

# Academic Qualifications and Experience Policy

## Purpose

This policy:

- outlines the standards and criteria for assessing the academic and professional experience of academic staff involved in teaching and academic supervisory roles and/or the implementation and evaluation of professional development activities which are connected with Kaplan award and non-award courses; and
- ensures 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 Kaplan's overarching staff recruitment, training and induction policies and processes.

## Scope

This policy is applicable to Kaplan Higher Education Pty Ltd trading as Murdoch College, ("Kaplan"). This policy applies to all academic staff (covering employees and contractors) teaching or assessing the award courses of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and non-award courses for Kaplan. This policy reflects the Higher Education Standards Framework 2021 (Threshold Standards) ('the Threshold Standards') and the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency's (TEQSA) Compliance Guide: Scholarship (version 3.0) and the ELICOS Standards 2018 (Standard 6).

## Policy Principles and Standards

- Kaplan requires that academic staff who are employed or contracted to teach or undertake teaching and learning supervisory roles and/or the implementation and evaluation of professional development activities are appropriately qualified in the field/discipline in which they are engaged.
- (i) To comply with the Threshold Standards, all relevant Kaplan academic staff must have either:
  - a qualification in a relevant field or discipline at least one AQF level higher than the subject being taught, or
  - a qualification in a relevant field or discipline at the same AQF level as the subject being taught ('equivalent academic experience'), together with equivalent professional or practice-based experience and expertise.
- (ii) To comply with the ELICOS Standards 2018 (Standard 6),
  - all relevant Kaplan teaching and academic staff must have the following:
    - a degree or diploma of at least three years full-time or equivalent (teaching or other),
    - a suitable Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) qualification or qualification that contains TESOL as a method,
    - appropriate TESOL teaching experience, or their teaching be performed under the supervision of a fully qualified senior member.
  - all relevant Kaplan senior academic leadership staff must have:
    - a degree,
    - a suitable postgraduate TESOL qualification(s), and
    - appropriate educational management and TESOL teaching experience or equivalent.
- For academic staff assessed based on the Threshold Standards criteria of equivalent academic, professional or practice-based experience, staff must have acquired sufficient professional

experience working in the relevant field or industry. At Kaplan 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, relevant and appropriate industry experience.
- Kaplan recognises that some discipline areas require a combination of registration, industry or professional experience and qualifications to achieve expert-level professional standards based on the Threshold Standards. In such cases, the relevant professional and industry experience would be used to assess the equivalence of being one AQF level above the subject being taught.
- All academic staff are to be fully informed of the requirements for delivering relevant Kaplan award and non-award subjects and courses and have approval for delivering them in accordance with this policy before undertaking any of those activities.

The criteria provided in the table below are considered the minimum qualifications and/or professional equivalence criteria for academic staff teaching and assessing Kaplan award subjects. Academic staff must remain current with contemporary developments in their specific discipline and be actively engaged in continuing professional development (CPD) activities.

Academic staff must also remain current with the latest advancements in pedagogical best practice. This can encompass contemporary teaching methods, learning science and assessment strategies relevant to their discipline, role, modes of delivery and the specific needs of the student cohort.

AQF Qualification and/or Subject Level	Minimum staff AQF Qualification Level	Academic and Professional Experience Equivalence Criteria
ELICOS	<p><b>Teachers</b></p> <p>Bachelor Degree or Diploma, and</p> <p>A suitable TESOL qualification</p> <p><b>Senior academic leader</b></p> <p>Bachelor Degree, and</p> <p>Postgraduate TESOL</p>	Nil
Postgraduate Qualifying Program	<p><b>Level 8</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor (Honours)</li> <li>• Graduate Certificate</li> <li>• Graduate Diploma</li> </ul>	<p><b>AQF Level 7</b></p> <p><b>With either</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrolment in a relevant AQF Level 8 program, plus relevant professional experience, together totalling 3 years</li> </ul>

