

A. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to explain:

- a) the process for determining whether or not a UT meets the educational requirement of “doctoral equivalent” for the purposes of promotion from Assistant Professor (UT-02) to Associate Professor (UT-03) or from Associate Professor (UT-03) to Professor (UT-04) under the Career Progression Management Framework for University Teaching (UT), approved by the Deputy Minister of National Defence on 6 June 2014 (CPMF); and
- b) the methodology for developing this process.

B. Why this Process is needed

In the section “Educational requirements” of Annex C, the CPMF stipulates:

“The educational qualifications are dependent on the rank being sought:

- a. For promotion from Assistant Professor (UT-02) to Associate Professor (UT-03), a doctorate or its equivalent is required except in circumstances where the discipline would normally accept a Master's degree and significant experience in their professional field of expertise; and*
- b. For promotion from Associate Professor (UT-03) to Professor (UT-04), a doctorate or its equivalent is required.”*

However, the CPMF does not define what the equivalent to a doctorate is or how doctoral equivalence is to be determined. Consequently, UTs who are hired without a doctorate and without the doctoral equivalence for their position defined in the Statement of Merit and Criteria (SOMC) at the time of hire require an open, fair, and transparent process for determining their eligibility for promotion under the CPMF.

C. How this Process was developed

This process was developed through joint consultation between RMC and the CMCFCA with the following interrelated principles in mind:

1. **Credibility**—In order to maintain RMC’s credibility as a reputable Canadian university, this process must be consistent with the standards, norms, and best practices of other Canadian universities for determining doctoral equivalency for the purposes of promotion to Associate Professor (UT-03) and Professor (UT-04).
2. **Consistency**—In addition, this process must be consistent with the Collective Agreement for UTs, the CPMF, and any other employer policy that deals with the qualifications and educational requirements for UTs.
3. **Equity**—At the same time, this process recognizes that the best practices of Canadian universities and employer policies are not always equitable and may present systemic barriers to

equity-seeking groups.¹ The process must therefore include a mechanism for identifying and addressing any equity-related barriers created or perpetuated by the process itself.

4. **Disciplinary Differences**—In keeping with the above principles of credibility, consistency, and equity, this process recognizes that different disciplines may define doctoral equivalency differently. This process must therefore ensure that the standard applied to each UT is consistent with the norms of that UT’s discipline. While true for all disciplines, this is especially true for disciplines involving Indigenous knowledge and expertise, as it is precisely that knowledge and expertise that have historically been excluded and marginalized in universities.
5. **Transparency**—In keeping with the principles of effective performance management, this process recognizes that UTs are entitled to know in advance of their application for promotion to Associate Professor (UT-03) or Professor (UT-04) what will be considered a doctoral equivalent in their discipline and/or whether or not they meet the standard of doctoral equivalency in their discipline.
6. **Openness and Fairness**—This process recognizes the right of UTs to an open and fair process for determining whether or not they meet the standard of doctoral equivalency in their discipline, including the right to submit evidence and arguments in support of their application for recognition of doctoral equivalency, the right to respond to any evidence or argument made against their application for recognition of doctoral equivalency, and the right to grieve any decision in the process.

D. Methodology

The following documents were examined in the development of this process:

1. Agreement between the Treasury Board and the Canadian Military Colleges Faculty Association, exp. June 30, 2022. <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/agreements-conventions/view-visualiser-eng.aspx?id=27>
2. Career Progression Management Framework for University Teaching (UT), UT-02-UT-04, dated 6 June 2014. <https://cmcfa-apcmc.ca/dox/Career-progression-management-framework-for-ut-02-to-ut-04-20140606.pdf>
3. Collective Agreements from Canadian Universities that make reference to doctoral “equivalence,” “equivalent,” or “terminal degree”
4. Universities Canada’s criteria for doctoral degrees, found in the “Ministerial Statement on Quality Assurance of Degree Education in Canada,” dated 2007: <https://www.univcan.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/qa-cmec-statement-on-qa-of-degree-education-in-canada-2007.pdf>

