Assessing Qualifications and Equivalence of Professional Experience

Policy and Procedure

Table of Contents

1. PURPOSE

1.1. As a registered Higher Education Provider, AFTT must ensure that that all members of its academic workforce are appropriately equipped for their roles so they can lead students in intellectual inquiry suited to the nature and level of relevant expected learning outcomes.

1.2. The Assessing Qualifications and Equivalence of Professional Experience Policy and Procedure provides standards and criteria for:

1.2.2 Assessing and mapping qualifications and equivalent professional and/or teaching experience of those who are teaching and assessing students' work, or are otherwise engaged in AFTT higher education courses, and

1.2.2 Specifying and evaluating factors when assessing the professional and/or teaching experience of members of the academic workforce, especially those who do not hold a qualification at the appropriate AQF+1 level higher than is awarded for the course of study in which they will be teaching and assessing students' work, or be otherwise engaged, and

1.2.2 Monitoring ongoing compliance with this Policy and Procedure.

2. SCOPE

The Assessing Qualifications and Equivalence of Professional Experience Policy and Procedure applies to all academic workforce members who teach and assess students' work or are otherwise engaged in AFTT higher education courses.

3. DEFINITIONS

All definitions are located in the *AFTT Glossary*.

4. POLICY

4.1. Minimum Requirements[1]

4.1.1. All AFTT's lecturers and tutors who have academic oversight and/or teaching and supervisory roles, must have at minimum:

4.1.1.1. **Knowledge** of contemporary developments in the discipline or field, which is informed by continuing scholarship or research or advances in practice,

4.1.1.2. **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

4.1.1.3. A **qualification** in a relevant discipline at least one level higher than is awarded for the course of study, or equivalent relevant academic, professional, or practice-based experience and expertise.

4.2. Assessment of Equivalency to Minimum Requirements

4.2.1. Where AFTT 's lecturers and/or tutors satisfy requirements set out in sections 4.1.1.1 and 4.1.1.2 above, but their qualification level in a relevant discipline is at the same level as awarded for the course of study, then AFTT will rely on an assessment of relevant qualifications and experience and expertise for AQF equivalence for the purpose of appointment.

4.2.2. In conducting the equivalency assessment, AFTT will consider:
- The full range of academic and/or teaching experience, and
- Practise-based experience and expertise, and

---

[1] HESF 2021, 3.2 3. a., b., c.

- A minimum requirement for academic qualification(s) that is the same AQF level as the relevant course of study, and
- The specific criteria for assessing professional equivalence at each level.

4.2.3. In determining equivalence, any case submitted for approval must be evidence-based and must document the appropriate level of skills, knowledge and the application of skills and knowledge as specified within the AQF for the respective level.

4.2.4. AFTT acknowledges that in some areas that are professionally focussed, developing academic disciplines, or highly specialist programs, that some flexibility with regard to the application of this Policy and Procedure may be required. However, circumstances requiring flexible application of this Policy and Procedure, must not curb the intent and general application of this Policy and Procedure.[2]

4.2.5. Assessment of the equivalency is made in accordance with the criteria set out in *Appendix 1 – Table 1 – Qualification and Professional Experience Requirements, and Equivalence Criteria.*

4.2.6. The Head of Department and/or Campus Manager will conduct an initial evaluation of the equivalency.

4.2.7. Determinations of equivalency are made by the Dean.

4.2.8. The Education Services maintain the *Register of Qualifications and Equivalence* to ensure ongoing compliance with this Policy and Procedure.

4.2.9. It is the responsibility of the appropriate Head of Department in each instance to ensure that verified evidence is provided to the Education Services for entry in the *Register of Qualifications and Equivalence*.

4.3. Exceptions

4.3.1. The following roles may be exempted from general provisions of this Policy and Procedure, but must bring a level of knowledge and expertise which will add value to the teaching of the relevant discipline area/s and will noticeably improve students learning experience:

4.3.1.1. Occasional guest lecturers/teachers/instructors/speakers who are not engaged in one-third of the unit in any study period,

4.3.1.2. Internship and/or work placement coordinators,

4.3.1.3. Tutors who do not meet requirement for AQF+1 or equivalent but are only engaged in delivering specialised components of a course of study. Such tutors will require supervision in accordance with the *Academic Supervision Policy and Procedure.*

5. PROCEDURE

5.1. Mapping Qualifications and Professional Experience

5.1.1. The Head of Department is responsible for making the first assessment of the level of each person's qualification/s, teaching experience and professional/discipline specific expertise.