AQF Qualification and/or Subject Level	Minimum staff AQF Qualification Level	Academic and Professional Experience Equivalence Criteria
AQF Level 5: Diploma*	AQF Level 6: Associate Degree	<b>AQF Level 5: Diploma</b>  <b>With either:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5 years minimum 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, or</li> <li>Enrolment in a relevant AQF Level 6 qualification plus relevant professional experience, together totaling 3 years.</li> </ul>
AQF Level 6: Advanced Diploma / Associate Degree*	AQF Level 7: Bachelor Degree	<b>AQF Level 6: Advanced Diploma / Associate Degree</b>  <b>With either:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5 years minimum 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, or</li> <li>Enrolment in a relevant AQF Level 7 qualification plus relevant professional experience, together totaling 3 years.</li> </ul>
AQF Level 7: Bachelor Degree	<b>AQF Level 8:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bachelor (Honours)</li> <li>Graduate Certificate</li> <li>Graduate Diploma</li> </ul>	<b>AQF Level 7: Bachelor Degree</b>  <b>With either:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5 years minimum 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, or</li> <li>Enrolment in a relevant AQF Level 8 qualification plus relevant professional experience, together totaling 3 years.</li> </ul>

AQF Qualification and/or Subject Level	Minimum staff AQF Qualification Level	Academic and Professional Experience Equivalence Criteria
<b>AQF Level 8:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor (Honours)</li> <li>• Graduate Certificate</li> <li>• Graduate Diploma</li> </ul>	<b>AQF Level 9:</b> <b>Masters by Research or Coursework</b>	<b>AQF Level 8:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor (Honours), or</li> <li>• Graduate Certificate, or</li> <li>• Graduate Diploma</li> </ul> <b>With either:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 years minimum 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, or</li> <li>• Enrolment in a relevant AQF Level 9 qualification plus relevant professional experience, together totaling 3 years.</li> </ul>
<b>AQF Level 9:</b> <b>Master's Degree (Coursework)</b>	<b>AQF Level 10:</b> <b>Doctorate</b>	<b>AQF Level 9: Masters by Research or Coursework</b> <b>With either:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 years minimum 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, or</li> <li>• Enrolment in a relevant AQF Level 10 qualification plus relevant professional experience, together totalling 3 years.</li> </ul>

\* Only when taught as a stand-alone qualification

## Recognition of Professional Designations

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

- a) Current registration as a Certified Financial Analyst (CFA).
- b) Current registration as a Certified Financial Planner (CFP).
- c) Current registration as a Fellow Chartered Financial Planner (FChFP).
- d) Current registration as a Certified Practicing Accountant (CPA).
- e) Current registration as a Chartered Accountant (CA).
- f) Current registration as a Fellow of the Australian Human Resources Institute (FAHRI).
- g) Current registration as a Fellow of the Australian Marketing Institute (FAMI CPM).
- h) Current registration as a Fellow of the Council for Australasian Tourism and Hospitality Education (CAUTHE).
- i) Current registration as a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Project Management (FAIPM).

- j) Current registration as a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management (FAIM).
- k) Current registration as a Chartered Manager with the Institute of Managers and Leaders (CMgr MIML).
- l) Current registration as a Certified Technologist (CT) or Certified Professional (CP) with the Australian Computer Society.
- m) Current registration as a medical practitioner, or equivalent, in Australia.

Kaplan 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 award subject to the Academic Director or General Manager – Teaching and Learning, who will seek endorsement from the Academic Dean. Following endorsement by the Academic Dean, final approval must be granted by the Academic Board before the academic staff member can commence any teaching activities. These teaching activities can only be performed under the supervision of a fully qualified senior member of the academic management team and under no circumstances can supervised members of staff serve as subject coordinators.

