to learners.
iii. The assessment shall consist of two major instruments which are evaluated in the following sequence:
    a. Portfolio submission
    b. Competency-Based Validation (CBV)
iv. Programmes that are under the purview of professional bodies may be considered for APEL.S, subject to acceptance by the relevant professional bodies. HEPs shall be responsible for securing such approval from the professional bodies.

2.6 Implementation Process

i. The APEL.S approval granted to HEPs is programme-based.
ii. Candidates may apply for APEL.S at any time during the year (subject to institutional regulation).
iii. Candidates must first submit their APEL.S applications through the MQA portal, which serves as the focal point for all APEL.S applications.
iv. Candidates are permitted to apply for APEL.S at only one MQA-approved HEP at any given time.
v. Candidates can reapply for APEL.S at the same HEP or at another approved APEL.S HEP after a lapse period to be determined by MQA.
vi. Assessments should be outcome-based, focusing on the skill set and competencies of the programme.

vii. Assessment for APEL.S should be carried out separately for each programme, where each application is specific for the award of one skills-based qualification.

viii. The awarding HEP will issue the scroll together with the academic transcript. This transcript will state the APEL.S assessment instruments and depict the Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA), obtained by learners who have been awarded the academic qualifications via APEL.S. The transcript shall be supplemented with the Malaysian Qualification Statement (MQS) as per **Appendix 2.** MQS is a formal document describing the qualification received in a standard format to provide information on the nature, level, context, content and status of the studies that were pursued and completed by the graduate. The information in the MQS statement may include its level, learning outcomes and assessment approach, to ensure transparency and comparability within the MQF and internationally.

ix. All HEPs can implement APEL.S at their respective institutions only after obtaining approval from MQA.

x. HEPs applying to conduct APEL.S must be an approved institution to conduct APEL or implement Work-Based Learning (WBL).

xi. HEPs must have pool of subject matter experts to manage the administration of the assessment.

xii. The duration for the completing the APEL.S application at the approved HEP shall be capped according to the following MQF levels of qualifications:

Table 3: Typical and maximum duration for the completion of APEL.S application by MQF level

MQF Level	Qualification Award Based on Lifelong Learning	Typical Duration for Completion via APEL.S (months)*	Maximum Duration for Completion via APEL.S (months)**
5	Advanced Diploma	6	24
6	Graduate Certificate	6	24
	Graduate Diploma	9	36
7	Postgraduate Certificate	3	12
	Postgraduate Diploma	6	24

Notes:

* In exceptional cases where a candidate completes the APEL.S assessments within a shorter duration than the stipulated timeframe, Senate endorsement shall be required to approve the award

** The maximum duration of studies must prioritise efficiency, learner interests and integrity.

xiii. It is the responsibility of HEPs to ensure that the implementation process of APEL.S is in accordance with the quality processes and procedures outlined in this GGP. Adhering to this GGP will ensure that the APEL.S process is effective, transparent, consistent, equitable and evidence based.

3.0 APPLICATION, ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS AND PROCEDURES

3.1 Application Process for Learners

i. Before a candidate decides to apply for APEL.S, the candidate must know and understand each stage of the APEL.S process. This briefing and counselling session by the HEP is vital for the candidate to make an informed decision and to have realistic expectations of the possible outcomes of the application. All general enquiries pertaining to APEL.S shall be directed to the APEL Centre of the HEP.

ii. If the candidate decides to proceed with the APEL.S application, he/she will need to register through the APEL.S portal in MQA. In this portal, the candidate will choose the HEP identified and the programme he/she has selected for APEL.S. The HEP that the candidate has chosen and consulted shall render appropriate support through an appointed Advisor who will guide the learner throughout the whole APEL.S journey.

iii. All APEL.S applications of the candidate will be **centrally monitored by MQA** as stated above. Subsequently, the results of the application will be channelled to the HEP. If an APEL.S application is not approved, the candidate may submit an appeal to the HEP, providing relevant justification or additional evidence for reconsideration.

iv. The application process at the identified HEP will begin with a **Guided Self-Assessment** exercise. The Advisor will guide the candidate in undertaking this self-assessment exercise evaluation using the template provided in **Appendix 2A**. Based on the self-assessment form and the report submitted, the Advisor will determine the candidate's eligibility and make an appropriate recommendation. Where the Advisor determines that the application is unlikely to succeed, the candidate will be advised accordingly and the application process will cease.

v. If the Advisor deems that the candidate's application is likely to succeed, the candidate may proceed to complete and submit the formal application form as per **Appendix 2B** and submit the relevant fees, before proceeding to the various assessment stages.

3.2 Assessment Instruments and Procedures

To ensure consistency and fairness in joint industry assessments, all industry partners involved in APEL.S assessments must align with a standardised competency framework referenced to the MQF learning domains and industry-recognised benchmarks. This framework shall serve as the basis for assessment rubrics, ensuring comparability and equivalence of skills across different organisations, regardless of their internal methodologies or capability levels.

In cases where assessment activities involve sensitive or confidential workplace information, assessors and partner organisations must adhere to relevant laws and regulations on personal data protection. This protocol governs access to proprietary materials, protects industrial confidentiality and allows the use of redacted evidence, simulated tasks or assessor observation via secure digital means where direct access is restricted.

This approach ensures that assessment integrity, industry relevance and confidentiality obligations are maintained while guaranteeing that competencies assessed remain valid, reliable and consistent across all APEL.S implementations.

i. **Basis of Assessment:** The assessment of acquired specialised skills for the purpose of APEL.S will encompass the comparability of the experiential skills acquired by learners to the skill set/competencies embedded in the specific programme. The assessment should be made strictly in correspondence to the level and type of the programme and the associated programme learning outcomes (PLO). Mapping of the competencies in the programme to the PLOs must be presented as per **Appendix 4**.

ii. **Assessment Principles:** The APEL.S assessment processes and procedures will uphold the following principles to ensure the integrity and credibility of the qualification awarded:

    a. There must be a transparent assessment system adopted to evaluate the acquired specialised skills against the skill set and core competencies of the programme. Recognition of the acquired specialised skills is based on demonstrable competency achievement and not on the assumption of skills acquired solely through the undertaking of a particular job and/ or position held for a set duration of time.

b. All forms of assessment adopted to evaluate the acquired specialised skills must be of equal rigour as the assessments in the conventional taught programmes. Equal rigour of assessment also means that the same process of internal moderation and external examiner scrutiny, which applies to the assessment of taught courses in the traditional pathway, must also be applied to the assessment of acquired specialised skills under APEL.S.

c. Subject to meeting the minimum age and relevant work experience requirements, the qualification award is open to all applicants.

iii. **Assessment Instruments:** Two main assessment instruments will be utilised in the following sequence to assess the acquired skills of learners for the award of skills-based qualification covering the 11 Programme Learning Outcomes as stipulated in the MQF for each qualification level:

a. Portfolio submission
b. CBV

Learners have to pass each stage of the assessment in the sequential order stated above before proceeding to the next stage. The overall procedure of the APEL.S assessment is depicted in **Appendix 3**.

iv. **Assessment Weightages:** The APEL.S assessment instruments carry different weights that contribute to the overall assessment. The weightage of each assessment instrument is stated in the following table.

Table 4: Weightage of Each Assessment Instrument

	Assessment instruments	Weightage (%)
1.	Portfolio	30
2.	Competency-Based Validation (CBV) i. Competency-Based Interview (CBI)/ Behavioural Evidence Interview	30
	ii. Demonstration of Practical Tasks	30
	iii. Workplace Endorsement (Third-Party Validation)	10

The APEL.S assessment instruments shall carry the standardised weightages reflected above that collectively contribute to the overall assessment of the learner's competencies.

The prescribed distribution of weightage reflects the relative importance of each assessment instrument in measuring the intended Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and ensures a balanced evaluation of theoretical knowledge, applied skills and workplace performance. The PLOs must be fairly distributed and assessed across all instruments to maintain consistency, validity and reliability of the assessment outcomes.

When aligning Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs) with assessment instruments, HEPs shall ensure that each PLO is appropriately mapped to at least one of the instruments according to its nature and intended competency outcomes. The following instruments and prescribed weightages shall be applied in totality to the APEL.S assessment structure:

a. Portfolio (30%) - Demonstrates prior experiential learning evidence and achievements aligned to relevant PLOs.

b. CBV (70%), comprising:

- Competency-Based Interview (CBI)/Behavioural Evidence Interview (30%) - Evaluates analytical reasoning, reflection, problem-solving and communication competencies.

- Demonstration of Practical Tasks (30%) - Assesses the application of technical and procedural skills in authentic or simulated contexts.

- Workplace Endorsement (Third-Party Validation) (10%) - Confirms workplace-based performance, professional conduct and the authenticity of demonstrated competencies.

While the overall weightage distribution (30/30/30/10) is fixed and must be uniformly applied, HEPs retain flexibility to determine how specific PLOs are best evidenced across these instruments, based on the field of the programme, level of complexity and occupational relevance.

This standardised yet flexible framework ensures that APEL.S assessments remain transparent, equitable and aligned with national quality assurance principles, while allowing contextual adaptation across disciplines.

3.3 Portfolio

i. A portfolio is a formal document that contains a compilation of evidence documenting the acquired specialised skills of a learner accumulated over a period of time. This learning may be in the form of formal, informal or non-formal learning. The portfolio is prepared by the learner to demonstrate that the specialised skills acquired are relevant and specific to the skill set/competencies of the programme. Documentary evidence must be provided in the portfolio. The evidence must be organised and presented based on the identified programme learning outcomes (PLOs).

ii. In submitting the portfolio for an APEL.S application, the learner must ensure that:

   a. the application form has been filled out correctly, i.e., the information and data provided are accurate, truthful and complete; and

   b. the documentary evidence has been submitted on time.

iii. Learners will provide the evidence based on a standard portfolio template. This template will contain information related to the programme applied for and mapping of individual learning (in the form of learning statements and the origin of learning supported by documentary evidence) to the skill set/competencies of the programme. A sample of the portfolio submission form is provided in **Appendix 3A**.

iv. To evaluate the portfolio submitted by the learner, HEPs must appoint Assessors with the appropriate qualifications and experience with well-defined roles and responsibilities as indicated in **Appendix 3B**. The appointment process of the assessor is crucial to ensure the integrity and credibility of the portfolio assessment.

v. During the evaluation process, Assessors must ensure that the contents and evidence of the portfolio submitted by the learner reflect the achievement of the skill set/competencies of the programme. Assessors may use one or several modes of assessment outlined in **Appendix 3C** to verify the evidence and claims put forward by the learner. This ensures that the competency level of the learner being assessed is authentic and corresponds to the skill set/competencies of the programme.

vi. In addition, Assessors must also develop an assessment rubric to ensure that a valid, credible and fair assessment is carried out. HEPs must appoint Moderators to moderate the assessment rubric. The assessment rubric constructed and moderated will facilitate the determination of the level of achievement of the skill set/competencies of the programme based on the acquired specialised skills of the learner. An example of an assessment rubric for a portfolio is illustrated in **Appendix 3D**.

vii. In determining whether the evidence presented in the portfolio is satisfactory and appropriate, the following widely accepted assessment criteria can be adopted:

a. **Authenticity**: The evidence clearly reflects the learner's effort, experience and learning for which the qualification award is being claimed.

b. **Acceptability**: To ensure that there is a good **alignment or matching** between PLOs and the evidence presented, the assessment instrument has to be **reliable** and **valid**.

c. **Sufficiency**: There is sufficient breadth and depth of evidence, including evidence of reflection that is able to demonstrate the achievement of PLOs or the competences claimed.

d. **Currency**: The learning is sufficiently recent to reflect the currency of competencies, knowledge or skills as required by the discipline of the qualification award.

e. **Specificity**: The acquired specialised skills are specific to the PLOs for which the award of qualification is sought.

3.4 Overview of Competency-Based Validation (CBV)

i. The CBV aims to assess and validate that the learner has the appropriate knowledge and competencies for the specialised skills award. This is usually conducted in the workplace of the learner or in any environment or location that is conducive and which permits appropriate and accurate assessment. The assessment can be conducted at the workplace, in a laboratory or under a simulated situation. The CBV assessment allows the learner to demonstrate that his/her learning in a particular job corresponds to the PLOs. The number of CBV will vary depending on the complexity of the skills or discipline and the level of study.

ii. HEPs should have a CBV assessment policy in place so that learners are aware of the related terms and conditions such as the appropriateness of the location, procedures and the risks involved.

3.4.1 Principles of CBV Assessment

i. As a general practice, all programmes will address the 11 domains in the five clusters of learning outcomes as per **Appendix 4** appropriately as described under the MQF. The 11 domains describe the general and specific content of knowledge and skills in a related field, the level of cognitive skills and where relevant, the specialised technical skills. However, given that certain domains may not be assessed under this instrument, the CBV will specifically target PLOs that allow for the validation of practical and observable competencies.

ii. The CBV will be guided by the following assessment principles:

a. **Validity**

Validity refers to the ability of the assessment to measure what it is supposed to measure. This is of critical importance as the CBV is to ascertain the competencies of the learner. The assessment has to include all the essential competencies of the profession at the appropriate level of the PLO(s). Therefore, the assessment methods and instruments must be moderated and appropriate to measure the levels of the learning outcomes. More than one tasks and sources of evidence are needed as the basis for judging the competencies of the learner.

