

AQF plus 1 and Professional Experience Equivalence Policy

Section 1 - Overview and Scope

(1) This policy provides guidance for determining professional experience and its equivalence to [Australian Qualifications Framework](#) (AQF) qualification levels. It assists UNE to fulfill its obligation to ensure staff have the knowledge, skills and experience to lead students in intellectual inquiry suited to the nature and level of expected learning outcomes.

(2) This policy is applicable to all UNE staff who teach or supervise within approved higher education programs and who are employed by UNE or a Third Party Provider.

(3) Within this policy:

- a. Part A covers the Australian Qualifications Framework +1 policy;
- b. Part B covers equivalency criteria;
- c. Part C covers evidence for equivalency criteria; and
- d. Part D covers responsibilities for equivalency assessment.

Part A - Australian Qualifications Framework +1 policy

(4) As well as relevant knowledge and skills in the discipline, UNE teaching and supervisory staff will normally have a qualification of at least one AQF qualification level higher than the unit of study being taught or supervised, or have equivalent professional experience and expertise. Professional experience must be current and relevant to the area being taught and must be demonstrated by the criteria outlined in this policy.

Part B - Equivalency Criteria

(5) The following table includes guidance for demonstrating professional experience equivalence for Unit Coordinators, teachers within units, and principal and co-supervisors. Schools may require combinations of, or additional evidence or standards as appropriate for different disciplines of study.

Higher Education level being taught	Required AQF qualification in relevant discipline	Factors to be considered for equivalency
AQF level 5 Diploma	AQF level 6 Advanced Diploma	<p>a. AQF level 5</p> <p>and/or an appropriate combination of:</p> <p>b. Enrolment in a relevant AQF 7 or higher program</p> <p>c. Registration (or equivalent) to practice within a relevant profession (where applicable)</p> <p>d. 3 years relevant professional experience within the last 5 years</p> <p>e. Be currently research active; have published academic papers or presented refereed papers presented at international or national conferences over the past 5 years (min number to be determined by Schools)</p> <p>f. Current or recent membership of an Academic Board or other formal academic governance committees and working groups; leadership in development of academic standards relevant to the discipline, unit field or unit; leadership or management of research acknowledged by peers; and or engagement with peer review and quality assurance (internal or external)</p>
AQF level 6 Advanced Diploma	AQF level 7 Bachelor Degree	<p>a. AQF level 6</p> <p>and/or an appropriate combination of:</p> <p>b. Enrolment in a relevant AQF 7 or higher program</p> <p>c. Registration to practice within a relevant profession (where applicable)</p> <p>d. 3 years relevant professional experience within the last 5 years</p> <p>e. Be currently research active; have published academic papers or presented refereed papers presented at international or national conferences over the past 5 years (min number to be determined by Schools)</p> <p>f. Current or recent membership of an Academic Board or other formal academic governance committees and working groups; leadership in development of academic standards relevant to the discipline, unit field or unit; leadership or management of research acknowledged by peers; and or engagement with peer review and quality assurance (internal or external)</p>
AQF level 6 Associate Degree	AQF level 7 Bachelor Degree	<p>a. AQF level 6</p> <p>and/or an appropriate combination of:</p> <p>b. Enrolment in a relevant AQF 7 or higher program</p> <p>c. Current registration to practice within a relevant profession (where applicable)</p> <p>d. 3 years relevant professional experience within the last 5 years e. Be currently research active; have published academic papers or presented refereed papers presented at international or national conferences over the past 5 years (min number to be determined by Schools)</p> <p>f. Current or recent membership of an Academic Board or other formal academic governance committees and working groups; leadership in development of academic standards relevant to the discipline, unit field or unit; leadership or management of research acknowledged by peers; and or engagement with peer review and quality assurance (internal or external)</p>