¹ From the Canada Council for the Arts: “Equity-seeking groups are communities that face significant collective challenges in participating in society. This marginalization could be created by attitudinal, historic, social and environmental barriers based on age, ethnicity, disability, economic status, gender, nationality, race, sexual orientation and transgender status, etc. Equity-seeking groups are those that identify barriers to equal access, opportunities and resources due to disadvantage and discrimination and actively seek social justice and reparation” (<https://canadacouncil.ca/glossary/equity-seeking-groups>)

5. Open job advertisements at the time of examination (on or around 15 October 2021) on the University Affairs website that make reference to doctoral equivalency
6. Treasury Board's Qualification Standards for the University Teaching (UT) group.
<https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/staffing/qualification-standards/core.html#ut>

E. Findings and Analysis

1. UT collective agreement ("the CA")

a. Findings:

- i. The CA is silent on the matter of doctoral equivalency. However, article 7.01 states that "nothing in this agreement shall be construed to alter any rights, privileges, and responsibilities of UTs, individually or collectively, to participate in the decision-making of the CMC [Canadian Military Colleges] and its component parts where such rights, privileges and responsibilities are not inconsistent with the express terms of this agreement."
- ii. Article 26.03 stipulates further that, "[w]herever possible, the Employer shall consult with representatives of the Association at the appropriate level about contemplated changes in conditions of employment or working conditions not governed by this agreement."

b. Analysis:

- i. The process should therefore ensure that UTs will have the opportunity to provide input into any decision regarding doctoral equivalency in their discipline.
- ii. The process should ensure further that consultation with the CMCFA takes place prior to any contemplated changes to the process.

2. Career Progression Management Framework for University Teaching ("CPMF")

a. Findings: Annex C of the CPMF stipulates:

"The educational qualifications are dependent on the rank being sought:

- i. *For promotion from Assistant Professor (UT-02) to Associate Professor (UT-03), a doctorate or its equivalent is required except in circumstances where the discipline would normally accept a Master's degree and significant experience in their professional field of expertise; and*
- ii. *For promotion from Associate Professor (UT-03) to Professor (UT-04), a doctorate or its equivalent is required."*

b. Analysis: The process must therefore recognize the distinction being made between the educational qualifications required for promotion to Associate Professor (UT-03) and the educational qualifications required for promotion to Professor (UT-04), as follows:

- i. This provision of the CPMF allows a UT to be promoted to Associate Professor (UT-03) without a doctorate or its equivalent in a discipline that would normally accept a

Master's degree and significant experience in their professional field of expertise for promotion to UT-03.

- ii. In contrast, this provision of the CPMF stipulates that a doctorate or its equivalent is required without exception for promotion to Professor (UT-04).
- iii. This provision suggests further that a doctorate or its equivalent is also required for promotion to Associate Professor (UT-03) in those disciplines that would not normally accept a Master's degree and significant experience in their professional field of expertise for promotion to Associate Professor (UT-03).

3. **Collective agreements of other Canadian universities**—The collective bargaining agreement (CBA) of the universities identified in Treasury Board's list of comparator universities for the purposes of bargaining² were examined for any references to "equivalent," "equivalence," or "terminal degree."

- a. **Findings:** Thirteen (13) CBAs referenced doctoral "equivalent," "equivalence," or "terminal degree"³:
 - i. Some mention doctoral "equivalence" or "terminal degree" without defining it;⁴
 - ii. Some allow for a doctoral equivalent only for the rank of Assistant Professor and require a doctoral degree for the ranks of Associate and Full Professor;⁵
 - iii. Some require a doctorate or a terminal degree for all ranks: Assistant, Associate, and Full professor, or impose a time limit of two or three years for achieving the doctorate, its equivalent, or terminal degree;⁶
 - iv. All those that describe exceptions or equivalences make exceptional research or significant contributions to the discipline, art or profession a requirement for tenure (Associate or full Professor):
 - Lakehead states, "exceptional research and other scholarly and creative output may compensate for lesser degree qualifications" for the rank of Professor (26.03.04)
 - Ottawa requires the member to have contributed in a significant manner to the advancement of knowledge in their discipline, art, or profession (23.4.2)

² Treasury Board's list of thirty-one (31) comparator universities: Brock, Carleton, Dalhousie, Lakehead, Laurentian, McMaster, Memorial, Nipissing, Queen's, Ryerson, Saint Mary's, Simon Fraser, Trent, Moncton, Alberta, UBC, Calgary, Guelph, Lethbridge, Manitoba, New Brunswick, UOIT, Ottawa, Regina, Saskatchewan, Toronto, Waterloo, Western Ontario, Windsor, Wilfred Laurier, and York.

