

Equivalence of Professional Experience to Academic Qualifications Policy

Document

Document Name	Equivalence of Professional Experience to Academic Qualifications Policy
Brief Description	The purpose of this policy is to articulate the criteria by which the Sydney Institute of Business and Technology (SIBT) will assess the professional experience of academic staff who do not meet the requirements of Standard 3.2 of the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) 2021.
Responsible Officer	Academic Director
Delegated Approver	Academic Board
Initial Issue Date	5 June 2023
Date for Next Review:	7 January 2028

Version Control

Date/Approval	Version No.	Summary of Changes	Reviewer Name and Department/Office
7/1/25	2	Added Review Clause, added related Policy and clarified clauses regarding scholarly activity and leadership experience specific to their field. Added clarity in Policy Statement	Academic Board

Related Documents

Name	Location
Recruitment, Appointment and Induction Policy	SIBT Website
Position Descriptions	Intranet
SIBT Learning and Teaching Plan	Intranet
TEQSA Guidance Note: Determining Equivalence of Professional Experience and Academic Qualifications	teqsa.gov.au
TEQSA Guidance Note: Staffing, Learning Resources and Educational Support	teqsa.gov.au



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1 Purpose

- a) The Equivalence of Professional Experience to Academic Qualifications Policy establishes the criteria by which the Sydney Institute of Business and Technology (SIBT) will map the equivalent professional experience of academic staff who do not meet the requirements of Standard 3.2(c) of the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) 2021, as outlined below.
- b) Staff with responsibilities for academic oversight and those with teaching and supervisory roles in programs or units of study are equipped for their roles, including having:
 - i. Knowledge of contemporary developments in the discipline or field, which is informed by continuing scholarship or research or advances in practice;
 - ii. Skills in contemporary teaching, learning and assessment principles relevant to the discipline, their role, modes of delivery and the needs of particular student cohorts, and
 - iii. A qualification in a relevant discipline at least one level higher than is awarded for the program of study, or equivalent relevant academic or professional or practice-based experience and expertise, except for staff supervising doctoral degrees having a doctoral degree or equivalent research experience.

2 Definitions

Term	Meaning
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)
Diploma	An Australian Qualifications Framework Level 5 (AQF Level 5) program of study
Professional Equivalence	Professional practice determined to be commensurate with the skills, knowledge and application of skills and knowledge of a particular AQF qualification level, and Broad and Narrow field of education equivalent to the minimum qualification requirement.

3 Application

- a) The Equivalence of Professional Experience to Academic Qualifications Policy applies to the appointment of academic staff involved in the delivery, management, or leadership of accredited and non-accredited programs of study at SIBT.

4 Policy Statement

- a) Appointments to teaching positions must meet the requirements outlined in the respective position descriptions and be supported by evidence through formal qualifications and documented equivalences set out in this policy. In some instances, other skills and experience may be substituted for the minimum qualification element.
- b) In accordance with Standard 3.2(C) of the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) 2021, Academic staff must have:

- i. At least one qualification standard level higher than the program of study being taught (AQF+1);
 - OR**
 - ii. Have equivalent professional experience as determined by mapping the established criteria as outlined in Schedule 1.
- c) Minimum qualification requirements are listed in each position description. 'Professional Equivalence' may be used when appointing academic staff in lieu of the minimum qualification requirement. 'Professional Equivalence' may also be applied to demonstrate how a staff member meets the discipline-specific knowledge requirements of a particular field, despite having a qualification from a different discipline group.
- d) In addition, all academic staff seeking employment through professional equivalence must have knowledge of contemporary developments in their specific discipline or field, and be actively engaged in continuing professional development, scholarship, research, in addition to knowledge of contemporary teaching, learning and assessment relevant to their discipline, role, modes of delivery, and the specific needs of student cohorts.
- e) The need to demonstrate equivalence through professional experience is an exception rather than regular practice. In exceptional cases, academic staff who are assessed on a combination of formal qualifications and professional experience must, as a minimum, possess formal qualifications to at least the same level as the program being taught.
- f) When assessing professional equivalence, the following will be considered:
 - i. Teaching experience, scholarly activity, and range of professional experience;
 - ii. Minimum requirement for academic qualifications;
 - iii. Any specific criteria for assessing equivalence at each AQF level.
- g) Professional experience must be current, documented, and directly relevant to the subject area being taught.
- h) A *Professional Equivalence Form* (Schedule 1) is completed by the relevant Program Convenor when applicable and is presented to the Academic Director for approval before engagement, in all instances.

