Securing qualified staff for Higher Education

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Today’s discussion

- The Standard about staff qualifications
- The question of equivalent professional experience
- The court case
3. Staff with responsibilities for academic oversight and those with teaching and supervisory roles in courses or units of study are equipped for their roles, including having:

a. knowledge of contemporary developments in the discipline or field, which is informed by continuing scholarship or research or advances in practice

b. 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

c. a qualification in a relevant discipline at least one level higher than is awarded for the course of study, or equivalent relevant academic or professional or practice-based experience and expertise, except for staff supervising doctoral degrees having a doctoral degree or equivalent research experience.
What is equivalent professional experience?

Is it recent clinical experience? How much? How recent?
Is it previous experience teaching at that level?
Current industry experience?
Recognition by a professional body?

A decision for each institution to justify
CQUniversity Professional Experience Equivalence Framework

- Provides guidelines for determining professional experience and its equivalence to Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualification levels.

- Applies to all CQUniversity staff who teach in courses within approved higher education programs and who are employed by CQUniversity (or a Third Party Provider).

- Does not apply to occasional guest lecturers, staff involved in professional placement subjects, or staff involved in the supervision of candidates enrolled in higher degrees by research courses.
CQUniversity Professional Experience Equivalence Framework

• Normally a qualification of at least one AQF qualification level higher than the course of study being taught or have equivalent professional experience.

• CQUniversity acknowledges that professional experience can also meet the requirements set out in the TEQSA Act (see 4.2 Provider Course Accreditation Standards, Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2011).

• A Bachelor degree is normally the minimum requirement to teach higher education courses at CQUniversity.

• Professional experience must be current and relevant to the area being taught and must be demonstrated by the criteria outlined in this framework.

• It is expected that staff with a continuing appointment made under professional experience equivalence contained within this framework undertake a relevant higher level AQF qualification within three years of being appointed to CQUniversity.
How CQUniversity interprets equivalence: Masters Qualification

Based on the AQF definition of a Masters qualification as specialised knowledge and skills ‘autonomy, expert judgement, of knowledge adaptability and responsibility as a practitioner or learner’

• High quality and sustained professional practice in employment, teaching or performance in the relevant discipline.

• Annual professional/clinical development that meets with the endorsement of the relevant industry body.

• Regular and recent contributions to the discipline via quality publications and/or presentations.

How CQUniversity interprets equivalence: Doctoral Qualification

Based on the AQF definition of a **doctoral** qualification as making a new contribution to knowledge ‘*individuals who apply a substantial body of knowledge to research, investigate and develop new knowledge, in one or more fields of investigation, scholarship or professional practice*’

- Sustained and significant contributions to the field, for example one peer reviewed journal article per year in the preceding five years.
- Leadership in local, state or national advisory bodies and/or community organisations, peak discipline or industry bodies.
- 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.
- Working to effect a demonstrable change in the creation of new practice in the field.
- Letters of support from recognised peers in the relevant field.
## CQUniversity Professional Experience Equivalence Framework

### Criteria example: AQF Level 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Higher education level being taught</th>
<th>Required AQF Level</th>
<th>Professional experience equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AQF Level 7 Bachelor Degree</td>
<td>AQF Level 8</td>
<td>AQF Level 7 plus current registration (or equivalent) to practice within a relevant profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Honours</td>
<td>PLUS EITHER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graduate Certificate</td>
<td>- 3 years relevant professional experience within the last 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graduate Diploma</td>
<td>OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Enrolment in a relevant AQF Level 8 program plus relevant professional experience, together totalling 3 years.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CQUUniversity Professional Experience Equivalence Framework

Criteria example: AQF Level 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Higher education level being taught</th>
<th>Required AQF Level</th>
<th>Professional experience equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AQF level 9 Masters Degree</td>
<td>AQF Level 10</td>
<td>AQF Level 9 plus current registration to practice within a relevant profession PLUS EITHER - 5 years relevant professional experience within the last 10 years OR - Enrolment in a relevant AQF Level 10 program plus relevant professional experience, together totalling 5 years.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CQU University Professional Experience Equivalence Framework

Exceptions:

- The Law discipline.
- Industry experts who teach on the MBA program.

Tutors not exempt

- Tutors require qualifications of at least the same level as the course being taught. If the tutor is responsible for unit coordination or delivers more than 40% of the teaching of a unit for any given student, professional experience equivalence is also required.
Implementation

- Professional Experience Equivalence Framework.

- The Dean is responsible for employment of appropriately qualified staff and must be satisfied that experience meets the requirements outlined above.

- The Dean must seek Provost approval for any exceptions.

- The Dean must also ensure the appropriate supervision of staff who teach specialised components of a course of study who may not fully meet the standard for knowledge, skills and qualification or experience required.

- A register will be maintained by each Dean to provide documentary evidence of how the equivalent professional experience requirement is assessed and met when a decision is made to employ a staff member who does not meet the TEQSA requirements around qualifications.