The competencies have to encompass all 11 learning domains which are categorised in the five clusters of learning outcomes. The standard of the competencies measured or evaluated should be comparable to that expected of students in the traditional learning pathway.

b. **Reliability**

Reliability refers to the degree of consistency and accuracy of the assessment outcomes. It reflects the extent to which the assessment will provide similar outcomes for learners with equal competence at different times or places, regardless of the assessors conducting the assessment.

To increase reliability, the assessment of the competencies in the 11 domains is obtained from a number of sources based on the skill set, which

may include checking of documents, observations and interviews with various categories of people in the workplace of the learners and is evaluated by at least two Assessors.

3.4.2 Suitability of the CBV Site

The competencies of the learner can be assessed in any location, provided it allows the learner to demonstrate his/her competencies without any undue disturbance to or interference from the work environment. The assessment site can be suggested by the learner, but it has to be approved by the HEP based on the risk identification and management procedures.

PROCEDURE FOR CBV ASSESSMENT

The flowchart below indicates the CBV assessment procedure.

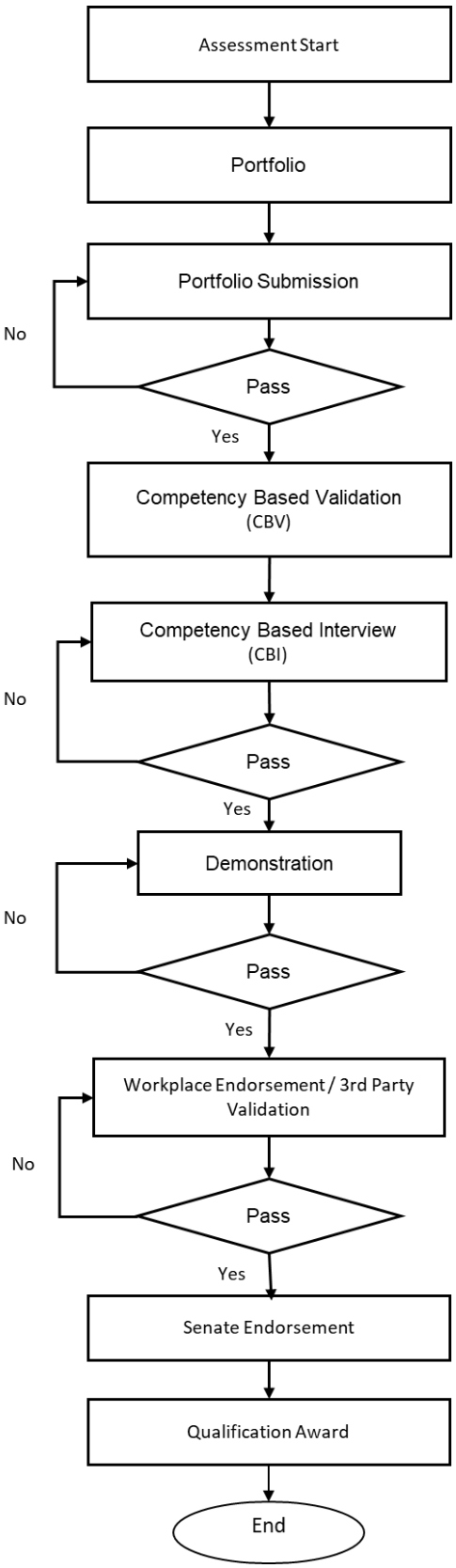


Figure 1: Flow chart of CBV assessment

Note: Learners who fail any of the assessment instruments may appeal for a review of the results. HEPs must establish a proper and transparent mechanism for appeals.

3.4.3 Policy on CBV Visit and Risk Management

The policy on CBV visits can include elements such as:

i. The purpose of the CBV

The purpose of the CBV is to assess and validate the knowledge and competencies of learners in their field of study. For the assessment to be valid and reliable, it has to be conducted in an environment that is appropriate to their field of study, conducive and safe to provide opportunities to optimise performance and to minimise risk.

ii. Risk identification and management

All CBVs involve risks to health and physical safety although the degree of risk varies according to the field of study and context. The risk can be low, moderate or high. There is a need to identify, assess and manage the risk to minimise any impact on the well-being of learners and assessors as well as the safety of the institution or organisation in which the assessment is carried out. A simple procedure to identify and manage the risk is shown in **Appendix 5**.

iii. Persons responsible for assessing the appropriateness and safety of the venue for assessment.

iv. Personal assurance during the CBV during travel and the conduct of the assessment covering:
   a. Learners
   b. Assessors

v. Professional indemnity insurance (where applicable).

vi. Legislative requirements such as occupational safety and health, criminal record screening (especially for those working with young children) and other relevant requirements.

vii. Agreement with the institution or organisation where the CBV will be conducted, especially in terms of the activities and insurance provisions. This should also include checking the compliance of the institution or organisation with rules and regulations (such as registration for operation at the premises, occupational hazards, etc.) especially for venues nominated by learners.

3.4.4 CBV Validation Assessment Instruments

CBV for APEL.S is a structured evaluation approach used to recognise the competencies that individuals have acquired from workplace or community-based settings. Aimed at awarding formal qualifications under MQF Level 5 (Advanced Diploma), Level 6 (Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma) and Level 7 (Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma), this assessment focuses on measuring practical abilities, job-specific competencies and cognitive skills demonstrated in real-life contexts. It offers an inclusive and flexible pathway for adult learners, especially those without formal education, to gain national recognition for their skills through a valid, reliable and outcomes-based process.

APEL.S provides an alternative pathway for individuals to be awarded formal **specialised skills qualifications** by recognising competencies acquired from workplace or community-based settings. Assessment is conducted at **MQF Levels 5, 6 and 7** and focuses on **job-relevant practical skills, cognitive abilities and work performance**.

Mandatory Use of All Following Three Instruments:

In APEL.S, candidates **must undergo the CBV assessment, which is conducted using all three** core instruments to ensure a robust and holistic evaluation of competencies:

i. Competency-Based Interview (CBI)
ii. Demonstration of Practical Tasks
iii. Workplace Endorsement (Third-Party Validation)

This structured, multi-instrument approach is essential to ensure **assessment validity, reliability and fairness**.

3.4.5 Competency-Based Interview (CBI)

Objective

To evaluate the learner's ability to **explain, reflect on, and justify** his/her performance of tasks based on **real-world experiences**.

Assessment Design

i. Uses structured questions (e.g., the STAR format: Situation, Task, Action, Result) as per **Appendix 6**.
ii. Assesses decision-making, problem-solving and role understanding.
iii. Mapped to **learning outcomes** and **work competencies** defined in the MQF or other benchmark competencies.

Validity Measures

i. Questions derived directly from **job functions and programme outcomes**.
ii. Customised to reflect **actual roles, contexts and industry expectations**.
iii. Ensures cognitive and functional understanding, not just recall.

Reliability Measures

i. Conducted by the two appointed **trained assessors**.
ii. Use of **scoring rubrics** as per **Appendix 7** with defined behavioural indicators.
iii. Assessor format recommended to reduce subjective bias**.**

3.4.6 Demonstration of Practical Tasks

Objective

To directly observe the learner's ability to **perform essential skills and tasks** aligned with the target qualification.

Assessment Design

i. Tasks reflect **realistic job functions** or technical requirements.
ii. Performed in a **controlled simulation** or **authentic workplace environment**.
iii. Aligned with PLOs in the relevant MQF Domain.

Validity Measures

i. Tasks must **mirror key performance areas** of the job.
ii. Benchmarked against **industry standards** or best practices.
iii. Assessment must evaluate **both outcome and process**.

Reliability Measures

i. Use of detailed performance rubrics as per **Appendix 8**.
ii. All documentary evidence shall be recorded for moderation.
iii. Tasks designed to be repeatable, fair and context appropriate.

3.4.7 Workplace Endorsement (Third-Party Validation)

Workplace Endorsement serves as a formal validation of the learner's competencies, confirming that the knowledge, skills and attitudes demonstrated through the APEL.S process are applied effectively in real work contexts. The endorsement should be provided by a superior, employer or authorised representative who has directly observed the candidate's performance and can attest to his/her professional capability, ethical conduct and consistency in meeting industry or organisational standards. This endorsement strengthens the authenticity and credibility of the evidence submitted, ensuring that the assessed competencies reflect actual workplace proficiency rather than self-reported achievements.

Workplace Endorsement is not a separate or alternative assessment pathway; rather, it functions as a supportive validation component within the CBV process. It provides third-party confirmation of the learner's demonstrated competencies in authentic work settings and serves to **corroborate evidence** gathered through other assessment instruments such as the Competency-Based Interview (CBI) and Demonstration of Practical Tasks.

This approach ensures that transparency and consistency are maintained, as Workplace Endorsement does not independently determine assessment outcomes but strengthens the credibility, authenticity and triangulation of competency evidence.

Objective

To gather **structured, work-based evidence** of the **candidate's competencies** from individuals (e.g., supervisors, clients, peers) who have directly observed his/her **job performance**.

Assessment Design

i. Use of a **testimonial statement, reference letter, third party report or other equivalent mechanism** (with required examples of tasks, role and outcomes) as per **Appendix 9**.

ii. Endorsers must have **direct professional relationship** and be in a position to evaluate candidate's competencies.
iii. Validates core, functional and behavioural competencies.

Validity Measures

i. Testimonies must be **specific and role-based**, not general character references.
ii. Endorsements must **correspond with other forms of evidence** (e.g., portfolio or interview content).

Reliability Measures

i. Standardised testimonial forms with behavioural anchors.
ii. Verification process to confirm the **authenticity of endorsers**.
iii. Multiple testimonials are encouraged where applicable to **triangulate observations**.

3.5 Panel of Experts

i. The panel of experts and the distribution of their roles as Advisor, Assessor or Moderator is important in the APEL.S assessment process. This panel comprises experts in the respective fields of study for which learners apply for the APEL.S award. This panel of experts should be up-to-date with developments in their field of work to understand which competencies can be gained, at which job or in what situation and to assess, if possible, in situations and ways described by learners. For each learner, there will be one Advisor, two Assessors (comprising one internal Academic Assessor and one external Skills Assessor) and one internal or external Moderator.

ii. The experts must keep abreast of APEL.S provisions and the developments in the promotion of lifelong learning. To fulfil their responsibilities, it is vital that this panel of experts must understands the content-related principles and requirements for APEL.S assessment and is well-versed in the various related documents used in the APEL.S procedures. They must also complete the relevant training courses on APEL.S policies, procedures and assessment before assuming their roles as Advisors, Assessors or Moderators.

iii. Generally, the panel of experts must have the professional and methodical competence indicated below:

a. Professional competence
   - Able to identify whether the learner has acquired the competencies to the appropriate extent.

b. Methodological Competence
   - Able to choose the most appropriate assessment methods for assessing different competencies.
   - Able to select and apply valid assessment methods.
   - Able to provide understandable and constructive feedback in oral and written form.

iv. The basic criteria of appointment, as well as the roles and responsibilities of the experts include the following:

a. Criteria of appointment
   - Must be an approved and trained Assessors by the relevant regulatory body or the institution.
   - Possess extensive experience in the relevant field.
   - Possess sufficient expertise in the content and structure of the programme.
   - Qualification of the Assessors:
     - **Academic Assessors**: Must possess an academic qualification at a level higher than the assessed programme, or if at an equivalent level, demonstrate substantial and relevant professional experience in teaching, research or practice within the related field.
     - **Skills Assessors**: Must possess a recognised skills or professional qualification at a level higher than the assessed programme or, if at an equivalent level, demonstrate significant and relevant industry experience that reflects current practice, applied expertise and leadership in the sector.

   - Have no conflict of interest with the HEP or the organisation or company where the CBV will be conducted.

b. Roles and responsibilities
   - Able to assess the skills and knowledge gained through prior experiential learning or professional experience that correspond to the PLOs for the specialised skills award.

