Learning and Teaching Quality and Standards - Equivalence of Professional Experience to Qualifications (Staff) Procedure

Section 1 - Summary

(1) This Procedure:

a. establishes criteria for assessing the equivalence of professional experience to academic qualifications in teaching positions where the incumbent or applicant does not possess the usual minimum required qualifications; and
b. details the evidence requirements for demonstrating professional experience to be considered as equivalent to qualifications.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Procedure applies to all staff employed by the University to deliver and assess any coursework teaching to students in Award and accredited Non-Award courses, unless one of the exceptions applies.

(3) This Procedure does not apply to the supervision of higher degrees by research.

Section 3 - Policy/Regulation

(4) Learning and Teaching Quality and Standards Policy

Section 4 - Procedures

Part A - Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
Executive Dean of the relevant College (HE) Chief TAFE Officer	Authorises exemptions from this Procedure in accordance with the relevant clauses. Ensures that a record of exemptions and the reasons for them is made and maintained.
Selection Panel (new recruitment) Director of Learning and Teaching of the relevant College (existing HE staff) Director, Academic Quality and Standards (existing VET staff)	Assesses candidates' or staff members' professional experience against criteria.

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Executive Dean of the relevant College (HE) Chief TAFE Officer	Approves equivalence assessment and authorises the offer of employment.

Part B - Overview

(5) Victoria University (VU) is committed to ensuring that all teaching academic staff who deliver courses and units to students are appropriately qualified to do so.

(6) VU recognises that, in some cases, academic qualifications are not the sole appropriate measure for determining a person's suitability to deliver coursework teaching. This Procedure provides direction for the assessment of such candidates' or staff members' experience as equivalent to particular levels of qualification.

Part C - General Rules

Higher Education (HE)

(7) As a general rule, VU expects HE teaching staff to have a qualification at least one AQF level (or equivalent) above that of the highest qualification course they will be teaching (e.g. if the staff member is required to teach courses at AQF Levels 6-8, they would normally be expected to hold an AQF Level 9 qualification or above).

(8) Generally, teaching staff delivering HE courses at any AQF level are expected to have a minimum qualification of AQF Level 7 (Bachelor Degree), notwithstanding any consideration given to professional experience equivalence.

(9) Professional experience equivalence cannot be used for more than one AQF level.

a. For instance, a person with an AQF Level 7 qualification may have substantial professional experience recognised in order that they may teach a program that would normally require an AQF Level 8 qualification. However, they cannot use professional experience, however substantial, to enable them to teach a program for which an AQF Level 9 qualification is the requirement.

Exceptions (HE)

(10) The following categories of staff may be exempted from these general requirements, but must have a level of knowledge and expertise that will demonstrably enhance the learning experiences of students:

a. Occasional guest lecturers and teachers/instructors who do not teach more than one-third of the unit in any teaching session may be exempted from the requirements.
b. Workplace learning educators and workplace learning supervisors are generally expected to have at least a Bachelor qualification plus two years' full-time equivalent experience in the discipline in the past 10 years. If they do not possess a Bachelor qualification, they will require extensive workplace experience as deemed appropriate by the relevant Executive Dean.
c. Existing staff may be exempt if they can demonstrate that they have been successful teachers in the relevant course/s at the University for a significant period of time. Each case must be evaluated on its individual merits. A record must be made and kept of the exemption and the reasons for it.

(11) Staff provided by partner organisations under partnership agreements to deliver VU courses and units may be exempted from these general requirements if:

a. the Executive Dean is satisfied that such an exemption would not jeopardise the academic quality or standards of the University; and
b. the exemption would not lead to a lesser learning experience for enrolled students than if they were being

taught by VU staff.

A record must be made and kept of the exemption and the reasons for it.

Vocational Education and Training (VET)

(12) All VET teaching staff, including those provided by partner organisations under partnership agreements to deliver training and assessment on VU's behalf, are required to hold a minimum teaching qualification level as detailed in the Credential Policy.

(13) There is no established requirement for other qualifications for VET teachers. However, VET teachers must:

a. Hold relevant vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered or assessed;
b. Meet any specific Training Package/licensing requirements;
c. Demonstrate current industry skills directly relevant to the training/assessment as specified at qualification or unit level in the training package or Assessment requirements; and
d. Have current knowledge and skills in vocational training and learning that informs their training and assessment.

Part D - Minimum Qualification Levels and Relevant Experience

(14) The table below outlines the minimum criteria to demonstrate professional experience equivalence for different AQF levels. Individual Colleges or disciplines may require additional types or volume of evidence as appropriate to the relevant discipline.

(15) Qualifications, as well as professional experience, must be in the same (or in a cognate) discipline as the course content and materials being taught in all programs to be delivered by the academic staff member, whether alone or as part of a team.

Table A: AQF Level Requirements

AQF Level Being Taught	**Required AQF Level for HE Staff**	**Professional Experience Equivalence for HE Staff**	**Required AQF Level for VET Staff (in addition to the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment)**	**Professional Experience Equivalence for VET Staff**
AQF Levels 1-4 Certificates I - IV	N/A	N/A	AQF I-IV	If no AQF I-IV: demonstrated competency in all units being delivered and assessed; AND current licensing to practice within relevant trade if applicable.

