

Academic Staff Qualifications and Equivalence Policy

1. Purpose and Scope

- 1.1 The Academic Staff Qualifications and Equivalence Policy sets out the minimum academic qualifications required by academic staff and provides 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.
- 1.2 This Policy applies to all academic staff (including prospective academic staff) who teach and assess students enrolled in AIAT courses.
- 1.3 The Policy does not apply to guest lecturers and speakers.

2. Definitions

Refer to *Glossary of Terms*.

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1 AIAT is committed to engaging students in a dynamic and high quality educational environment. This is achieved by ensuring that students are taught, mentored and supervised by appropriately qualified and experienced staff who have comprehensive and current knowledge of the discipline area and subject material being taught.
- 3.2 AIAT expects that its academic teaching staff are appropriately qualified in the relevant discipline, have a sound understanding of current scholarship and/or professional practice in the discipline areas that they teach, and understand the contemporary pedagogical principles relevant to their discipline, modes of delivery and student cohorts being taught.

4. Policy Principles

- 4.1 AIAT academic staff are expected to hold a qualification of at least one AQF qualification level above that of the course in which they will be teaching. The formal qualifications of the staff member will normally be in the same (or in a cognate) discipline as the subject content and materials being taught.
- 4.2 Academic staff who do not hold a qualification of at least one AQF qualification level above that of the courses in which they will be teaching will have the equivalent relevant academic or professional or practice-based experience and expertise as set out in Table 1
- 4.3 Staff without required qualifications or experience may teach components of a course under the supervision of staff with appropriate qualifications or experience where they are employed:
 - 4.3.1 as professional specialists to meet particular education needs

- 4.3.2 to teach as part of their career development or
 - 4.3.3 to teach in emergent academic disciplines and a plan to support their development, with appropriate timelines, is implemented.
- 4.4 Evidence to support decisions about equivalence of experience might relate to, but is not limited to:
- 4.4.1 high quality and sustained professional practice in employment or teaching in the relevant discipline;
 - 4.4.2 testimonials, awards or other recognition that acknowledges leadership or expertise in the field;
 - 4.4.3 professional qualifications, experience and standing, including participation in advisory boards and professional networks;
 - 4.4.4 annual professional development that meets with the endorsement of the relevant industry body;
 - 4.4.5 leadership in the development of professional standards;
 - 4.4.6 design, creative or other practice-based technical achievements;
 - 4.4.7 teaching experience and success;
 - 4.4.8 regular and recent contributions to the discipline via quality publications and/or presentations;
 - 4.4.9 recognised influential contributions to the discipline as evidence by invitations as a keynote speaker, appointment to an expert panel for the discipline;
 - 4.4.10 leadership in local, state or national advisory bodies and/or community organisations, peak discipline or industry bodies;
 - 4.4.11 experience in managing significant projects in the field of study, for example experience as a consultant who manages projects for medium to large private or public sector organisations; and/or
 - 4.4.12 working to effect a demonstrable change in the creation of new practice in the field.
- 4.5 Decisions about the equivalence of experience of staff are made by the Head of Institute on the advice of the Course Director or senior member/s of academic staff with expertise in the relevant discipline as appropriate.
- 4.6 The Head of Institute will provide annual reports to the Academic Board and Board of Directors outlining the number of
- 4.6.1 applications considered over the 12 month period;
 - 4.6.2 successful and unsuccessful position advertised;
 - 4.6.3 currently employed academic staff, the AQF Level in which they are teaching and their qualification, including those with equivalent professional experience approved under this process.
- This report will identify the grounds for granting equivalency where the expected qualifications are not present.

TABLE 1 – Criteria for assessing appropriateness of qualifications and/or experience of staff overseeing or teaching in a course

AQF Level being taught	Minimum qualifications/experience required
AQF Level 7 Bachelor Degree	AQF Level 8 Honours, Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma in a cognate discipline OR AQF Level 7 qualification PLUS one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three years' relevant teaching at AQF Level 7, research and/or professional or practice-based experience in a cognate discipline within the last five years; OR • Completion of at least two-thirds of a relevant AQF Level 8 program in a cognate discipline plus some relevant teaching, research and/or professional or practice-based experience, together totalling three years.
AQF Level 8 Graduate Certificate/ Graduate Diploma/ Bachelor Honours Degree	AQF Level 9 Masters by Research or Coursework Masters in a cognate discipline OR AQF Level 8 qualification PLUS one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five years' relevant teaching at AQF Level 8, research and/or professional or practice-based experience in a cognate discipline within the last ten years; OR • Completion of at least two-thirds of a relevant AQF Level 9 (Masters) program plus some relevant teaching, research and/or professional or practice-based experience, together totalling five years.
AQF Level 9 Masters Degree by Coursework	AQF Level 10 Doctorate by research or professional doctorate in a cognate discipline OR AQF Level 9 qualification PLUS one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five years' relevant teaching at AQF Level 9, research and/or professional or practice-based experience in a cognate discipline within the last ten years; OR • Completion of at least two-thirds of a relevant AQF Level 10 (Doctoral) program in a cognate discipline plus some relevant teaching, current research and/or professional or practice-based experience in a cognate discipline, together totalling five years.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 The Head of Institute is responsible for

5.1.1 determining professional experience equivalency; and

5.1.2 reporting to the Board of Directors and the Academic Board as specified in 4.6.

6. Policy Details

Institution	Australian Institute of Advanced Technologies (AIAT)
Policy name	Academic Staff Qualifications and Equivalence Policy

Policy Reference No.	POL – 19
Policy Approval	Board of Directors
Policy Authority	Academic Board
Responsible Officer	Head of Institute
Governance Reference Threshold Standards	HESF 2021: 3.2
Related Documents	Staff Recruitment and Appointment Policy Staff Recruitment and Appointment Procedure Position Descriptions
Related Legislation	Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (HESF)
References	<p>AIAT has referred and benchmarked with the following institutions and policies during the creation of this policy:</p> <p>Australian Institute of Business (2019) Policy for Determining the Equivalence of Professional Experience and Academic Qualifications</p> <p>Central Queensland University (2016) Professional Experience Equivalence Framework</p> <p>Central Queensland University (2021) Professional Experience Equivalence Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Charles Sturt University (2015) Academic Staff Teaching Qualifications and Equivalent Professional Experience Policy</p> <p>Curtin University (2018) Curtin Equivalence of Qualifications Guidelines</p> <p>Curtin University (2018) Equivalence of Qualifications Procedure</p> <p>Deakin University (2016) Schedule A: Academic Staff Qualifications and Equivalence Framework</p> <p>La Trobe University (unknown) Equivalence of Professional Experience with Qualification Levels For Academic Staff Policy, retrieved 2/12/2021</p> <p>The University of Notre Dame Australia (2020) Policy: Qualifications and Equivalence of Experience for staff Teaching or Supervising Higher Education Programs</p> <p>The University of Notre Dame Australia (2020) Procedure: Qualifications and Equivalence of Experience for staff Teaching or Supervising Higher Education Programs</p> <p>Universal Business School (2018) Academic Staff Qualifications and Equivalence Policy</p> <p>University of the Sunshine Coast (2018) Determining equivalence of professional experience to academic qualifications – Operational Policy</p>
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6. Document Version Control

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Version No	1.0	NA	Initial version approved by Board of Directors
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