- Possess the knowledge and ability to use different assessment means, methods and tools.
- Possess good interpersonal skills and the ability to cooperate with the assessment panel to reach a common assessment decision.
- Able to make decisions in the context of the entire programme.
- With respect to the CBV:
  - Able to assess whether the environment and the assessment instruments are valid and reliable for assessing any evidence presented.
  - Communicate with learners in the workplace of the learner.
- Provide feedback, including recommending training and support for learners after the assessment has been conducted.

v. The appointed Advisor will perform the following roles and responsibilities:

   a. Supervise and guide learners on how to self-assess and compare or map their acquired specialised skills to the PLOs.
   b. Explain the applicable requirements and rules, answer questions from learners and provide greater clarity where needed.
   c. Depending on the assessment methods, the Advisor may review the applications submitted, for example the Portfolio compiled before it is submitted for evaluation. In essence, the appointed Advisor will provide support to learners throughout the entire duration of the APEL.S journey. **Appendix 10** outlines the general duties of an Advisor.

vi. To avoid any conflict of interest, the Advisor appointed to a learner should not serve as the Assessor for any of the APEL.S assessment instruments designed for the said learner.

vii. According to established good practice, an application should be assessed by at least two Assessors. Hence, there must be at least two Assessors appointed by HEP (first Assessor from HEP and the second Assessor from industry) to assess the various APEL.S instruments, i.e. Portfolio and CBV. This is to ensure the validity and reliability of the assessment carried out.

viii. The main duties of an Assessor are:
   a. to perform an objective assessment, based on the relevant assessment instruments, learning outcomes and the respective assessment criteria; and
   b. to ensure and provide constructive feedback that is understandable to learners.

ix. Apart from professional and methodological competence, the attitudes and value judgments of the Assessors may also influence the validity and reliability of the assessment. These qualities are vital ensuring that independent and impartial assessments are carried out. The independence and impartiality of Assessors encompass one or all of the following:

   a. 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 accessibility in recognising the prior experiential learning of the learner;
   b. If the Assessor has background information on the competencies or specialised skills of the learner, but such information is not provided in the documentation submitted by the learner, the Assessor will need to disregard such prior information when making decisions during the APEL.S assessment; and/or
   c. The Assessor is not influenced by his/her personal attitude towards the learner or his/her activities, e.g., if the learner is a representative of a different school of thought.

x. Besides Advisors and Assessors, Moderators with appropriate competencies have to be appointed to ensure the reliability of the assessment instruments. The Moderator can be an internal staff member of the institution or an appointed external expert. The roles of the Moderator must be clearly outlined. These include moderating all assessment materials or instruments developed, as well as the evaluated learner's assessments. This is to ensure that the assessment materials or instruments are aligned with the level of study and intended learning outcomes and to verify that the assessments have been evaluated fairly and consistently.

xi. Taking responsibility for self-improvement and periodic self-analysis should be a natural part of the work process of APEL.S Advisors, Assessors and Moderators. This activity provides an opportunity for them to reflect on their roles and responsibilities. This self-assessment allows for clear and deliberated formulation of the problems that have occurred and best practices they have observed. This information is crucial for the continuous improvement of the quality of APEL.S processes and procedures.

3.5.1 Assessor's Competency Profile

The following competency profile outlines the roles and capabilities of an Assessor.

No.	Competency	Descriptions
1.	Understands the principles, processes and procedures of APEL.S and is familiar with the relevant regulations.	a. Able to list the main principles of APEL.S. b. Able to explain the importance of these principles. c. Well-versed in the various main components of the APEL.S process. d. Able to describe the related APEL.S regulations.
2.	Is familiar with relevant MQA programme or professional standards and outcome-based education including learning outcomes and identified skill sets.	a. Able to describe the requirements of the study programme or a professional standard. b. Understands the components of the programme based on the MQA programme standards.
3.	Knows and applies the principles of APEL.S assessment.	a. Is independent and impartial in conducting assessment. b. Applies comprehensive assessment approaches, including consideration of general competencies. c. Uses relevant assessment instruments. d. Provides constructive feedback to learners. e. Relate programme learning outcomes, skill set and competencies to the learner's acquired specialised skills based on the evidence submitted.
4.	Is knowledgeable in the field assessed.	Complies with the qualification requirements of the competent authority.

No.	Competency	Descriptions
5.	Cooperates and collaborates with different stakeholders involved in the APEL.S process.	a. Communicates effectively with learners, Advisors and external parties, (e.g., the employers of the learners during the CBV). b. Cooperates with other Assessor to reach a common assessment decision.
6.	Expresses views and thoughts clearly and produces accurate documentation.	a. Presents information in a manner that is clear to all parties. b. Completes all documentation related to assessment in accordance with the requirements of the competent authority.
7.	Identifies and mitigates risks that might affect the quality of the assessment.	a. Able to identify risks that affect the quality of the assessment. b. Able to identify risk within the assessment process. c. Able to mitigate risks wherever feasible.

3.6 Competency Enhancement Modules

Competency Enhancement Modules are structured, non-conventional, skills-based learning units designed to strengthen and complement an individual's competencies, in alignment with the outcomes-based philosophy of the MQF. Competency Enhancement Modules are particularly relevant in the context of APEL.S, where learners bring diverse experiential knowledge, often acquired outside the formal education system.

Competency Enhancement Modules may cover areas such as digital tools, technical operations, sector-specific regulatory compliance, vocational leadership or other domains deemed essential for competency validation or renewal.

In essence, Competency Enhancement Modules bridge the gap between recognition and readiness and between qualification and relevance, making them an essential component in supporting a credible and industry-responsive APEL.S system.

Competency Enhancement Modules serve as flexible intervention tools to address identified gaps in practical skills or knowledge and may be undertaken at two key stages of the APEL.S journey:

i. APEL.S Pre-Award Phase

This phase supports assessment readiness prior to a learner attempting APEL.S assessments whether through Portfolio submission or CBV. The appointed APEL.S Advisor may recommend specific Competency Enhancement Modules to help learners address critical gaps in required competencies. These may include areas where the learner lacks documented experience, up-to-date practice or demonstrable mastery.

In some instances, Competency Enhancement Modules may also be advised prior to a resit, particularly when earlier assessments have revealed specific areas needing improvement.

This pre-assessment approach offers learners the opportunity to undertake concise, targeted learning aimed at strengthening underdeveloped or missing skill domains. In keeping with the learner-centred and formative nature of APEL.S, Competency Enhancement Modules are strongly encouraged, though not mandatory and are intended to increase the likelihood of a successful qualification outcome.

ii. APEL.S Post-Award Phase

Following the award of an APEL.S qualification, Competency Enhancement Modules may continue to play a vital role in helping individuals remain professionally current and competitive. These post-award modules may be recommended by employers, professional bodies or industry partners, especially in rapidly evolving sectors or those with continuing competence requirements.

This reflects a commitment to sustaining employability and relevance, in line with the national lifelong learning agenda. It ensures that APEL.S recipients do not treat their qualification as a final destination, but as a stepping stone in an ongoing process of skills development and career progression.

In this regard, Competency Enhancement Modules support the broader objective of APEL.S: to recognise, validate and further enhance practical, industry-aligned capabilities.

3.7 Appeal and Resit

Applicants who fail any of the assessment instruments may appeal for a review of the results or opt for a resit.

3.7.1 Appeal

A learner who is not satisfied with the decision of the APEL.S assessment result may submit a written appeal to the HEP by providing the grounds for the appeal, based on the HEP process and procedures.

3.7.2 Resit

A learner will be given three attempts to remedy the fail status in any of the assessment modes (i.e., Portfolio** and CBV). The HEP will recommend improvement strategies through the Advisors, as part of the learning support services provided to the learner at any stage of the assessment mode where the learner fails and is required to resit.

The best grade achieved in the resit process will be used in the computation of the Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA). Learners' application will be terminated should he/she exceed the three attempts.

Note: ** If the learner fails the Portfolio assessment, he/she needs to reapply for APEL.S after a cooling period of at least three months. This will allow the learner to gather additional documentary evidence to be assessed.

If the learner is unable to achieve a passing outcome after three attempts in any assessment mode (Portfolio or CBV), the learner shall be required to exit the current APEL.S application. The HEP may recommend one of the following exit options:

a. **Change of programme or qualification level**: The learner may be advised to pursue a lower MQF level or a different programme pathway that is more aligned to their demonstrated competencies and experiential background.

b. **Referral to other learning pathways**: The learner may be guided to alternative forms of access or qualification recognition (e.g., APEL.A, formal study or micro-credentials) depending on readiness and occupational goals.

This ensures that the APEL.S system maintains its standards of competence, integrity and fairness, while also providing learners with constructive pathways for further development rather than indefinite reassessment.

3.8 Criteria for Award

i. The specialised skills award accorded to candidates through APEL.S must be based on demonstrated and evidence-based validation through Portfolio and CBV. Although consideration may be given for all types of skill acquired regardless of where, when or how they were acquired, the learner must prove (through the identified assessments) that learning has indeed taken place. Ultimately, specialised skills are assessed specifically against the programme learning outcomes and skill sets.

ii. For the specialised skills award, candidates must:
   a. pass every assessment instrument: Portfolio and CBV by achieving at least a 50% score on each programme learning outcome tested. Failure to achieve the 50% score in any of the programme learning outcome examined under the various assessment instruments, will be result in a fail status for the said assessment instrument.

   b. achieve a minimum CGPA of 2.0 out of 4.0 for an undergraduate programme (Advanced Diploma, Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma) and 3.0 out of 4.0 for a postgraduate programme (Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma)

The classification of the qualification, such as Distinction, Merit or equivalent, shall be determined based on the final CGPA in accordance with the institution's Senate-approved grading policy for the respective programme. The CGPA obtained through the APEL.S assessment shall be treated equivalently to that of conventional learners, ensuring parity and consistency in the recognition of academic standing.

4.0 APPROVAL TO IMPLEMENT APEL.S: FOR HEPs

4.1 Application Process

i. In ensuring that an acceptable level of quality assurance is adhered to and the approval to conduct APEL.S is programme-based, the following requirements must be observed by HEPs:

   a. HEPs with prior experience in conducting APEL or implementing Work-Based Learning.

   b. For HEPs that intend to offer programmes via APEL.S, prior approval from MQA is mandatory. This may involve existing accredited programmes or completely new programmes in partnership with industries.

   c. HEPs have to undergo the APEL.S workshop training organised by MQA.

ii. The application process begins with the HEP submitting a formal application to MQA by completing the APEL.S-01 Form as per **Appendix 11** together with an application fee determined by MQA. In the APEL.S-01 Form, the HEP will provide general information on the institution; its commitment to implementing APEL.S, the processes of managing APEL.S and a pilot study plan.

iii. The HEP is required to present one pilot case study outlining the processes, procedures and instruments adopted to assess the prior experiential learning of the learner for an award of skills-based qualifications. At the stage of APEL.S-01 submission, the HEP only needs to identify a readily available APEL.S learner to undertake this whole exercise.

iv. MQA will then send the complete application to a Panel of Assessors for evaluation. Approval to proceed is granted only upon MQA's endorsement based on the evaluation report of the Panel of Assessors. Once approved, the HEP will begin to initiate the pilot study plan.

   During the first pilot study, when HEP conducts the CBV, HEP must invite MQA and the Panel of Assessors to observe how the assessment is conducted. Upon completion of all related assessments for the learner, the HEP will present to MQA the overall processes and outcomes of the APEL.S assessment.

This presentation session is crucial to assess the actual implementation and assessment of APEL.S by the HEP. It is an integral part of the approval process. In the event of non-compliance with the prescribed procedures, standards or assessment integrity requirements, MQA reserves the right to defer, revoke or request rectification of the APEL.S approval until full compliance is demonstrated. **Figure 2** summarises the details of the application process for HEPs to implement APEL.S.

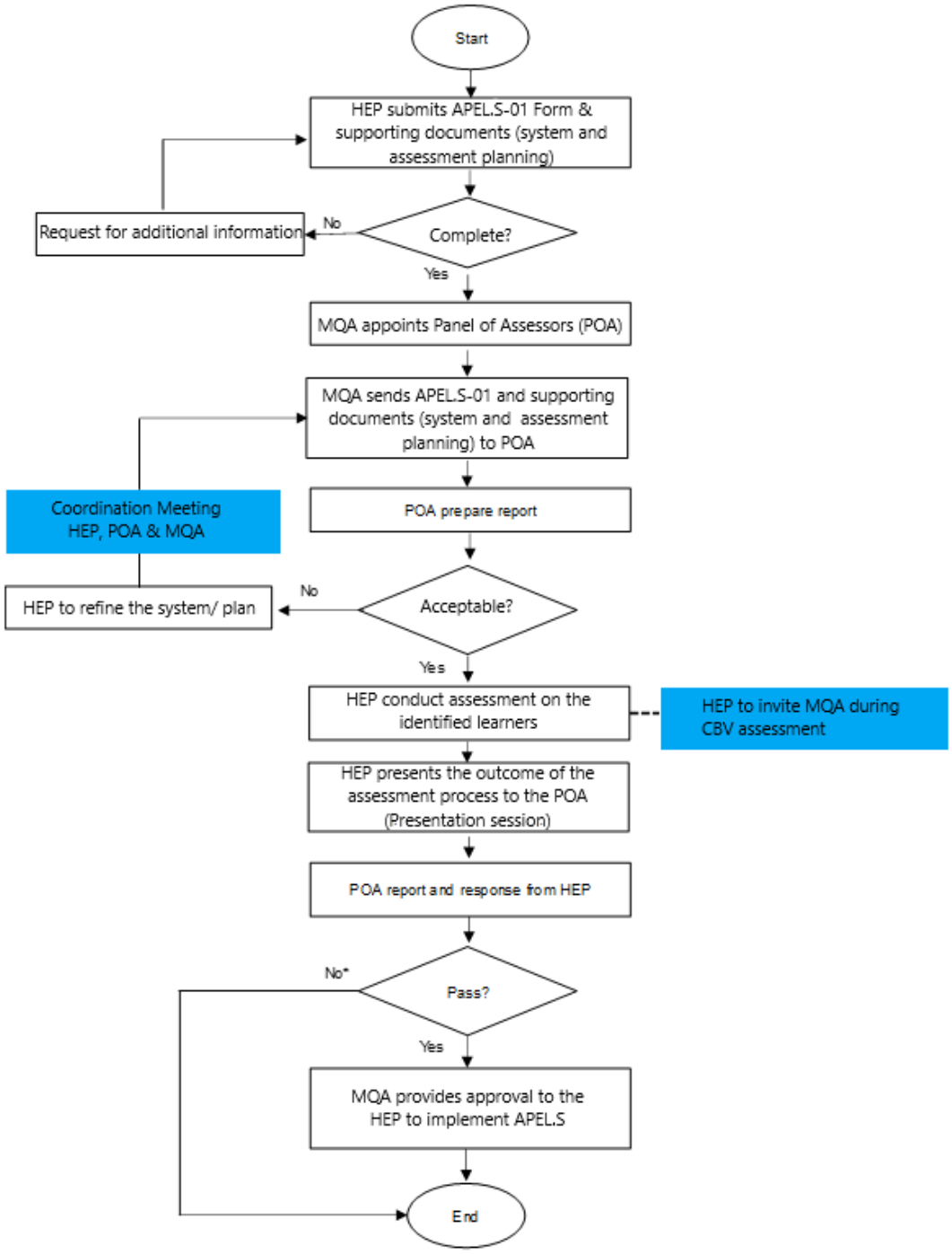


Figure 2: The APEL.S application process for HEPs

4.2 Application Criteria

4.2.1 Establishment of APEL.S Centre/Unit

i. The HEP must have a dedicated centre or unit headed by an individual knowledgeable in the development and implementation of APEL.S in Malaysia.

ii. The HEP must have an APEL.S policy in place as the guiding principle for the implementation of APEL.S.

iii. The APEL.S Centre or Unit must have a proper organisational structure with clear job descriptions for each appointed staff member.

