



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

Procedure:

Qualification Equivalence Assessment

Effective: 13 January 2023

Audience: staff

Policy category: academic

Policy sub-category: higher degrees by research, programs and courses, research

Key words:	Qualification equivalence, qualification equivalency, qualification equivalent
Procedure owner:	Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching
Responsible officer:	Head, Curriculum and Quality
Review date:	1 March 2024

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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This procedure supports the *Policy: Programs and Courses* by stating requirements of the University of Notre Dame Australia (the University) for assessing a staff member's qualifications, experience and achievements as equivalent to a qualification at a higher level of the Australian Qualifications Framework.
- 1.2 The Interpretation and definitions section at the end of this procedure:
 - 1.2.1 states requirements for interpreting this procedure and
 - 1.2.2 explains its hierarchical relationship with other policy documents in the University's *Policy Framework*.
- 1.3 **Scope**
 - 1.3.1 This procedure applies to all staff of the University.

2 RELATED POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

- 2.1 The *Procedure: Program and Course Delivery and Management* states the levels of qualification required to teach or assess, or supervise students' research, in coursework programs that lead to awards at various AQF levels.

3 QUALIFICATION EQUIVALENCE ASSESSMENT

- 3.1 A staff member may be assessed as having the equivalent of a qualification at a higher Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) level than the qualification in which they are to teach or assess, or supervise students' research, where they:
 - 3.1.1 are qualified at the same AQF level as the highest award resulting from the program, and
 - 3.1.1.1 have current professional experience that is equivalent to achieving a qualification at least one AQF-level higher, in the same discipline as the program, or in a closely-related discipline.
- 3.2 A qualification equivalence assessment can be approved:
 - 3.2.1 for the purpose of appointing an academic staff member to a position on an ongoing or fixed-term contract basis, by the executive dean of the faculty that will employ the staff member, on the recommendation of the head of the school in which they will work, or
 - 3.2.2 for the purpose of employing an academic staff member on a casual basis, by the national head of the school that manages the relevant program or course(s).
- 3.3 Faculty managers will keep records of executive deans' and heads' of school approvals of qualification equivalence assessments, including how the staff member met the university minimum and school-specific criteria for assessing qualification equivalence.

4 CRITERIA FOR QUALIFICATION EQUIVALENCE ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The two tables below state the University's guidelines on minimum criteria for assessing qualification equivalence.
 - 4.1.1 Table 1 states minimum criteria for assessing equivalence to qualifications at AQF level 8 and 9.
 - 4.1.2 Table 2 states minimum criteria for assessing equivalence to qualifications at AQF level

10 (doctoral degree by research, professional doctoral degree), which depend on the specific program(s) in which the staff member will teach or supervise and whether the program is more or less research focused.

4.1.3 In addition to these university-wide criteria, heads of school will establish, for the disciplines and/or professions taught by the school, discipline-specific and/or profession-specific criteria for assessing qualification equivalence.

4.1.3.1 These school-specific additional criteria will identify experience and achievements equivalent to the learning outcomes of qualifications at AQF levels that are required to teach in programs managed by the school.

Table 1: minimum criteria for assessing equivalence to qualifications at AQF levels 8 and 9

AQF level and qualification(s)	Minimum criteria for assessing equivalence
AQF level 8 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bachelor (honours) degree • graduate certificate • graduate diploma 	An AQF level 7 bachelor degree. Also, within the past five years, one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • three years of teaching in a program leading to an award at AQF level 8, research and/or professional or practice-based experience, or • having completed at least two-thirds of a relevant program leading to an award at AQF level 8 and/or relevant teaching, research, professional or practice-based experience; the combined duration of this study and experience being at least three years.
AQF level 9 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • masters by coursework • masters extended • masters by research 	An AQF level 8 qualification or fellowship of a relevant professional body. Also, within the past 10 years, one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • five years of teaching in a program leading to an award at AQF level 9, research and/or professional or practice-based experience, or • having completed at least two-thirds of a relevant program leading to an award at AQF level 9 and/or relevant teaching, research, professional or practice-based experience, the combined duration of this study and experience being at least five years.

Table 2: minimum criteria for assessing equivalence to qualifications at AQF level 10 (doctoral degree by research, professional doctoral degree)

Program(s) in which staff member will teach or supervise and (where relevant) supervisory role	Minimum criteria for assessing equivalence to an AQF level 10 qualification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masters by coursework • Masters extended 	An AQF level 9 qualification or fellowship of a relevant professional body. Also, within the past 10 years, one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • five years of teaching in a program leading to an award at AQF level 9, research and/or professional or practice-based experience, or • having completed at least two-thirds of a relevant program leading to an award at AQF level 10 plus relevant teaching, research, professional or practice-based experience, the combined duration of this study and experience being at least five years.
Masters by research	An AQF level 9 qualification or fellowship of a relevant professional body. Also, within the past 10 years, one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • five years relevant research and/or professional or practice-based experience, or

Program(s) in which staff member will teach or supervise and (where relevant) supervisory role	Minimum criteria for assessing equivalence to an AQF level 10 qualification
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> having completed at least two-thirds of a relevant program leading to an award at AQF level 10 plus relevant teaching, research, professional or practice-based experience, the combined duration of this study and experience being at least five years.
Professional doctorate – principal supervisor	<p>An AQF level 9 qualification.</p> <p>Also, where the relevant professional body has fellowships, is a fellow.</p> <p>Also, within the past 10 years, at least a five-year track record of peer-reviewed research outcomes, indicating research leadership in the discipline area.</p>
Professional doctorate – associate supervisor	<p>An AQF level 9 qualification.</p> <p>Also, where the relevant professional body has fellowships, is a fellow.</p> <p>Also, within the past five years, at least a three-year track record of peer-reviewed research outcomes.</p>
Doctorate by research – principal supervisor	<p>An AQF level 9 qualification.</p> <p>Also, within the past 10 years, at least a five-year track record of peer-reviewed research outcomes, indicating research leadership in the discipline area; and a record of being an associate supervisor of higher degree by research candidates.</p>
Doctorate by research – associate supervisor	<p>An AQF level 9 qualification.</p> <p>Also, within the past five years, at least a three-year track record of peer-reviewed research outcomes.</p>

5 EVIDENCE OF EQUIVALENCE

5.1 An academic staff member must provide evidence of relevant experience and achievements, for these to be assessed as equivalent to a qualification at a higher Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) level than the qualification they hold.

