



Higher Education Professional Entry Criteria Policy

Effective Date: 2025.05.10

Last Reviewed: 2025.05.10

Version: v3.1 2026.10.02

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline professional entry criteria for Alphacrucis University College (AC) postgraduate and Higher Degree Research (HDR) awards.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all postgraduate and HDR courses at AC.

3. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- 3.1. **Professional entry:** Professional entry is an option which recognises that many aspects of a person's life experience may result in the development of skills, abilities and knowledge that relate directly to the ability to undertake tertiary study successfully.
- 3.2. **Professional entry applicants:** Professional entry applicants are those who are applying for a postgraduate coursework (Levels 8 or 9) or HDR (Level 9 or 10) course of study without having a prior required degree but can demonstrate an appropriate level of professional experience.
- 3.3. **Full-Time Equivalent (FTE):** FTE is a measurement of workload that equates to a full-time workload.
- 3.4. **Statement of Service:** An official document provided by an employer confirming the applicant's employment history, including role(s), responsibilities, duration, and relevance to the proposed course of study.
- 3.5. **Bridging Subject:** An academic subject that may be required for HDR applicants entering via professional entry to demonstrate research readiness if prior research experience or training is lacking.
- 3.6. **AQF Levels:** The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) categorises qualifications from Level 1 (Certificate I) to Level 10 (Doctoral Degree). This policy refers specifically to Level 8 (Graduate Certificate/Diploma), Level 9 (Masters), and Level 10 (Doctorate).

4. Policy Statement

4.1. Minimum Criteria for Professional Entry

- 4.1.1. Professional experience must be within five years and relevant to the course of study being undertaken.
- 4.1.2. A CV demonstrating relevant experience.
- 4.1.3. Statement of service or reference from current or previous employer; or, where the student is self-employed, a statutory declaration confirming work experience.
- 4.1.4. A candidate suitability statement.
- 4.1.5. In exceptional circumstances, a case may be made for assessing broader skills or qualifications, such as:
 - a. research and/or creative projects at an advanced level;
 - b. publications, presentations and conference participation;
 - c. experience outside tertiary education in industry, business or government employment; and
 - d. professional experience in local, state or national organisations.
- 4.1.6. Eligibility for admission does not guarantee offer of a place.



4.2. Guidelines for Assessing Criteria

- 4.2.1. Level 8 and 9 – Honours, Graduate Certificates, Graduate Diplomas, Masters by coursework: Three years FTE relevant professional experience.
- 4.2.2. Level 9 – Masters by Research: Three years FTE relevant professional experience.
- 4.2.3. Level 10 – Doctor of Ministry or Doctor of Philosophy: Five years FTE relevant professional experience with at least five years of those years at a senior level. This timeframe may be disregarded if the applicant can demonstrate equivalent experience through outputs such as:
 - a. Work published in peer-reviewed journals;
 - b. Published professional work (e.g. policy papers, reports, creative works);
 - c. Industry leadership or innovation;
 - d. Professional certifications or fellowships;
 - e. Portfolio of creative or practice-based outputs.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- 5.1. **Registrar:** The Registrar is responsible for overseeing the implementation, review, and alignment of this policy with institutional standards and regulatory frameworks. The Registrar is also responsible for coordinating communication of policy revisions to stakeholders.
- 5.2. **Admissions Committee:** The Admissions Committee approves applications for professional entry into postgraduate and HDR programs. The Admissions Committee also assesses supporting documentation to determine whether applicants meet the criteria for professional entry.
- 5.3. **Program Directors (or equivalent):** Program Directors (or equivalent) may be required to be involved in reviewing submitted documentation (e.g. CVs, Statements of Service, Personal Competence Assessments) for alignment with course requirements.

6. Procedures

- 6.1. Professional entry into HDR programs must be approved by the Admissions Committee.

6.2. Course Work Courses

- 6.2.1. If an applicant is applying to undertake a coursework program on the basis of professional entry, the documents listed at item 4.1 are required.

6.3. Higher Degree by Research Courses

- 6.3.1. If an applicant is applying to undertake a HDR program on the basis of professional entry, the following is required:
 - a. the documents listed at item 4.1;
 - b. A letter of recommendation by a suitably qualified member of faculty or an external expert;
 - c. The HDR student may also be required to undertake a bridging subject to demonstrate research readiness if they do not already meet this requirement.

7. Responsible for Implementation

- 7.1. Registrar.

8. Related AC Policies or Documents, Standards and Legislations

8.1. AC Policies or Documents

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following AC policies available at ac.edu.au/ppm/:

- 8.1.1. Admissions Policy;



8.1.2. HDR Candidature Policy.

8.2. Relevant Standards and Legislation

8.2.1. Higher Education Standards Framework: 1.2;

8.2.2. Higher Education Support Amendment (2023).

9. Review and Revision

This policy will be reviewed by the Registrar on a regular basis in accordance with the Policy Development and Review Policy. Any proposed changes will be tabled at the Quality Assurance Committee for endorsement and Academic Board for approval. Revisions will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders upon approval.

10. History of Approval and Amendments

Policy owner	Registrar
Policy category	Academic: Academic Administration
Policy status	Approved
Approval Body	Academic Board
Endorsement Body	Quality Assurance Committee
Approval Date	2025.05.10
Last Review Date	2025.05.10
History of Policy Amendments	
V2 2024.10.21	The change of ownership from QAC chair to Registrar
V3 2025.05.10	Policy transferred to new policy template; definitions and roles & responsibilities added
V3.1 2026.10.02	Reformatting changes

Add a new row for each version of the policy. Do not remove previous changes.

Appendices

- N/A