4.2.2 Resources

i. The HEP must have the right and adequate human resources to manage APEL.S.

ii. The HEP must have appropriate information technology infostructure to manage APEL.S applications, delivery and assessments.

iii. As part of capacity building, the HEP must provide continuous training to all staff involved in APEL.S. It is reiterated that one of the requirements for the appointment of an Advisor, Assessor or Moderator is that they undergo the APEL.S training which will expose them to the APEL.S processes and procedures of the HEP.

iv. The HEP must develop a handbook for learners and the staff on the award of skills-based qualifications through APEL.S and provide the appropriate support services. Information contained in the handbook must be consistent with the APEL.S policy of the HEP and does not contradict the provisions of the GGP: APEL.S.

4.2.3 Implementation Processes

The HEP is to adopt all the processes outlined in the GGP: APEL.S to uphold the quality of APEL.S processes and procedures.

5.0 ROLES OF MQA AND HEPs

APEL.S is an approach that offers individuals the opportunity to gain formal recognition for knowledge, skills and experience acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning. APEL.S specifically focuses on the assessment of technical competencies and practical specialised skills relevant to a particular job sector or industry. The implementation of APEL.S must be guided by systematically developed good practice guidelines that align with the MQF. To ensure an efficient and quality-assured implementation of APEL.S, two key entities play crucial roles: the MQA and HEPs.

5.1 Role of the MQA

As the statutory body responsible for the quality assurance of higher education in Malaysia, MQA holds the primary responsibility for developing and overseeing the policies and guidelines related to APEL.S. The key roles of MQA include:

5.1.1 Policy Development and National Guidelines

MQA is responsible for formulating and reviewing guidelines and implementation standards for APEL.S to ensure alignment with MQF principles. This includes establishing eligibility criteria, assessment structures and quality standards for implementation by all institutions.

5.1.2 Accreditation and Recognition of Assessment Centres

MQA approves and accredits APEL.S Assessment Centres established by HEPs. This involves verifying the capability of these centres in terms of facilities, human resources and assessment management systems.

5.1.3 Quality Assurance and Monitoring

MQA conducts continuous monitoring of APEL.S implementation through audits, periodic reporting and data analysis. MQA ensures that assessments are conducted in a valid, fair and transparent manner.

5.1.4 Capacity Building

MQA provides training and guidance to assessors, coordinators and verifiers involved in APEL.S to ensure their competency and consistency in implementation.

5.1.5 Protection of Candidate Interests and Rights

MQA ensures the protection of candidate interests and rights by requiring HEP to implement fair and transparent practices throughout the APEL.S process. MQA shall also ensure that HEPs provide clear information on all stages of assessment and maintain practices that safeguard the integrity, confidentiality and equitable treatment of every learner. Learners also have the right to seek clarification or appeal decisions through established procedures.

5.2 Role of HEPs as APEL.S Assessment Centres

As the institutions responsible for implementing the APEL.S process, HEPs must ensure the effective and systematic delivery of this process, adhering to the guidelines set by the MQA. The key roles of HEPs include:

5.2.1 Implementation and Governance of APEL.S

HEPs are required to establish APEL.S Assessment Centres with a defined organisational structure, staffing and internal operating procedures. Good governance ensures the integrity and effectiveness of the assessment process.

To preserve the integrity and impartiality of the APEL.S assessment process, all individuals involved in assessment, moderation or advisory functions must declare any potential conflict of interest prior to engagement. This includes relationships or affiliations that could reasonably be perceived to influence professional judgement.

5.2.2 Industry Collaboration

Industry collaboration and partnership must be a core condition for any HEPs applying to MQA to offer APEL.S, as it ensures that the assessment of acquired skills is directly aligned with real-world industry needs. The structured and strategic engagement between the institution and key industry stakeholders may include:

i. National and sectoral associations (e.g., Malaysian Employers Federation, Federation of Malaysian Manufacturing).
ii. Industry consortia and employer federations.

iii. Government-linked industry bodies (e.g., Human Resource Development Corporation, Department of Skills Development, Government-Industry TVET Coordination Body).
iv. Multinational corporations and small and medium-sized enterprises across sectors.

These stakeholders collectively represent sizable and sustainable practitioner communities of practitioners.

Through such collaboration, industry partners can co-develop the specialised skills award blueprint and assessment tools, validate competency-based standards and serve as part of the evaluation panel. Industry partners may also be involved in programme reviews to ensure dynamic relevance. To formalise this collaboration, the HEP must establish a written agreement that clearly outlines the scope and roles of the industry collaboration or partnership in supporting a credible, relevant and industry-responsive APEL.S assessment process.

5.2.3 Candidate Support Services and Resources

HEPs must provide comprehensive support to candidates through counselling services, personalised guidance and readily accessible information resources. These services should help candidates understand the APEL.S requirements, prepare relevant evidence and progress through the assessment process with confidence and clarity.

To ensure effective implementation, HEPs shall also establish clear roles, responsibilities and decision-making authority among all parties involved in the APEL.S process covering the application, assessment, approval and review stages. Transparent communication and accountability mechanisms must be in place to prevent role overlap and to ensure consistency, integrity and alignment with MQA's quality assurance principles.

5.2.4 Quality Assessment Practices

HEPs must appoint competent and experienced assessors and moderator(s) in the relevant fields. The assessment methods should be varied and appropriate to the types of skills being assessed, such as practical demonstrations, portfolios, interviews and job simulations.

5.2.5 Integrated Quality Assurance Mechanism for APEL.S Assessment Centres

HEPs must have an integrated within the existing quality assurance and enhancement mechanisms of the HEP responsible for continuously monitoring and ensuring the quality of APEL.S Assessment Centres. This unit shall oversee the effective execution of assessments and ensure that all processes align with established guidelines and quality standards.

As part of the quality assurance framework, HEPs shall also implement structured orientation and information dissemination mechanisms to ensure that learners are well informed and adequately prepared for each stage of the APEL.S process. This may include induction sessions, pre-assessment briefings, and accessible reference materials such as learner handbooks, digital guides and resource toolkits. These measures aim to enhance learner understanding, promote transparency and uphold consistency and integrity in the overall APEL.S implementation.

5.2.6 Secure Data Management and MQA Reporting

HEPs must ensure that all assessment data is securely stored, controlled, and maintained in strict confidentiality, in full compliance with the Personal Data Protection Act 2010. This measure ensures ethical handling of sensitive information and upholds the integrity of data protection practices within the APEL.S implementation framework.

HEPs must prepare a report and include comprehensive data such as the number of applications received, accepted, rejected, passed and failed, as well as the profile of candidates (including demographic background and employment sector). Furthermore, HEPs must highlight any issues or challenges encountered during the implementation to facilitate continuous improvement and quality enhancement of the APEL.S process.

5.3 Role of Industry in APEL.S

The involvement of industry stakeholders is a defining feature of APEL.S, setting it apart from traditional academic-based prior learning assessments. Industry participation ensures that the skills and competencies being assessed and awarded are relevant, current and aligned with sectoral needs.

Key roles played by industry in the APEL.S ecosystem include:

5.3.1 Co-development of Blueprint on Specialised Skills Award Content

This serves as a strategic guide to ensure that the qualifications awarded are anchored in real-world industry needs. It outlines the essential skill sets, performance indicators and occupational standards required for various job roles and levels. The active participation of industry in shaping this blueprint ensures that APEL.S remains responsive to evolving labour market trends and reflects competencies that are both measurable and meaningful.

5.3.2 Validation of Skills and Competencies

i. Industry representatives are involved in validating candidate competencies, particularly for Competency Evidence Interview/Behavioural Evidence Interview, Demonstration of Practical Tasks and Workplace Endorsement (Third-Party Validation)

ii. They assess whether the demonstrated skills reflect real-world application, industry standards and operational expectations.

5.3.3 Collaboration in the Development of Assessment Instruments

Industry partners collaborate with HEPs in the development and management of Portfolio and CBV assessment. Their input ensures that the assessment tools reflect authentic work tasks and industry performance standards. Qualified industry experts may serve as Skills Assessors ensuring impartiality and bridging the gap between the specialised skills award and workplace requirements.

5.4 Summary: Roles of MQA, HEPs and Industry in Safeguarding APEL.S Quality

The successful implementation of APEL.S relies on a tripartite collaboration between MQA, HEPs and Industry:

i. MQA provides guidelines, policies, accreditation and quality assurance to ensure consistency with the MQF.

ii. HEPs operationalise the APEL.S process by conducting assessments, supporting candidates and maintaining robust internal quality systems.

iii. Industry plays a pivotal role in validating competencies, co-developing assessment tools and ensuring that the qualifications awarded remain relevant to workforce needs.

This integrated approach ensures that APEL.S awards are not only academically rigorous but also professionally credible, thereby strengthening Malaysia's lifelong learning agenda, workforce transformation, effort commitment to inclusive qualification pathways.

6.0 QUALITY ASSURANCE

Quality assurance is an integral part of the APEL.S process. HEPs that have been approved to implement APEL.S are advised to apply the same standards and rigour to the assessment and evaluation processes as those used for conventional programme. This ensures the credibility and integrity of the entire APEL.S system.

6.1 Monitoring Process and Periodic Review of APEL.S Processes and Procedures

i. The processes and procedures for monitoring and reviewing APEL.S operations should be clearly defined and integrated into the existing quality assurance and enhancement mechanisms of the HEP. HEPs must appoint an External Examiner for the purpose of reviewing APEL.S processes and procedures and prepare the relevant terms of reference accordingly.

ii. Mechanisms for monitoring and reviewing APEL.S processes and procedures may take into account the following:

   a. The number of learners undertaking APEL.S.
   b. The success rate of APEL.S applications.
   c. An evaluation of the learner experience, including the time taken to undertake and complete the APEL.S process.
   d. An evaluation of the staff's experience, including the time required to support and manage the APEL.S process.
   e. Tracking and monitoring the progression of learners pursuing a programme through APEL.S to build evidence on the suitability of particular qualifications or experiential profiles for the qualification award.
   f. An evaluation of the effectiveness of collaborative arrangements with other HEPs or professional bodies.
   g. Reports from external assessors or moderators, where appropriate and feedback from industry partners on the relevance, applicability and effectiveness of APEL.S assessments in meeting workforce needs.

iii. To strengthen transparency and consistency, HEPs shall maintain clear documentation of quality assurance procedures, conduct periodic training for assessors and implement external moderation or external validation where appropriate.

iv. Digital security and confidentiality in managing portfolios and learner evidence must be upheld in compliance with the Personal Data Protection Act 2010.

6.2 Integration of APEL.S Provision within the HEP's Quality Assurance Framework and Systems

The HEP's quality assurance framework must fully integrate APEL.S by embedding all related policies, procedures, and monitoring mechanisms within its institutional quality assurance system. This ensures that APEL.S implementation upholds the same standards of transparency, consistency, reliability and accountability applied to conventional academic programmes.

Within this framework, APEL.S processes including learner admission, assessment design, moderation, and result endorsement are subject to the same cycles of internal audit, periodic review and external evaluation as other programmes offered by the HEP. Comprehensive documentation of procedures, roles and decision-making structures must be maintained and made available for review by the MQA or other authorised external quality assurance bodies to ensure transparency and accountability.

This integrated approach ensures that APEL.S is not treated as a parallel or isolated pathway, but as an equally rigorous and quality-assured component of the institution's overall academic governance and quality assurance system.