Higher Education level being taught	Required AQF qualification in relevant discipline	Factors to be considered for equivalency
AQF level 7 Bachelor Degree	AQF level 8 Honours Graduate Certificate Graduate Diploma	<p>a. AQF level 7</p> <p>and/or an appropriate combination of:</p> <p>b. Enrolment in a relevant AQF level 8 or higher program</p> <p>c. Current registration to practice within a relevant profession (where applicable)</p> <p>d. 3 years relevant professional experience within the last 5 years</p> <p>e. Be currently research active; have published academic papers or presented refereed papers presented at international or national conferences over the past 5 years (min number to be determined by Schools)</p> <p>f. Current or recent membership of an Academic Board or other formal academic governance committees and working groups; leadership in development of academic standards relevant to the discipline, unit field or unit; leadership or management of research acknowledged by peers; and or engagement with peer review and quality assurance (internal or external)</p>
AQF level 8 Graduate Certificate Graduate Diploma	AQF level 9 Master's by research or coursework	<p>a. AQF level 8</p> <p>and/or an appropriate combination of:</p> <p>b. Enrolment in a relevant AQF level 9 or higher program</p> <p>c. Current registration to practice within a relevant profession (where applicable)</p> <p>d. 3 years relevant professional experience within the last 5 years</p> <p>e. Be currently research active; have published academic papers or presented refereed papers presented at international or national conferences over the past 5 years (min number to be determined by Schools)</p> <p>f. Current or recent membership of an Academic Board or other formal academic governance committees and working groups; leadership in development of academic standards relevant to the discipline, unit field or unit; leadership or management of research acknowledged by peers; and or engagement with peer review and quality assurance (internal or external)</p>
AQF level 9 Master's Degree (Coursework)	AQF level 10 Doctorate by research or coursework	<p>a. AQF level 9</p> <p>and/or an appropriate combination of:</p> <p>b. Enrolment in a relevant AQF level 10 program</p> <p>c. Current registration to practice within a relevant profession (where applicable)</p> <p>d. 6 years relevant professional experience within the last 10 years</p> <p>e. Be currently research active; have published academic papers or presented refereed papers presented at international or national conferences over the past 5 years (min number to be determined by Schools)</p> <p>f. Current or recent membership of an Academic Board or other formal academic governance committees and working groups; leadership in development of academic standards relevant to the discipline, unit field or unit; leadership or management of research acknowledged by peers; and or engagement with peer review and quality assurance (internal or external)</p> <p>g. Fellowship of a nationally recognised professional/vocational body requiring advanced extensive work experience, professional standing and ongoing professional development</p>

Higher Education level being taught	Required AQF qualification in relevant discipline	Factors to be considered for equivalency
AQF level 9 Master's Degree (Research)	AQF level 10 Doctorate by research	<p>a. AQF level 9</p> <p>and/or an appropriate combination of:</p> <p>b. Enrolment in a relevant AQF level 10 program</p> <p>c. Current registration to practice within a relevant profession (where applicable)</p> <p>d. 6 years relevant professional experience within the last 10 years</p> <p>e. Be currently research active; have published academic papers or presented refereed papers presented at international or national conferences over the past 5 years (min number to be determined by Schools)</p> <p>f. Current or recent membership of an Academic Board or other formal academic governance committees and working groups; leadership in development of academic standards relevant to the discipline, unit field or unit; leadership or management of research acknowledged by peers; and/or engagement with peer review and quality assurance (internal or external)</p> <p>g. Fellowship of a nationally recognised professional/vocational body requiring advanced extensive work experience, professional standing and ongoing professional development</p>
AQF 10 HDR Training (Principal Supervision)	AQF level 10 Doctorate by research	<p>a. AQF level 9</p> <p>and/or an appropriate combination of:</p> <p>b. Enrolment in a relevant AQF level 10 program</p> <p>c. Current registration to practice within a relevant profession (where applicable)</p> <p>d. 6 years relevant professional experience within the last 10 years</p> <p>e. Be currently research active in accordance with the requirements of UNE's HDR Research Activity and Publication for Higher Degree Research Supervisors</p> <p>f. Current or recent membership of an Academic Board or other formal academic governance committees and working groups; leadership in development of academic standards relevant to the discipline, unit field or unit; leadership or management of research acknowledged by peers; and/or engagement with peer review and quality assurance (internal or external)</p> <p>plus any additional training required by UNE to be registered as a principal supervisor.</p>

Higher Education level being taught	Required AQF qualification in relevant discipline	Factors to be considered for equivalency
AQF 10 HDR Training (Co-supervision)	AQF level 10 Doctorate by research	<p>a. AQF level 9</p> <p>and/or an appropriate combination of:</p> <p>b. Enrolment in a relevant AQF level 10 program</p> <p>c. Current registration to practice within a relevant profession (where applicable)</p> <p>d. 6 years relevant professional experience within the last 10 years</p> <p>e. Be currently research active; have published academic papers or presented refereed papers presented at international or national conferences over the past 5 years (min number to be determined by Schools)</p> <p>f. Current or recent membership of an Academic Board or other formal academic governance committees and working groups; leadership in development of academic standards relevant to the discipline, unit field or unit; leadership or management of research acknowledged by peers; and or engagement with peer review and quality assurance (internal or external)</p> <p>plus any additional training required by UNE to be registered as a co-supervisor.</p>

(6) Where the knowledge, skills, and qualification or equivalent experience or expertise requirements (see [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\)](#) 3.3.2) are not fully met by UNE staff involved in unit coordination, teaching or supervision, additional support in teaching, marking or supervision will be required as a condition of their employment. This support includes:

- regular monitoring of teaching/marketing/supervision and provision of feedback for continuous improvement by staff who meet the AQF level or equivalent professional experience standard; and/or
- opportunities for co-teaching or supervision alongside staff who meet the AQF level or equivalent professional experience standard.

