

DAU COURSE EQUIVALENCY PROGRAM

1. REFERENCE:

DoDI 5000.57, *Defense Acquisition University* dated December 18, 2013

2. PURPOSE:

a. To implement Enclosure 2 of the reference, paragraph 2.k., which directs the president of the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) to establish an equivalency program that identifies alternatives for Defense Acquisition Workforce members to attain required training.

b. This directive supersedes all previous versions of DAU Directive 708.

3. DISCUSSION:

a. DAU is charged with developing and delivering a continuum of coursework to support the consistent and continuous development of the Defense Acquisition Workforce's capabilities as they relate to effectively and efficiently implementing the Defense Acquisition System.

b. The primary objectives of the equivalency program are to:

1) Promote flexibility and efficiency in meeting Department of Defense (DoD) acquisition training requirements.

2) Expand the number of DAU course equivalents by expanding the approved provider list and/or the number of DAU course equivalents.

3) Facilitate the development of new DAU course equivalents among approved equivalent providers.

4) Ensure equivalent providers keep current their DAU course equivalents with changes in the DAU courseware and curriculum and consistently deliver a quality training experience to their students when teaching equivalent courses.

5) Make readily accessible information on how to become an equivalent provider, the process for approving DAU course equivalents, and a list of current DAU course equivalents.

c. A collateral benefit to the University of supporting a vibrant equivalency program is the potential to cultivate relationships with other organizations for the exchange of best practices, current trends in industry and education, ideas, and effective student assessment techniques.

4. POLICY:

a. DAU supports the development and expansion of partnerships with activities through the equivalency program.

b. Any entity legally authorized to conduct business in the United States may apply for approval as an equivalent provider.

c. Every potential equivalent provider must be approved prior to the approval of any of the provider's products as an equivalent.

d. All approved providers will be categorized as one of the following:

- College or university: A college or university is defined as only those regionally or nationally accredited academic institutions recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.
- DoD School
- Other DoD/federal agency
- Civilian organization or professional society
- Commercial training vendor

e. Prior to review of an application to become an equivalent provider, the provider must execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that outlines the program and the responsibilities of both DAU and the equivalent provider.

f. Once approved as a provider and an MOU has been executed, DAU may terminate the MOU with the provider if the provider fails to comply with the policies and procedures outline in this Directive.

g. Courses eligible for equivalency:

(1) All DAU courses below the 300 level where the continuous learning points (CLPs) assigned are equal to or greater than 10 are eligible for equivalency.

(2) DAU 300 level courses may be considered for equivalency on a case-by-case basis prior to the start of the equivalency review process.

(3) DAU 400 level courses are not eligible for the equivalency program.

(4) Rapid Deployment Training (RDT) courses are not eligible for the equivalency program.

h. DAU will make readily available to the equivalent provider all course material except the types of material identified below. Note that providers harvesting DAU material must remove all DAU identifying information and logos prior to submission for review and production.

- Instructors' personal notes
- Student examination/assessments instruments

- Material that is proprietary to a third party and used by DAU with permission when the material can reasonably be excluded or extracted without substantively impacting the lesson flow

i. Equivalencies may be approved when the provider demonstrates that the provider's products reflect the ability to convey and verify behaviors identified in the DAU course objectives, and that these behaviors are assessed at a Bloom's Taxonomy hierarchy level equal to or greater than that to which DAU teaches for each individual course learning objective.

j. DAU will issue equivalency certificates to approved providers outlining the provider's equivalent products that have been approved as equivalent to a DAU course. This information also will be published and maintained on the DAU Web site.

k. Individuals taking or participating in DAU equivalent course products will have an opportunity to provide feedback directly to DAU regarding the providers and the individuals' participation in the providers' equivalent products.

l. DAU will accept without further evaluation the equivalent coursework completed by individuals attempting to meet DAU course prerequisite requirements.

m. Objective DAU-approved third parties will serve as the reviewing organization to make recommendations for approval of potential equivalent providers and their products.

n. DAU employees are prohibited from accepting employment, with or without compensation, from or engaging with equivalent providers to assist in the development, review, or preparation for submission equivalent provider courseware that is intended for equivalency review or that is so similar to current DAU courseware it could be submitted for review with little or no revision.

o. The director of academic programs is responsible for oversight, management, and administration of the DAU Equivalency Program and serves as the source authority for DAU on the program. This includes its processes and all provider and DAU course equivalent product approvals/disapprovals.