REFERENCES

1. Academy of Sciences Malaysia. (2023). *Review of the Malaysia Education Blueprint (Higher Education).*
2. Khazanah Research Institute. (2023). *Shifting tides: Policies to Support Malaysia's Transition to A High-Income Nation.*
3. Malaysian Qualifications Agency. (2016). *Guidelines to Good Practices: Work-Based Learning (GGP: WBL).*
4. Malaysian Qualifications Agency. (2024). *Malaysian Qualifications Framework: MQF Second Edition.*
5. Malaysian Qualifications Agency. (2024). *Guidelines for Industrial Verification of Curriculum (GIVC) Second Edition.*
6. Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia. (2023). *National Policy Review Committee Report.*
7. Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia. (2026). *Malaysia Higher Education Blueprint 2026-2035.*
8. Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia. (2020). *National Education Code 2020 (NEC-2020).*
9. Ministry of Human Resources. (2020). *Malaysia Standard Classification of Occupations (MASCO)*
10. Sekretariat Majlis TVET Negara. (2024). *Dasar TVET Negara 2030.*
11. United Nations. (2015). Su*stainable Development Goal 4: Ensure Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Promote Lifelong Learning Opportunities for All. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.*
12. World Economic Forum. (2024). *The Global Competitiveness Index 5.0: Measuring Productivity and Prosperity.*

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF PANEL MEMBERS

NO.	PANEL MEMBER	ORGANISATION
1.	Dr. Mad Ithnin bin Salleh (Chairman)	Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI)
2.	Prof. Madya Dr. Rozyanty binti Rahman (Standard Writer)	Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP)
3.	Prof. Dr. Liew Teik Kooi	HELP University
4.	Prof. Madya Dr. Noorfaizal bin Dato' Yidris	Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM)
5.	Tuan Haji Nik Mustapha bin Nik Mohamed	Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF)
6.	Dato' Sri Haji Azmin Mustam bin Abdul Karim	Petro Teguh (M) Sdn. Bhd. [Representative: Government-Industry TVET Coordination Body (GITC)]
7.	Ts. Asral Falah bin Ahmad Asnawi	VAT Manufacturing Sdn Bhd.
8.	Puan Siti Rahayu binti Yaakub	Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB)
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE		
1.	Puan Salina binti Mohamed Suhaimi	Department of Higher Education Ministry of Higher Education, (JPT, MOHE)
2.	Puan Marzita binti Muhamad Tazi	Department of Polytechnic and Community College Education Ministry of Higher Education, (MOHE)

APPENDIX 2: MALAYSIAN QUALIFICATION STATEMENT

SECTION 1: INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE HOLDER OF THE QUALIFICATION

1.1 Name

1.2 Identification Number/Passport Number

1.3 Date of Birth (day/month/year)

1.4 Student Identification Number or Code (if available)

SECTION 2: INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE QUALIFICATION

2.1 Name of Qualification and (if applicable) Title Conferred (in original language)

2.2 Qualification Status MQA Registration No. (programme code, year of accreditation)

2.3 Main Field(s) of Study for the Qualification - National Education Code and/or Malaysia Standard Classification of Occupations Code

2.4 Name and Status of Awarding Institution (in original language) – University name, date of establishment

2.5 Name and Status of Institution Administering Studies (in original language) (if different from 2.4)

2.6 Language(s) of Instruction and Examination - English, Bahasa Melayu

SECTION 3: INFORMATION ON THE LEVEL OF THE QUALIFICATION

3.1 Level of Qualification – MQF level (5,6 or 7)

3.2 Official Length of Programme - Refer to the table in Section 2.6 GGP; APEL.S

3.3 Entry Requirement(s) - Minimum age and minimum years of working experience in the relevant field.

SECTION 4: INFORMATION ON THE CONTENTS AND RESULTS GAINED

4.1 Mode of Study - APEL.S

4.2 Programme Requirements - Programme Learning Outcomes and Competency/Skill set.

4.3 Programme Details: (e.g., modules or units studied), and the individual grades/marks/credits obtained: (if this information is available on an official transcript, it should be reproduced here)

No.	Assessment instruments	Weightage (%)
1.	Portfolio	30
2.	Competency-Based Validation (CBV)	
	i. Competency-Based Interview (CBI)/Behavioural	30

	Evidence Interview	
	ii. Demonstration of Practical Tasks	30
	iii. Workplace Endorsement (Third-Party Validation)	10

4.4 Grading Scheme and (if available) Grade Distribution Guidance - Marks and grading table, CGPA

4.5 Overall Classification of the Qualification (in original language).

SECTION 5: INFORMATION ON THE FUNCTION OF THE QUALIFICATION

5.1 Access to Further Study

5.2 Professional Status (if applicable)

SECTION 6: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

6.1 Additional Student Activities - Skills related activities

6.2 Additional Information

6.3 Further Information Sources

SECTION 7: CERTIFICATION OF THE SUPPLEMENT

7.1 Date

7.2 Signature - HEP personnel (e.g., Registrar)

7.3 Capacity – Signatory

7.4 Official Stamp or Seal

SECTION 8: INFORMATION ON THE NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

(Refer to the GGP: Malaysian Qualification Statement)

APPENDIX 2A: APEL.S SELF-ASSESSMENT FORM FOR LEARNERS

Instruction for Completing the APEL.S Self-Assessment Form

1. Provide your personal particulars in Part A.
2. For Part B substantiate your claims with relevant documentary evidence.
3. For Part C submit a brief account of the acquired skills that supports the learning outcomes of the programme you are applying under APEL.S.

PART A: PERSONAL PARTICULARS

Name			
Identity Card No.			
Name of Programme			
Level of the Programme	Level 5	Advanced Diploma	
	Level 6	Graduate Certificate	
		Graduate Diploma	
	Level 7	Postgraduate Certificate	
		Postgraduate Diploma	

PART B: SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs) On completion of this programme, the learner should be able to…	I have acquired these skills through my working career and can provide documentary evidence (label all the evidence appropriately)	I possess most of these skills, but have no documentary evidence	I am willing to complete a task, assignment or relevant assessment to demonstrate these skills
1. PLO1			
2. PLO2			

Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs) On completion of this programme, the learner should be able to…	I have acquired these skills through my working career and can provide documentary evidence (label all the evidence appropriately)	I possess most of these skills, but have no documentary evidence	I am willing to complete a task, assignment or relevant assessment to demonstrate these skills
3. PLO3			
4. PLO4			
5. PLO5			
6. PLO6			
7. PLO7			
8. PLO8			
9. PLO9			
10. PLO10			
11. PLO11			

PART C: REPORT SUBMISSION

Write and submit **a report at least 1,000 words** describing the acquired specialised skills and experience that supports the programme learning outcomes (you may attach a separate sheet for this report). In your report, please describe why you are applying for APEL.S and how your prior experiential learning aligns with the programme learning outcomes.

I confirm that all the details on this form are correct to the best of my knowledge. The submission of the report is also my own works. Submitted by: Date:

For office use only:	
Received by: Date :	Recommendation by Advisor:

Remarks		
Review by Skill Assessor		
Signature	:	
Name	:	
Position	:	
Date	:	

APPENDIX 2B: APEL.S APPLICATION FORM

Instructions for completing the APEL.S application form.

1. Fill in your personal information and attach the necessary documentary evidence for APEL.S. This will ensure that your application is complete and can be processed.
2. The following documents are required for submission of the application.

PART A: PERSONAL PARTICULARS		
Name of Applicant:		
Identification Card No:		
Name of Programme:		
Level of the Programme:	Please indicate the level of the qualification you are applying for by ticking (✓) only **ONE** of the options.	
		Advanced Diploma (L5)
		Graduate Certificate (L6)
		Graduate Diploma (L6)
		Postgraduate Certificate (L7)
		Postgraduate Diploma (L7)
PART 2: SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR SUBMISSION*		
Please tick (✓) the appropriate boxes to indicate the documents enclosed.		Identity document (IC/Passport)
		Highest educational qualification
		Resume/CV
		Evidence of prior learning (e.g., work experience, training, achievements)
		Industry supporting letter
PART 3: DECLARATION		
Confirmation by APEL.S Advisor	I hereby confirm that the above applicant has undertaken the Self-Assessment exercise and is deemed eligible to apply for APEL.S assessment. Signature: Name of Advisor: Date:	

*Note: All evidence must be properly labelled

I hereby:

a. declare that I have read, understood and accepted all the terms and conditions stipulated under the provisions of APEL.S of my institution*

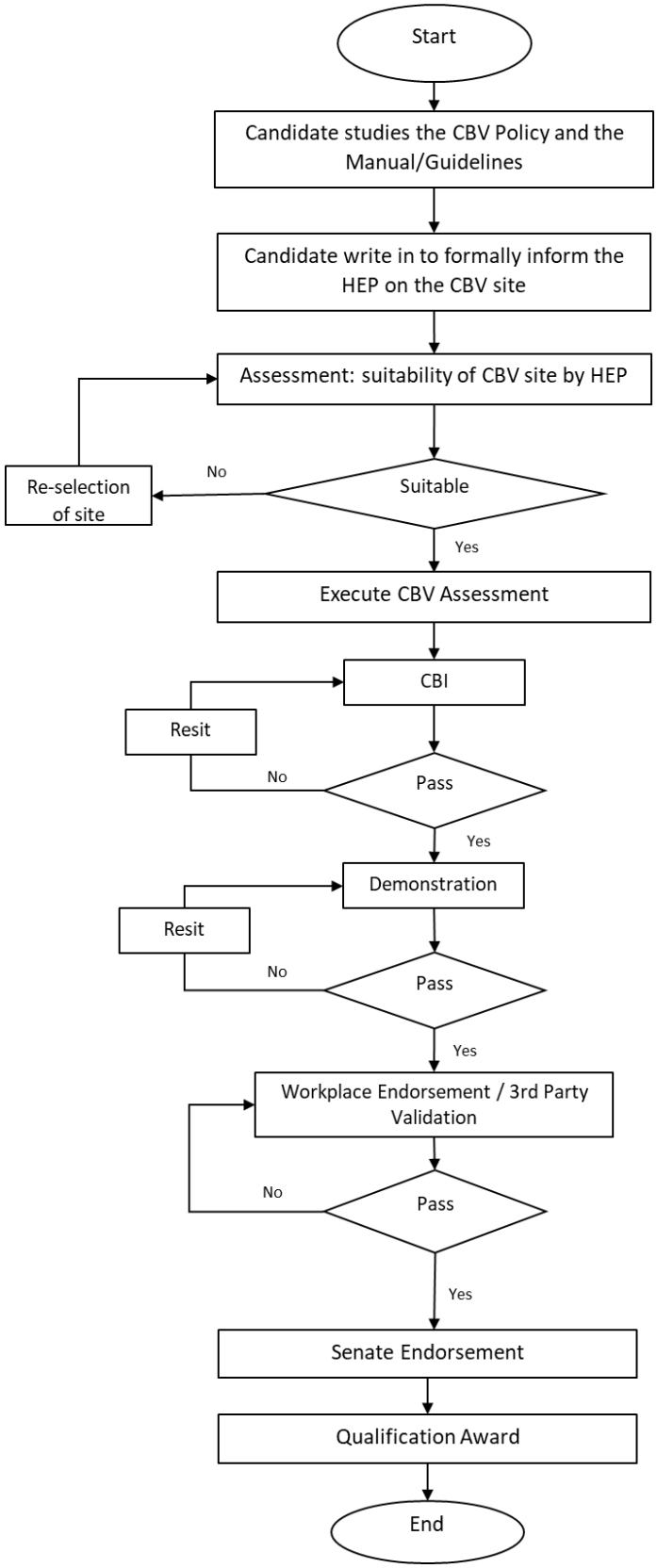
b. declare that all the information and documents provided to support this application are authentic, true and accurate.

I fully understand that the HEP* reserves the right to reject my application if proven otherwise.

Signature	:	
Name	:	
Date	:	

*Note: The term ‘HEP’ should be replaced with the approved name of the institution accordingly.

APPENDIX 3: APEL.S ASSESSMENT FLOWCHART



Note: Learners who fail any of the assessment instruments may appeal for a review of the results. The HEP must establish a proper and transparent mechanism for appeals

APPENDIX 3A: PORTFOLIO SUBMISSION FORM FOR APEL.S

PART 1: PERSONAL PARTICULARS

Full Name				
Identify Card (IC)/ Passport Number				
Intended Programme of Study				
MQF Level		Advanced Diploma (L5)		Postgraduate Certificate (L7)
		Graduate Certificate (L6)		Postgraduate Diploma (L7)
		Graduate Diploma (L6)		

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

(A) CERTIFICATED LEARNING (FORMAL LEARNING)

TITLE OF CERTIFICATION	LEVEL OF THE AWARD (CERTIFICATE/ DIPLOMA/ DEGREE)	AWARDING BODY / INSTITUTION	DURATION OF STUDY (MONTHS / YEARS)	YEAR AWARDED	LABEL AND ATTACHED EVIDENCE
e.g., STPM	Certificate	Majlis Peperiksaan Malaysia (MPM)	2 years	1995	e.g., Appendix A (STPM certificate)
1.					
2.					
3.					

(B) INFORMAL LEARNING

Work experience

NAME OF EMPLOYER /SELF EMPLOYED	ADDRESS OF EMPLOYER	TIME SERVED (MONTH & YEAR)		POSITION(S) HELD	BRIEF JOB DESCRIPTIONS
		FROM	TO		
e.g., XYZ Company	No. 123, Batu 3, Shah Alam	May 2000	April 2005	Floor Supervisor	
e.g., XYZ Company	No. 123, Batu 3, Shah Alam	May 2005	December 2006	Shift Manager	
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					

Other learning activities (e.g., hobbies**)**

OTHER ACTIVITIES This may include your hobbies, sports, recreational activities, social or community service, training provided, consultancy work or other activities that may be relevant to the competencies.	YEAR	WHAT I HAVE LEARNT (Relevant to the Programme Applied)
e.g., Marshall of Local Cycling Club	1990- present	Planning and managing club activities.
1.		
2.		
3.		

