

University Staff Educational and Experience Equivalencies

Incorporating educational and experience equivalencies into a requisition can help attract a broader, more diverse applicant pool. Education and experience equivalencies provide objective measures for determining whether applicants meet the minimum requirements of the position.

What is an equivalency?

Within the job functions and families established for the university's compensation structure, some positions allow for the use of an educational or experience equivalency. Positions that allow for an equivalency will have the following statement in their associated requisition template, "Equivalent combination of relevant education and experience may be substituted as appropriate." Professional positions that require a certain degree (e.g., J.D. for a lawyer) do not have equivalency language.

Hiring departments have the flexibility to remove the equivalency when posting a position, as long as they can justify this change as consistent with business necessity, job-related, and consistent with affirmative action plan (AAP) goals.

Equivalency matrices

When evaluating position requirements, the University of Arizona uses a 1-to-1 ratio between years of relevant experience and education. An applicant or employee cannot use the education equivalency to account for years of relevant experience when they have not completed a degree program.

Consider, for example, a position that requires a bachelor's degree and three years of relevant work experience. An applicant without a degree would require seven years of relevant, full-time experience (four years = bachelor's degree requirement + three years = relevant experience requirement).

Education	Equivalent Years of Relevant Work Experience	Experience	Equivalent Years of Postsecondary Education
High school diploma	0 years	0 years	High school diploma
Associate's degree	2 years	2 years	Associate's degree
Bachelor's degree	4 years	4 years	Bachelor's degree
Master's degree	6 years	6 years	Master's degree

Note: These matrices do not account for any job specific requirements that may be applicable.

Frequently asked questions

Why would I use equivalencies?

Many available job seekers have not had the opportunity to pursue a formal education but have cultivated skills within their profession. A hiring manager who considers only formal education may overlook or exclude vastly experienced candidates who could perform the job duties just as successfully. Other job seekers may have been able to pursue a formal education but have limited hands-on work experience.

What kinds of positions are appropriate for accepting experience as equivalent to education?

Appropriate positions require some postsecondary education and have a knowledge base that can be learned "on-the-job." Most University Staff positions employ an equivalency. The Compensation team or your Senior HR Partner can advise you about positions where equivalencies cannot be accepted.

If I accept equivalencies, will hundreds of job seekers apply for the position?

Accepting equivalent experience will likely increase the size of your applicant pool and your chances of finding the best available candidate. However, you can include preferred qualifications in your posting to enable you to narrow the candidate list to those who meet both minimum and preferred qualifications. You will benefit from the added depth and choices available to you.

As a higher education institution shouldn't we prefer job seekers who have a higher degree of education?

As an institution of higher education, we value the benefits of a higher education. As an employer of choice, we also actively seek to diversify our workforce and select the best candidates for each open career opportunity. It would be an unfair bias to assume that candidates without a postsecondary education cannot offer valuable skills and experiences that would benefit the University. Limiting our applicant pools to those with a higher education is not always the best approach to recruitment.

What does relevant work experience mean?

Relevant work experience demonstrates skills or knowledge comparable to those required for your position.



Educational Equivalency Matrix

		Position Minimum Educational Requirements			
Candidate Education Level		High school diploma	Associate's degree	Bachelor's degree	Master's degree
	High school diploma	✓ Meets minimum qualifications	High school diploma + 2 years of relevant experience	High school diploma + 4 years of relevant experience	High school diploma + 6 years of relevant experience
	Associate's degree	Exceeds minimum qualifications	✓ Meets minimum qualifications	Associate's degree + 2 years of relevant experience	Associate's degree + 4 years of relevant experience
	Bachelor's degree	Exceeds minimum qualifications	Exceeds minimum qualifications	✓ Meets minimum qualifications	Bachelor's degree + 2 years of relevant experience
	Master's degree	Exceeds minimum qualifications	Exceeds minimum qualifications	Exceeds minimum qualifications	✓ Meets minimum qualifications



Experience Equivalency Matrix

		Position Minimum Experience Requirement			
		0 years	2 years	4 years	6 years
Candidate Education Level	High school diploma	✓ Meets minimum qualifications	High school diploma + 2 years of relevant experience	High school diploma + 4 years of relevant experience	High school diploma + 6 years of relevant experience
	Associate's degree	Exceeds minimum qualifications	✓ Meets minimum qualifications	Associate's degree + 2 years of relevant experience	Associate's degree + 4 years of relevant experience
	Bachelor's degree	Exceeds minimum qualifications	Exceeds minimum qualifications	✓ Meets minimum qualifications	Bachelor's degree + 2 years of relevant experience
	Master's degree	Exceeds minimum qualifications	Exceeds minimum qualifications	Exceeds minimum qualifications	✓ Meets minimum qualifications