

# PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE EQUIVALENCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE



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## 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This policy and procedure assists CQUniversity to decide if an employee's professional experience is equivalent to required [Australian Qualifications Framework \(AQF\)](#) levels and the standards in the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2015](#).
- 1.2 This policy and procedure assists CQUniversity to fulfil its obligation to ensure that the extent of academic oversight and teaching capacity needed to effectively lead students in intellectual inquiry occurs for each course of study and is suited to the nature and level of expected learning outcomes.

## 2 SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy and procedure applies to all CQUniversity employees (including prospective employees) who teach and assess in the University's higher education courses and units, whether employed by CQUniversity or by any of CQUniversity's third-party teaching partners.
- 2.2 It does not apply to occasional guest lecturers, employees of institutions where students are undertaking study as outbound mobility programs or partner supervisors of students undertaking placements, internships or other forms of work-integrated learning or employees involved in supervising candidates enrolled in higher degrees by research courses.

## 3 POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 CQUniversity employees are expected to hold a qualification of at least one AQF qualification level above that of the course in which they will be teaching.
- 3.2 Where a teaching employee does not hold the requisite qualification, a determination of the employee's professional or practice-based experience and expertise may be used to ensure teaching requirements in the Higher Education Standards are met.
- 3.3 Employees appointed based on a determination of professional experience equivalence must be supervised by employees who meet the AQF requirement of holding one AQF level qualification higher than the level being taught.

- 3.4 The employee's professional experience must be current and relevant to the discipline/field of study being taught and must be demonstrated by meeting the [criteria](#) outlined in this policy and procedure.
- 3.5 Continuing employees appointed based on a determination of professional experience equivalence are expected to commence study in a relevant higher level AQF qualification within six months of their appointment and must demonstrate satisfactory progress towards completing the qualification within a specified timeframe when their appointment is reviewed.

## Criteria

- 3.6 The following table sets out the minimum criteria CQUniversity applies when determining an employee's professional experience equivalence. Schools may require additional evidence or standards as appropriate for different disciplines/fields of study.

Higher education qualification AQF level being taught	Required AQF level for employees	Teaching, research or professional experience equivalent
AQF levels 5 and 6 (i.e. Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Associate Degree)	AQF level 7 (i.e. Bachelor Degree)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- AQF level 6 qualification</li> <li>- Current membership/registration (or equivalent) to practice within a relevant profession</li> </ul> <p>PLUS, EITHER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 years relevant teaching, research and/or professional experience within the last 5 years</li> <li>OR</li> <li>- Enrolment and demonstrated satisfactory progress in a relevant AQF level 7 course.</li> </ul>
AQF level 7 (i.e. Bachelor Degree)	AQF level 8 (i.e. Bachelor Honours Degree, Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- AQF level 7 qualification</li> <li>- Current membership/registration (or equivalent) to practice within a relevant profession</li> </ul> <p>PLUS, EITHER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 years relevant teaching, research and/or professional experience within the last 5 years</li> <li>OR</li> <li>- Enrolment and demonstrated satisfactory progress in a relevant AQF level 8 course and relevant professional experience, together totalling 3 years.</li> </ul>
AQF level 8 (i.e. Bachelor Honours Degree, Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma)	AQF level 9 (i.e. Masters Degree by research or coursework)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- AQF level 8 qualification</li> <li>- Current membership/registration to practice within a relevant profession</li> </ul> <p>PLUS EITHER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 5 years relevant teaching, research and/or professional experience within the last 10 years</li> <li>OR</li> <li>- Enrolment and demonstrated satisfactory progress in a relevant AQF level 9 course plus relevant professional experience, together totalling 3 years.</li> </ul>
AQF level 9 (i.e.) Masters Degree	AQF level 10 (i.e. Doctoral Degree by research or coursework)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- AQF level 9 qualification</li> <li>- Current membership/registration (or equivalent) to practice within a relevant profession</li> </ul> <p>PLUS, EITHER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 5 years relevant teaching, research and/or professional experience within the last 10 years</li> <li>OR</li> <li>- Enrolment and demonstrated satisfactory progress in a relevant AQF level 10 course plus relevant professional experience, together totalling 5 years.</li> </ul>

## Exceptions

- 3.7 The only exception to these criteria is when employing expert practitioners who will teach under the supervision of CQUniversity employee with the required AQF level qualifications.
- 3.8 When deciding whether to apply the above criteria in circumstances not covered by this policy and procedure, the Dean or other relevant senior manager will recommend a course of action, on a case by case basis, to the Provost for a decision.

