



## ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE POLICY

### Purpose

Lincoln Education Australia (LEA\*\*) strives to be an acclaimed higher education institution. LEA courses shall be taught by highly qualified and experienced academic staff. LEA is committed to employing high quality staff from a range of backgrounds and ensuring that they have the support to develop as teachers and leaders in the Higher Education sector.

This *Academic Qualifications and Experience Policy* outlines the standards and criteria for assessing the professional experience of academic staff involved in teaching and academic supervisory roles which are connected with LEA award courses. Further, it sets out the ways that LEA shall ensure that academic staff undertaking teaching and academic supervisory roles are appropriately qualified in the field/discipline in which they teach or assess.

This Policy is intended to complement and support, and should be read in conjunction with, LEA's overarching staff recruitment, training and induction policies and processes.

\*\*The trading name for the Lincoln Institute of Higher Education (LIHE) is Lincoln Education Australia (LEA).

### Scope

This policy applies to all LEA academic staff (covering employees and contractors) teaching or assessing TEQSA accredited higher education courses within the Australian Qualification Framework. This policy also reflects the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015* ('the Threshold Standards').

### Principles

LEA requires academic staff who are employed or contracted to teach or undertake academic or teaching and learning supervisory roles to be appropriately qualified in the discipline in which they are engaged.

To comply with the Threshold Standards all LEA academic staff shall have:

- a qualification in a relevant discipline at least one AQF qualification level higher than the course of study being taught, OR
- equivalent relevant academic or professional or practice-based experience and expertise, AND
- knowledge of contemporary developments in their specific discipline or field, be actively engaged in continuing professional development, scholarship, research or knowledge of contemporary teaching, learning and assessment relevant to their discipline, role, modes of delivery and the specific needs of student cohorts.



For those assessed under the criteria of equivalent academic, professional or practice-based experience, staff shall have acquired sufficient professional experience working in the relevant field or industry.

At LEA this is determined as:

- equivalent professional experience that demonstrates achievement of specific knowledge and skills relevant to the role; and
- a minimum of five years current and appropriate industry experience.

LEA recognises that some discipline areas require a combination of registration, industry or professional experiences and qualifications to achieve expert-level professional standards. In such cases, the relevant professional and industry experience would be used to assess the equivalence of being one AQF level above that being taught.

All academic staff are to be fully informed of the requirements for delivering relevant LEA higher education courses and have approval for delivering higher education subjects in accordance with this Policy before undertaking any of those activities.

The criteria below are considered the minimum qualifications or professional equivalence for academic staff teaching and assessing LEA courses.

Subject/ Course AQF Qualification Level being taught	Minimum staff AQF Qualification Level	Professional Experience Equivalence Criteria
<b>Level 7</b> <i>Bachelor Degree</i>	<b>Level 8</b> Bachelor Honours Degree, Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma	AQF Level 7 plus current registration (or equivalent) to practice within a relevant profession  <b>With either</b> Minimum 5 years relevant professional full- time experience in a relevant field and/or discipline area, together with a sound understanding of current scholarship in the discipline and demonstrated ability to engage students in intellectual inquiry <b>or</b> Enrolment in a relevant AQF Level 8 program plus relevant professional experience, together totaling 3 years.



<b>Level 8</b> <i>Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma</i>	<b>Level 9</b> Masters by research or coursework	AQF Level 8 plus current registration (or equivalent) to practice within a relevant profession  <b>With either</b> Minimum 10 years relevant professional full- time experience in a relevant field and/or discipline area, together with a sound understanding of current scholarship in the discipline and demonstrated ability to engage students in intellectual inquiry <b>or</b> Enrolment in a relevant AQF Level 9 program plus relevant professional experience, together totaling 5 years.
<b>Level 9</b> <i>Masters Degree (Coursework)</i>	<b>Level 10</b> Doctorate by research or coursework	AQF Level 9 plus current registration (or equivalent) to practice within a relevant profession  <b>With either</b> Minimum 10 years relevant professional full- time experience in a relevant field and/or discipline area, together with a sound understanding of current scholarship in the discipline and demonstrated ability to engage students in intellectual inquiry <b>or</b> Enrolment in a relevant AQF Level 10 program, plus relevant professional experience, together totaling 5 years.

### Recognition of Professional Designations

LEA recognises some existing professional designations when assessing academic staff against the professional experience equivalence criteria outlined in the table above. These include:

- Current registration as a Member, Senior Member or Fellow of the Australian Computer Society (ACS) Certified Financial Analyst (CFA)
- Current registration as a Certified Practicing Accountant (CPA)

LEA may also accept the international equivalents of these professional registrations or designations.