5.1.1 Broadly, evidence of the following can be considered:

- 5.1.1.1 teaching experience
- 5.1.1.2 experience in research
- 5.1.1.3 experience outside tertiary education
- 5.1.1.4 creative achievements
- 5.1.1.5 contributions to a profession
- 5.1.1.6 technical achievement.

5.1.2 Examples of evidence that may be considered are:

- 5.1.2.1 research and/or creative works or projects at an advanced level
- 5.1.2.2 peer-reviewed research publications; books; reports; or conference/seminar presentations
- 5.1.2.3 research income
- 5.1.2.4 leadership or management of research acknowledged by peers
- 5.1.2.5 professional standing of independent or creative work
- 5.1.2.6 peer reviews of teaching or teaching materials, student evaluations or a

- supervisor's evaluation of teaching relevant to the AQF level of the program in which the staff member will teach
- 5.1.2.7 having supervised higher degree by research students to completion
- 5.1.2.8 testimonials, awards, fellowships or other recognition of leadership or expertise in the discipline area
- 5.1.2.9 contributions to the discipline by participating in advisory boards or professional networks
- 5.1.2.10 managing significant projects in the discipline area
- 5.1.2.11 leadership roles in local, state or national advisory or governing bodies or community or professional organisations, for example in developing professional standards.

6 RESPONSIBILITIES AND DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITIES

- 6.1** This section summarises the requirements and decision-making authorities stated in this procedure that apply to each of the positions, committees or roles listed below.
 - 6.1.1 Should any decision-making authority stated in this procedure be inconsistent with a delegation in the schedule of academic delegations to the *Standing Delegations of Authority*, the *Standing Delegations of Authority* states the correct delegation of the decision-making authority.
- 6.2 Academic staff**
 - 6.2.1 Academic staff must provide evidence of relevant experience and achievements, to be eligible for qualification equivalence assessment (see clause 5.1 and its subclauses).
- 6.3 Executive deans**
 - 6.3.1.1 Executive deans may approve a qualification equivalence assessment in relation to the appointment of an academic staff member to a position on an ongoing or fixed-term contract basis (see clauses 3.2 and 3.2.1).
- 6.4 Faculty managers**
 - 6.4.1 Faculty managers will keep records of executive deans' and heads' of school approval of qualification equivalence assessments (see clause 3.3).
- 6.5 Heads of school**
 - 6.5.1 Heads of school:
 - 6.5.1.1 may approve a qualification equivalence assessment in relation to the employment of an academic staff member on a casual basis (see clauses 3.2 and 3.2.2)
 - 6.5.1.2 will send each qualification equivalence assessment that they have approved to their faculty manager (see clause 3.3)

7 RELATED DOCUMENTS

None.

8 INTERPRETATION AND DEFINITIONS:

- 8.1 Interpretation**
 - 8.1.1 The following rules of interpretation apply to this procedure:

- 8.1.2 The University's *Policy Framework* sets out the hierarchy of the University's policy documents.
- 8.1.3 Should any provision in this procedure be inconsistent with a provision of a document higher in the University's hierarchy of policy documents as stated in the [Policy Framework](#), the higher document prevails and overrules this procedure to the extent of the inconsistency.
- 8.1.4 This procedure must be read alongside other closely-related policy documents:
 - 8.1.4.1 the policy that it supports, identified in the Purpose section
 - 8.1.4.2 closely-related policies and regulations listed in the Related policies and regulations sections
 - 8.1.4.3 the *Code of Conduct (Staff)* and *Code of Conduct (Students)*, which include a requirement to comply with policy documents of the University, and
 - 8.1.4.4 any other documents listed in the Related documents section.
- 8.1.5 Where this procedure uses:
 - 8.1.5.1 the verbs 'will' or 'must', it states a requirement
 - 8.1.5.2 the phrases 'cannot', 'must not' or 'only [position title] can', it states a prohibition
 - 8.1.5.3 the words 'include', 'includes; or 'including' followed by a list, the words 'without limitation' are taken to follow immediately
 - 8.1.5.4 the phrase 'for example' or 'such as' followed by a single instance or list, the instance or list is not exhaustive
 - 8.1.5.5 the phrases 'described in', 'set out in', 'specified in' or 'stated in', it will be read as if the words 'expressly or impliedly' appeared immediately before them;
 - 8.1.5.6 the singular, it also means the plural, and vice versa
 - 8.1.5.7 any gender, it includes the other genders, and
 - 8.1.5.8 a reference to a statute, ordinance, code or other law, it includes regulation, by-laws, rules and other statutory instruments under it for the time being in force and consolidations, amendments, re-enactments, or replacements of any of them.

8.2 Definitions

- 8.2.1 The definitions section of the *Policy: Programs and Courses* defines the terms used in this procedure, other than the following term.
 - 8.2.1.1 **Qualification equivalence assessment** means assessment of a person's qualification, together with their experience and achievements, as equivalent to a qualification at a higher level of the Australian Qualifications Framework than the qualification the person holds.

Version	Date of approval	Approved by	Amendment
1	13/01/2023	Vice Chancellor	New procedure