

Staff Recruitment and Performance Policy

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy provides a framework for recruiting and selecting qualified staff through merit-based selection, which is conducted in a fair, equitable and transparent manner. It also outlines performance review processes for the Conservatory.

This policy applies to staff that are involved in recruitment and appointment processes and decisions, and performance reviews.

2. Objectives

The Conservatory is committed to:

- providing equal employment opportunities to all applicants
- being fair, equitable and timely when hiring staff
- attracting the best possible candidates
- applying merit-based selection
- conducting fair performance review processes

3. Implementation

Executive Management is responsible for oversight and implementation of this policy ensuring that staff are appropriately qualified to perform their roles. The Academic Board may provide input on academic staff qualifications.

Vacancies may be conducted via an open-merit or closed-merit process. The procedures for appointment will remain the same, other than the advertising scope.

3.1. Academic Staff Qualifications

The Conservatory's higher education courses contain a strong emphasis on professional performance and practical skills, underpinned by theoretical knowledge, and therefore the Conservatory aims to appoint academic staff who hold significant industry professional experience additional to the requisite academic regulatory qualification requirements.

The Conservatory will recruit and retain higher education teaching staff who hold a qualification at least one AQF level above the course being taught, or equivalent. A minimal number of staff may hold a combination of equivalent qualifications and experience to obtain staff to teach specialist units.

3.2. Threshold Standards

The Threshold Standards prescribe minimum standards for academic staff qualifications.

4.2 *The higher education provider ensures that staff who teach students in the course of study:*

- *are appropriately qualified in the relevant discipline for their level of teaching (qualified to at least one AQF qualification level higher than the course of study being taught or with equivalent professional experience);*

TEQSA has produced a *Guidance Note Equivalence of professional experience to academic qualifications* which outlines how HEPs could demonstrate equivalent professional experience. Some key features listed are:

- *Equivalent professional experience goes well beyond a measure of the time spent by a person working in a particular profession. Assessment must also take into account how the professional experience demonstrates achievement that is equivalent to the specific knowledge and skills established in the learning outcomes of the required AQF level being considered. A provider's policy and procedures should recognise that these learning outcomes are specific for each field of education as well as AQF level and that necessarily, the criteria for equivalence that would apply will need to be tailored to the field of education under consideration.*
- *The evidence that may be considered when assessing the professional experience of an individual includes for example evidence of: leadership in the development of professional standards; performing in a role that requires high order judgement and the provision of expert advice, or roles have been at a senior level; managing significant projects in the field; testimonials, awards or other recognition that acknowledges leadership or expertise in the field of education; contributions in the field of study through participation in advisory boards and professional networks; peer reviewed publications in the field of study; other publications such as books and reports; leadership or management of research acknowledged by peers.*
- *TEQSA recognises that in fields of study that are professionally focused, emergent academic disciplines or highly professional specialist subjects within a discipline, a policy may allow for some flexibility in its application, while maintaining the robustness of the policy intent. However, TEQSA would expect that where staff may not yet strongly meet all the criteria outlined in the policy, there would be an explicit and time limited professional development plan, or other strategies put in place such as mentoring or team teaching, to enable the individual to make the transition to academic teaching successfully.*

4. Implementation Procedures

4.1. Recruitment

4.1.1. Advertising Vacant Positions

Vacant positions will only be advertised if an open-merit recruitment process has been chosen. In many instances, to obtain the calibre of professional performance experience required, a closed-merit process will be used, in which case advertising will not be undertaken.

For an open-merit process, vacant positions will usually be advertised through relevant channels that are deemed to attract the best candidates. Advertisements will include all the necessary details so that candidates are suitably informed about the position as follows:

- Position title
- Required and desirable qualifications and experience
- Responsibilities

- Term of appointment, weekly hours, employment status
- Selection criteria, if relevant
- Closing date for applications and method of applying
- Contact details

Additional information may be requested from applicants depending on the position advertised, such as consent to a Criminal History Check.

4.1.2. Shortlisting and Interviews

Once applications have been received the selection process will commence against the selection criteria. A Selection Panel will be formed to fully assess each applicant.. For academic staff, the Director of Higher Education, or a delegate, will form part of the Selection Panel. A member of the Academic Board may also sit on the Selection Panel. These short listed applicants will be invited to an interview. Interview questions shall be the same for each candidate. The Selection Panel will ensure that assessment is fair and transparent and that appropriate records are kept.

