

AC-A1 ACADEMIC ACCREDITATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the standards and framework by which BBI-TAITE approves academic staff to teach units at BBI The Australian Institute of Theological Education (BBI-TAITE).

2 BACKGROUND

BBI-TAITE is committed to quality learning and teaching, as reflected in its educational mission. This policy ensures academic staff are classified based on their knowledge, skills, experience, and qualifications to provide the highest qualified academic staff for teaching the Institute's courses and units of study.

The *Higher Education Standards Framework Section 3.2 Staffing* requires that:

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.
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.
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.¹

¹ Higher Education Standards Framework. *Section 3.2 Staffing*. Available online at: https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2015L01639/Html/Text#_Toc428368860. Accessed 13/04/2020.

3 SCOPE

This policy applies to all academic staff of BBI-TAITE.

4 DEFINITIONS

Academic accreditation refers to the academic staff member's approval to teach in specific disciplines, sub-disciplines, courses and units BBI-TAITE offers.

Academic staff refers to all full-time, part-time, and sessional faculty members employed by the Institute, including unit authors, lecturers and tutors.

5 POLICY

5.1 Qualification level: The Institute requires that all academic staff approved to teach a unit at BBI-TAITE hold qualifications at one AQF level above the level the Institute delivers the course of study. For example, teaching an AQF level 8 graduate certificate unit requires the lecturer to hold an AQF level 9 qualification in the field they will be teaching.

In normal circumstances, the Institute will approve academic staff to teach specific units, for example, a Biblical Studies unit, if their qualifications, skills, knowledge, and professional and research experience focus on the Biblical Studies discipline.

5.2 Sessional staff: Sessional staff will only be approved to teach specific units.

5.3 Cross-discipline teaching: In some cases, BBI-TAITE may approve academic staff to teach across two or more disciplines where their qualifications, skills, knowledge, and professional and research experience demonstrate this.

5.4 Teaching at a higher AQF level: Academic staff may not teach at an AQF level above their highest AQF qualification. Applications for exemptions to this requirement will not be approved.

5.5 Exceptions: Exceptions to 5.1 above may occur where the applicant:

5.5.1 demonstrates professional, teaching, and research experience to warrant teaching at the same level as their highest AQF qualification and meets at least TWO of the following criteria:

5.5.1.1 Leadership: five (5) or more years experience at a senior leadership level in a relevant professional context

5.5.1.2 Publications: five or more peer-reviewed publications in the area of accreditation over the past ten (10) years, and

5.5.1.3 Teaching experience: BBI-TAITE requires two or more years of teaching experience at the relevant AQF level at another Higher Education provider and a letter of endorsement from a senior academic at that provider.

5.5.2 holds a doctoral qualification (Level 10) and teaches at that level.

6 PROCEDURE

The Associate Dean (Academic) (or delegate) maintains the *Accreditation Register* (the Register) listing the academic staff and the units they are approved to teach. The procedure for approval to be included in the Register is as follows:

6.1 Application procedure: Academic staff may apply to the Associate Dean (Academic) for admission to the Register. Typically, BBI-TAITE approves applicants to teach in one discipline area, for example:

- Theology
- Religious Education

- Leadership and Theology, or
- Governance and Canon Law.

6.2 Approval to teach at the same level: The Associate Dean (Academic) coordinates applications to teach a unit at the same level the academic staff member holds their highest qualification for the approval of the Academic Board Standing Committee.

6.3 Admission to the Register: To be admitted to the Register, academic staff members apply to the Associate Dean (Academic), outlining their case for approval to teach in a specific discipline area and a nominated unit(s).

The application must include:

- a letter outlining the applicant's case;
- a copy of their current CV including a summary of their qualifications, publishing and research activity, teaching experience and industry and professional experience;
- a copy of transcripts and testamurs for all academic awards received; and
- any other supporting documentation

6.4 Academic Board Standing Committee Approval:

6.4.1 The Associate Dean (Academic) reviews the application for admission to the Register and recommends to the Academic Board Standing Committee the approval or not of the application, based on the following criteria:

- the applicant holds a qualification in the specific discipline at least one AQF level higher than the degree in which they will be teaching;
- the applicant's qualifications warrant approval to teach in the selected discipline and the nominated units;
- the applicant holds an AQF qualification
 - at the same level as the nominated teaching area, and
 - demonstrates professional, teaching, and research experience to meet that level, and
 - meets two of the criteria listed under 5.5 above.

6.4.2 The Associate Dean (Academic) forwards the recommendation to the Academic Board Standing Committee, who approves or declines it.

6.4.3 The Associate Dean (Academic) informs the applicant of the outcome within eight weeks of applying to the Register.

6.4.4 If the committee declines the application or the applicant is dissatisfied with the outcome, the applicant may discuss the decision with the Associate Dean (Academic), who may invite the applicant to re-apply.

6.4.5 The Associate Dean (Academic) securely files a copy of the application, records the outcome, and updates the Register.

6.4.6 The Associate Dean (Academic) reports quarterly updates to the Register to the Academic Board.

7 KEY RELATED DOCUMENTS

- *AC-A3 Academic Board Membership and Terms of Reference*
- *R2 Records Management Policy*

8 NOTES

Contact Officer	Associate Dean (Academic)
Implementation Officer/s	Associate Dean (Academic)
Approval Authority / Authorities	Associate Dean (Academic) / Academic Board
Date Approved	18/11/15
Date of Commencement	1/7/16
Date for Review	24 MONTHS AFTER COMMENCEMENT
Amendment History	<p>Reviewed: 3 December 2018</p> <p>Reviewed 17 April 2020: HESF Standards added to set the background for the requirements concerning academic staff teaching units at particular levels, reinforcing the N + 1 rule, the addition of Academic Board Standing Committee approval, and addition of Clause 7 Relaxing Provision.</p> <p>1/7/2021 Change the policy code from A1 to AC-A1 to reflect that is an Academic Policy. Delete references to Academic Dean and replace with Associate Dean (Academic).</p> <p>08/02/2022 Removal of Relaxing Provision clause</p> <p>15/03/2022 Tidy up of text and procedures.</p>
Key Stakeholders	Full-time and Fractional Academic Staff and Sessional Academics