

ACADEMIC STAFF QUALIFICATIONS AND EQUIVALENCE POLICY¹

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¹ For a list of documents referred to in the development of this document see **Attachment A**

1 Context

This policy outlines the appropriate qualifications and/or equivalent professional experience for academic teaching staff at the Universal Business School Sydney (UBSS).

2 Scope

2.1 Rationale

This policy applies to all staff with responsibilities for academic oversight or teaching and supervisory roles.

2.2 Legislative Context

The Australian Qualifications Framework, Second Edition, January 2013 (AQF) is the national policy for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training. It incorporates the qualifications from each education and training sector into a single comprehensive national qualifications framework.

The organising framework for the AQF is a taxonomic structure of levels and qualification types each of which is defined by a taxonomy of learning outcomes. The taxonomic approach is designed to enable consistency in the way in which qualifications are described as well as clarity about the differences and relationships between qualification types.

The AQF Levels define the relative complexity and depth of achievement and the autonomy required of graduates to demonstrate that achievement. In the AQF there are 10 Levels with Level 1 having the lowest complexity and AQF Level 10 the highest complexity. The Levels are defined by criteria expressed as learning outcomes.

AQF qualification type is the nomenclature used in the AQF to describe each discipline-free category of AQF qualifications. Each qualification type is defined by a descriptor expressed as learning outcomes. There are 14 AQF qualification types from across all education and training sectors.

The Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 Standard 3.2 requires that –

3. Staff with responsibilities for academic oversight and those with teaching and supervisory roles in courses or units of study are equipped for their roles, including having –
 - a. Knowledge of contemporary developments in the discipline or field, which is informed by continuing scholarship or research or advances in practice;
 - b. Skills in contemporary teaching, learning and assessment principles relevant to the discipline, their role, modes of delivery and the needs of particular student cohorts; and

c. c. A qualification in a relevant discipline at least one level higher than is awarded for the course of study, or equivalent relevant academic or professional or practice based experience and expertise, except for staff supervising

- The Educational Services for Overseas Students Act (ESOS) 2000 (Cth);
- The National Code Tertiary Education Quality and Standards (TEQSA) Act 2011 (Cth);
- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015;
- National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007;
- Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth);
- TEQSA Guidance Note: Determining Equivalence of Professional Experience and Academic Qualifications
- Australian Qualifications Framework, Second Edition, January 2013.

3 Definitions

Item	Definition
<i>AQF</i>	<i>The Australian Qualifications Framework, which describes the minimum standards and levels of Australian qualifications and award courses.</i>
<i>Course</i>	A structured sequence of study leading to the award of a degree, diploma, certificate or other recognized qualification, which when successfully completed is conferred on the graduand by the GCA Board of Directors.
<i>Cognate discipline</i>	A closely allied discipline or area of study. Typically in the same broad Field of Education as classified by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in the Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED), 2001.
<i>Course Learning Outcome</i>	A statement of the knowledge, skills, and application of knowledge and skills that students are expected to have achieved upon completion of the course.
<i>Managerial work experience</i>	Work experience that includes responsibility for planning and organizing resources (including staff), leading or influencing individuals or groups and controlling processes, and that is characterised by the requirement to make decisions that can have a significant impact on the organisation.

Item	Definition
<i>Professional work experience</i>	Work experience that includes some authority for decision making, individual accountability for results, and that is characterised by specified in-depth work requirements and the ability to use independent judgment and discretion in the performance of duties.
<i>Related field</i>	Belonging to the Managers or Professional major groups as classified by the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO).
<i>Qualification</i>	Refers to the broad discipline-free nomenclature used in the AQF to describe each category of AQF qualification
<i>Subject Learning Outcome</i>	A statement of what students are expected to learn and/or skills they are expected to acquire in the unit and be able to demonstrate upon completion of the unit.

4 Qualifications and Equivalence Framework

Academic oversight, teaching, and supervisory roles involve the exercise of academic judgement and include conducting classes or seminars, online course delivery or facilitation, and setting and marking formative and summative assessment tasks.

Staff with responsibilities for academic oversight or teaching and supervisory roles in courses or units will have appropriate qualifications or equivalent experience as set out in Table 1 below (except as noted immediately below).