### Exceptions

Any academic staff member who does not meet the requirements of this Policy must submit a case for approval to deliver a specific subject to the Head of Faculty or Dean, which must also be approved by the Academic Board before commencing any teaching activities.



## Scholarship

LEA recognises that the engagement in scholarly activities is a significant element of academic staff experience. LEA is, therefore, committed to fostering a culture of scholarship amongst all of our academic staff (both internal and external), by supporting all academic staff to undertake regular scholarly activities. All academic staff are required to annually declare to LEA the nature of their scholarly activities throughout the previous year and provide further details or evidence to confirm these activities at LEA's request.

All scholarly activities are recorded and maintained on a centralised register.

The following table outlines LEA's scholarship expectations and examples of scholarship activities.

Scholarship expectation	Examples of scholarship activities
Demonstrate current discipline knowledge and provide evidence of ongoing intellectual engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Attendance and presenting at conferences</li><li>Participation in networks, communities of practice or mentoring activities</li><li>Actively engaged in ongoing academic study</li><li>Undertaking CPD including as required as part of professional designation.</li></ul>
Service to the profession	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Engagement in and/or leadership roles in professional organizations</li><li>Leadership in the development of professional standards</li><li>Mentoring</li><li>Ongoing maintenance and upgrade (where appropriate) of professional qualification</li></ul>
Maintain and develop discipline-specific expertise through literature, new research, interaction with peers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Publishing articles related to research within the discipline or profession</li><li>Accessing current research through LEA Australia databases etc.</li><li>Attend and participate in workshops, seminars, conferences</li><li>Active membership of peer working groups</li></ul>
Actively engage with current thinking and practices relevant to discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Contributions in the field of study through participation in advisory boards and professional networks</li><li>Actively engage in industry forums, think tanks and industry regulatory bodies</li></ul>
Ongoing development of teaching practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Participate in external benchmarking project</li><li>Participate in assessment benchmarking activities</li><li>Undertake and complete the LEA Way training Professional development or other relevant professional development activities</li><li>Be actively involved in the development and review of curricula</li><li>Lead faculty validation and moderation</li></ul>



	processes
Supporting students to become critical, creative thinkers and enhancing teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance and participation in assessment workshops</li> <li>• Consistent achievement of a high ranking from student feedback (SELTS) together with constructive feedback.</li> </ul>

## Compliance

All staff members and students at LEA are required to comply with this policy and its procedures and with related policies and respective procedures. Non-compliance may result in disciplinary action.

<b>File Number</b>	LEA-GEN-COR-70005-D
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Academic Dean
<b>Legislative Compliance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015</i></li> <li>• <i>Australian Qualifications Framework (2013)</i></li> <li>• <i>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011</i></li> </ul>
<b>Supporting Documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Workforce Management Plan</i></li> </ul>
<b>Related Documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Staff Recruitment, Review &amp; Promotions Policy</i></li> </ul>
<b>Superseded Documents</b>	
<b>Effective Date</b>	1 January 2022
<b>Next Review</b>	3 years from the effective date

## Definitions

**Academic Staff:** Academic Dean, Course and Subject Coordinators, Lecturers and Tutors.

**Qualified:** Qualified to at least one AQF level higher than the course of study being taught or have professional experience equivalent to at least one AQF level higher than the Policy Category Policy/guideline/procedure/rules

**Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF):** National guidelines that regulate Australian post-compulsory education and training qualifications. The framework identifies learning outcomes for each AQF level and qualification, policy requirements, educational and economic objectives, governing and monitoring arrangements.

**AQF levels:** An indication of the relative complexity and/or depth of achievement and the autonomy required to demonstrate that achievement. AQF level 1 has the lowest complexity and AQF level 10 has the highest complexity.

**Professional Experience:** Experience obtained through the practice of a profession, including teaching experience, scholarship and professional practice and from which the



professional competency, knowledge, skills and learning outcomes achieved can be assessed.

**Research:** The systematic experimental and theoretical work, application and/or development that results in an advancement of knowledge.

**Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA):** Australia’s regulatory and quality agency for higher education. TEQSA’s primary aim is to ensure that students receive high quality education at any Australian higher education provider.

## Review Schedule

This policy shall be reviewed by the Academic Board every three years.

Version History			
Version number:	Approved by:	Approval Date:	Revision Notes:
1.0	Academic Board	17/09/2020	New policy
1.1	Academic Board	22/02/2023	TEQSA and CRICOS requirements incorporated