- The Provost is responsible for ensuring the framework complies with relevant legislation and University requirements.
The court case – a genuine redundancy because of changed operational requirements

- It is significant that the ruling was in favour of CQUniversity that staff without a Masters could not teach in a Masters despite having done so for many years.

- They were genuinely redundant because of a change in operational requirements despite the fact that the teaching was being done by other people (with higher qualifications).

- This has significance throughout the sector.
Precedent making
[2015] FWC 4595
FAIR WORK COMMISSION

DECISION

Fair Work Act 2009
s.394-Unfair Dismissal

Davood Alizadeh
V
Central Queensland University T/A CQUUniversity
(U2015/3536)

COMMISSIONER SIMPSON
BRISBANE, 27 JULY 2015

Application for relief from unfair dismissal – Termination a genuine redundancy – Application dismissed
Precedent making – the headlines

THE AUSTRALIAN

HIGHER EDUCATION

‘Academic counts cost of career without PhD’

30 July 2015

CAMPUS MORNING MAIL
Hard facts and insider analysis
From Stephen Matchett
Big trouble for highly experienced, under-qualified teaching staff

The Fair Work Commission has delivered a very big judgement for academics who do not have qualifications above the level they are teaching, which TEQSA requires. Back in June CMM suspected that neither management nor union would push this matter, less the FWC create an unfavourable precedent for one of them. But this is exactly what has happened in a case at Central Queensland University, which made Brisbane based business lecturer Davood Alizadeh redundant when his position was replaced with one requiring a PhD. The National Tertiary Education Union argued that TEQSA’s equivalent professional experience alternative applied but the university replied the agency intends this only as guidance.

Commissioner Simpson found for the university, holding that Mr Alizadeh’s position was abolished and that he lacked the PhD necessary to fill the only job available as CQU adapted to changing patterns of demand. This is very bad news for people, regardless of experience and ability, who are teaching programmes at a level higher than their own top qualification. But it is an excellent outcome for managements keen to move on people without postgraduate degrees. (Campus Morning Mail Blog 27 July 2015)
Academic counts cost of career without PhD

JULIE HARE

An accounting academic at a Queensland university has been made redundant after 10 years in his job because he doesn’t have a PhD.

The Fair Work Commission decided in favour of Central Queensland University this week over its decision to make Davood Alizadah redundant, saying it did not amount to unfair dismissal because he didn’t have the necessary qualifications to teach postgraduate students.

In 2005 Mr Alizadah began working for a CQU subsidiary called CMS, which was widely criticised for churning mainly Indian students through business and accountancy degrees during the 2000s.

Most graduates used their degrees to apply for permanent residency under generous Howard government policies that linked education and migration.

Mr Alizadah was later absorbed into the university’s School of Business and Law after CMS was wound up in 2013.

However, the dean of the university’s business school, Lee di Milia, told the commission that a strategy change meant it wanted to increase the number of staff who held PhDs from about 50 per cent to 75 per cent.

Since the dismantling of CMS, there were fewer undergraduate students and more postgraduate students, who Mr Alizadah was not properly qualified to teach.

Professor di Milia told the commission that having only 50 per cent of staff doctoral qualified was “a very low percentage” in the Australian context.

However, Mr Alizadah claimed that much of his teaching, including that of postgraduates, had been assigned to casuals without PhDs.

Bill Danby, an industrial officer with the National Tertiary Education Union, said Mr Alizadah had taught postgraduate students successfully for many years.
Securing qualified staff for Higher Education

Since July 2015

- Revisions
- Implementation in a number of discipline areas

THANK YOU

TIME FOR DISCUSSION & QUESTIONS
TEQSA standard

1. The staffing complement for each course of study is sufficient to meet the educational, academic support and administrative needs of student cohorts undertaking the course.

2. The academic staffing profile for each course of study provides the level and extent of academic oversight and teaching capacity needed to lead students in intellectual inquiry suited to the nature and level of expected learning outcomes.
4. Teachers who teach specialised components of a course of study, such as experienced practitioners and teachers undergoing training, who may not fully meet the standard for knowledge, skills and qualification or experience required for teaching or supervision (3.2.3) have their teaching guided and overseen by staff who meet the standard.

5. Teaching staff are accessible to students seeking individual assistance with their studies, at a level consistent with the learning needs of the student cohort.
Guidance from TEQSA

• The Provider Course Accreditation Standards (specifically 4.2) require registered higher education providers to ensure that academic staff appointed to teach students are appropriately qualified in the relevant discipline for their level of teaching.

• The Threshold Standards specify that academic teaching staff must be qualified to at least one AQF qualification level higher than the course of study being taught, or have equivalent professional experience.

• Higher education students are entitled to expect that they are being taught by a person who is qualified in the particular field of study at a level more advanced than the level of the course being taught.

Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2011
- F2013C00169