5. PROCEDURES:

a. General. The equivalency program will be executed in a two-phase approach in which first the potential provider is approved prior to review and approval of any equivalent products. Attachment 1 outlines the fundamental process flow for the equivalency program as well as the details for Phase I and Phase II.

b. Phase I

1) Attachment 2 is the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that all equivalent providers must execute and submit with their Equivalent Provider Application (EPA), Attachment 3. Failure to execute an MOU will render a potential provider ineligible for consideration.

2) Attachment 4 is the EPA instruction guide, providing detailed instructions on what must be included in an application and how it is to be submitted.

3) Attachment 5 is the EPA evaluation sheet for use with all EPAs for the third-party reviews. The areas of evaluation are not necessarily “GO” / “NO GO” criteria. The reviewer is to make a value recommendation based on the entire package as presented, giving consideration primarily to the ability of the provider to:

- Adhere to professional standards imposed by academic or other accrediting bodies
- Effectively maintain and deliver equivalent products in a consistent and effective manner
- Positively represent DAU and DoD

4) Normal processing time from receipt of a completed application to approval should not exceed 20 business days.

5) The provider’s approval will run for 36 months (from the date DAU solidifies the MOU) unless otherwise terminated as outlined in the MOU and/or this directive. Every triennial period the provider will be required to update and resubmit an EPA directly to DAU, summarizing in a cover letter all changes that have occurred since the last application.

c. Phase II

1) Once a provider has been approved, the approved provider can submit an equivalency review request as outlined in Attachment 6. Normal processing time from receipt of a completed package to approval should not exceed 35 business days for a one-for-one (one provider product to one DAU course) review.

2) Attachments 7 through 9 contain the associated templates for this phase as well as the evaluation sheet for use with all third-party review requests.

3) Unlike the evaluation sheet for the provider, the Equivalent Product Evaluation Sheet is fundamentally a “GO” / “NO GO” criterion checklist. Accordingly, any review in which the evaluator has recommended approval for an item marked as a “NO”, the evaluator must fully justify the recommendation. Additionally, in the case of any review request that is not recommended for approval, the reviewing organization must provide notice to the provider and give the provider a reasonable opportunity (not less than 30 days) to respond with a plan of action to correct the deficiency. Failure of the providers to appropriately respond with a plan of action will cause the review request process to be terminated. The plan of action to correct the deficiency cannot exceed 120 days.

4) For all approved equivalent products, the provider will receive a certificate of acknowledgement that provides a consolidated list of products that are recognized as equivalent to current DAU courses. This information will also be made available to the public via the DAU Web site. And the provider point of contact and course point of contact information will be provided to all stakeholders. Course point of contact information includes the contact information for the DAU course manager (CM), performance learning director (PLD), and center director. Providers are

encouraged to periodically communicate with the CM and PLD regarding the course and its delivery.

5) The approval period normally will start at the time the submitted material was initially implemented by the provider and run for an indefinite period, listed as “INDEF.” A termination date will be established when DAU no longer offers the course, the provider ceases to be approved, or the provider fails to comply with the MOU or this directive.

d. After Approval of a Product

1) Once a product has been approved, the provider may promote a product as equivalent to the appropriate DAU course for as long as the equivalency remains in effect. When promoting DAU equivalent products, the Provider must ensure that the DAU equivalent products are clearly distinguishable from other products of the Provider that are not approved as equivalent.

2) By October 15 of each year following the approval of an equivalent product, the provider will deliver to the director of academic programs the below metrics, for the previous 12-month period (October 1–September 30) for each equivalent product:

- Number of offerings
- Number of DoD participants
- Number of federal government participants (excluding DoD)
- Number of industry participants supporting DoD

3) The provider may make permanent design modifications to a product as it deems appropriate to serve the needs of its customers without undergoing another review so long as:

- The DAU-associated objectives of the approved product, the Blooms levels associated with the objectives and participant assessment methodologies are not degraded.
- The material in the initial review request is updated and provided to the director of academic programs prior to implementation.