5.1.2. Where professional experience mapping is required, the Head of Department will forward the person's qualifications and their resume/CV and details of the position to the Education Services, together with their initial assessment.

5.1.3. The Education Services will map the person's qualifications and professional experience in accordance with the criteria set out in this Policy and Procedure to assess whether they meet the AQF+1 or equivalent qualification requirement. Professional and/or teaching experience and expertise may be demonstrated

---

by evidence of criteria as set out in *Appendix 2 – Table 1 - Criteria and Evidence of Professional Experience*.

5.1.4. The Education Services will enter all the details in the *Register of Qualifications and Equivalence*.

5.1.5. The Dean will review the mapping to determine whether the person's professional and/or teaching experience and expertise is of a level sufficient to meet the minimum requirements of an AQF+1 or equivalent qualification.

    5.1.5.1. At least one of the assessors (the Head of Department, Dean, or member of the Education Services) will hold an AQF qualification above the level for which the professional experience in question is being evaluated.

5.1.6. The equivalence will be mapped to:
- At least AQF level 8 for undergraduate degrees,
- At least AQF level 9 for AQF level 8 awards,
- At least AQF level 10 for AQF level 9 awards.

5.1.7. The Dean will advise the Head of Department and Campus Manager of their decision within five (5) business days of receiving the equivalency mapping request of their determination, which may be:

    5.1.7.1. The person meets all requirements for AQF+1 or equivalent,

    5.1.7.2. The person requires supervision when:
- They meet requirements for AQF+1 or equivalent, but they are new/relatively new to teaching and/or teaching at AFTT,
- They do not meet requirement for AQF+1 or equivalent, but they are only engaged in delivering specialised components of a course of study (tutors).

    Refer to the *Academic Supervision Policy and Procedure*.

    5.1.7.3. The person does not meet the requirements and will advise that the person cannot be considered for a teaching role at AFTT.

5.2. Monitoring Qualifications and Professional Experience of Lecturers and Tutors

The Education Services:

5.2.1. Update the *Register of Qualifications and Equivalence* at least annually, and

5.2.2. Send out a reminder to all lecturers and tutors to:
- Update their details in the *Professional Development and Scholarly Activity Register*, and
- Submit their updated resumes and evidence of any new qualifications and professional experience,

5.2.3. Update all relevant records,

5.2.4. Review all the supervision arrangements in place,

5.2.5. Request any additional evidence from the lecturers and tutors to support claims of progress,

5.2.6. Re-map and document qualifications and professional experience of each lecturer and tutor in accordance with the criteria set out in this Policy and Procedure to assess if they meet the AQF+1 or equivalent requirement and provide the summary documents together with recommendations to each relevant Head of Department for consideration, and to the Dean for determination as per section 5.1.7.

5.3. Reporting

5.3.1. An annual report on the implementation of this Policy and Procedure will be presented to the Academic Board's final meeting in each calendar year.

5.3.2. The annual report to the Academic Board will summarise AFTT's academic workforce qualifications and the outcomes of all applications for assessments of equivalence relating to this Policy and Procedure.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS
6.1. AFTT Glossary
6.2. Professional Development Policy and Procedure
6.3. Academic Workforce Recruitment and Induction Policy and Procedure
6.4. Academic Supervision Policy and Procedure
6.5. Performance Appraisal Policy and Procedure

7. RELEVANT LEGISLATION
7.1. Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth)
7.2. Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021

8. POSITIONS RESPONSIBLE
8.1. Governing Council
8.2. Academic Board
8.3. Dean
8.4. Campus Managers
8.5. Education Services
8.6. Heads of Department

9. APPROVAL INFORMATION

Approval Authority	Academic Board
Health Check approval authority	Dean
Review date	30/01/2025

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Effective date	Modifications	Status
1.0	Academic Board	02/07/2021	22/01/2022	Amendments as per external reviewer's recommendations. **Academic Staff Qualifications and Professional Experience Policy** and **Mapping Academic Staff Qualifications and Professional Experience Procedure** have been merged into this single document. Supervision and co-teaching arrangements added and/or amended.	Superseded
1.1	Dean	12/08/2022	12/08/2022	Position/s updated.	Current

Version control tables from previous Policies and Procedures reside in the original documents.