5 Required Evidence

- a) Any verifiable source of relevant evidence may be considered in determining the weight and value of professional experience. This includes, but is not limited to, evidence of:
 - i. Leadership in the development of professional standards in the field in which they teach e.g. accounting, engineering;
 - ii. Performing in a role that requires high order judgment and the provision of expert advice, or roles at a senior level;
 - iii. Managing significant projects in the field;
 - iv. Testimonials, awards, or other recognition that recognises leadership or expertise in the field;
 - v. Contributions in the field through participation in advisory boards and professional networks;

- vi. Peer-reviewed publications;
 - vii. Other publications such as books, reports, and journal articles;
 - viii. Leadership in, or management of, research acknowledged by peers;
 - ix. Teaching experience, including teaching at lower AQF levels, delivery of professional development or public lectures.
- b) Each of the above criteria is to be assessed in combination with at least one other to be deemed sufficient.
 - c) Academic staff who do not meet these requirements are supervised and supported by those in leadership positions using a time-limited professional development plan or other strategies put in place such as mentoring or team teaching, that addresses their specific needs and enable the individual to successfully make the transition to academic teaching.
 - d) Similarly, in the case where teachers are engaged on a continuing basis to teach specialised components of a program because of their specialised expertise, but do not fully meet the general requirements of Standard 3.2.3, they are supervised by staff who do meet the requirements (see Standard 3.2.4).

6 Academic Leaders

- a) Academic leaders (Program Convenors) must meet the requirements of Standard 3.2 of the Higher Education Standards Framework 2021 as well as demonstrate previous experience in higher education management.
- b) Where an academic leader does not meet the requirements, the Academic Director will map their equivalent professional experience to the criteria at Schedule A to this policy. A Professional Equivalence Form will be presented to the Academic Director and Chair of the Academic Board for approval before the appointment.

7 Review

- a) This Policy is reviewed by the Responsible Officer and the Quality and Compliance Manager every three (3) years and with updates to any changes to the regulatory compliance requirements, legislation, regulation, and guidelines.
- b) This review process aims to ensure alignment to appropriate strategic direction and continued relevance to SIBT's current and planned operations.



Schedule 1: Mapping of Professional Equivalence Form

AQF+1 Level Assessment (select one):	Level 5	Level 7	Level 8
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Type of Academic Role (select as appropriate):	Teaching Staff	Program Convenor	Other
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Staff (Applicant) Details
Given Name(s):

Family Name:

Title:

Appointment Details

What faculty will the applicant be an academic member of? *Tick as appropriate from the drop-down list.*

What program/s of study will the applicant be teaching, coordinating and/or leading at SIBT? *Select as appropriate from the drop-down list.*

- 1.
- 2.

What units will the applicant be teaching at SIBT? *Enter the unit names.*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Supporting Documentation

Please list below the supporting document used to determine equivalency. *A copy of all documentation must be attached when submitting the completed form to the Academic Director/Committee.*

Other Comments

Please provide below any other comments that may be helpful to the AQF Equivalency Committee in their assessment:

Assessment: Level 5 (Diploma)

Criteria	How has the individual achieved equivalency in their professional experience?
<p>Primary Criteria: <i>Applicant must meet the following criteria</i></p>	
<p>A Level 5 qualification Please provide title of qualification, conferring body and date of conferral.</p> <p>NB. Where staff have a Level 6 qualification, but it is NOT IN THE FIELD of STUDY, other in-field experience may be taken into account and professional equivalency applied.</p> <p>Equivalence 5 years relevant professional experience Other evidence: consider the following in assessing equivalency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualification lower than Level 6 that is in field, plus; • Experience outside tertiary education in industry, business or government employment; • Leadership in local, state or national advisory bodies and/or community organisations; • A Fellow of relevant Learned or Professional Society (for example, CPA Australia, Australian Institute of Management). 	
<p>Relevant professional experience within the last 5 years, such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Leadership in the development of professional standards e.g. accounting, marketing; b. Performing in a role that requires higher order judgment and the provision of expert advice, or roles at a senior level; c. Managing significant projects in the field; d. Testimonials, awards or other recognition that recognises leadership or expertise in the field; e. Contributions in the field through participation in advisory boards and professional networks; f. Peer-reviewed publications; g. Other publications such as books, reports and artistic works; h. Leadership or management of research acknowledged by peers; i. Teaching experience including teaching at lower AQF levels, delivery of professional development or public lectures. 	Please provide details:
<p>Activities performed by teacher if appointed: Assessment marking Assessment development Tutorial delivery Lecture delivery Other</p>	<p>Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No</p>



Criteria	How has the individual achieved equivalency in their professional experience?
Program Convenor (Signature):	Date:
Academic Director (Signature):	Date: