



Qualifying Education and Training Standards 2021

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Outcomes

Standard 1

Admissions

Social work courses recruit students who have the capability and suitability towards developing the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the professional standards and become registered upon completion of the course.

Standard 2

Learning environment

Social work courses deliver, in partnership with practice placement providers, practice learning experiences which support readiness to practise at the point of graduation. This includes providing learning opportunities that reflect and allow students to learn from the diversity of the communities they will work with.

Standard 3

Course governance, management and quality

Social work courses are governed, managed, continually improved and administered to a consistent quality and resourced sufficiently to ensure they meet the expectations of the regulator.

Standard 4

Curriculum and assessment

Social work courses are shaped by the needs and insights of academia, employers, practitioners and people with lived experience of social work. This is to ensure a continually evolving curriculum which is evidence-informed, matches the contemporary demands of the whole sector, is delivered by appropriately qualified and experienced professionals, and produces informed, capable, prepared and motivated graduates who deliver safe and effective services.

Standard 5

Supporting students

Social work students have effective educational and pastoral support to progress through their course and meet the professional standards when they qualify.

Standard 6

Level of qualification to apply for entry onto the register

Social work students who successfully complete approved courses are eligible to apply to join the social work register.

Admissions

Admissions processes must be robust, transparent, ensure that applicants meet course entry requirements and involve a range of stakeholders.



Outcome: Social work courses recruit students who have the capability and suitability towards developing the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the professional standards and become registered upon completion of the course.

Education and training providers will:

- 1.1 **Confirm on entry to the course, via a holistic/multi-dimensional assessment process, that applicants:**
 - i. have the potential to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the professional standards;
 - ii. can demonstrate that they have a good command of English;
 - iii. have the capability to meet academic standards; and
 - iv. have the capability to use information and communication technology (ICT) methods and techniques to achieve course outcomes.
- 1.2 **Ensure that applicants' prior relevant experience is considered as part of the admissions processes.**
- 1.3 **Ensure that employers, placement providers and people with lived experience of social work are involved in admissions processes.**
- 1.4 **Ensure that the admissions processes assess the suitability of applicants, including in relation to their conduct, health and character. This includes criminal conviction checks.**
- 1.5 **Ensure that there are equality and diversity policies in relation to applicants and that they are implemented and monitored.**
- 1.6 **Ensure that the admissions process gives applicants the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place on a course. This will include information about the professional standards, research interests and placement opportunities.**

Learning environment

The learning environment must provide education and training opportunities that enable students to develop their skills and knowledge across all areas of social work, gain required experience in practice settings and meet the professional standards in supportive, supervised and safe settings.



Outcome: Social work courses deliver, in partnership with practice placement providers, practice learning experiences that support readiness to practise at point of graduation. This includes providing learning opportunities that reflect and allow students to learn from the diversity of the communities they will work with.

Education and training providers will:

- 2.1 Ensure that students spend at least 200 days (including up to 30 skills days) gaining different experiences and learning in practice settings. Each student will have:
 - i. placements in at least two practice settings providing contrasting experiences; and
 - ii. a minimum of one placement taking place within a statutory setting, providing experience of sufficient numbers of statutory social work tasks involving high risk decision making and legal interventions.
- 2.2 Provide practice learning opportunities that enable students to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to develop and meet the professional standards.
- 2.3 Ensure that while on placements, students have appropriate induction, supervision, support, access to resources and a realistic workload.
- 2.4 Ensure that on placements, students' responsibilities are appropriate for their stage of education and training.
- 2.5 Ensure that students undergo assessed preparation for direct practice to make sure they are safe to carry out practice learning in a service delivery setting.
- 2.6 Ensure that practice educators are on the register and that they have the relevant and current knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning.
- 2.7 Ensure that policies and processes, including for whistleblowing, are in place for students to challenge unsafe behaviours and cultures and organisational wrongdoing, and report concerns openly and safely without fear of adverse consequences.

Course governance, management and quality

Social work courses must be governed, resourced and managed using effective and transparent processes in collaboration with employers and people with lived experience of social work.

There must be processes to monitor and manage the quality and delivery of courses.



Outcome: Social work courses are governed, managed, continually improved and administered to a consistent quality and resourced sufficiently to ensure they meet the expectations of the regulator.