REFERENCES and ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Australian Government. (2021). *Higher education standards framework (threshold standards) 2021.* https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2021L00488

TEQSA. (2017). *Guidance note: Determining equivalence of professional experience and academic qualifications.* https://www.teqsa.gov.au/latest-news/publications/guidance-note-determining-equivalence-professional-experience-and-academic/

University of Sunshine Coast. (2018). *Determining equivalence of professional experience to academic qualifications - Operational policy.* https://www.usc.edu.au/about/policies-and-procedures/determining-equivalence-of-professional-experience-to-academic-qualifications-operational-policy

Victoria University. (2018). *Learning and teaching - Equivalence of professional experience to qualifications (staff) procedure.* https://policy.vu.edu.au/document/view.php?id=415

Appendix 1 – Table 1 – Qualification and Professional Experience Requirements, and Equivalence Criteria

Role	Course Level	Relevant Qualification and Experience Required	Equivalence Criteria
Lecturer/Tutors	AQF 7	AQF 8	Relevant AQF 7 qualification and a total of three (3) years relevant teaching and/or professional experience within the last five (5) years.
			Relevant AQF 7 qualification, completion of **at least half** of a relevant level AQF 8 course and a total of three (3) years relevant teaching and/or professional experience.
Lecturer/Tutors	AQF 8	AQF 9	Relevant AQF 8 qualification and a total of five (5) years relevant teaching and/or professional experience within the last ten (10) years.
			Relevant AQF 8 qualification, completion of **at least half** of a relevant level AQF 9 course and a total of five (5) years relevant teaching and/or professional experience.
Lecturer/Tutors	AQF 9 (Masters Coursework)	AQF 10	Relevant AQF 9 qualification and a total of five (5) years relevant teaching and/or professional experience within the last ten (10) years.
			Relevant AQF 9 qualification, completion of **at least half** of a relevant level AQF 10 course and a total of five (5) years relevant teaching and/or professional experience.

Exceptions	Course Level	Requirements	
Tutors[3] (including specialised practitioners) are engaged in instructing and guiding students and/or delivering specialised components of a course of study, for example: • Performance Tutors,	Any	Tutors (including specialised practitioners) must have three (3) years relevant teaching and/or professional experience within the last five (5) years and ongoing industry involvement in a relevant field.	

---

[3] Tutors (including specialised practitioners) who do not meet AQF+1 or equivalent requirement will have supervision arrangements in place in accordance with the *Academic Supervision Policy and Procedure.*

• Songwriting Tutors, • Instrument Tutors, • Voice Tutors.		
Occasional guest lecturers/ teachers/instructors/ speakers	Any	They must bring a level of knowledge and expertise which will add value to the teaching of the relevant discipline area/s will noticeably improve students learning experience.
Internship and/or work placement coordinators	Internship is offered only to undergraduate students (AQF level 7)	Co-ordinators must have three (3) or more years relevant professional experience in the last five (5) years. Such individuals are responsible only for operational tasks associated with student allocations to industry. Lecturers who met AQF+1 or equivalent requirement are responsible for student learning, assessment, and unit content.

Appendix 2 – Table 1 – Criteria and Evidence of Professional Experience

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

Activity/Experience	Potential Sources of Evidence
Prior teaching experience in a relevant discipline at the same level being taught.	• Student evaluations. • Teaching awards or commendations. • References and letters of recommendation.
High quality and sustained experience working as a professional in the discipline being taught.	• Letters of support and recommendation from current/past employers detailing relevant aspects of the role/s. • Letters of support and recommendation from recognised peers in the relevant field. • References. • Client recommendations.
Annual professional development that has met with the endorsement of the relevant industry body.	• Certificates of Attendance/Completion.
Provision of public lectures and keynote speeches.	• Copies of speaking invitations or event programs on which listed as a speaker.
Appointment to an expert panel/s 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.
Possession of industry-based certifications.	• Copies of certifications and citations.
Authorship of high- quality research outputs and citations in the field of study.	• Evidence of authorship of research outputs in the preceding five (5) years. • Evidence of recent citations (e.g., over the past 5 years).
Regular and recent contributions to the discipline via publications, presentations, conduct of professional development seminars in the preceding 5 years.	• Copies or citations of authorship or co-authorship of book/s or articles/s. • Copies of Authorship Agreements. • Copies of presentations. • Copies of development seminars.
Research contributions.	• Participation in successful competitive grant applications. • Recognition in the 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.
Management of significant projects in the field.	• Letters of support and recommendation from employer/s or clients associated with key projects. • If relevant, copies of project reports or outcomes.
Testimonials, awards, or other recognition including letters of support from recognised peers in the relevant field,	• Copies of the award or testimonial. • Copies of letters of support and recommendation from peers in the relevant field

Activity/Experience	Potential Sources of Evidence
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.