

## **Governance Institute of Australia**

### **Recognition of Equivalence of Professional Experience to Academic Qualifications Policy**

<b>Document Identifier</b>	Recognition of Equivalence of Professional Experience to Academic Qualifications Policy
<b>Document Classification</b>	Academic Governance
<b>Approval date</b>	1 December 2018
<b>Publication date</b>	13 January 2020
<b>Summary</b>	This policy outlines the guidelines for assessment of professional equivalence for the purpose of appointing academic teaching staff.
<b>Authoring Department</b>	Education
<b>Contact</b>	General Manager, Education
<b>Applies to</b>	Higher Education
<b>Distribution</b>	External
<b>Related documents</b>	Australian Qualifications Framework Council, Australian Qualifications Framework Second Edition January 2013 Governance Institute of Australia Graduate Attributes Policy Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015
<b>Review date</b>	2020 Q4

**Issued under the authority of Governance Institute of Australia Board of Directors**

# **Governance Institute of Australia**

## **Recognition of Equivalence of Professional Experience to Academic Qualifications Policy**

### **Policy Statement**

Governance Institute of Australia (hereafter referred to as Governance Institute) is committed to ensuring that academic staff appointed to teach students are appropriately qualified in the relevant discipline for their level of teaching. This policy provides criteria for the appropriate evaluation of the equivalence of professional experience for determining that academic teaching staff are qualified to at least one Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualification higher than the course of study being taught, or have equivalent professional experience.

This policy applies to all staff who teach postgraduate courses within Governance Institute.

### **Aims and Objectives**

1. The objectives of this Academic Equivalence Policy Statement are to:
  - a. Ensure that processes for appointing academic teaching staff at Governance Institute are in accord with the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Threshold Standards for staffing (3.2), are consistent with the Mission of Governance Institute, and enable students to attain the relevant Graduate Attributes;
  - b. Provide guidance to support the appointment of academic teaching staff and any ongoing professional development required to meet the requirements of this policy; and
  - c. Provide assurance to students that their academic teaching staff are suitably qualified.

### **Scope**

2. The policy applies to current or prospective academic staff teaching students enrolled in subjects, employed by Governance Institute.

## Overview

3. Students of Governance Institute are assured that their academic teaching staff are suitably qualified. This suitability will be generally based on the appointment of teachers who are qualified in the particular field of study at a level more advanced than the level of the course being taught.
4. Governance Institute will engage teachers using the criteria of equivalencies in practice experience as required. This may include recognition of:
  - a. Membership of governance-related professional associations;
  - b. Attainment of defined senior governance-related professional positions. The recognition of equivalent professional experience is an essential feature of teacher attributes for Governance Institute; and
  - c. The learning outcomes for Governance Institute courses are such that they require currency in expert practice to ensure the building of student capabilities in practice.
5. Governance Institute will have clear procedures and delegations that guide the determination of professional equivalency in experience and skills. They will inform how such professional attributes are assessed in terms of their equivalence to the AQF level in supporting students to attain Governance Institute Graduate Attributes, and the knowledge and skills established in the learning outcomes of courses staff may be involved in teaching. This will ensure that Governance Institute academic teaching staff will bring both academic rigour and cutting edge practice to their teaching roles.
6. Guest presenters are exempt from the requirements to demonstrate equivalence of professional experience as defined in this policy, but must have a level of knowledge and expertise that will demonstrably enhance the learning experiences of students.
7. There may be special circumstances not covered by these guidelines. In such a circumstance an individual case must be made regarding the attributes of the staff member that enable them to be considered to have a level of knowledge and expertise that will demonstrably enhance the learning experiences of students.
8. All academics, including guest presenters, will have access to training to support their ability to deliver teaching consistent with the aims of this policy.

9. Governance Institute will have clear procedures for monitoring the qualifications of all academic teaching staff against the guidelines on equivalence of professional experience in this policy; and the implications of this for student experience, academic staff recruitment and professional development.

## **Definitions**

10. For the purpose of this policy:
  - a. Academic teaching staff refers to staff employed to deliver direct teaching to students. Subject coordinators are part of the academic teaching staff.
  - b. Currency refers to the period of time during which relevant professional experience in practice continues to be valid.
  - c. Equivalence of professional experience comprises the professional practice and teaching experience that an individual demonstrates that is determined to be equivalent to the academic knowledge and skills required to have expertise in a field of study at a level more advanced than the level of the course being taught.
  - d. Equivalent professional qualification is the attainment of governance-related professional qualifications or defined senior governance-related professional positions that have been formally determined by Governance Institute to have defined AQF equivalency.
  - e. Guest presenter refers to individuals who present on a single topic within a subject.