(C) NON-FORMAL LEARNING

Training, seminar, workshop, conferences etc

NAME/TITLE OF TRAINING OR COURSE	LOCATION	DATE	LENGTH (Hours/Days/ Month)	DESCRIPTION OF KNOWLEDGE/ SPECIALISED SKILLS ACQUIRED
e.g., 5S Workshop	Hotel Eastin, Petaling Jaya	2nd May 2005	1 day	Basics of 5S, managing 5s practices
1.				
2.				
3				

(D) LANGUAGE COMPETENCY

LANGUAGE	1: POOR; 2; AVERAGE 3: GOOD; 4: EXCELLENT											
	READING				SPEAKING				WRITING			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
e.g., BM				□				□				□
2.												
3.												
4.												

PART 3: COMPETENCY WORKSHEET FOR SPECIALISED SKILLS AWARD-BASED LEARNING PORTFOLIOS

<table>
<tr><th>Programme Learning Outcomes (PLO)</th><th>Skill Set/ Competency</th><th>Learning Statements</th><th>Origin of Learning</th><th>Supporting Documentations</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2" rowspan="2">This (PLO and skill set) will be provided by the HEP</td><td colspan="3">Advisory note:
Gather as much information as possible about the curriculum structure of the programme.
Examine the PLOs (knowledge, skills or competencies that you should achieve upon completion of the programme). The PLOs of the various programmes of study are usually available on the HEP website.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Learning statements form the core of the portfolio.

The language you use and the details you provide here will show the Assessors what you have acquired or gained from your formal, informal or non-formal learning that are relevant to the programme.</td><td>Include information regarding the location and time (where and when) the learning occurred.
A location and date may be used more than once throughout your competency worksheets.</td><td>Wherever possible, make reference to supporting documentation that provides evidence of the learning you have claimed.
Use tabs and cross-referencing to facilitate easy access to your supporting documents.</td></tr>
</table>

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

Name	
Position	
Organisation	
Phone Number	
Email Address	

Name	
Position	
Organisation	
Phone Number	
Email Address	

DECLARATION:

I hereby declare that all the information and documents provided to support this application are authentic, true and accurate. I fully understand that the HEP* reserves the right to reject my application if proven otherwise.

Signature : _____

Name :

Date :

**Note: The term HEP should be replaced with the approved name of the institution accordingly i.e. XXX University or YYY College.*

APPENDIX A

LIST OF EVIDENCE

Candidates are encouraged to attach additional supporting evidence that substantiates their prior experiential learning and competencies. Such evidence may include, but is not limited to, work samples, project reports, certificates of training, reflective journals, letters of verification or records of achievement.

All evidence must be **authentic, verifiable and relevant** to the claimed competencies and aligned to the respective programme learning outcomes. Candidate shall organise and label each item clearly within the **portfolio submission** to facilitate systematic evaluation by Assessors. Digital or multimedia evidence (e.g., videos, presentations or workplace artefacts) may also be accepted, provided that confidentiality and intellectual property requirements are observed.

Evidence that can be provided by the candidate:

Direct Evidence		Indirect Evidence
Certificates You can provide copies of your qualifications: ● School certificates ● Statements of results ● Courses completed at work ● Professional body membership ● Certificates of training		**Written Records** You can provide copies of: ● Diaries ● Records ● Journals ● Articles
Work Samples You can provide samples of your work: ● Drawings or photographs ● Reports ● Written materials ● Projects ● Objects ● Work of art ● Audio/Video recordings		**E-mail** You can provide copies of email communication which verify: ● Customer feedback ● Work activities ● Written skills

Records of Workplace Activities You can provide documents that verify your work activities: ● Notes ● Emails ● Completed worksheets ● Workplace agreements ● Contracts		**Supporting Letters** You can provide letters to verify your claim from: ● Employers ● Community groups ● People you have worked with (paid or unpaid work)
Documents You can provide evidence that shows what you have done in your life: ● Media articles ● Meritorious awards ● Letters of verification/recommendation		**Exhibitions** You can provide evidence of participation in exhibitions related to skills: ● Technology exhibitions ● Trade events ● Local and international fashion weeks
Skills Competitions You can provide evidence that show what you have participated in: ● World Skills Competition ● Malaysian Skills Competition		

APPENDIX 3B: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF APEL.S ASSESSORS AND SKILL ASSESSORS

The following outlines the criteria for appointing Assessors, their responsibilities and the general strategies that may be adopted throughout the assessment process.

Criteria for Appointment of Assessors:

The Assessor appointed is an academic staff member, who is a subject matter expert or specialist in the APEL.S programme offered. The Assessor must possess an academic qualification at a level higher than the assessed programme or, if at an equivalent level, must have a substantial number of years of relevant work experience, (i.e., at least 5 years in related fields). In addition, he/she should demonstrate the following:

a. Is knowledgeable in the framework and implementation of APEL.S.
b. Has sufficient knowledge of the skills qualification been assessed.
c. Demonstrates an open mind towards various assessment instruments.
d. Maintains objectivity and independence throughout the evaluation process.
e. Ensures that there is no personal interest in the assessment outcome and no conflict of interest.

Roles and Responsibilities of Assessors:

i) Prior to an assessment

a. Base the assessment and recognition of learning on knowledge (formal and informal), acquired specialised skills, technical/technological certifications and professional experience (related to the APEL.S programme or specialised skills award).
b. Ensure that the learning standards against which acquired skills are assessed (e.g., learning outcomes, competency standards) are clearly stated.
c. Use the existing experience and expertise of the HEP or colleagues to assess portfolio deliverables.
d. Ensure that the assessment tools selected are ‘fit for purpose’.
e. Establish procedures for assessing team-based prior learning (skills).
f. Identify methods that measure the application of skills competencies and tacit knowledge.
g. Review previously administered assessments for ideas.
h. Design tools that assess the appropriate balance of theoretical and practical skills.

i. Ensure that sector-specific jargon and textbook-style questions are not used when developing assessments.

j. Establish explicit criteria for third party evidence and determine the assigned weight for portfolio assessment.

APPENDIX 3C: VARIOUS FORMS OF VALIDATION INSTRUMENTS

Types of Validation Instruments	Description	Advantages	Constraints
I. PRACTICAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT			
Hands-On Tasks (Skills Demonstration)	- Complete real tasks relevant to the skill. A structured method to evaluate an individual's practical ability to perform specific tasks. - Assess how well the individual applies knowledge, skills, tools and judgement in practice, not just what is stated in an interview.	- Demonstrate actual performance rather than verbal claims. - Reduce reliance on subjective measures such as interviews.	- Resource-intensive (time, materials and personnel). - Performance anxiety may affect outcomes. - Not all skills are demonstrable. - Represents only a one-time snapshot.
Simulations	- Use of virtual environments to simulate work situations (e.g., flight simulators for pilots). - Simulations help to validate real world skills by individuals in a realistic scenario under controlled condition. They measure not only what a person knows but how they apply their skills under pressure, with limited information and/or time.	- Allow individuals to demonstrate skills without real-world consequences. - The same simulation can be used repeatedly, ensuring standardisation. - Cost effective. - Flexible.	- May not replicate all the complexities of real-world situations. - May require training just to operate the simulation. - Might oversimplify complex skills.

Types of Validation Instruments	Description	Advantages	Constraints
Competitions	- Useful or validating skills under time pressure, teamwork and creativity. - Competitions can demonstrate not just what individuals know, but how well they perform in real-time, high-pressure situation.	- Testing performance under deadlines and stress. - Allow comparison of skills with peers. - Competitive settings often drive unique solutions and creative approaches.	- Not everyone performs well under competitive pressure. - Resource intensive. - May encourage preparation focused on the event rather than long-term mastery.
Presentations	- Present a topic or proposal to evaluate communication skills, domain knowledge and critical thinking. - Presentations can validate both hard and soft skills by identifying how well an individual information, communicates ideas and responds under pressure.	- Assess how clearly and confidently a person can explain ideas. - Reflects depth of understanding and mastery.	- Candidates may underperform due to nervousness or stage fright. - May introduce bias towards good communicators. - Assessment can be inconsistent. - Offer limited validation of practical skills.

Types of Validation Instruments	Description	Advantages	Constraints
Shadowing, Job Trials, Buddy System	- Job shadowing involves observing a role being performed. - Job trials require an individual to perform the job themselves. - These short-duration activities are used to assess the practical skills of individuals.	- Provide real-world immersive exposure. - Not resource-intensive. - Reduce the learning curve. - Offer insight into authentic workplace dynamics.	- Learning may be passive. - Risk of buddy mismatch (e.g., personality or skill level differences). - Lack of standardisation.
Key Performance Indicators	- A quantifiable metric used to evaluate an individual's the success in meeting specific goals and objectives.	- Measures performance in real job conditions. - Align individual goals with organisational strategic objectives. - Promotes accountability by clarifying expectations and responsibilities.	- Time- bound nature. - One-size-fits-all limitation. - Risk of overemphasis on numerical targets.

Types of Validation Instruments	Description	Advantages	Constraints
Probationary Periods: Observe actual work in real conditions	- Review the individual's performance during the probationary period, including the learning achieved and feedback received. - Consider whether any extensions of probation were required.	- Real-time performance evaluation. - Reduced risk. - Holistic assessment.	-Risk of subjectivity. - Delayed performance feedback. - Snapshot-based judgement.
II. PORTFOLIO REVIEW			
Work Samples	- Review completed projects or outputs. - Evaluating work samples provides structured insight into an individual's skills, problem-solving ability, attention to detail and overall competence.	- Direct evidence of skills. - Reflect real tasks performed in the role. - Allow application of consistent standards.	- May not fully represent skills required in a different context. - Subjectivity across evaluators. - Challenges in standardisation.
Case Studies or Reports	- Useful for fields such as design, marketing, data analysis and writing.	- Mimic real-world challenges. - Assess how individuals analyse and solve problems. - Effective for evaluation soft skills.	- Time-intensive. - May not fully replicate actual job conditions. - Potential evaluator bias. - Difficult to standardise.

Types of Validation Instruments	Description	Advantages	Constraints
Self-Assessments (with verification)	- Skills self-evaluations: Useful as a baseline but must be cross validated. - Learning journals/ logs: Track progress and reflections over time.	- Promotes self-awareness. - Easy to administer to large groups. - Flexible.	- Subject to bias (over or underestimation. - Lack of standardisation.
III. CERTIFICATIONS & CREDENTIALS			
Industry- Recognised Certifications & Credentials	- Demonstrate that the individual's skills meet industry standards. - Many certifications require renewal or continuing education, supporting life-long learning.	- Evidence of industry-standard competencies. - Supports ongoing professional development.	- Limited shelf-life may require periodic recertification. - Certification cost can be high.
Diplomas or Degrees from Recognised Institutions of Higher Learning	- Degrees or Diplomas with practical components (e,g., internships, work-integrated learning) can provide evidence of applied skills especially in technical or professional programmes.	- Evidence of formal education. - Demonstrate cognitive readiness. - Recognised qualification.	- Possible mismatch between formal qualification and the intended skills award qualification.
Micro-Credentials from Recognised Institutions.	-Micro-credentials validate specific, job-relevant skills through focused learning modules.	-Flexible learning. -Low-cost, short programmes. -Stackable pathways.	- Possible overlap with existing learning.

Types of Validation Instruments	Description	Advantages	Constraints
Automated Tools/Platforms	- Ability to use automated tools or digital platforms to perform relevant tasks.	- Use the latest technology and software. - Enable multidisciplinary applications.	- Complexity of integration. - Rapid technological advancement.
IV. INTERVIEWS			
Behavioural Interviews	- Evaluate soft skills and situational responses.	- Elicit authentic evidence drawn from real past behaviour. - Captures soft skills and affective competencies.	-Reliance on memory, self-reporting or personal testimony. -Lack of standardisation, risk of biased reporting.
Technical Interviews	- Focus on domain-specific knowledge and logical reasoning.	- Assess depth of knowledge and understanding. - Allow adaptive probing. - Provide strong triangulation with other evidence sources.	- Limited demonstration of practical skills. - Scope limitation. - May not fully reflect actual problem-solving capability.
Panel Interviews	- Involve diverse viewpoints for a holistic evaluation.	- Multi-angle assessment. - More balanced evaluation. - Increased reliability.	- Variation in judgement among panel members. - Risk of uneven assessor engagement.

