University of
South Australia

Minimum Qualifications for Academic Staff

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APPLICATION

This document outlines the minimum qualifications required to appoint staff to continuing and fixed term academic positions at classification levels A to E inclusive.

It establishes:

- Consistent recruitment requirements relating to minimum qualifications for academic staff; and
- A transparent process and quality assurance relating to the appointment of academic staff without doctoral qualifications.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS FOR ACADEMIC STAFF

The following table outlines the minimum qualifications required to appoint staff to continuing and fixed term academic positions within the University.

	Research Academic	Teaching & Research Academic	Teaching Academic
Level A	Bachelor qualification AND Postgraduate qualification AND/OR relevant experience*		
Level B	Doctoral qualification	Doctoral qualification	Doctoral qualification; OR Postgraduate degree in relevant discipline; OR Equivalent professional/industry experience
Level C	Doctoral qualification	Doctoral qualification	Doctoral qualification; OR Postgraduate degree in relevant discipline; OR Equivalent professional/industry experience and teaching experience
Level D	Doctoral qualification	Doctoral qualification	Doctoral qualification
Level E	Doctoral qualification	Doctoral qualification	Doctoral qualification

 Specific requirements to be determined by the Executive Dean on a case-by-case basis

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REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

1. Position Descriptions

1.1 Position descriptions for academic roles should identify the preferred qualification requirement as the first essential criterion.

2. Appointment without a doctoral qualification

2.1 It may be appropriate to appoint a candidate who does not hold a doctoral qualification to an academic position in the following limited circumstances:

a) Appointments at Level A.

b) Teaching Academic appointments at Level C or below.

c) Appointments relating to disciplines that have only recently introduced doctoral qualifications. In such cases, a postgraduate qualification combined with equivalent professional accreditation, standing and professional achievement is expected in lieu of a doctoral qualification.

d) If the Executive Dean determines that the field of candidates is expected to be extremely limited due to the nature of the position or discipline, a doctoral qualification may not be required as an essential criterion.

e) Where a candidate is nearing completion of their doctoral qualification, have submitted their thesis for examination, and can provide documentation to prove this.

2.2 Excluding the circumstances as listed in 2.1, a decision to appoint a new academic staff member who does not hold a doctoral qualification requires approval from the Vice Chancellor. Appointment should be assessed against the expected profile and standing the University would gain by appointing a highly renowned or recognised professional in a specialised field. Consideration should also be given to the composition of the University's academic workforce to ensure an appropriate majority of staff hold a doctoral qualification.

2.3 When appointing a candidate to an academic position which will be engaged in teaching students, consideration must be given to the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2011 which requires staff members to hold a qualification at least one AQF qualification level higher than the course of study being taught or be able to demonstrate equivalent and relevant academic, professional or practice-based experience. Staff should also have a sound understanding of current scholarship and/or professional practice in the discipline that they teach, have an understanding of pedagogical and/or adult learning principles relevant to the student cohort being taught, and be able to engage students in intellectual inquiry appropriate to the level of the course of study being taught.

3. Conditions for Teaching Academic Positions

3.1 Teaching Academics (Level B) who do not hold a doctoral qualification must hold a postgraduate degree in the relevant discipline OR have equivalent professional/industry experience.

3.2 Teaching Academics (Level C) who do not hold a doctoral qualification must hold a postgraduate degree in the relevant discipline OR have equivalent professional/industry experience, plus a record of achievement in teaching.

3.3 Equivalent professional/industry experience will be determined by the Executive Dean. This may include a requirement to hold accreditation/registration with the appropriate professional body (e.g. CPA Australia, Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia), a defined number of years of experience in the industry, and/or be of good professional standing. Experience is expected to be current and relevant to the area being taught, consistent with 2.3 above.

3.4 Nothing in this procedure removes the ability for the relevant Executive Dean to require doctoral qualifications for academic appointments in specific disciplines.

4. Approval process to appoint without a doctoral qualification

If seeking to appoint an applicant without a doctoral qualification at Level B or above (excluding appointments to Teaching Academic positions at Levels B or C), approval must be sought in accordance with the following process:

4.1 Advertising without doctoral qualification requirement

4.1.1 If it is deemed that a doctoral qualification for an academic position at Level B or above is not an essential criterion and/or that it may be difficult to recruit a person with doctoral qualifications, a case should be submitted to the Vice Chancellor for approval prior to commencing the recruitment process.

4.1.2 Where the Vice Chancellor gives prior approval to appoint a candidate who does not have a doctoral qualification, the final report of the selection panel should include a statement detailing this information and written verification of Vice Chancellor approval.

4.2 Advertised with doctoral qualification requirement but seeking to appoint without

4.2.1 Where the Vice Chancellor has not given prior approval to appoint a candidate who does not have a doctoral qualification, the Chair of the selection panel should make a submission to the Vice Chancellor. This must include:

a) The candidate's curriculum vitae;
b) The final report of the selection panel stating a case for the appointment; and
c) Sighted and verified evidence of progress of doctoral qualifications, if applicable.

4.2.2 Written verification of Vice Chancellor approval is required before a formal offer can be made to appoint a candidate who does not have a doctoral qualification.

4.2.3 Following appointment, the probation and performance management process should be utilised to manage the timely progress of doctoral studies, if applicable.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND/OR AUTHORITIES

Vice Chancellor

The Vice Chancellor has the authority to approve academic appointments where the candidate does not hold a doctoral qualification for:

- Research Academics, and Teaching and Research Academics – Levels B to E; and
- Teaching Academics – Levels D and E.

Chair of the Selection Panel

The Chair of the selection panel is responsible for ensuring that the academic staff member is recruited in accordance with this procedure.

Local People, Talent and Culture Business Partners

Local PTC Business Partners staff are responsible for ensuring that appropriate authorisations are attained and that local procedures and appointments are in accordance with this procedure.

People, Talent and Culture

People, Talent and Culture is responsible for the development and continuous improvement of this procedure.

FURTHER ASSISTANCE

Staff may seek further advice from:

- Their immediate supervisor
- The designated PTC Business Partner for their area
- People, Talent and Culture.

Released: November 2014
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Amended: January 2020

This procedure replaces the 'Procedure for the appointment of Academic Staff Level B and above without Doctoral qualifications'.