4) By April 1 of each year following equivalent product approval, the provider must certify that:

- Any changes to the DAU Plan of Instruction that involve the Course Student Assessment Plan (CSAP) have been incorporated into the approved equivalent product.
- The equivalent provider’s material reflects current DoD policy where appropriate.
- Appropriate files in the equivalent provider’s folder have been updated.

a) If the DAU changes have not been incorporated, the provider will provide the planned implementation date for each change and adhere to that date.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES:

a. Director, Foundational Learning (FLD):

1) Assumes staff cognizance over the implementation and daily management of the DAU Equivalency Program as outlined in this directive.

2) Will establish and maintain an information page on the DAU Web site on the equivalency program for Defense Acquisition Workforce members, as well as a current listing of all equivalencies acceptable toward meeting course prerequisite and acquisition career field certification training standards.

3) Will establish and maintain an information page on the DAU Web site on the equivalency program for potential equivalency providers to include review procedures, policies, standards, and forms required.

4) Will make available, upon request of an equivalent provider preparing for an equivalency review, the requested course materials as outlined in Section 4.g (Policy) of this directive.

5) Will maintain and publish a generic e-mail address and phone number for questions regarding the DAU Equivalency Program.

6) Will develop a plan to implement this directive with current equivalent providers. Current providers must comply with the revised reporting requirements and execute a new MOU within the next 12 months.

7) Will represent the president of the DAU for purposes of executing the MOU at Attachment 2. This authority may be delegated to a direct report.

8) To facilitate the execution of the equivalency program, amendments to the attachments are authorized as needed and will be posted on the DAU Web site so long as the amendments are consistent with the policies and objectives outlined in this directive. Amendments to Attachment 2 must be approved by the DAU general counsel before implementation.

b. Director, Information Technology (IT):

1) Will provide Web design and update support to FLD to facilitate the implementation of Section 5 (Procedures) of this directive.

2) Will provide e-mail support to FLD to facilitate the implementation of Section 6.a.(5) (Responsibilities) above.

c. Director, Performance and Resource Management (PRM):

1) Will ensure the DAU transcript reflects all AT&L workforce equivalencies that have been recorded in the DAU system of record for course completions by the services and DoD agencies.

2) Will provide support as necessary to implement paragraph 4 of this directive.

3) Will ensure course registration systems supporting the Services and DoD agencies recognize workforce equivalencies that have been recorded by the Services and DoD agencies, when assessing course prerequisite requirements as appropriate.

7. DEFINITIONS

a. Activity: A college, university, DoD school or organization, professional organization, or commercial training vendor.

b. Equivalent Product: A course, program of instruction, or assessment process implemented by an activity other than DAU that assesses its participants against related competencies and/or substantially similar learning outcomes that meet or exceed the collective outcomes of a specific DAU course.

c. Equivalent Provider: An activity that has had specific coursework and/or an assessment process evaluated against the learning outcomes and student assessment indices of a specific DAU course and is approved by DAU to market its equivalencies.

d. Equivalency Review: The process of assessing an activity's courseware and/or assessment process to validate that it is or is not equivalent to a specified DAU course.

e. Equivalent Coursework (sometimes referred to as equivalencies): The equivalent course delivered or implemented by an equivalent provider.

f. Instructor Personal Notes: Material intended for the personal use of the instructor in executing a course of instruction regardless of whether or not the instructor decides to share this material with select colleagues.

g. Student Examination/Assessments Instruments: Examinations and associated answer keys. This does not include grading rubrics, or group exercise such as case studies.

JOSEPH E. JOHNSON
Chief of Staff

Attachments:

1. Equivalency Program Process Flow
2. Memorandum of Understanding between DAU and the Equivalent Provider
3. DAU Equivalent Provider Application (EPA)
4. DAU Equivalent Provider Application (EPA) Instruction Guide
5. DAU Equivalent Provider Evaluation Sheet
6. DAU Equivalent Product Review Request (RR) & Equivalent Product Information/Questionnaire (IQ) Instruction Guide
7. DAU Course/Equivalent Product Review Request
8. DAU Equivalent Product Information/Questionnaire
9. DAU Equivalent Product Evaluation Sheet