³ The thirteen (13) CBAs that reference "equivalent," "equivalence," or "terminal degree": Brock, Lakehead, Laurentian, Ottawa, Carleton, Saint Mary's, Simon Fraser, Guelph, UNBC, Western, Regina, Manitoba, Moncton

⁴ UNBC, Western, Carleton, Guelph, Regina, Manitoba.

⁵ Laurentian and Saint Mary's, though Guelph requires a "terminal degree" for the ranks of Associate and Full Professor. Saint Mary's grants the exception to the rank of assistant professor only "on the basis of exceptional scholarly achievement and/or proven outstanding teaching at the University level" (12.2).

⁶ Brock, UNBC and Lakehead, although Brock states, "Promotion to the rank of Assistant Professor shall normally depend upon the attainment of a doctoral degree or its equivalent" (21.51[b]) and requires that the equivalence be established at the time of appointment (19.03[c]). Lakehead accepts a "lesser degree" where research/scholarly/creative work is available for peer review and represents a contribution to the discipline or profession (26.03). Western requires that a doctorate, its equivalent, or a terminal degree be in progress for the rank of Assistant Professor and requires it be completed within three years of appointment (4.3.1-4.3.2.1); Guelph requires a terminal degree within two years of appointment to Assistant Professor.

- Saint Mary's requires "exceptional scholarly achievement and/or proven outstanding teaching at the University level" for a doctoral exception at the Assistant Professor rank; the ranks of Associate Professor and Professor require a doctoral degree (12.2)
 - Moncton requires "work judged by peers as having contributed in a significant way to the professor's discipline" to be considered equivalent to the doctorate, even for an Assistant Professor (Annexe B)
- v. Brock requires that doctoral equivalence be established and certified by the department at the time of appointment (19.03[c]);
- vi. Only two define doctoral equivalence expressly in the CBA as follows:
- having "contributed in a significant manner to the advancement of knowledge" in their discipline, art, or profession, as determined by three outside evaluators (Ottawa 23.4.2);
 - "An equivalent degree according to AUCC [now Universities Canada], AUF [Agence universitaire de la Francophonie], and Association of Commonwealth Universities criteria" (Moncton, Annexe B);
 - "A diploma which crowns a third cycle university study program and which is normally obtained after twenty (20) years of schooling" (Moncton, Annexe B);
 - "In disciplines where there is no doctorate, or the equivalent, an attestation of excellence, recognized at the same level by experts in the discipline, and eligible only after seven (7) full years of experience in the discipline and five (5) years devoted to peer-reviewed scholarly work" (Moncton, Annexe B)
- vii. Ottawa makes special provisions for "lawyers in the Faculty of Law and accountants in the School of Management and any other groups agreed to by the Parties" (23.4.2.3);
- viii. Moncton expressly excludes "acquired experience" as a basis for evaluating either a doctoral or master's degree equivalence: "the equivalent of a diploma must be measured on the basis of studies and not of acquired experience." Moncton specifies further that it is "important not to confuse the field of study itself with that of the various works which give rise to the experience required" (Annexe B)
- ix. Where the equivalence is not established at the time of appointment or defined in the CBA, the equivalence is determined by a committee:
- at Lakehead, by the tenure and promotion committee;
 - at Ottawa, by three outside evaluators in the discipline selected IAW the CBA 23.3.2;
 - at Moncton, by a University Degree Equivalency Committee composed of the dean, the principal, and four (4) recognized academics in the discipline in question, including two (2) appointed by the employee and two (2) from outside the University (Annexe B).
- x. References to doctoral equivalence are consistently qualified with language about disciplinary specificity, such as "a doctorate or a degree normally considered to be terminal in his/her discipline"; "the degree that is determined as the terminal degree for the discipline"; "an academic doctoral degree or equivalent professional qualification or terminal degree for the discipline or field"; or "a completed doctoral degree, or equivalent as appropriate to the discipline."

b. Analysis:

- i. The CPMF allows for the equivalent to a doctorate for promotion to Associate Professor (UT-03) and Professor (UT-04), so points 3(a)(ii)-(iii) above do not apply;
- ii. There were three mechanisms for establishing doctoral equivalency found in the CBAs:
 - Establish the equivalence at the time of appointment;
 - Establish specific criteria in the collective agreement;
 - Have a committee assess whether a candidate meets the standards for doctoral equivalence in their discipline.
- xi. Although only one CBA referenced the AUCC (now Universities Canada) criteria for doctoral degrees, these criteria should be considered in any evaluation of doctoral equivalence, IAW the first principle of “credibility,” if RMC is to maintain its credibility as a reputable Canadian university.

4. Universities Canada’s criteria for doctoral degrees, found in the “Ministerial Statement on Quality Assurance of Degree Education in Canada,” dated 2007

a. Findings: According to the statement, the distinguishing feature of doctoral degrees is their emphasis on “intellectual autonomy,” “the generation of significant new knowledge and/or understanding,” “an ability to create and interpret knowledge that extends the forefront of a discipline” or “area of professional practice,” and the ability to “produce original research, or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, and to merit publication.”

b. Analysis:

- i. Any determination of doctoral equivalence must be done by experts in the discipline or field;
- ii. The criteria for doctoral equivalence must include, at the very least, work judged by experts in the discipline as having made a significant contribution to the professor’s discipline.

5. University Affairs Job Ads—All the job ads that were open at the time of investigation (on or around 15 October 2021) were searched for language on doctoral equivalency. Approximately 200 job ads were examined.

a. Findings:

- i. Many required a PhD and made no mention of a PhD equivalent;
- ii. Some mentioned a PhD equivalent but did not specify the equivalency (e.g. “a PhD or equivalent professional qualification”);
- iii. Those that did not require a PhD often required a different doctoral degree, such as EdD (Education), MusDoc (Music), PsyD (Psychology) or a terminal degree other than a doctorate, such as MFA (Fine Arts);⁷

⁷ “Terminal degree” most commonly refers to the highest degree available in an academic discipline. Most often it is a doctoral degree, but in some disciplines, there are no doctoral degrees available, and the highest degree available is the terminal degree (e.g. Master of Fine Arts or the Master of Library and Information Science).

iv. All those that specified the equivalency defined it as a terminal degree specific to the field.

Examples:

- “Candidates must possess a DDS/DMD and a Master’s degree in Periodontics or equivalent and be eligible for licensure by the Provincial Dental Board of Nova Scotia” Dentistry - Assistant/Associate Professor (Periodontics) – Dalhousie U
- “Qualifications include an MD, FRCPC certification in Respiratory Medicine and eligibility for specialist licensure in the province of Alberta as well as a PhD or equivalent research training in cystic fibrosis and postdoctoral fellowship research experience” Respiratory Medicine - Clinician Researcher (Cystic Fibrosis) – U Calgary
- “A PhD or PhD equivalent typically an MDES/MA/MFA with a substantial record in professional or academic experience related to User Experience Design or Service Design is required along with a demonstrated record of excellence in research and teaching” Design - Department Chair (User Experience Design or Service Design) – York U
- “A PhD (or a PhD near completion) or PhD equivalent (specialized doctorate, such as an DMA, EdD) or MA/MFA with a record of professional experience in technology and music or equivalent creative or professional experience in relevant fields, is required” Music Technology and Production - Assistant Professor, Teaching Stream – York U

b. Analysis:

- i. The most common equivalent to PhD is another doctoral degree or a terminal degree in a discipline where a doctoral degree is not available;
- ii. The issue of equivalency must be examined within the context of the discipline.

6. Treasury Board’s Qualification Standards for the University Teaching (UT) Group

a. Findings: Only “Note 2” in the qualifications standards is relevant to the issue of doctoral equivalence. It states:

“For positions requiring a master’s or doctoral degree, the following alternatives may be accepted when combined with an acceptable bachelor’s degree from a recognized post-secondary institution:

- a. *Research or scholarly studies constituting a significant contribution to the discipline; or*
- b. *Professional practice recognized for its high quality.*

When the educational qualifications are met through one of the alternatives described above, they are met for the position in question only.”

b. Analysis:

- i. The listed alternatives are consistent with what was found in the CBAs and Universities Canada’s criteria for doctoral degrees, which also require a significant contribution to the discipline to be considered a doctoral equivalent and make special provisions for professional degrees.

- ii. Since the Qualification Standards do not distinguish between a master's or doctoral degree, it is still to be determined what will constitute the equivalence of a master's degree and what will constitute the equivalence of a doctoral degree. This is consistent with what was found in the CPMF, the CBAs of other Canadian universities, and the recent job ads from Canadian universities, all of which interpret doctoral equivalence as specific to the norms of the discipline or field.

F. Doctoral Equivalency Process

1. **Eligibility**—At any time, a UT who has at least seven (7) full years of experience in their discipline following completion of a Master's degree may request an evaluation of their work for doctoral equivalency. The request is made in writing to the Principal RMC, who will form a Doctoral Equivalence Committee (DEC) within fifteen (15) working days of receiving the request.
2. **DEC**—The DEC is composed of one representative from the Colleges, in the UT's discipline (referred to as the disciplinary representative), one representative of RMC management, and one CMCFA representative. The representative of RMC management will chair the committee.
 - a. All members of the committee must have a doctoral degree or a doctoral equivalence and at least seven (7) full years of experience in their respective disciplines.
 - b. Where a conflict of interest is identified by either a committee member or the applicant, and is confirmed by DEC, the committee member in question will be replaced by a suitable alternate appointed by the Principal or CMCFA as appropriate. Examples of conflicts include, but are not limited to, former supervisor-student relationships, research collaborator, or personal conflict.
 - c. The disciplinary representative on the DEC will seek input from other members of the discipline at the CMCs on the following:
 - i. Whether a doctoral degree is available in the discipline. If not, what the terminal degree is for the discipline;
 - ii. What the standard for doctoral equivalence is in the discipline, if known;
 - d. No member of the DEC will share the application without the applicant's express consent.
3. **Application**—The application for an evaluation of doctoral equivalence must include one (1) electronic copy of each of the following documents in Portable Document Format (PDF):
 - a. A statement of no more than four (4) pages that presents the applicant's case for doctoral equivalence. The statement should address the following:
 - i. Whether a doctoral degree is available in the discipline. If not, what the terminal degree is for the discipline;
 - ii. What the standard for doctoral equivalence is in the discipline, if known;
 - iii. How the applicant's research, scholarly, or creative work constitutes a significant contribution to the discipline or area of professional practice;

- iv. In disciplines where professional practice is normally accepted in place of a doctoral degree, how their professional practice meets the standard of doctoral equivalence in their discipline;
 - b. An up-to-date curriculum vitae (CV);
 - c. A research dossier of the applicant's scholarship, including one (1) electronic copy of each of the following documents in PDF:
 - i. Peer-reviewed publications (and reviews if available);
 - ii. Technical research reports (and reviews if available);
 - iii. Conference papers (and reviews if available);
 - iv. Books and/or other lengthy items (and reviews if available) (in this case, applicants may choose to submit copies of the tables of contents, prefaces, introduction or executive summaries, and bibliographies); and
 - v. Other non-peer reviewed articles.
 - d. Any relevant documentation that supports the applicant's case for doctoral equivalence in their discipline.
- 4. **External referees suggested by the applicant**—At the time of application, the applicant must provide to the DEC Chair a list of four (4) experts in the discipline who currently hold an academic appointment and who, in the applicant's view, would be suitable external referees for their application.
 - a. These experts must meet the following criteria:
 - i. Hold a permanent/tenured faculty position at a recognized university;
 - ii. Have at least a doctoral degree or its equivalent as recognized by their institution (with supporting documentation) in disciplines where a doctoral degree is not available or normally expected;
 - iii. Have at least seven (7) full years of experience in the discipline;
 - iv. Must be external to the CMCs; and
 - v. Must be at arm's length from the applicant.
 - b. The list is to clearly indicate:
 - i. The candidate's professional and/or personal relationships with each potential referee;
 - ii. Why each of the proposed referees is appropriate. Include a brief biography of each proposed referee; and Complete contact information for each referee (address, phone numbers, and email address).
- 5. **External referees suggested by the disciplinary representative**—Within ten (10) working days of receiving the application, the disciplinary representative on the DEC will provide to the DEC Chair a

list of four (4) possible referees in addition to those submitted by the applicant and in accordance with the criteria listed at paragraph 4a.

