

Academic Staff Qualifications Procedure

Purpose

1. This Procedure gives effect to the Academic Staff Qualifications Policy and outlines the processes used by Global Higher Education (GHE) to ensure that appropriately qualified academic staff are employed to teach its courses and that all relevant sections of the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021* are met.

Scope

2. This Procedure applies to the qualifications, and assessment of equivalence for, all academic staff teaching and assessing units in GHE's courses.
3. Other provisions in relation to the recruitment of academic staff are in the **Human Resources Framework**.

Definitions

4. Definitions for key terms are presented in the Glossary of Terms which may be accessed on the GHE website at <https://www.globalhe.edu.au/policy>

Suite documents

5. This Procedure is linked to the following suite documents:
 - a) Academic Staff Qualifications Policy;
 - b) Academic Staff Qualifications Procedure - Schedule One: Criteria for Assessing Equivalence of Professional Experience to AQF Levels.

Procedure

6. Academic staff will be recruited to teach GHE courses under the processes outlined in the **Human Resources Framework**.
7. Where a potential academic staff member is deemed to have valuable appropriate expertise but does not meet the minimum requirement of possessing a qualification in a relevant discipline at least one level higher than the course in which they will be teaching, an assessment of equivalence will be undertaken.

Assessing the equivalence of professional experience

8. When assessing evidence of professional experience to determine its equivalence, the full range of relevant, verifiable professional activities must be considered.
9. The assessment of experience will vary by field of education, but the following broad criteria must be met. The experience being assessed must:
 - a) be of at least commensurate standing to the required qualification level;
 - b) be of at least five year's duration;
 - c) include evidence within the last five years.
10. Criteria for specific Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) levels are provided in Schedule One to this Procedure. Such criteria provide a minimum threshold to guide assessment, but the process of assessment must take into account how the level of professional experience demonstrates achievement that is equivalent to the specific learning outcomes of the relevant AQF level.

11. Professional experience equivalence is granted for one AQF increment only.
12. Where a recommended appointee to a teaching position does not meet the academic qualification requirements the Chair of the recruitment panel is responsible for submitting an *Assessment of Professional Equivalence Form* to the Academic Director with relevant evidence to accompany the recommendation to appoint. Where the Academic Director is the Chair the recommendation must be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer.
13. The Academic Director must authorise the assessment of professional equivalence and approve any required supervision or professional development arrangements for the employee.

Required evidence

14. Any verifiable source of relevant evidence may be considered in determining the weight and value of the professional experience. This includes, but is not limited to, evidence of:
 - a) leadership in the development of professional standards;
 - b) performing in a role that requires high order judgment and the provision of expert advice, or roles at a senior level;
 - c) managing significant projects in the field;
 - d) testimonials, awards or other recognition that recognises leadership or expertise in the field;
 - e) contributions in the field through participation in advisory boards and professional networks;
 - f) peer reviewed publications;
 - g) other publications such as books, reports and artistic works;
 - h) leadership or management of research acknowledged by peers;
 - i) general teaching experience including teaching at lower AQF levels, delivery of professional development or public lectures.

Support for staff

15. Appropriate support must be provided for staff who do not meet the criteria for professional equivalence until they are deemed to have met the required standard. This includes:
 - a) a professional development plan that is reviewed at the conclusion of each teaching period;
 - b) guidance and oversight of their teaching by staff who are appropriately qualified.

Record keeping

16. The Academic Director, together with the Operations Director, is responsible for ensuring that appropriate records are kept for all staff for whom an assessment of professional equivalence has been conducted. This includes authorised Assessment of Professional Equivalence Forms and any accompanying evidence, together with information about any professional development or mentoring arrangements that have been put in place.

Roles and responsibilities

17. Chairs of recruitment panels are responsible for assessing and making a recommendation in relation to professional equivalence.
18. The Academic Director is responsible for:
 - a) authorising assessments of professional equivalence and ensuring consistency over time;
 - b) the approval of any required supervision or professional development arrangements;
 - c) with the Operations Director, ensuring that academic staff, chairs of panels and human resource staff understand the requirements of this Policy;
 - d) all records management arising from this Policy and Procedure.