Tutors/Demonstrators/Markers

(7) Tutors, demonstrators and markers are qualified by:

Required AQF level	Professional Experience Equivalence
A qualification in a relevant discipline one AQF level higher than the unit	<p>a. A qualification or the equivalent of a qualification in a relevant discipline at the same level as the unit and in receipt of professional development support and supervision that assures high quality teaching</p> <p>or</p> <p>b. Demonstrated achievement of the learning outcomes for the unit(s) being taught to an exceptional level (D or HD), and in receipt of professional development support and supervision that assures high quality teaching. This includes Doctoral candidates teaching in their area of study.</p>

Expert Guest Lecturers, Peer Assisted Learning Partner and Cultural Experts

(8) Expert Guest Lecturers, Peer Assisted Learning Partners and cultural experts may be appointed to provide

distinctive expertise in teaching activities. They are appointed at the discretion of the Head of School (or delegate) and do not require a minimum qualification. The decision of the Head of School (or delegate) is final.

Part C - Evidence for Equivalency Criteria

(9) Evidence for establishing equivalent professional experience may include, but is not limited to:

- a. high quality and sustained professional practice in employment, teaching, research or performance in the relevant discipline;
- b. annual professional/clinical development that meets with the endorsement of the relevant industry body;
- c. regular and recent contributions to the discipline via quality publications and/or presentations;
- d. recognised influential contribution to the discipline, for example invitations as a keynote speaker or appointment to an expert panel for the discipline;
- e. sustained and significant contributions to the field, for example peer reviewed journal articles;
- f. leadership in local, state or national advisory bodies and/or community organisations, peak discipline or industry bodies;
- g. experience in managing significant projects in the field of study, for example a consultant who manages projects for medium to large private or public sector organisations;
- h. work to effect a demonstrable change in the creation of new practice in the field; and/or
- i. letters of support from recognised peers in the relevant field.

Recognition of Professional Designations

(10) UNE recognises existing professional designations when assessing academic staff against the professional experience equivalence criteria.

(11) UNE may accept the international equivalents of professional registrations or designations.

Part D - Responsibility for Equivalency Assessment and Record Keeping

(12) The Head of School (or delegate) is responsible for ensuring employment of appropriately qualified staff:

- a. Where a member of staff's formal qualifications meet the required AQF level in a relevant discipline, no further assessment is required.
- b. Where a member of staff does not possess formal qualifications that satisfy the required AQF level, the Head of School (or delegate) must undertake and record an assessment of AQF requirement equivalency in accordance with this policy. The decision of the Head of School (or delegate) is final.
- c. Where a member of staff does not meet the qualification or equivalent experience or expertise requirements, the Head of School (or delegate) must require that additional support be included as a condition of employment (see clause 9). The member of staff cannot be employed to teach or supervise above their formal qualification level unless the conditions of employment are met.

(13) The Head of School (or delegate) is responsible for ensuring that the AQF level or equivalent professional experience of each teaching and supervisory staff member within each school is recorded within the University's Records Management System.

Section 2 - Authority and Compliance

Authority

(14) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, pursuant to Section 29 of the [University of New England Act 1993 \(NSW\)](#), makes this University policy.

(15) The Policy Steward, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, is authorised to make procedures and processes for the effective implementation and operation of this policy, and to publish as associated documents any tool that will assist with compliance.

(16) The Policy Administrator for this policy is the Director Governance and University Secretary who is authorised to make minor administrative updates to this policy.

Compliance

(17) UNE Representatives must observe this policy.

(18) This policy is consistent with the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2021 and the [Australian Qualifications Framework](#) 2013.

(19) This policy operate as and from the Effective Date.

(20) Notwithstanding the other provisions of this policy, the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer may approve an exception to this policy where the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer determines the application of this policy would otherwise lead to an unfair, unreasonable or absurd outcome. Approvals by the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer under this clause must be documented in writing and must state the reason for the exception.

Section 3 - Quality Assurance

(21) Education Quality will provide an annual report on AQF Equivalency by School to Academic Board and the Academic Portfolio Executive Committee.

(22) The report will include:

- a. the number and proportion of academic staff, the units in which they are teaching (or programs they are supervising) and their qualification, with equivalent professional experience approved under the professional experience equivalence;
- b. the employment status of these staff e.g. Permanent, Casual, Fixed Term;
- c. number and proportion of issues identified as part of the annual audit and effectiveness of solutions implemented; and
- d. recommendations for improvements to the process.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	19th May 2023
Review Date	19th May 2024
Approval Authority	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Approval Date	15th May 2023
Expiry Date	To Be Advised
Unit Head	Simon Evans Deputy Vice-Chancellor dvc@une.edu.au
Author	Michael Wilmore Deputy Vice-Chancellor 02 6773 5307
Enquiries Contact	Simon Evans Deputy Vice-Chancellor dvc@une.edu.au <hr/> Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor +61 2 6773 5050

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"UNE Representative" - Means a University employee (casual, fixed term and permanent), contractor, agent, appointee, UNE Council member, adjunct, visiting academic and any other person engaged by the University to undertake some activity for or on behalf of the University. It includes corporations and other bodies falling into one or more of these categories.

"School" - Is an organisational unit comprising academic staff in related fields of study who are responsible for teaching and research in those academic fields together with support staff. Each School also has lead management for the design and delivery of the courses within its responsibility.