APPENDIX 3D: SAMPLE OF ASSESSMENT RUBRIC (PORTFOLIO)

Name of Programme: Advanced Diploma in Petroleum Production Technology					
Programme Learning Outcome (PLO)	**Likert Scale**				
	1 Poor	**2 Fair**	**3 Average**	**4 Good**	**5 Excellent**
PLO1: Acquire and apply knowledge of sciences and technology fundamentals relevant to the Petroleum Production field.	Demonstrates limited knowledge of sciences and technology fundamentals in the Petroleum Production field.	Demonstrates partial knowledge of sciences and technology fundamentals in the Petroleum Production field.	Demonstrates adequate knowledge of sciences and technology fundamentals in the Petroleum Production field.	Demonstrates comprehensive knowledge of sciences and technology fundamentals in the Petroleum Production field.	Demonstrates leading-edge knowledge of sciences and technology fundamentals in the Petroleum Production field.
PLO1: (Score)			√		
PLO2: Demonstrate comprehensive technical skills in the Petroleum Production field in a safe manner based on standards and regulations.	Demonstrates limited technical skills in the Petroleum Production field in a safe manner based on standards and regulations.	Demonstrates partial technical skills in the Petroleum Production field in a safe manner based on standards and regulations.	Demonstrates adequate technical skills in the Petroleum Production field in a safe manner based on standards and regulations.	Demonstrates comprehensive technical skills in the Petroleum Production field in a safe manner based on standards and regulations.	Demonstrate leading-edge technical skills in the Petroleum Production field in a safe manner based on standards and regulations.
PLO2: (Score)			√		

Name of Programme: Advanced Diploma in Petroleum Production Technology					
PLOXX:					
PLOXX: (Score)			√		

APPENDIX 4: COMPETENCIES OF THE FIVE CLUSTERS OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

Domain in the Cluster of Learning Outcomes	Competencies/ Descriptor		
	Level 5 **ADVANCED DIPLOMA**	**Level 6** **GRADUATE CERTIFICATE/ GRADUATE DIPLOMA**	**Level 7** **POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE/ POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA**
Cluster 1: Knowledge and Understanding	• Demonstrate technical knowledge and comprehension within an advanced or specialised field. • Address varied and unpredictable task in work and/or study context.	• Apply advanced theoretical and technical knowledge and demonstrate relevant skills in a specialised field. • Demonstrate multidisciplinary skills related to the field of study, work and/or practice.	• Demonstrate innovation and independence in analytical and critical evaluation. • Synthesise complex information, specialised concepts, theories, methods and practices in field(s) of study or practice as a basis for research.
Cluster 2: Cognitive Skills	• Apply detailed technical, conceptual and theoretical knowledge in a specialised subject/discipline or work. • Solve problems or issues in broadly defined complex, routine and non-routine contexts, including unpredictable circumstances, using a limited	• Demonstrate intellectual independence applying knowledge within specific field(s) by using critical, analytical and evaluation skills relevant to study, work or practice. • Manage complex applications and handle unpredictable	• Critically and integratively resolve complex problems or issues in a field(s) of study or practice through research, using advanced techniques, tools, skills or a range of approaches. • Use a combination of approaches for decision-making and for producing new ideas, innovative solutions or improved practices.

Domain in the Cluster of Learning Outcomes		Competencies/ Descriptor		
		Level 5 **ADVANCED DIPLOMA**	**Level 6** **GRADUATE CERTIFICATE/ GRADUATE DIPLOMA**	**Level 7** **POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE/ POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA**
		range of approaches and some degree of independence.	issues by generating creative or innovative solutions. ● Apply knowledge and skills using a range of approaches appropriate to the field of study, work or practice.	
Cluster 3: Functional Work Skills	Practical Skills	● Apply a range of practical skills, essential methods and procedures to a broad range of complex tasks and/or areas of study. ● Supervise others in related practices and processes.	● Apply essential methods and procedures to solve a broad range of complex problems. ● Supervise related practices and processes within the field of specialisation.	● Apply standard and specialised research methods, approaches practical skills and tools. ● Use techniques informed by knowledge at the forefront of the field and current developments in the subject/discipline.
	Interpersonal and Communication Skills	● Convey information, ideas, problems and solutions in a comprehensive, well-structured manner for social, academic and	● Convey ideas in written and oral forms confidently, accurately and coherently, using appropriate modes of	● Communicate knowledge, skills, ideas, critiques and conclusions using appropriate methods to peers, experts and non-experts, in at least one international language.

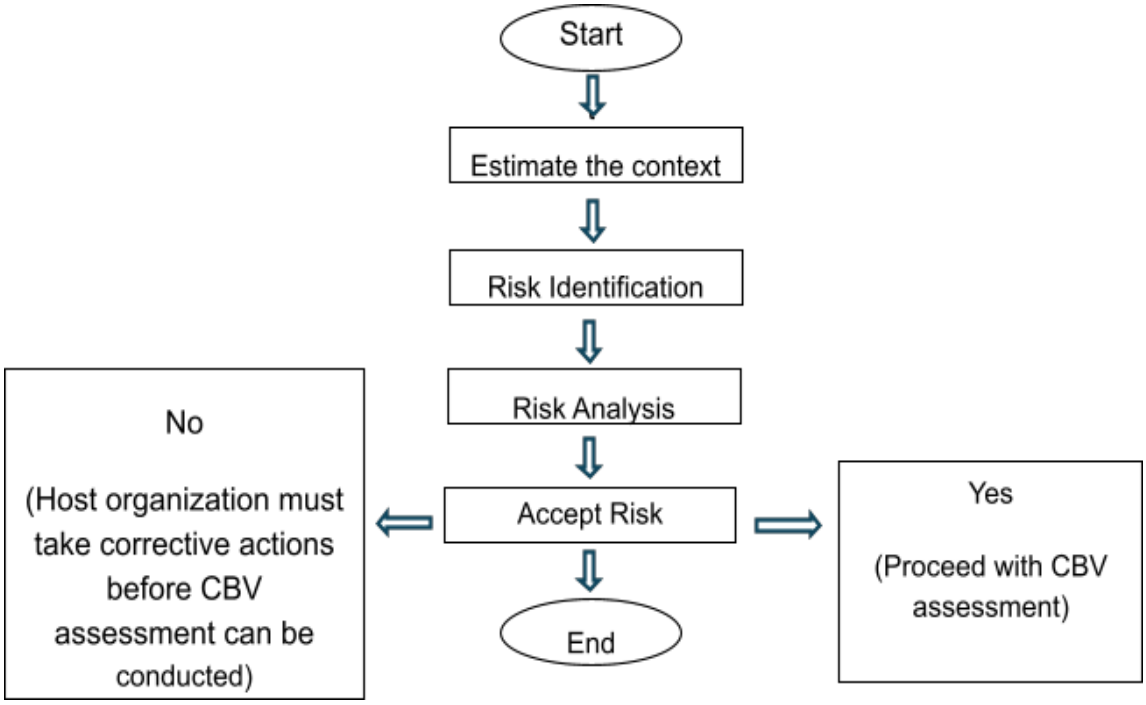
Domain in the Cluster of Learning Outcomes		Competencies/ Descriptor		
		Level 5 **ADVANCED DIPLOMA**	**Level 6** **GRADUATE CERTIFICATE/ GRADUATE DIPLOMA**	**Level 7** **POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE/ POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA**
		professional purposes to a range of audiences. ● Demonstrate high level of oral and written proficiency in at least two languages.	presentation for diverse audiences and contexts. ● Work with different people in diverse learning and working communities, both locally and internationally.	● Work collaboratively and professionally with different people in learning and working communities, groups and networks. ● Demonstrate competence to work and undertake advanced study in at least one foreign language.
	Digital and Numeracy Skills	● Use a range of information, media and technology applications to support study and/or work. ● Interpret routine and non-routine, numerical and graphical/visual data.	● Apply a broad range of information, media and technology applications to support study and/or work. ● Integrate numerical and graphical/visual data for study and/or work.	● Use a wide range of suitable digital technologies and software to enhance study, research and/or work/practice. ● Apply digital applications and systems to address defined and emerging situations or problems.
	Leadership, Autonomy and Responsibility	● Exercise a substantial degree of autonomy and carry significant of responsibilities.	● Demonstrate leadership and professionalism in managing responsibilities within broad	● Engage in professional environments with substantial autonomy, independence and leadership.

Domain in the Cluster of Learning Outcomes	Competencies/ Descriptor		
	Level 5 **ADVANCED DIPLOMA**	**Level 6** **GRADUATE CERTIFICATE/ GRADUATE DIPLOMA**	**Level 7** **POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE/ POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA**
	● Make management decisions independently including resource allocation and performance-related judgements of others. ● Demonstrate responsibility and accountability for one's own actions. ● Lead teams in new or undefined work environments. ● Apply decision-making capacities and professionalism to meet predetermined goals and outcomes.	organisational parameters. ● Operate with an appropriate level of autonomy (basic considerable) in carrying out work and study tasks. ● Manage responsibilities related to own work and, where relevant, the work of others.	● Assume significant responsibility in planning, resource-management, supervision and problem-solving and managing work within own team and collaboratively with other teams especially complex and unpredictable context. ● Exhibit a high level of autonomy including the ability conduct research independently with minimal guidance.
Cluster 4: Personal and Entrepreneurial Skills	● Engage in self-directed lifelong learning and participate independently in professional collaborations. ● Adapt to changes in the work environment.	● Pursue self-directed lifelong learning and professional pathways. ● Demonstrate flexibility and adaptability to changes in the industry.	● Advance oneself through continuous academic and/or professional development. ● Adapt to new changes in the industry with high flexibility. ● Initiate innovative entrepreneurial

Domain in the Cluster of Learning Outcomes	Competencies/ Descriptor		
	Level 5 **ADVANCED DIPLOMA**	**Level 6** **GRADUATE CERTIFICATE/ GRADUATE DIPLOMA**	**Level 7** **POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE/ POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA**
	● Apply entrepreneurial skills in relevant selected situations. ● Demonstrate competencies for working or studying in multicultural, multilingual and multi-ethnic communities, both locally and globally.	● Apply entrepreneurial competency through selected projects. ● Understand broader socio-political economic and cultural issues at local/national and regional levels.	ventures or projects.
Cluster 5: Ethics and Professionalism	● Demonstrate social responsibilities and comply with professional, ethical and sustainable practices. ● Support sustainable practices within local and global communities.	● Address ethical issues, make decisions ethically and act professionally within varied social and professional environments. ● Understand local and global issues relating to science, technology, business, social and environmental matters.	● Apply legal, ethical and professional codes of practice. ● Evaluate complex issues using critical reflections and sound ethical judgement. ● Engage with civic, social, technological and economic development at national and international levels in a responsible and ethical manner.

APPENDIX 5: RISK IDENTIFICATION AND MANAGEMENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

For the safety of individuals, workplaces and organisations, there must be clear procedures and practices in place to identify, assess and manage risk in the workplace. To determine whether an assessment site has adequate safety measures to minimise risk and optimise the reliability and validity of evaluating candidate's knowledge and competencies, the following process is recommended:



One way of identifying, assessing and managing risk in the workplace is to consider and document the following (non-exhaustive):

a. Have hazards been identified in the assessment area prior to assessment?
b. Is the learner informed of the identified hazards?
c. Will the assessment place the learner at risk?
d. Does the assessment require the creation of unsafe conditions?
e. Is all required safety equipment available for the assessment?
f. Have appropriate contingency plans been considered for the assessment?

APPENDIX 6: SAMPLE OF COMPETENCY-BASED INTERVIEW (STAR ASSESSMENT)

Name of Programme:				
Interviews, Assessments, or Performance Reviews	**S – Situation** Describe the context within which you performed a task or faced a challenge.	**T – Task** Explain the actual responsibility or goal you were working towards.	**A – Action** Detail the specific steps you took to address the task or situation. Focus on your actions.	**R – Result** Share the outcome of your actions.
1. Technical Skills Application	What was the task or situation?	What was your role or responsibility?	What technical skills did you use and how did you apply them?	What was the outcome?
2. Problem Solving in Practical Tasks	What was the challenge or error?	What needed to be done?	What troubleshooting steps did you take?	What was the result?
3. Following Standard Operating Procedures and Safety Protocols	What was the situation and which the standard operating procedures were involved?	What was your specific responsibility?	How did you ensure the procedures were followed correctly?	What was the result or impact?
4. Use of Tools or Equipment	What equipment or tool was used, and why?	What task were you assigned?	How did you use it safely and correctly?	What was the outcome or product?
5. Adapting to New Tools/ Technologies	What was the tool or technology?	What were you expected to do with it?	How did you adapt to it or learn to use it?	What was the result?

Name of Programme:				
6. Workplace Collaboration	Where were you placed, and what was the task?	What was expected from your team?	What did you contribute?	What was achieved?
7. Time Management for an Assessment or Project	What was the project or assessment?	What was your responsibility?	How did you manage your time or prioritise tasks?	Were you successful in completing it?
8. Communication with Clients/ Customers	What was the situation?	What did the customer need to understand?	How did you communicate clearly?	How did the customer respond?

APPENDIX 7: SAMPLE OF ASSESSMENT RUBRIC (BEHAVIOURAL)

Name of Programme: Advanced Diploma in Electronic Engineering					
Behavioural Criteria	**Likert Scale**				
	1 Poor	**2 Fair**	**3 Average**	**4 Good**	**5 Excellent**
1. Responsibility & Reliability	Frequently unreliable; neglects duties	Occasionally late; inconsistent in task completion	Meets basic expectations; completes most tasks on time	Usually punctual and dependable; minor follow-up needed	Always punctual and, dependable; completes tasks with full accountability
2. Initiative & Motivation	Avoids work; lacks motivation	Passive unless directed; shows little interest	Willing to work; waits for instruction	Takes initiative often; shows strong engagement	Seeks out tasks; improves processes; highly self-driven
3. Adaptability & Flexibility	Avoids or rejects change entirely	Resists or struggles to adjust to change	Manages change with some difficulty	Accepts changes well; requires minimal support	Adapts quickly and effectively; remains calmly in any situation
4. Attitude & Professionalism	Often rude or unprofessional; careless in conduct	Occasionally disrespectful occasional inappropriate behaviour	Generally acceptable behaviour	Usually professional; respectful and cooperative	Consistently respectful, mature, and positive at all times

Name of Programme: Advanced Diploma in Electronic Engineering					
Behavioural Criteria	**Likert Scale**				
	1 Poor	**2 Fair**	**3 Average**	**4 Good**	**5 Excellent**
5. Teamwork & Collaboration	Creates tension; avoids teamwork	Struggles to work with others; minimal contribution	Works with others when required	Cooperates well; supports the team when asked	Actively contributes, helps others, promotes team spirit
6. Communication & Listening	Poor communication; interrupts or ignores others	Difficulty explaining ideas; often misses key information	Communicates adequately; sometimes unclear	Speaks clearly; listens well; adjusts communication	Communicates clearly, listens actively; responds appropriately
7. Respect for Rules & Authority	Challenges authority; frequently breaks rules	Often forgets or ignores instructions	Accepts guidance; occasional lapses	Follows most rules accepts authority	Fully complies with rules; follows directions with respect
8. Workplace Ethics & Integrity	Known for dishonesty; cuts corners	Sometimes dishonest; weak integrity	Generally honest; understands right and wrong	Demonstrates integrity regularly; make ethical choices	Always honest, fair, and trustworthy; act ethically without supervision

APPENDIX 8: SAMPLE OF ASSESSMENT RUBRIC (PERFORMANCE)

Name of Programme: Advanced Diploma in Electronic Engineering **Candidate Name:** **Date:** **Assessor Name:** **Skill Area:**					
Criteria	**Likert Scale**				
	1 **Poor**	**2** **Fair**	**3** **Average**	**4** **Good**	**5** **Excellent**
1. Tool & Material Preparation	Major tools or materials missing; incorrect selection	Some correct tools or materials; major errors	Most tools or materials correct; minor errors	All tools or materials correct; minor inefficiency	All tools or materials selected correctly; and efficiently
2. Safety Compliance (personal protective equipment, power off, safe work)	Minimal safety equipment power not switched off	Partial compliance with safety requirements	Adequate safety equipment and safety practices	Good adherence to safety procedures	Fully compliance with all safety standards; proactive approach
3. Wiring Accuracy (connections & colour code)	Mostly incorrect connection; safety risk	Some correct connections, safety risk	Mostly correct connections; minor issues	All connections correct minor flaws	All connections fully correct; neat and follows standard colour code

4. Workmanship (neatness, cable management)	Very messy layout; unsafe arrangement	Basic layout; lacks neatness	Functional layout; fairly neat	Clean layout; good cable management	Professional finish; excellent layout and neatness
5. Functionality Test	Circuit fails; major errors	Circuit works intermittently; inconsistent performance	Circuit works; minor performance issues	Circuit works reliably; stable performance	Circuit works flawlessly on first-attempt success
6. Clean-up & Workplace Habits	Minimal cleanup effort	Some clean-up; tools not organized	Cleaned up adequately; some gaps	Cleaned thoroughly; minor oversight	Spotless work area; tools organized, exemplary habits

APPENDIX 9: SAMPLE OF TESTIMONIAL STATEMENT / REFERENCE LETTER WITH TASK-BASED EVIDENCE

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to wholeheartedly recommend [Candidate's Full Name], who worked with us at [Company/ Organisation Name] as a [Position Title] from [Start Date] to [End Date]. During this time, I had the pleasure of witnessing their dedication, professionalism and consistent delivery of high-quality work.

[Candidate's Name] undertook on a range of responsibilities and demonstrated strong competencies throughout their tenure. A summary of their key contributions is outlined below:

Area	Description
Roles	
Main Tasks	
Skills and Competencies Demonstrated	
Outcomes	

These achievements are a testament to [Candidate's Name's] ability to think strategically, work collaboratively, and deliver tangible results. Their guidance and support to junior colleagues also contributed to building a stronger and more cohesive team.

It was a genuine pleasure working with [Candidate's Name] and I am confident that their skills, integrity and work ethic will be a valuable asset in any future role. Please feel free to contact me at [email address/phone number] should you require any further information.

Warm regards,
[Referee's Name]
[Position]
[Organization]
[Contact Information]

APPENDIX 10: GUIDELINES FOR APEL.S ADVISOR

The APEL.S Advisors are individuals who provide guidance to learners on the expectations and the assessment instruments used to evaluate prior experiential learning. Advisors are appointed to support the learner in the APEL.S application but are not permitted to serve as an Assessors at the same time.

The following strategies may be adopted by APEL.S Advisors to perform their roles effectively and efficiently:

i. General strategies:
   a. Advocate the benefits and principles of APEL.S..
   b. Demonstrate a receptive attitude towards alternatives to traditional and behavioural assessment.
   c. Promote the various APEL.S assessments.

Learners must understand that APEL.S is not a soft option; it requires confidence, discipline and rigorous individual effort. When learner are fully informed of the nature and demands of the APEL.S processes, they will be better able to determine whether they should pursue the usual programme pathway or for the award of qualification via APEL.S.

ii. Advising strategies:
   a. Provide learners with clear, consistent, accurate and written guidelines on APEL.S application and assessment procedures.
   b. Communicate APEL.S expectations clearly and create a supportive environment.
   c. Assist learners applying for APEL.S to identify their educational and career goals.
   d. Assist learners in identifying their experiential knowledge, competencies and/or skills.
   e. Interview, coach and provide regular feedback to learners.
   f. Promote learner independence throughout the APEL.S process.
   g. Link learners to appropriate resources, e.g. portfolio development workshops.
   h. Explain the post-assessment processes for unsuccessful learners.

Each clearly defined stage of the APEL.S process must be supported appropriately by the Advisor. Support includes guidance on APEL.S processes as well as on the programme,

course, module, subject, vocational area or professional area field to which the APEL.S application relates.

Support services may be provided through the following means:

- Written or e-learning materials.
- Individual tutorials or meetings.
- Group sessions.
- Telephone or technology-mediated communication.

APPENDIX 11: APEL.S-01 FORM FOR HEPs

APEL.S-01 FORM

APPLICATION TO IMPLEMENT APEL.S

PART A: GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE HEP

1. Name of the HEP:
2. Date of Establishment:
3. Reference Number for the Approval of Establishment:
4. Reference Number and Approval Period for the Registration of the Institution:
5. Name, Title and Designation of the Chief Executive Officer:
6. Name, Title and Designation of the Liaison Officer:
7. Correspondence Address:
8. Telephone No.:
9. Email:
10. Website:

PART B: PROGRAMME INFORMATION

1. Name of Programme:
2. MQA Provisional/Full Accreditation Code:
3. Year Provisional/Full Accreditation was Granted:
4. Programme Learning Outcomes:
5. Course Information:
    - category of courses
    - course code, course name and credit value
    - course learning outcomes
6. Total Credits of the Programme:
7. Requirements for Graduation:

PART C: HEP'S COMMITMENT TO IMPLEMENTING APEL.S

1. Provision of an Institutional Policy on APEL.S
    - Approval from the HEP's Highest Academic Board/Senate

2. Provision of Resources (infrastructure, infostructure and human resources)
    2.1 Establishment of a centralised university wide APEL centre/unit* for managing APEL.S
        2.1.1 Objectives and functions of the centre/unit
        2.1.2 Organisational chart of the centre/ unit
        2.1.3 Roles and responsibilities of staff in the centre/unit
        2.1.4 Capacity building (training and development) for staff e.g., Administrator, Advisor, Assessor, Moderator involved in APEL.S

    2.2 Infostructure to manage data relevant to APEL.S
        2.2.1 Data related to the candidates' applications, assessments, results and appeals.
        2.2.2 Data related to the panel of Advisors, Assessors and Moderators

*Note: This centre/ unit may also collectively responsible manage APEL matters.

PART D: MANAGEMENT OF APEL.S APPLICATION

1. Application Process
    1.1. Confirmation of application from MQA
    1.2. Selection criteria and appointment of Advisors
    1.3. Advisory and counselling provided to learners

2. Registration Process
    2.1. Completion of the registration form for APEL.S at the institutional level

3. Assessment
    3.1. Selection criteria and appointment of Assessors
    3.2. Development of assessment instruments (Portfolio, CBV)
        3.2.1. Structure of assessment instruments and its associated marking guides/ rubrics
        3.2.2. Moderation processes for assessment instruments
    3.3. Role of panel of Assessors and Moderators
    3.4. Assessment instruments
        3.4.1. Portfolio
        3.4.2. CBV
            3.4.2.1 Competency-Based Interview (CBI)/Behavioural Evidence Interview

3.4.2.2 Demonstration of Practical Tasks

3.4.2.3 Workplace Endorsement.

3.5. Academic Committee/Examination Committee/Senate deliberation and approval of assessment results

3.6. Appeal process

4. Monitoring and Review of APEL.S: Stakeholders and the Processes Involved.

5. Integration of APEL.S Processes and Procedures within the Existing Quality Assurance Framework of the HEP.

PART E: PILOT STUDY

The HEP is required to identify at least ONE (1) candidate for the APEL.S process and specify the intended programme of study.

Documents for Submission (APEL.S Application)

The following documents are required documents are required submission:

a. APEL.S-01 Form

b. Assessment Instruments:

i. Portfolio:

- Portfolio Submission Form
- Assessment Rubric for Portfolio
- Evidence of the moderation process

ii. CBV

- Competency-Based Interview/Behavioural Evidence Interview
  - Process of construction of interview questions
  - Structured interview questions (e.g., STAR format: Situation, Task, Action, Result)
  - Rubrics for items to be assessed/verified
  - Evidence of the moderation process

- Demonstration of Practical Tasks

- Process of construction of demonstration tasks
- Practical performance assessment rubric
- Evidence of moderation the process

- Workplace Endorsement
  - Structured testimonial form/ statement (template)

c. A Sample of the Malaysian Qualification Statement (MQS)

PART F: HEAD OF THE HEP'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that all information and documents provided to support this application are authentic, true and accurate. I fully understand that the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) reserves the right to reject this application if the information or details provided do not satisfy the requirements stated in the 'Guidelines to Good Practices: APEL for Specialised Skills (APEL.S)'.

Signature :
Name :
Designation :
Date :
Official Stamp :

Note:
Please include hyperlinks to appendices where applicable

GLOSSARY

1.	Accreditation	Provisional and full accreditation granted by the Malaysian Qualification Agency.
2.	Advisor	Appointed staff of the HEP.
3.	Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)	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, the award of credit or for the award of academic qualifications.
4.	APEL.A	Accreditation of prior experiential learning for the purposes of admission/access into a programme of study under the various Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF) levels.
5.	APEL.C	Accreditation of prior experiential learning for the purposes of awarding credits for courses within a programme of study.
6.	APEL.M	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.
7.	APEL.Q	Accreditation of prior experiential learning for the purposes of awarding academic qualifications under the various Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF) levels.
8.	Assessment	The process of evaluating, measuring and documenting learners' academic readiness, learning progress, skill acquisition or educational needs.
9.	Competency	An underlying characteristic of an individual relating to knowledge, skills or abilities that enables that enables successful and meaningful performance of a given task or role.
10.	Competency-Based Interview	An assessment that evaluates a candidate's ability to explain, reflect on and justify their performance of tasks based on real-world experiences.
11.	Competency-Based Validation	An assessment that verifies and validates weather the learner possesses the appropriate knowledge and competencies for the skills award. It is usually conducted at the learner's workplace or any conducive environment that allows accurate assessment.

12.	Credit	A quantitative measure that representing the learning volume or the academic load required to achieve specified learning outcomes.
13.	Academic Assessor	An academic staff member in the discipline of the programme who develops assessment items to evaluate the learner's prior experiential learning.
14.	Skill Assessor	A professionally qualified individual with occupational or industry-based expertise, appointed to develop, administer and evaluate the assessment instruments for Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning for Skills (APEL.S)
15.	Formal Learning	Learning delivered within an organised and structured educational setting (e.g., preschool, primary school, secondary school, college, university) which may lead to formal recognition or a recognised qualification.
16.	Full Accreditation	An accreditation exercise to ascertain that the teaching, learning and all related activities of a provisionally accredited programme meet the required quality standards.
17.	Informal Learning	Learning that occurs continuously through life and work experiences. It is often unintentional.
18.	Malaysian Qualifications Framework	An instrument that classifies qualifications based on nationally approved a set of criteria and benchmarked against international best practices.
19.	Malaysian Qualification Statement	A document that describes a qualification received in a standard format providing information on the nature, level, context, content and status of the studies pursued and completed by the graduate.
20.	Non-Formal Learning	Learning that occurs alongside mainstream education and training. It may be assessed but does not normally lead to formal certification.
21.	Portfolio	A formal document that contains a compilation of evidence documenting the prior experiential learning of an individual and his or her articulation of learning acquired over a period of time, prepared to demonstrate the achievement of the intended course learning outcomes.
22.	Provisional Accreditation	An accreditation exercise to determine whether a proposed programme meets the minimum quality standards prior to its

		launch
23.	Qualification	An affirmation of achievement awarded by a Higher Education Provider or any party that is authorised body.

MALAYSIAN QUALIFICATIONS AGENCY (MQA)
No. 3539, Jalan Teknokrat 7, Cyber 5
63000, Cyberjaya
Selangor Darul Ehsan,
MALAYSIA