## Scholarship: Academic Staff Teaching and Assessing Award Subjects

Kaplan recognises that engagement in scholarly activities is a significant and essential element of academic staff development. Kaplan is therefore committed to fostering a culture of scholarship by supporting all academic staff to regularly undertake those activities. All academic staff are required to annually declare to Kaplan the nature of their scholarly activities throughout the previous year, and to provide further details or evidence to confirm these activities at Kaplan's request. All scholarly activities are to be recorded and maintained on a centralised register.

Kaplan's culture of scholarship is guided by the following models, systems and practices:

- The typology of scholarship, as conceptualised by Professor Ernest L. Boyer<sup>1</sup>, is adopted at Kaplan as a means of classifying the various types of scholarly activities that academic staff can undertake:
  - *The scholarship of discovery:* This is “what is meant when academics speak of research”. At Kaplan, for example, academic staff in the process of completing an AQF Level 10 qualification are assigned a remunerated load to support their research.
  - *The scholarship of integration:* This is the practice of assigning “meaning to isolated facts, putting them in perspective ... making connections across the disciplines, placing the specialties in larger context, illuminating data in a revealing way, often educating non-specialists ... work that seeks to interpret, draw together, and bring new insight to bear”. At Kaplan, for example, numerous interdisciplinary staff-led professional development sessions are hosted every month that enable academic staff to teach each other about the latest advancements in their field.
  - *The scholarship of application:* This is the way in which “knowledge [can] be responsibly applied to consequential problems ... how it can be helpful to individuals as well as institutions ... In activities such as these, theory and practice vitally interact”. At Kaplan, for example, working groups of academic staff are formed with the objective of developing and implementing solutions and innovations such as the EdTech Group which is tasked with piloting and evaluating educational technologies. They are then responsible for coaching their fellow faculty members on how to effectively incorporate these technologies in their teaching.

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<sup>1</sup> Boyer, EL 1990, *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*, Princeton University Press, Lawrenceville, pp. 17-25.

- *The scholarship of teaching:* This emerges when acquired knowledge is conveyed in such a manner it “both educates and entices future scholars”. At Kaplan, for example, academic staff are encouraged and supported to write research papers, conceptual articles and literature reviews in various publications such as the Kaplan-funded peer-reviewed Journal of Applied Learning and Teaching (JALT), whose editorial board comprises senior academics from approximately two dozen higher education institutions across the world.
- Academic staff must complete a minimum of two scholarly activities annually: one that pertains to the disciplinary field in which they teach and another on the practice of teaching and learning.
- The completion of the scholarly activities must be accompanied by further detail and evidence in relation to two specific factors:
  - The **demonstrable outcomes** that ensued as a result of that scholarly activity, such as an increase in subject knowledge, the strengthening of teaching skills, improvements to curriculum and the launch of an innovation.
  - The **dissemination of that knowledge** to wider scholarly or professional communities so that others can learn from the academic staff member's experience.
- This approach ensures the scholarly activity can indeed be regarded as scholarship since it will not be sufficient for an academic staff member, for example, to simply attend a conference, participate in a governance committee or serve on the board of a professional association unless the academic staff member can articulate relevance via the demonstrable outcomes that ensued and the way in which these learnings were shared with a wider audience.
- The scholarly activities, demonstrable outcomes and dissemination of learnings will be recorded on a centralised register which will be analysed and submitted via a summary report to the December meeting of the Academic Board every year. The report will illustrate the proportion of academic staff who have met both forms of scholarship in the preceding 12 months as well as the names of those who remain non-compliant and as such will be placed on a documented performance improvement plan. Failure to meet these standards of scholarship may culminate in the cessation of the academic staff member's employment relationship with Kaplan.
- To further support academic staff, Kaplan will make available a comprehensive schedule of complimentary scholarship events that can be accessed synchronously or asynchronously. Academic staff must have engaged with at least one of these Kaplan-funded opportunities for CPD every year. This usage will be reported annually to the Academic Board.