19. The Manager, Quality and Compliance is responsible for:
- ensuring compliance with this Procedure;
 - benchmarking GHE policy and standards with those adopted elsewhere in the tertiary sector;
 - monitoring of information available from the review of records relating to the implementation of this Policy and Procedure.
20. All staff are responsible for becoming familiar and complying with this Procedure.

Associated information

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| Related Internal Documents | Academic Staff Qualifications Policy Academic Staff Qualifications Procedure - Schedule One: Criteria for Assessing Equivalence of Professional Experience to AQF Levels Assessment of Professional Equivalence Form Assessment Policy Course Design Policy Human Resources Framework Quality Assurance Policy Staff Scholarship Policy GHE Glossary of Terms |
| Related Legislation, Standards and Codes | <i>Tertiary Education and Quality Standards Agency Act 2011</i> <i>Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021</i> <i>Australian Qualifications Framework</i> TEQSA Guidance Note: <i>Determining Equivalence of Professional Experience and Academic Qualifications, Version 2.2</i> |
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Change history

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|------------------------|-------------|---|
| Version Control | Version 1.3 | |
| Change Summary | 13-Mar-20 | v1.0 Draft approved by Academic Board (AB) 27-April-20 with minor revisions and recommended to the Board of Directors (BoD) for endorsement |
| | 18-May-20 | V1.1 Revised version (incl. schedule) endorsed by BoD 5-Jun-20 plus administrative updates |
| | 27-Jul-20 | V1.2 administrative updates |
| | 9-Oct-23 | V1.3 administrative updates following TEQSA registration |

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Schedule One

Table One - Criteria for Assessing Equivalence of Professional Experience to AQF Levels

| Level | Required AQF level | Professional Experience Equivalence |
|---|--|--|
| Level 8 Graduate Diploma | Level 9 - Masters by research or coursework <i>(for the purpose of teaching at Level 8)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 8 qualification and current registration to practice within the relevant profession <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation that the professional experience demonstrates achievement which is equivalent to the knowledge and skills for the learning outcomes at Level 8 <p>PLUS, EITHER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 years' relevant professional experience¹ <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolment in a relevant doctoral program plus some relevant professional experience, together totalling 5 years. |
| Level 9 Master's degree At a senior level | Level 10 - Doctorate by research or coursework <i>(for the purpose of teaching at Level 9)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 9 qualification and current registration to practice within the relevant profession <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation that the professional experience demonstrates achievement which is equivalent to the knowledge and skills for the learning outcomes at Level 9 <p>PLUS, EITHER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 years' relevant professional experience¹ with at least five of those years at a senior level <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolment in a relevant doctoral program plus relevant professional experience (see footer) together totalling 10 years <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fellow of a relevant Professional Association (Fellows of professional associations will be considered to satisfy these equivalence guidelines only where such appointments are made to either honour exceptional achievement and/or service.) |
| Level 10 Doctoral degree | Level 10 - Doctorate by research or coursework <i>(for senior academic appointments)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 9 qualification and current registration to practice within the relevant profession <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation that the professional experience demonstrates achievement which is equivalent to the knowledge and skills for the learning outcomes at Level 10 <p>PLUS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 10 years practising as an expert in the relevant profession at a senior level and evidence of a significant contribution to a relevant discipline or to the area of higher education at a national or international level <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolment in a relevant doctoral program plus some relevant professional experience¹ together totalling 10 years <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fellow of a relevant Professional Association (Fellows of professional associations will be considered to satisfy these equivalence guidelines only where such appointments are made to either honour exceptional achievement and/or service.) <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • current research experience in a relevant area equivalent to a Doctoral Degree to be determined with reference to evidence. This might include independently peer-reviewed publications, research-related awards or prizes, professional reports, body of creative work and/or expert commentary. |

¹ Such evidence may include: leadership in developing professional standards; a role requiring high order judgement at a senior level; managing large projects; testimonials or awards; engagement with education on advisory boards or networks; peer and non-peered reviewed publications; other relevant research acknowledged by peers.