

Procedures for Education & Experience Equivalencies

INTRODUCTION

The following procedures are being established to assist in maintaining the System-Wide Pay Plan, including consistency for on-going job standardization and compensation planning efforts. Education and experience equivalencies are provided to maintain consistency in how applicants are screened for a position to determine if an employee meets the minimum requirements for a position.

SYSTEM LEVEL RESPONSIBILITY

All job descriptions (JD) will have an equivalency statement except for professional positions that require a specific degree. In order to provide flexibility, individual system members will be allowed to post positions with the equivalency or remove the equivalency as long as they can justify it as consistent with business necessity, job-related, and in accordance with the following:

1. System members will establish and implement procedures for removing equivalencies while considering applicable laws, rules, regulations, and Affirmative Action Plans (AAP) that ensure they are developing specifications that are free from bias with regard to sex, age, race, color, religion, national origin, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, genetic information, or gender identity.
2. The Texas A&M University System Members do not and will not discriminate against any applicant or employee regardless of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity and status as a protected veteran and/or individual with a disability for any position for which the applicant or employee is qualified.

The preferred section of an individual position description may include other job-related preferred qualifications per System Member. System members will have the discretion to further evaluate applicants based on preferred qualifications when determining who to interview.

STANDARD EQUIVALENCIES

High School Diploma/Equivalent:

For most positions that include a high school diploma equivalency, a ratio of 1:1 will be used for applicants/incumbents with less than a high school diploma. This means that one year of *paid full-time experience equals one year of high school education. An applicant/incumbent that has completed an 8th grade education will need to have 4 years of full-time experience to substitute for the required high school diploma or GED.

When an equivalency statement is not allowed to substitute for the required high school education, use the following statement, "High School Diploma or GED."

Undergraduate College Education/Equivalent

When *requiring a Bachelor's degree* the equivalency statement on the JD will be "An equivalent combination of education and experience may be considered."

Generally, one year of related, full-time experience is considered equal to 30 accredited semester credit hours. When an equivalency is allowed, a ratio of 1:1 will be used for applicants/incumbents with less than a college education. This means that one year of college equals one year of experience and vice versa. An applicant/incumbent that has received a high school diploma will need to have 4 years of ** **related** full-time experience to substitute for the bachelor's degree. In the table, a college education is equivalent to experience in 30 college credit hour increments, as follows:

*Unpaid internships and other volunteer work experience, if full-time, can count as full-time experience depending on the nature of the internship/work compared with the required experience for the position. This applies to part-time unpaid internships and other volunteer work experience and will count as part-time experience.

**Related experience is defined by System Member's

Table of Degree Equivalents				
College Credit Hours	=	Degree Equivalent	=	Work Experience
30 hours of college	=	-	=	1 years
60 hours of college	=	Associate	=	2 years
90 hours of college	=	-	=	3 years
120 hours of college	=	Bachelor	=	4 years
		Master	=	6 years
		Ph. D./Doctorate	=	8 years

Graduate College Education/Equivalent

When *requiring a Master's degree* the equivalency statement on the JD will be "Equivalent combination of relevant education and experience may be substituted as appropriate."

When the equivalency is allowed, a Master's degree is generally considered 2 years of experience. This means that if someone has a Master's degree this would equal six years of experience if they have a high school diploma and vice versa. System members would have the latitude based on the needs to have a total substitution, or only part of one. For example, a system member may only want to consider the equivalency down to the Bachelor's degree and would not give experience for college hours that did not result in a degree.

If there are system members that need different educational requirements for a position then the JD will list only one of the equivalencies. System Member's will have the flexibility to post a position with an approved equivalency.

An example would be is the job description states Master' Degree. No experience required, the system member could post a position as Bachelor's + 2 years of experience.

Ph.D./Doctorate Degree

When requiring a *Ph.D./Doctorate* the equivalency statement on the JD will be "Equivalent combination of relevant education and experience may be substituted as appropriate."

When the equivalency is allowed, a Ph.D./Doctorate is generally considered 2 years of relevant experience. This means that if someone has a Ph.D./Doctorate degree this would equal 8 years of experience if they have a high school diploma and vice versa. System Members would have the latitude based on their needs to have a total substitution, or only part of one. For example, a system member may only want to use the equivalency down to the Master's degree and would not give experience for college hours that did not result in a degree.

If there are system members that need different educational requirements for a position then the JD will list only one of the equivalencies. System Member's will have the flexibility to post a position with an approved equivalency.

An example would be if the job description states Ph.D. No experience required, the system member could post a position as Master's +2 years of experience.

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES:

TYPE OF EXPERIENCE ALLOWED TO SUBSTITUTE FOR DEGREE EQUIVALENCIES

The following table specifies the type of experience that is equivalent to a Bachelor's degree when a position requires a college education equivalency:

Table of Bachelor's Degree Equivalents		
Degree	=	Type of Work Experience
Bachelor (any) or equivalent...	=	4 years of any full-time (8 years if part-time) work experience
Bachelor (specific) or equivalent...	=	4 years of related full-time (8 years if part-time) work experience, related to degree

SPECIFIC BACHELOR'S DEGREE (IF APPLICABLE) AND NO EQUIVALENCIES

When a position requires a specific Bachelor's degree and no equivalency, a higher degree (such as a Master's) may not count towards the requirement unless it is specified in the requirement.

Recruitment Scenario Example
Question: A position requires a Bachelor's degree in an Engineering field and 3 years of engineering experience. An applicant has a Bachelor's degree in Liberal Arts and a MBA and 1 year of engineering experience. <i>Does the applicant meet the required qualification? No</i>
Issue: The applicant will not meet the qualification, since the Bachelor's degree is not in a engineering field. His Master's degree <i>will not</i> count towards the requirement, since it is not specified in the required qualifications.
Resolution: Write the qualifications to include a higher degree when an equivalency is not included. The qualification should be worded " <i>Bachelor's degree in engineering-related field and 3 years of experience, or Master's degree in engineering-related field and 1 year of experience.</i> " This wording will also allow substitution of the Master's degree for some of the experience.

REQUIRED EXPERIENCE BEYOND THE DEGREE EQUIVALENCIES

- Experience must be of the kind of experience described.
- Part-time experience will continue to count as part-time, i.e. 1 year of work at 50% effort = six months full-time experience.
- The Job descriptions will contain only the required qualifications. Preferred qualifications will be listed in the position description and would generally not contain equivalencies.
- Members have the discretion to use or not use only the basic equivalency statement: "An equivalent combination of education and experience may be considered" without a detailed explanation.