

## **Provost Policy on Academic Appointment and Credentials Verification Requirements for Teaching**

### **Purpose/Rationale:**

To ensure that the University is in compliance with Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) teaching credentials guidelines in comprehensive standard 6.2.a Faculty Qualifications, the university must maintain qualified and effective faculty members who carry out the institution's mission and ensure the quality and integrity of its academic programs.

### **Policy:**

The University will require any individual who teaches courses in credit bearing programs, including those teaching dual enrollment courses\* and who do not meet one of the exceptions listed below, to have a faculty academic appointment in a unit appropriate to the teaching assignment.

It is the responsibility of the director of the unit (department chair, school director, or dean) of the individual's academic appointment, to review the individual's credentials to ensure compliance with the SACSCOC teaching credentials standards and recommend the appropriate academic appointment terms (assignment period, rank, title series, etc.) before an offer is extended. The credentials and academic appointment information should be forwarded to the Office for Faculty Advancement for review prior to the instructor's start date. Approval by the Provost and Board of Trustees should be completed before the individual starts their appointment but must be completed before the last day of the first semester of the recommended academic appointment.

To assist unit directors, the Office for Faculty Advancement and Office of Strategic Planning and Institutional Effectiveness reviews academic appointments and credentials records on a monthly basis and provides reports to each unit, to ensure compliance with this policy. Instructors who do not have approved academic appointments within their first semester are not eligible to be assigned to courses in subsequent semesters, until such time as an academic appointment is approved.

### **Definition of Teaching**

For the purposes of this policy, "teaching" is defined as having regular and substantive interactions with the students within the context of a for credit UK course. Activities considered to be regular, substantive interaction include:

- Direct instruction (synchronous discussion, instructor feedback, lectures, etc.) on a day to day basis in the course (not as a guest lecturer).
- Providing information or responding to questions about course content
- Assessing coursework and giving feedback, including grading assignments

Academic appointments are also required for anyone who is not on an approved teaching assistant (TA) contract and is:

- Ensuring that the course learning outcomes are covered and assessed, and assigning grades for the course and/or
- Being reviewed in end of term course evaluation surveys.

**Exceptions** to the academic appointment requirement include

1. Graduate teaching assistants with active assistantship contracts- these contracts stand in the place of faculty academic appointment.
2. Individuals teaching academic orientation courses (such as UK 101, 201)
  - For those teaching this series of courses the following requirements must be met:
    - Minimum of master's degree
    - Current employment at UK verified through Human Resources
    - Documented attendance at instructor training which provides course information, lesson plans and skills necessary to teach the course.
3. Individuals teaching course sub-activities such as lab, recitations or seminars, if a faculty member is the instructor of record and teaching the main course activity. Note, this does not apply to individuals teaching separate course sections, who must be appropriately credentialed as the Instructor of Record for their own section.

These exclusions do **not** imply that individuals who teach these courses are exempt from meeting SACSCOC teaching credentials standards. An individual who teaches any course that may count toward general education credit at the undergraduate level must meet the following credentials standard: *doctor's or master's degree in the teaching discipline or master's degree with a concentration in the teaching discipline (a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline)* (SACSCOC Standard 6.2.a))

**\*Note on dual enrollment high school teachers:**

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), requires all instructors, including those teaching dual enrollment courses to meet the same academic credential requirements as on-campus faculty to maintain the quality and integrity of educational programs. These will be subject to the same policies and processes outlined in this policy.