Education and training providers will:

- 3.1 Ensure courses are supported by a management and governance plan that includes the roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability of individuals and governing groups in the delivery, resourcing and quality management of the course.
- 3.2 Ensure that they have agreements with placement providers to provide education and training that meets the professional standards and the education and training qualifying standards. This should include necessary consents and ensure placement providers have contingencies in place to deal with practice placement breakdown.
- 3.3 Ensure that placement providers have the necessary policies and procedures in relation to students' health, wellbeing and risk, and the support systems in place to underpin these.
- 3.4 Ensure that employers are involved in elements of the course, including but not limited to the management and monitoring of courses and the allocation of practice education.
- 3.5 Ensure that regular and effective monitoring, evaluation and improvement systems are in place, and that these involve employers, people with lived experience of social work, and students.
- 3.6 Ensure that the number of students admitted is aligned to a clear strategy, which includes consideration of local/regional placement capacity.

Education and training providers will:

3.7 Ensure that a lead social worker is in place to hold overall professional responsibility for the course. This person must be appropriately qualified and experienced, and on the register.

3.8 Ensure that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff, with relevant specialist subject knowledge and expertise, to deliver an effective course.

3.9 Evaluate information about students' performance, progression and outcomes, such as the results of exams and assessments, by collecting, analysing and using student data, including data on equality and diversity.

3.10 Ensure that educators are supported to maintain their knowledge and understanding in relation to professional practice.

Curriculum and assessment

Courses must be designed to enable students to develop the required behaviours, skills, knowledge and understanding to meet the professional standards.



Outcome: Social work courses are shaped by the needs and insights of academia, employers, practitioners and people with lived experience of social work. This is to ensure a continually evolving curriculum which is evidence-informed, matches the contemporary demands of the whole sector, is delivered by appropriately qualified and experienced professionals, and produces informed, capable, prepared and motivated graduates who deliver safe and effective services.

Education and training providers will:

- 4.1 Ensure that the content, structure and delivery of the training is in accordance with relevant guidance and frameworks and is designed to enable students to demonstrate that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to meet the professional standards.
- 4.2 Ensure that the views of employers, practitioners and people with lived experience of social work are incorporated into the design, ongoing development and review of the curriculum.
- 4.3 Ensure that the course is designed in accordance with equality, diversity and inclusion principles, and human rights and legislative frameworks.
- 4.4 Ensure that the course is continually updated as a result of developments in research, legislation, government policy and best practice.
- 4.5 Ensure that the integration of theory and practice is central to the course.
- 4.6 Ensure that students are given the opportunity to work with, and learn from, other professions in order to support multidisciplinary working, including in integrated settings.
- 4.7 Ensure that the number of hours spent in structured academic learning under the direction of an educator is sufficient to ensure that students meet the required level of competence.

Education and training providers will:

- 4.8 Ensure that the assessment strategy and design demonstrate that the assessments are robust, fair, reliable and valid, and that those who successfully complete the course have developed the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the professional standards.
- 4.9 Ensure that assessments are mapped to the curriculum and are appropriately sequenced to match students' progression through the course.
- 4.10 Ensure students are provided with feedback throughout the course to support their ongoing development.
- 4.11 Ensure assessments are carried out by people with appropriate expertise, and that external examiner(s) for the course are appropriately qualified and experienced and on the register.
- 4.12 Ensure that there are systems to manage students' progression, with input from a range of people, to inform decisions about their progression including via direct observation of practice.
- 4.13 Ensure that the course is designed to enable students to develop an evidence-informed approach to practice, underpinned by skills, knowledge and understanding in relation to research and evaluation.

Supporting students

Students must receive appropriate educational and pastoral support.



Outcome: Social work students have effective educational and pastoral support to progress through their course and develop the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the professional standards when they qualify.

Education and training providers will:

- 5.1 Ensure that students have access to resources to support their health and wellbeing including:
 - i. confidential counselling services;
 - ii. careers advice and support; and
 - iii. occupational health services.
- 5.2 Ensure that students have access to resources to support their academic development including, for example, personal tutors.
- 5.3 Ensure that there is a thorough and effective process for ensuring the ongoing suitability of students' conduct, character and health.
- 5.4 Make supportive and reasonable adjustments for students with health conditions or impairments to enable them to progress through their course and meet the professional standards, in accordance with relevant legislation.
- 5.5 Provide information to students about their curriculum, practice placements, assessments and transition to registered social worker including information on requirements for continuing professional development.
- 5.6 Provide information to students about parts of the course where attendance is mandatory.
- 5.7 Provide timely and meaningful feedback to students on their progression and performance in assessments.
- 5.8 Ensure there is an effective process in place for students to make academic appeals.

Level of qualification to apply for entry onto the register



Outcome: Social work students who successfully complete approved courses are eligible to apply to join the social work register.

Education and training providers will:

- 6.1 The threshold entry route to the register will normally be a bachelor's degree with honours in social work.