The Human Resource Manager ensures that the proposed appointee's qualifications and experience has been verified, by requiring original or certified copies of qualifications, and contacting referees.

4.1.3. Appointments

Appointment decisions or recommendations will be made by the Director of Higher Education for academic staff, and by the CEO for non-academic staff.

Applicants who have not been short-listed will be notified that they have been unsuccessful within two weeks of the application closing date.

The Academic Board may scrutinise the selection process and may wish to ratify appointments for academic staff.

Executive Management may wish to be involved in, and ratify the appointment of non-academic staff. The Human Resource Manager will notify the successful applicant of the selection decision, and if the applicant accepts the position, appointment and induction procedures will follow. Unsuccessful short-listed applicants should be notified as soon as the relevant decision-maker has ratified the appointment decision.

The Human Resource Manager will forward a formal letter of offer and other relevant documents to the successful applicant. All relevant documents pertaining to the new appointee will be recorded and filed confidentially.

4.1.4. Staff Induction

All newly appointed staff are required to undergo an induction process. The Human Resource Manager is responsible for conducting the process for all staff with regard to general information such as work place health and safety; Conservatory wide policies and procedures; and general staff development.

The Director of Higher Education will oversee the induction of academic staff focusing on academic policies and procedures, and the appointment of an academic mentor. This should include outlining staff development opportunities for undertaking further study; attendance at conferences; and expected scholarly activities. Completion of induction activities should be recorded on the staff member's personnel file.

4.2. Performance Review

Staff performance reviews are an important aspect of achieving organisational objectives and maintaining personal job satisfaction. Annual performance reviews will provide an opportunity for two-way conversations to ensure that expectations are clear. It will also assist with planning staff development activities to improve staff skills and performance.

It should be noted that a performance review is the culmination of ongoing regular discussions between supervisors and staff throughout the year so that feedback is ongoing. There should be no surprises at a performance review meeting, rather a formalisation of outcomes and achievements, and documented planning for the year ahead.

4.2.1. Probationary Period

A probationary period of 6 months for non-academic staff and 12 months for academic staff will apply for all new staff. New staff will be assisted to meet the job description requirements and be assessed to determine if they are performing adequately during the probationary period. Where performance issues are identified relating to teaching and assessment, observers may sit in on lecturers, or additional moderation of assessment marking may be applied. Other supports will be provided dependent upon the identified issues.

The staff member's supervisor will keep the staff member informed of their progress at regular intervals and complete a report at the end of the probationary period. For academic staff, student surveys and feedback will form part of their assessment on performance. Where performance issues are identified, assistance may be provided to help support the staff member.

4.2.2. Performance Appraisal

Supervisors will ensure that information on the performance appraisal process is distributed to staff well in advance of their appraisal meeting, to ensure that the process is well understood and adequate preparation time is given. All staff are encouraged to participate in an open and honest manner and demonstrate a willingness to receive feedback to improve their performance.

Academic staff are expected to maintain a portfolio to: summarise teaching strategies throughout the year; reflect and comment on student evaluations of teaching and improvements in teaching that have resulted from the feedback; and record other scholarly activities and professional development activities undertaken.

All staff are responsible for identifying staff development needs and discussing these during the performance appraisal meeting. Professional development opportunities shall be discussed and agreed, and recorded with the planning goals for the following year.

4.3. Dismissal

The Conservatory will ensure that it is compliant with all relevant legislation regarding dismissal of employees.

If unsatisfactory performance is ongoing, even after supports have been provided, the Director of Higher Education (for academic staff) or the CEO (for non-academic staff) will send a written warning to the staff member, which may result in termination if not rectified. Staff may be dismissed after the implementation of supports and three written warnings have failed to resolve the matter. An exit interview will be conducted and records kept.

Staff may also be terminated without notice for cases of gross misconduct, such as but not limited to:

- Possession, or under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Theft
- Abuse of personnel or the Conservatory's property
- Threatening personnel
- Inappropriate behaviour with students or staff

5. Definitions

Appointment: the process of employing staff to a vacant position.

Applicant: a person who applies for a position at the Conservatory. An applicant becomes an employee upon appointment.

Closed Merit: a process by which a vacant position is only advertised within the Conservatory to current employees or other recommended persons.

Open Merit: a process by which a vacant position is advertised openly to the wider community.

Selection: process of assessing applicants for vacant positions and deciding which applicants will be made an offer of appointment.

Selection Criteria: a set of criteria developed to assess an applicant's aptitude at performing required duties and responsibilities of a position and used to assist the selection process.

