



Did you know that considering equivalent experience is an option available to hiring units when filling positions? Hiring units can substitute the educational requirement with years of related work experience if defined in the job posting. If considering using this option, **a statement must be stated in the Required Qualifications** section of the **job posting**, with similar phrase such as “will consider an equivalent combination of relevant education and experience”. Without a statement, candidates cannot be evaluated using this an equivalency.

Why to consider using the “equivalent experience” option?

You want to find the best candidates and diversify your candidate pool. Accepting equivalent experience is a very easy way to do that. Many available job seekers grew within their profession, but may not have been afforded the opportunity to pursue a formal education, for whatever reason. When you strictly require a degree, you are depriving yourself of these vastly experienced candidates.

What kinds of positions are appropriate for accepting equivalent experience?

Many of these positions are standard support staff and administrative/professional staff career opportunities. However, each opportunity is unique, and you may have circumstances in which accepting equivalent experience is not appropriate. For example, in the case of faculty, research and/or executive level positions, or where specific departmental attributes make it necessary to seek candidates with a formal education.

If I accept equivalent experience, will I get hundreds of job seekers submitting their resumes for my employment opportunity?

Accepting equivalent experience will likely increase the size of your candidate pool *and* your opportunities for finding the best available candidate. What it will not do is water-down your candidate pool. You will benefit from the added depth and choices available to you. If you find that your candidate pool gets too large, The EEO specialist, HR Generalist, or your HR Business Partner can assist you.

We're East Tennessee State University (ETSU), a higher education institution; shouldn't we prefer job seekers who have a higher education?

As a well-respected institution of higher education, we as employees, are committed to and value the benefits of a higher education. We also actively seek to diversify our workforce and select the best candidates for each open career opportunity. It would be incorrect to assume that candidates without a post-secondary education fail to offer valuable skills and experiences that would benefit the University. Limiting our candidate pools to only those with a higher education may not always be the best approach to fill our open positions.

When you have an open position to fill, think about your situation and whether or not accepting equivalent experience is appropriate. If you would like to accept equivalent experience, please let your HR Business Partner, HR Generalist, or the EEO Specialist know (if it is not already a part of the approved position description). We can assist you with ensuring that the posting reflects the correct verbiage.



When using the “**equivalent experience**” option, to determine if a potential applicant meets the required education and experience requirements **as defined in the job posting**, the following educational equivalencies are used as general guidelines:

Educational Requirements and Equivalent Experience:

Educational Requirement	Equivalent Experience
High School Diploma/GED	None
Vocational/Technical/Trade Schools	One (1) year of related work experience (plus any additional required experience)
Associate Degree	Two (2) years of related work experience or Two (2) years of college (plus any additional required)
Bachelor's Degree	Associate's Degree/ Two years of College + Two (2) years of related work experience OR four (4) years of related work experience (plus any additional required experience)
Master's Degree	Bachelor's + Two (2) years of related work experience (plus any additional required experience)
JD (Jurist Doctorate)	See your HR Business Partner
ABD (All But Dissertation)	See your HR Business Partner
Doctoral Degree	See your HR Business Partner

**All degrees should come from a regionally accredited institution or comparably recognized non-U.S. institution. Colleges/Departments are responsible for compliance with SACSCOC and any additional accrediting organization.*

Experience Equivalencies:

- Full-time: All experience must be in a related field to be counted
- Paid experience/internships are accepted as experience
- Part-time, Graduate Assistance, Student Worker, Volunteer experience is **NOT** considered as years of experience **unless otherwise stated in the job posting**. Example: “*Related part-time, student worker, graduate assistance experience may be considered*”.

Also, it is important to know, when using language to define the levels of experiences required, ETSU uses the following equivalents:

- Experience = one (1) year
- Considerable experience = three (3) years
- Extensive experience = five (5) years

Example: If you say a position requires considerable supervisory experience, candidates must have at least three years (3) of experience as a supervisor.



Examples:

Advertised Required Qualifications	Potential Required Qualifications
Bachelor's Degree in Accounting, or an equivalent combination of relevant education and experience may be considered	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Master's degree in Accounting• Bachelor's Degree in Accounting• Associates Degree/ Two years of College in Accounting + Two (2) years of relevant experience in Accounting
Bachelor's Degree plus 2 years of experience, or an equivalent combination of education and experience may be considered	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Master's degree or higher (No experience required)• Bachelor's Degree + Two (2) years of relevant experience• Associates Degree/ Two (2) years of College + Four (4) years of relevant experience.
High School Diploma/GED plus 3 years' experience, or an equivalent combination of education and experience may be considered	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bachelor's Degree or higher (No experience required)• Associates Degree/Two (2) years of College + One (1) year of relevant experience.• High School Diploma/GED plus 3 years' experience
Master's Degree in Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Master's Degree in Marketing <p><i>**Equivalence cannot be used since it wasn't stated in the advertisement.</i></p>

Additional Comments:

- Please keep in mind your accreditations. It is the responsibility of the hiring department and/or college to ensure all accreditation requirements are being met with all hires.
- Hiring units can use the above stated educational equivalencies or can define their own, within reason, in the Required Qualifications in the job posting. You HR Business Partner can assist if needed.