## Minimum Requirements for the Qualifications of Academic Teaching Staff

11. The table below describes the minimum requirements for equivalence. Except in exceptional circumstances, all academic teaching staff considered to have equivalence of professional experience will hold an AQF Level 8 professional qualification.

Teaching AQF Level 8 (Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma)	
Required Qualifications	Guidelines on Equivalence
AQF Level 9 (Masters)	<p>AQF Level 8 professional qualification and current professional membership or registration to practice within the relevant governance area,</p> <p><b>PLUS</b></p> <p>5 years relevant teaching and/or professional experience in the last 10 years.</p> <p>Evidence that may be considered when assessing the professional experience of an individual:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. evidence of leadership in the development of professional standards;</li> <li>b. performing in roles at a senior level (other than determined as an equivalent professional qualification);</li> <li>c. performing in a role (other than determined as an equivalent professional qualification) that requires high order judgement and the provision of expert advice;</li> <li>d. managing significant projects in the field;</li> <li>e. testimonials, awards or other recognition that acknowledges leadership or expertise in the field of education;</li> <li>f. contributions in the field of study through participation in advisory boards and professional networks;</li> <li>g. peer reviewed publications in the field of study;</li> <li>h. other publications such as books and reports;</li> <li>i. leadership or management of research acknowledged by peers.</li> </ol>

## Procedures

12. Included in all appointment of academic teaching staff will be the review of the appropriateness of their qualifications to teach to the specified learning outcomes of any Governance Institute course.
13. As required any determination of a professional equivalence to a nominated AQF level for the purposes of teaching will be made based upon the holding of appropriate professional qualifications or positions in relation to the course learning outcomes.
14. This review will include consideration of:
  - a. Knowledge, skills, and application of knowledge and skills to the relevant AQF level; and
  - b. Relevance to supporting students in attaining Governance Institute Graduate Attributes, and a Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma Award.
15. A Register of Academic Teaching Staff will be maintained with evidence of the staff qualifications, and/or equivalence of professional experience to AQF Levels. The Register will be reviewed annually by Governance Institute's Education Committee.
16. This policy applies to all new academic staff appointments made by Governance Institute.

## Roles and Responsibilities

17. The Education Committee (or nominees) is responsible for:
  - a. Approving the determination of equivalence to AQF level (for the purpose of teaching within Governance Institute) of a nominated governance-related professional qualification or senior governance-related professional position;
  - b. Approving the determination of equivalence of professional experience of any staff member nominated for employment under "special circumstances not covered by these guidelines";
  - c. Prior to the commencement of the academic year conducting an annual review of the Register of Academic Teaching Staff and providing advice regarding implications for student experience, academic staff recruitment and professional development.
18. The General Manager, Education is responsible for:

- a. Making recommendation to the Education Committee for approval for the determination of equivalence of professional experience for new staff who require such a determination under this policy, other than “special circumstances not covered by these guidelines”;
  - b. Nominating, with rationale, (in consultation with the Executive Management Team):
    - i) Governance-related professional qualifications and/or senior governance-related professional positions as equivalent professional qualifications; and
    - ii) Staff members recommended for determination of equivalence of professional experience related to “special circumstances not covered by these guidelines”.
  - c. Overseeing the maintenance of a current Register of Academic Teaching Staff;
  - d. Initiating, including through delegation, any actions required in response to advice from the Education Committee after review of the Register of Academic Teaching Staff;
  - e. In the event that an academic staff member has not maintained currency of qualifications, a staff development plan will need to be implemented to enable compliance with this policy over an agreed period of time, not exceeding six months.
19. The State Managers are responsible within their state for:
- a. Determining that guest presenters recruited to teach in a subject have a level of knowledge and expertise that will demonstrably enhance the learning experiences of students; (see Recruitment of Guest Presenters Guideline) and
  - b. Maintaining the Register of Academic Teaching Staff for all guest presenters within the state for which they are responsible.

## **Related Documents**

- Australian Qualifications Framework Council, Australian Qualifications Framework Second Edition January 2013
- Governance Institute of Australia Graduate Attributes Policy
- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015

### **Acknowledgement:**

Governance Institute of Australia gratefully acknowledges the permission granted by Health Education and Training Institute (HETI) for the use of its policy template and policy content in the development of this publication.