

Educational Discrepancy – Process

Education Review Process

Any time a background check yields a discrepancy pertaining to the education section in HireRight, the Shared Service Center (SSC) will send the background check to Academic Human Resources (AHR), who is responsible for processing education reviews, to assist in resolving the discrepancy.

AHR will review the HireRight report and assess why a discrepancy occurred. Discrepancies in HireRight may include:

- HireRight could not verify that any degree was obtained;
- HireRight could not verify the required degree was obtained;
- The degree disclosed on the system application form does not match the disclosed degree in HireRight; or
- HireRight verifies a different degree than the degree disclosed on the report.

When AHR is made aware of a degree discrepancy, they will contact the unit to resolve the concern.

Postdoctoral Research Fellows

To appoint an individual to the title of Research Fellow, the individual must already possess either a terminal doctoral degree (i.e., Ph.D.) or a professional doctorate (e.g., M.D., D.D.S, D.V.M.). Please review SPG 201.19 for more information. <https://spg.umich.edu/policy/201.19>.

When the background check vendor cannot verify possession of the terminal degree, AHR will contact the unit to obtain one of the following documents:

1. a copy of applicant's actual degree; or
2. A letter from the applicant's University stating that all degree requirements have been met on or before the anticipated start date, and when the degree will be conferred. The degree conferral date must fall within the first 6-months of employment.

A Research Fellow must meet all degree requirements by their start date, in order to start their position as a Research Fellow. If the required degree will not be conferred within the first 6-months of employment, and/or if all degree requirements are not completed officially on or before the start date, the academic unit *may* appoint the applicant to an alternate title until the degree is conferred and/or degree requirements have been met.

Once the degree is confirmed and the discrepancy is resolved, AHR will notify the appropriate SSC representative to proceed with the hire.

Other Academic Appointments

Academic units are responsible for determining what the required degree is for a specific academic position.

To resolve other academic appointment education discrepancies the academic unit will need to contact the candidate and provide AHR with one of the following:

1. a copy of applicant's actual degree;
2. A copy of the applicant's transcripts with the conferral date stated; or
3. Other documentation that confirms degree conferral.

Once the degree is confirmed and the discrepancy is resolved, AHR will notify the appropriate SSC representative to proceed with the hire.

International Degrees and PhD "equivalent degrees"

AHR does not review education discrepancies from International Universities. The SSC will consult the academic unit for their assessment of the academic criteria of the degree in question. The academic unit is then required to determine if the degree from an international university is equivalent to the required degree for the position. If the unit determines the international degree is comparable, AHR would need documentation supporting that the applicant will have the required degree by their start date.

For PhD equivalent degrees AHR will not make an academic judgment based on what constitutes an equivalent degree. The academic unit will need to provide their assessment of the academic criteria of the degree in question. (This academic analysis typically is provided by the PI or Department Chair.)