Staff without appropriate qualifications or experience may teach components of a course under the supervision of staff with appropriate qualifications or experience where they are employed:

- as professional specialists to meet specified educational needs;
- to teach as part of their career development; or
- to teach in emergent academic disciplines

Where a plan to support their development, with appropriate timelines, is implemented and they are working under the supervision of an appropriately qualified staff member. The criteria set out in Table 1 below are applied in the context of the discipline and the relevant Course and Subject Learning Outcomes. The criteria may be varied or added to by the Academic Senate for specified award courses as appropriate for the discipline or for individual staff members provided staff can demonstrate equivalence of professional or practiced-based experience (with reference to AQF criteria) and are equipped to meet students' educational needs.

Decisions about the equivalence of experience of teaching staff are made by the Dean on the advice of the Program Directors and/or other senior academic member(s) of UBSS with demonstrated expertise in the relevant discipline as appropriate.

Evidence to support decisions about equivalence of experience may include, but is not limited to -

- Experience in professional, business or creative or other practice-based roles requiring high order judgement and the provision of expert advice;
- Managerial experience in a related field;
- Testimonials, awards or other recognition that acknowledges leadership or expertise in the field;
- Professional qualifications, experience and standing, including participation in advisory boards and professional networks;
- Leadership in the development of professional standards;
- Peer reviewed publications and/or scholarship in a related field or other publications such as professional and/or industry reports;
- Leadership or management of research acknowledged by peers; or
- Current teaching experience in a related field with demonstrated success and evidence of scholarship in the field.

The assessment of equivalent experience will be made with reference to the relevant Course Learning Outcomes and AQF Level of award. The number of years of experience stipulated in Table 1 below is indicative and may be varied as appropriate for particular disciplines or professions. What is considered to be ‘current’ experience will depend on the pace of change in a particular discipline or profession.

5 Table 1 - Criteria for Assessing Appropriateness of Qualifications and/or Experience of Staff Overseeing or Teaching in a Course

Course Level	Minimum Qualification/Experience to Oversee or Teach at the Course Level
Bachelor (AQF 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor Honours degree, Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma (AQF 8) in a cognate discipline; or • Bachelor Degree (AQF 7) in a cognate discipline and at least five-years fulltime managerial and/or professional work experience in a related field; or • Bachelor Degree (AQF 7) in a cognate discipline and at least five-year fulltime current teaching experience at AQF 7 with demonstrated success and evidence of scholarship in the field.
Bachelor Honours; Graduate Certificate;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 7 qualification PLUS either;

Graduate Diploma (AQF 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 years relevant professional experience in the last 5 years demonstrating achievement equivalent to AQF level 8 <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Masters degree (AQF 9) in a cognate discipline; plus current and professional experience totalling 3 years and demonstrating achievement equivalent to AQF Level 8
Masters (coursework) (AQF 9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD (AQF 10) in a cognate discipline; <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>Masters Degree (Coursework), (Extended) or (Research) (AQF Level 9)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AND</p> <p>(a) For coursework components, extensive current experience practising as an expert in the relevant profession i.e. 5 years professional experience in the last 10 years.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>(b) For research and research training components, current research experience in a relevant area equivalent to a Doctoral Degree, to be determined with reference to evidence which might include independently peer-reviewed publications, research-related awards or prizes, professional reports, body of creative work and/or expert commentary</p>

6 Document Change Control

Version	Change Description	Date	Author
V12	Refreshed format	November 2017	Professor Ian Bofinger
V12.1	Change of review date	June 2018	Jotsana Rooram
V13	Refreshed and change to review date	August 2019	Professor Ian Bofinger

Version	Change Description	Date	Author
V14	Change to review date, references to Executive Dean removed.	March 2021	Anurag Kanwar
V15	Refresh update of the Threshold Standards	January 2022	Anurag Kanwar

Attachment A

List of external documents referenced in this document.

Name of Institution	Name of Policy	URL Link	Date Accessed
Whitehouse Institute	Academic Staff Qualifications and Equivalence Policy	https://whitehouse-design.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/A013_PO_HE_AcadStaff-Quali_Equi.pdf	6.1.22
AFTRS	Academic Employees Qualification Policy	https://www.aftrs.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Academic-Employees-Qualifications-Policy.pdf	6.1.22
ECU	Determining Professional Equivalence for Staff Qualifications	https://intranet.ecu.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/805213/Determining_Professional_Equivalence_for_Staff_Qualifications_Procedures.pdf	6.1.22