6. Related Documents

The following policies and procedures are related to this policy:

- Staff Development Policy
- Staff Grievance Policy
- Records Management Policy

7. Review

Three years from commencement.

8. Accountabilities

The Governance Board is responsible for review and approval of this policy, with input from the Academic Board.

The policy is to be implemented via induction and training of staff and distribution to students and the Conservatory's higher education community via the website and other publications.

9. Revision History

Approval Authority	Contact Person	Revision Due Date	Revision Date	Approved Date	Version No.	Revision Description
Board of Directors	Chair	01/07/19		15/4/16	1	New document
Board of Directors	Chair	03/11/23	03/11/20	03/11/20	2	Approved



Appendix 1

Requisite Qualifications, Professional Experience and Equivalence Criteria for Higher Education Academic Staff

The following criteria aim to set out the academic qualifications, higher education teaching experience and professional industry experience that the Conservatory will strive to achieve when appointing academic staff.

Table 1 outlines the requisite qualifications and preferred experience for academic staff. Guest lecturers are exempt from the requisite qualifications to permit highly experienced industry professionals to deliver occasional lectures.

Table 2 and 3 outline the attributes required for academic staff without the requisite qualifications to demonstrate equivalent experience. Academic staff must hold the minimum level qualifications and experience specified, and demonstrate how their experience maps to the AQF attributes.

These tables provide details for a general Performing Arts degree. For other discipline areas or sub-discipline areas, relevant qualifications should be substituted, such as acting, film production, or song and dance.

Table 1 - Requisite Qualifications for Bachelor and Advanced Diploma Courses

Position Title	Requisite Qualifications	Preferred Experience
Director of Higher Education	PhD in Performing Arts or any other level 10 award combined with a Bachelor of Performing Arts or similar.	10 years higher education teaching experience. Experience in managing staff and providing academic direction. 5 years professional Performing Arts experience.
Lecturer/Tutor - Bachelor course	Bachelor (Hons) or Graduate Certificate in Performing Arts or higher in a relevant field (or any AQF level 8 award or higher combined with a Bachelor in a relevant field).	5 years professional Performing Arts experience. 3 years higher education teaching experience.
Lecturer/Tutor – Advanced Diploma course	Advanced Diploma of Performing Arts or higher in a relevant field.	5 years professional Performing Arts experience. 3 years higher education teaching experience.

Table 2 - Equivalent Qualifications and Experience for Bachelor Course

Bachelor Course/ Position	Minimum Required Qualifications and Experience	Preferred Experience	AQF Level 8 Attributes
Lecturer/Tutor	Bachelor of Performing Arts or higher in a relevant field; and 3 years professional Performing Arts experience.	5 years professional Performing Arts experience. 3 years higher education teaching experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advanced theoretical and technical knowledge in one or more disciplines or areas of practice • advanced cognitive, technical and communication skills to select and apply methods and technologies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ analyse critically, evaluate and transform information to complete a range of activities ○ analyse, generate and transmit solutions to complex problems ○ transmit knowledge, skills and ideas to others • apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy, well-developed judgement, adaptability and responsibility as a practitioner or learner
	OR Equivalent: 5 years professional Performing Arts experience and teaching experience.	10 years professional Performing Arts experience and teaching experience.	

Table 3 - Equivalent Qualifications and Experience for Advanced Diploma Course

Advanced Diploma Course/ Position	Minimum Required Qualifications and Experience	Preferred Experience	AQF Level 7 Attributes
Lecturer/Tutor	Advanced Diploma of Performing Arts or higher in a relevant field; and 3 years professional Performing Arts experience.	5 years professional Performing Arts experience. 3 years higher education teaching experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • broad and coherent body of knowledge, with depth in the underlying principles and concepts in one or more disciplines as a basis for independent lifelong learning • cognitive skills to review critically, analyse, consolidate and synthesise knowledge • cognitive and technical skills to demonstrate a broad understanding of knowledge with depth in some areas • cognitive and creative skills to exercise critical thinking and judgement in identifying and solving problems with intellectual independence • communication skills to present a clear, coherent and independent exposition of knowledge and ideas <p>Demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • with initiative and judgement in planning, problem solving and decision making in professional practice and/or scholarship • to adapt knowledge and skills in diverse contexts • with responsibility and accountability for own learning and professional practice and in collaboration with others within broad parameters
	OR Equivalent: 5 years professional Performing Arts experience and teaching experience.	10 years professional Performing Arts experience and teaching experience.	