While not exhaustive, the following table outlines Kaplan's scholarship expectations and examples of scholarship activities:

Scholarship expectation	Examples of scholarship activities
Demonstration of current disciplinary knowledge and evidence of ongoing intellectual engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Submission of extracts to, and delivery of presentations at, conferences.</li> <li>● Participation in networks, communities of practice and formal mentoring activities.</li> <li>● Active engagement in ongoing academic study, particularly at a higher AQF level.</li> <li>● Completion of CPD which forms part of professional designation requirements.</li> </ul>

Scholarship expectation	Examples of scholarship activities
Service to the profession.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement as a member and/or leader of relevant professional organisations.</li> <li>Leadership in the development of professional standards.</li> <li>Formal documented mentoring of new entrants to the relevant profession.</li> <li>Ongoing maintenance and upgrading (where appropriate) of professional qualifications.</li> </ul>
Maintenance and development of discipline-specific expertise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publication of articles related to research within the discipline or profession.</li> <li>Engagement with current research through Kaplan databases, libraries and information resources.</li> <li>Active participation in and reporting on relevant workshops, seminars and conferences.</li> <li>Active membership of peer working groups.</li> </ul>
Engagement with current thinking and practices relevant to the discipline.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contributions in the field of study through participation in relevant advisory boards and professional networks.</li> <li>Active engagement in relevant industry forums, think tanks and regulatory bodies.</li> </ul>
Ongoing development of teaching and learning practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in external benchmarking projects.</li> <li>Completion of relevant training and professional development.</li> <li>Active involvement in the development and review of curriculum.</li> <li>Leadership of assessment validation and moderation processes.</li> <li>Facilitation of grade calibration exercises.</li> </ul>
Supporting students in their acquisition of learning outcomes and graduate attributes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active participation in assessment workshops and pedagogical forums.</li> <li>Development and implementation of action items arising from student feedback.</li> </ul>

## Professional Development: Academic, Teaching, and Support Staff for ELICOS Courses

Staff members receive appropriate guidance and support through both Kaplan and staff-initiated professional development sessions within the Professional Development Framework. Those sessions allow staff to strengthen managerial and administrative skills, develop new skills and knowledge, raise work standards, achieve expected work outcomes, and keep abreast of changes in government regulations. The sessions also provide teaching and academic staff with the opportunity to maintain currency within the education industry, enhance their professional skills, and keep up to date with the latest information and developments in the TESOL field. All teaching staff are encouraged to complete a minimum of two professional



development sessions annually. All professional development sessions are to be recorded and maintained on a centralised register.

- Kaplan-initiated professional development sessions – annually planned and delivered by adequately qualified staff and/or contractors, both internally and externally. They are provided for varying combinations of teaching, academic, and support staff, which include presentations, peer observations, review of teaching content/materials, workshops, participation in assessment validation/moderation sessions, small group activities, online training sessions or courses etc.
- Staff-initiated professional development sessions – proactively identified and engaged by staff for their own professional development needs (e.g., up to date developmental knowledge in TESOL theory and practice), which includes attendance at conferences, workshops, relevant professional memberships, academic qualifications, certified training, webinars, participation in assessment validation/moderation sessions, self-training etc.

## Relevant Legislation

As a registered education provider, Kaplan operates under strict laws and regulations. Policies and procedures are in place to ensure compliance with such laws. Below lists the most relevant legislation that apply to this policy:

- Australian Qualifications Framework
- Education Services for Overseas Students Act (ESOS Act)
- Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2019
- ELICOS Standards 2018 (Standard 6)
- Higher Education Standards Framework 2021 (Threshold Standards)
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
- TEQSA's Compliance Guide: Scholarship (version 3.0)

## Related Document

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Professional Development Framework



## Version Control and Accountable Officers

It is the joint responsibility of the Responsible Officer and Implementation Officer(s) to ensure compliance with this policy.

Policy Category		Academic		
Responsible Officer		Vice President, Academic		
Implementation Officer(s)		Academic Manager		
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Approved by				
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1.0	Quality, Regulations and Standards Team	New Policy	17.02.2023	17.02.2023