



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**NOTRE DAME**  
A U S T R A L I A

# Policy:

Qualifications and  
Equivalence of Experience  
for Staff Teaching or  
Supervising Higher  
Education Programs

Effective: 5 June 2020

Audience: Staff

Policy Category: Management  
Policy Sub-category: Human  
Resources

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## 1 OBJECTS OF THE UNIVERSITY

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The University's Objects are defined in Section 5 of its Act of Parliament:

The Objects of the University are:

- (a) the provision of university education, within a context of Catholic faith and values; and
- (b) the provision of an excellent standard of -
  - i. teaching, scholarship and research;
  - ii. training for the professions; and
  - iii. pastoral care for its students.

## 2 PURPOSE

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- 2.1** The *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015* require the University to ensure that academic staff appointed to teach students must be qualified at least one Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) level qualification higher than the course of study being taught or have equivalent relevant academic, professional or practice-based experience.
- 2.2** The Purpose of this Policy is to set out the minimum academic qualifications required by academic staff and provide a framework for determining equivalent professional or practice-based experience where academic staff are unable to meet the formal AQF level qualification in the relevant course of study in which they are appointed to teach.

## 3 SCOPE

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- 3.1** This Policy applies to all academic staff teaching and assessing students enrolled in undergraduate and postgraduate (including HDR) award programs and courses and academic staff responsible for supervising postgraduate research students.
- 3.2** The Policy does not apply to:
  - 3.2.1 Staff delivering English Language Programs (ELICOS) courses
  - 3.2.2 External supervision of industry components of Practicum (WIL) subjects
  - 3.2.3 Staff examining thesis within Research degrees at AQF Level 10
  - 3.2.4 Guest lecturers and speakers.

## 4 PRINCIPLES

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- 4.1** University academic staff teaching or supervising programs of study leading to Higher Education awards are expected to have a qualification of at least one AQF qualification level higher than the program of study being taught. The formal qualifications of the staff member will normally be in the same (or in a cognate) discipline as the program content and materials being taught.
- 4.2** For academic staff who have formal qualifications at least at the same AQF qualification level as the program being taught or supervised, relevant academic, professional or practice-based experience and expertise may be used to assess whether a staff member is deemed to have the

equivalent of one qualification standard level above the program of study being taught or supervised.

- 4.3** Equivalent academic, professional or practice-based experience and expertise will be current and relevant to the same (or a cognate) discipline as the program content and materials being taught.
- 4.4** Deans have the authority to decide whether a staff member with formal qualifications at the same AQF level as the program of study being taught has the appropriate level of academic, professional or practice-based experience and expertise to be deemed equivalent to one qualification standard level above the program of study.
- 4.5** The Vice Chancellor (or delegate) decides whether a Dean with formal qualifications at the same AQF level as the program of study being taught or supervised has the appropriate level of academic, professional or practice-based experience and expertise to be deemed equivalent to one qualification standard level above the program of study they are teaching or supervising.
- 4.6** When judging equivalent academic, professional or practice-based experience and expertise, consideration will be given to:
  - 4.6.1 the minimum requirements set out in the supporting *Procedure: Qualifications and Equivalence of Experience for Staff Teaching into Higher Education Programs*
  - 4.6.2 relevant academic, professional, and/or practice-based experience and expertise demonstrated through appropriate evidence and/or references, including experience teaching at the required AQF level.
- 4.7** Except in special circumstances approved by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (DVC), Academic, the minimum qualification level to teach any University student enrolled in a program leading to a Higher Education award is a Bachelor degree.
- 4.8** Academic staff teaching a program of study leading to a Higher Education award who:
  - 4.8.1 do not have a qualification of at least one AQF qualification level higher than the program of study; and
  - 4.8.2 have not been deemed to have the academic, professional or practice-based experience and expertise required for equivalence of one qualification level higher than the program of study;must have a time-limited Professional Development Plan. This Plan should lead to higher qualifications or equivalence of academic, professional or practice-based experience and expertise and until this is achieved, be mentored and supervised by staff members with the appropriate level of qualifications and/or experience.

## 5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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- 5.1 Deans** have responsibility to:
  - 5.1.1 establish profession-specific evidence of equivalent academic, professional or practice-based experience and expertise that has been benchmarked against relevant program learning outcomes, including those of external institutions where relevant, and is in line with the *Procedure: Qualifications and Equivalence of Experience for Staff Teaching into Higher Education Programs*;
  - 5.1.2 assess evidence of the level of equivalent academic, professional or practice-based experience and expertise to deem equivalence to one AQF qualification level above the program of study;
  - 5.1.3 ensure that appropriate records are kept of decisions made in determining

“equivalence” in accordance with this policy and supporting procedures;

5.1.4 ensure that Professional Development Plans setting out how staff will achieve a qualification of at least one AQF qualification level higher than the program they are teaching into and/or equivalent professional or practice-based experience and expertise are in place and are monitored to ensure outcomes are achieved according to the timeframes in the approved Professional Development Plan;

5.1.5 ensure that mentoring and/or supervisory arrangements for staff members deemed not to have the appropriate level of qualifications and/or experience are in place and that records of these are kept.

**5.2 DVC, Academic** has responsibility to approve special circumstances in which a staff member with teaching responsibilities may not have the minimum qualification expected of a Bachelor degree (AQF Level 7).

## 6 RELATED DOCUMENTS

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**6.1** This Policy should be read in conjunction with:

6.1.1 Standard 3.2.3(c) and 3.2.4 – *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015*

6.1.2 *The University of Notre Dame Australia Staff Enterprise Agreement 2015-2017*, Clause 8 and Schedules 1 and 2

6.1.3 *Australian Qualifications Framework*

## 7 DEFINITIONS

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**7.1 For the purpose of this Policy, the following definitions apply:**

**AQF** means the Australian Qualifications Framework.

**Recognised professional body** means medical colleges, discipline academies and other peak professional bodies that recognise individual esteem within the profession.

**Teaching** means all academic activities relating to the preparation and delivery of any program or course content.

Version	Date of approval	Approved by	Amendment
1	5 June 2020	Vice Chancellor	Effective date – new Policy.