AQF Level 5 Diploma	AQF Level 7 Bachelor Degree	If no AQF 7: current registration (or equivalent) to practice within relevant profession; PLUS EITHER - 3 years' relevant professional experience within the last 5 years; OR - Enrolment in relevant AQF Level 7 program.	AQF Level 5	If no AQF 5: demonstrated competency in all units being delivered and assessed; AND current registration (or equivalent) to practice within relevant profession, if applicable.
AQF Level 6 Advanced Diploma / Associate Degree	AQF Level 7 Bachelor Degree	If no AQF 7: current registration (or equivalent) to practice within relevant profession; PLUS EITHER - 3 years' relevant professional experience within the last 5 years; OR - Enrolment in relevant AQF Level 7 program.	AQF Level 6	If no AQF 6: demonstrated competency in all units being taught; AND current registration (or equivalent) to practice within relevant profession, if applicable.
AQF Level 7 Bachelor Degree	AQF Level 8 Graduate Certificate / Graduate Diploma / Bachelor Honours Degree	If No AQF Level 8: Level 7 qualification (Bachelor degree) and current (membership) registration to practice within the appropriate profession (if relevant). PLUS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING: - 3 years' relevant teaching, research and/or professional experience in the last 5 years; OR - Completion of at least two-thirds of a relevant level 9 (Masters) course, plus relevant teaching, research and/or professional experience, together totalling 3 years.	N/A	N/A

AQF Level 8 Graduate Certificate / Graduate Diploma / Bachelor Honours Degree	AQF Level 9 Master Degree	If no AQF Level 9: Level 8 qualification and current (membership) registration to practice within the appropriate profession (if relevant). PLUS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING: - 5 years' relevant teaching, research and/or professional experience in the last 10 years; OR - Completion of at least two-thirds of a relevant level 9 (Masters) course plus relevant teaching, research and/or professional experience, together totalling 5 years.	N/A	N/A
AQF Level 9 Master Degree	AQF Level 10 Doctoral Degree	If no AQF Level 10: Level 9 qualification and current (membership) registration to practice within the appropriate profession (if relevant). PLUS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING: - 5 years' relevant teaching, research and/or professional experience in the last 10 years; OR - Completion of at least two-thirds of a relevant level 10 (Doctoral) course plus relevant teaching and/or professional experience, together totalling 5 years.	N/A	N/A

Part E - Assessing Evidence of Professional Experience

(16) In assessing evidence of professional experience to determine its equivalence, regard must be given to the full range of relevant, verifiable professional activities of the individual.

(17) Evidence examples listed below are indicative only. Any verifiable source of relevant evidence may be considered in determining the weight and value of the professional experience.

Table B: Evidence of Professional Experience

Activity/Experience	**Potential Sources of Evidence**
Experience in professional, business or creative or other practice-based roles requiring high-order judgement and / or the provision of expert advice.	Letters of support from current / past employers detailing relevant aspects of the role/s. Letters of support from recognised peers in the relevant field.
Possession of industry-based certifications.	Copies of certifications and citations.

Extensive experience working as a professional in the discipline being taught.	Professional recommendations and references. Client recommendations.
Annual professional/clinical development that meets with the endorsement of the relevant industry body.	Certificates of Attendance/Completion.
Recognised influential contributor to the discipline as evidence by invitations to be a keynote speaker.	Copies of speaking invitations or event programs on which listed as a speaker.
Appointment to an expert panel for the discipline.	Copies of notices of appointment / public announcements.
Mentorship and leadership within the field.	Details of leadership roles and specific contribution. Details of mentoring and support of colleagues.
Teaching excellence.	Student evaluations. Teaching awards or commendations.
Significant contributions to the literature of the field.	Citations for peer reviewed journal articles in the preceding five years. Copies or citations of authorship or co-authorship of book/s.
Research contributions.	Participation in successful competitive grant applications. Recognition in their field.
Leadership in local, state or national advisory bodies; community organisations; peak discipline or industry bodies.	Copies of notices of appointment/public announcements or media releases.
Experience in managing significant projects in the field of study.	Letters of support from employer/s or clients associated with key projects. If relevant, copies of project reports or outcomes.
Testimonials or awards acknowledging leadership or expertise in the field.	Copies of the award or testimonial.
Leadership in the development of professional standards.	If available, draft or completed standards. Copies of notices of appointment / public announcements.
Design, creative or other practice-based achievements.	May include photographs, portfolios or other representations of creative work, as well as non-academic publications.

Part F - Teaching Staff Provided by Partner Institutions

(18) All teaching staff provided by educational partners in the delivery of VU courses are included within the ambit of this Procedure.

(19) Where partner staff do not have AQF (or equivalent) + 1 qualifications for the courses or units they are to teach, they may be subject to an exemption listed in this Procedure, or may be assessed as possessing suitable professional experience equivalence consistent with the table in Part D.

(20) The VU Academic Program Director for the partnership arrangement will evaluate and record in writing the eligibility of partner staff to deliver the relevant courses or units.

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Section 5 - HESF/ASQA/ESOS Alignment

(21) Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2025: Standards 1.2 Training; 3.2,3.3 Trainer and Assessor Competancies.

Section 6 - Definitions

(22) Nil.

Status and Details

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