- a. For each potential referee, the disciplinary representative will provide:
 - i. A brief statement about why each of the proposed referees is appropriate. Include a brief biography of each proposed referee; and
 - ii. Complete contact information for each referee (address, phone numbers, and email address).
- b. The DEC Chair will forward this list to the applicant, who will identify any potential conflicts of interest they may have with the referees proposed by the DEC disciplinary representative. Examples of conflict include, but are not limited to, former supervisor-student relationships, research collaborator, or personal conflict.

6. **Selection of referees**— The DEC Chair will select four (4) referees from the two lists provided by the applicant and the DEC representative. Where possible, an equal number of people from each list will be selected. Each of those selected will be contacted by the Principal's Office to determine their willingness to provide a written appraisal of the application. Referees will be given thirty (30) working days to respond.

- a. If any of the initial four (4) referees are unable to provide appraisals, the Principal's Office will approach other referees from the applicant's and disciplinary representative's lists until either:
 - i. Four (4) letters are received; or
 - ii. Three (3) letters confirming that the applicant meets the standard of doctoral equivalence in their discipline are received;
- b. If all names on both lists have been contacted and neither of the above conditions is met, the applicant and disciplinary representative will each provide a list of four (4) additional names of experts in the discipline, IAW the criteria listed in para. 4(a), and the process will be repeated while keeping those letters that have been received.
- c. If all names on both the applicant's and the disciplinary representative's secondary lists have been contacted and neither of the conditions outlined in para. 6(a) is met, then the applicant will not be recognized to have met the standard for equivalency.

7. **Communication with referees**—The Principal's Office will:

- a. Forward the application to each referee. Upon request, a paper copy of the application can be provided to the referees.
- b. Request a statement from the external referee describing any past collaborative activities that could be considered a conflict of interest;
- c. Ask external referees to comment on the following:

- i. Whether a doctoral degree is available in the discipline. If not, what the terminal degree is for the discipline;
 - ii. What the standard for doctoral equivalence is in the discipline, if known;
 - iii. Whether the referee believes the applicant's research, scholarly, or creative work constitutes a significant contribution to the discipline or area of professional practice, with an explanation wherever possible;
 - iv. Whether the referee believes the applicant has met the standard for doctoral equivalence in the discipline based on their answers to the above, with an explanation wherever possible;
 - v. In disciplines where professional practice is normally accepted in place of a doctoral degree, whether the referee believes the applicant's professional practice meets the standard of doctoral equivalence in their discipline, with an explanation wherever possible.
8. **Communication with applicant** – The Principal's Office will:
 - a. Receive the written reports of the referees and forward anonymized copies of the reports to both the applicant and the DEC within fifteen (15) days of receipt.
 - b. The applicant may provide comments on the written reports of the referees to the DEC within fifteen (15) working days after receiving this information from the Principal's Office. Any equity-related concerns, such as suspicion of or evidence of bias or discrimination in the letters on any ground(s) prohibited by the Canadian Human Rights Code, should be identified at this time.
9. **Equity-related concerns**—At any point in the process, the applicant may also identify any equity-related concerns with the process itself. The concerns should be submitted in writing to the DEC and the DEC will respond in writing within ten (10) days of receiving the comments.
10. **Assessment of letters** – The DEC will review all the letters received and determine by majority vote whether each letter is clearly an affirmation that the applicant has met the standard of doctoral equivalency in their discipline. This information will be forwarded to the candidate.
11. **Determination of doctoral equivalence**—The DEC will consider the applicant as having met the standard of doctoral equivalence, if at least three external experts in the discipline affirm that the applicant has met the standard of doctoral equivalence in their discipline. The applicant will not be recognized to have met the standard under other conditions.
12. **Communication of the decision**—The DEC Chair will inform the applicant of the results of the application in writing within three (3) working days of the decision. This decision shall be placed on the UT's personnel file.
13. **Recourse**—The applicant may seek recourse through the grievance procedure outlined in the UT Collective Agreement.