## Considerations

- 3.9 When deciding how an employee's equivalent professional experience may be demonstrated, the following considerations may be applied:
  - a) high quality and sustained professional practice in employment, teaching or performance in the relevant discipline/field of study
  - b) annual professional/clinical development endorsed by the relevant industry body
  - c) regular and recent contributions to the discipline/field of study via quality publications and/or presentations
  - d) recognised influential contributor to the discipline/field of study as evidenced by invitations as a keynote speaker, appointment to an expert panel for the discipline/field of study
  - e) sustained and significant contributions to the discipline/field of study, e.g. one peer-reviewed journal article per year in the preceding five years
  - f) leadership in local, state or national advisory bodies and/or community organisations, peak discipline or industry bodies relevant to the teaching discipline/field of study
  - g) experience in managing significant projects in the discipline/field of study, e.g. a consultant who manages projects for medium to large private or public sector organisations
  - h) working to effect a demonstrable change in creating new practice in the discipline/field of study, and
  - i) letters of support from recognised peers in the relevant discipline/field of study.

## 4 PROCEDURE

- 4.1 The Dean is responsible for employing appropriately qualified employees and must be satisfied that their professional experience meets the criteria stated above.
- 4.2 The relevant work area must submit a completed Professional Experience Equivalence Form to the Dean for recommendation to the Provost for approval. The form must include an appropriate supervision plan and evidence of scholarship in their discipline **and** in learning and teaching.
- 4.3 Where applicable, an employee's agreement to commit to scholarship activities and/or a professional development plan may also be included in the form or added as conditions of approval. The supervisor is expected to implement such a plan, which may include team teaching, mentoring or other relevant mechanisms that support the employee to gain experience and levels of achievement to meet the required standard.
- 4.4 The relevant work area must send a copy of the approved form to the People and Culture Directorate via email to [PACDirector@cqu.edu.au](mailto:PACDirector@cqu.edu.au).
- 4.5 The Letter of Offer to a person appointed based on professional experience equivalence must include any equivalence requirements and conditions of appointment, including:
  - the appointee's commencement of the relevant higher education AQF level course within six months of commencing the appointment and regular demonstrated satisfactory progress towards completing the course to achieve the qualification
  - the appointee's participation in professional development and participation in scholarly activities relevant to the appointee's discipline/field of study as well as maintaining contemporary skills in higher education teaching and learning, and

- a supervision plan developed by an appropriately qualified CQUniversity employee.
- 4.6 The Dean must review the qualifications, employee supervision plan and scholarly activity/professional development of employees appointed based on professional experience equivalence annually as part of the PRPD/PEP process.
- 4.7 If the employee has not met the course/qualification requirements within the specified timeframe, including conditions of employment such as agreed scholarly activity and/or professional development, the employee's status of employment will be reviewed.
- 4.8 The Dean must maintain a register to manage documentary evidence of how employees' professional experience equivalence was determined, approved and reviewed.

## 5 RESPONSIBILITIES

### Compliance, monitoring and review

- 5.1 The Provost or nominee is responsible for ensuring this policy and procedure complies with relevant legislation and CQUniversity requirements, is implemented and monitored, and is reviewed to evaluate its continuing effectiveness.

### Reporting

- 5.2 No additional reporting is required.

### Records management

- 5.3 Staff must maintain all records relevant to administering this policy and procedure in a recognised University recordkeeping system.

## 6 DEFINITIONS

- 6.1 Terms not defined in this document may be in the University [glossary](#).

## 7 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

[Australian Qualifications Framework](#)

[Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2015](#) (Cwlth)

[Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011](#) (Cwlth)

[TEQSA Guidance Note: Determining Equivalence of Professional Experience and Academic Qualifications](#)

## 8 FEEDBACK

- 8.1 University staff and students may provide feedback about this document by emailing [policy@cqu.edu.au](mailto:policy@cqu.edu.au).

## 9 APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

<b>Approval and Review</b>	<b>Details</b>
Approval Authority	Learning and Teaching Committee
Advisory Committee to Approval Authority	
Administrator	Provost
Next Review Date	23/10/2022

<b>Approval and Amendment History</b>	<b>Details</b>
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Notes	This policy and procedure replaced the Professional Experience Equivalence Framework (effective date 29/01/2016).