



ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE POLICY

Approving Authority	Academic Board	Approval Date of Last Revision	–
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Policy Category	Academic		
Governing Authority	Teaching and Learning Committee		
Responsible Officer	Head of School		
Related Documents	Teaching and Learning Framework Scholarship and Research Policy (and related Procedure) Staff Recruitment and Selection Procedure Workforce Plan Staff Grievances Policy (and related Procedure) Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 (TEQSA Act 2011)		

* Unless otherwise indicated, this Policy will still apply beyond the review date.

Version Control

Version #	Date	Author	Key changes
1.0	19/11/2019	A Noack	Approved by Academic Board (with amendments)

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The Academic Qualifications and Professional Experience Policy sets out Adelaide Institute of Higher Education's (AIHE's) requirements for the qualifications and experience of academic staff to ensure that all students receive a quality learning experience.
- 1.2 The Policy outlines the standards and criteria for assessing the professional experience of academic staff and its equivalence to Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) qualification levels so that AIHE can ensure the academic staffing profile for each course provides the level and extent of academic oversight and teaching capacity needed to lead students in intellectual inquiry suited to the nature and level of expected learning outcomes.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 The Academic Qualifications and Professional Experience Policy applies to all academic staff involved in teaching, academic supervisory roles, or the design, delivery and assessment of AIHE coursework courses and subjects.
- 2.2 This Policy does not apply to guest lecturers nor to staff or others supervising work integrated learning (WIL) activities.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 Students are entitled to expect they are being taught and assessed by a staff member who is knowledgeable and skilled in the field of study at a more advanced level than the level of the course being taught. The expertise of academic staff will be clearly established through an assessment of formal academic qualifications, equivalent professional experience or a combination of both.

4. PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 Academic staff teaching students enrolled in coursework courses will have:
 - a qualification in the relevant discipline at least one AQF level higher than the course being taught; or
 - equivalent relevant academic or professional or practice-based experience and expertise; and knowledge of contemporary developments in their specific discipline or field, be actively engaged in continuing professional development, scholarship, research or knowledge of contemporary teaching, learning and assessment relevant to their discipline, role, modes of delivery and the specific needs of student cohorts.
- 4.2 For those assessed under the criteria of equivalent academic, professional or practice-based experience, academic staff:
 - should have formal qualifications to at least the same level as that being taught
 - must have acquired sufficient professional experience working in the relevant field or industry.

The basis for judging equivalent professional experience is the documented professional and practice-based experience of academic staff that demonstrates achievement of specific knowledge and skills relevant to the role, including previous experience teaching at the required AQF level. Any teaching and professional experience must be current and relevant to the course being taught.

4.3 A Bachelors Degree is generally the minimum qualification required to teach in coursework courses at AIHE.

4.3.1 Staff who do not meet the minimum qualification will receive supervision from a staff member with a qualification in a relevant discipline at least one level higher than is awarded for the course of study.

4.4 Full-time and part-time academic staff appointed under professional experience equivalence are expected to enrol in a relevant higher level AQF qualification within three years of being appointed. This does not apply to casual academic staff.

4.5 All determinations of equivalence of experience will be made in accordance with the Guidelines at Appendix A and will be recorded in AIHE's Register of Academic Qualifications and Professional Equivalence.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Academic Board will establish and maintain appropriate procedures and receive reports to oversee and monitor the qualifications and professional experience of academic staff.

5.2 Heads of School will:

- assess and approve academic staff member qualifications and their equivalent professional experience
- adequately document their determinations
- ensure that academic staff are aware of AIHE's requirements for academic qualifications and professional experience
- report on professional experience equivalence to Academic Board.

5.3 Academic staff will provide AIHE with details of their academic qualifications and professional experience upon commencement and annually provide an updated CV.

5.4 Human Resources Manager will maintain the Register of Academic Qualifications and Professional Equivalence.

6. DEFINITIONS

6.1 See the AIHE Glossary of Terms for definitions.

AIHE acknowledges reference to policies and procedures from across the Australian higher education sector, including: University of the Sunshine Coast 'Determining equivalence of professional experience to academic qualifications – Managerial Policy'; Kaplan Business School Australia 'Academic Qualifications and Experience Policy'; University of Adelaide 'Academic Staff Qualifications'; University of South Australia 'Minimum Qualifications for Academic Staff'; Central Queensland University 'Professional Experience Equivalence Framework'.

APPENDIX A: Guidelines for Assessing Professional Experience Equivalence

Higher education level being taught	AQF Level of teaching staff
AQF Level 7 Bachelor Degree	AQF Level 8: Bachelor Honours Degree, Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma OR Level 7: Bachelors (Pass) plus a sufficient combination of criteria outlined below OR A sufficient combination of the criteria outlined below
AQF Level 8 Graduate Certificate Graduate Diploma	AQF Level 9: Masters by research or coursework OR Level 8: Bachelors (Honours), Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma plus a sufficient combination of criteria outlined below OR A sufficient combination of the criteria outlined below
AQF level 9 Masters Degree	AQF Level 10: Doctorate by research or coursework OR Level 9: Masters plus a sufficient combination of criteria outlined below OR A sufficient combination of the criteria outlined below

Criteria

Demonstration of a sufficient combination of the following equivalence factors in the relevant discipline area to meet the learning outcomes of at least one AQF level higher than the course being taught includes:

- Strong academic record in a relevant discipline area
- Enrolled in a degree in the relevant discipline at the required AQF level (i.e. at least one AQF level higher than the course being taught)
- Relevant professional experience or practice
- Relevant research experience
- Leadership experience
- Relevant teaching, mentoring experience (e.g. peer assisted study session (PASS) leader)
- Leadership in the development of professional standards
- Performing in a role that required high order judgement / provision of expert advice
- Professional registration and participation in professional networks
- Participation or leadership on advisory boards
- Peer reviewed publications in the field of study
- Other publication (e.g. books, reports, presentations)
- Undertaking a professional development program in higher education teaching
- Relevant industry training or non-formal course(s)
- Professional development that meets with the endorsement of the relevant industry body.