



***Registration Policy of the College Regarding
Academic Qualifications and Experience Performing the Role Determined to
be Substantially Equivalent to a Degree in Social Work***

Approved by Council on December 8, 2017

Background

Under the terms of the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998*, the Registrar may grant a certificate of registration for social work to a person who has a combination of academic qualifications and experience performing the role of a social worker that the Registrar determines is substantially equivalent to the qualifications required for a degree in social work from a social work program accredited by the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE-ACFTS).

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out criteria to assist the Registrar to determine whether an applicant meets the requirements of section 7(1)1 iii of the Registration Regulation.¹

POLICY

In this policy, the following words and phrases have the meanings set out below:

“role of a social worker” means the role of a person who assesses, diagnoses, treats and evaluates individual, interpersonal and societal problems through the use of social work knowledge, skills, interventions and strategies, to assist individuals, dyads, families, groups, organizations and communities to achieve optimum psychosocial and social functioning.²

“substantially equivalent” means equal in value in essential and material requirements to the qualifications required for a degree in social work from a social work program accredited by the CASWE-ACFTS.

¹ O. Reg. 383/00, as amended from time to time.

² section 1, O. Reg. 383/00.



Criteria

Set out in sections I and II below are the criteria to be used by the Registrar to assist him/her to determine whether an applicant possesses a combination of academic qualifications and experience performing the role of a social worker that is substantially equivalent to the qualifications required for a social work degree from a social work program accredited by the CASWE-ACFTS.

This Registration Policy is a guide. However, it is a guide based on the standards of accreditation used by the CASWE-ACFTS. While the Registrar has discretion with respect to any particular application, a significant variance from this Policy would raise questions about the “substantial equivalence” of any particular applicant’s qualifications.

This Registration Policy assumes that section 7(1)1 iii is not intended to change the requirement of having appropriate academic qualifications as an essential prerequisite for the issuance of a general certificate of registration for social work. It is not intended to alter the standards of professional competence, and the foundation of those standards is a university-level program in social work.

I. Requirements:

- a. An applicant must possess a minimum of a university-level Bachelor’s degree, based on the norm of a four year degree programme (or three years in Quebec) with a minimum of 40% course credits in the liberal arts, humanities and social sciences. The four-year BSW curriculum reflects a balance of general education (at least 40 percent) and professional education (at least 50 percent) and a field practicum of at least 700 hours. The Quebec three-year programs essentially cover professional social work education and the field practicum, while liberal arts are principally covered at the CEGEP level.
- b. Included in the degree, or in some combination of acceptable education and training obtained outside the degree, there must be content judged to be minimally equivalent to 10 full credit undergraduate university-level courses. These content areas (outlined in section II below) are founded on the CASWE-ACFTS *Standards for Accreditation 2014*.



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- c. Experience performing the role of a social worker may be assessed as a substitute for academic credits/coursework, but only to a maximum of two full-credit courses or four half-courses, and only in connection with content areas 2 and 3.
- d. In addition to the formal education described above, the applicant must have practised in a situation where he/she performed the role of a social worker for at least one year.

During this year the applicant must have had direct responsibility for providing social work services to individuals, groups and communities. At least 700 hours of this practice must have been supervised by a social worker. Social work practice may be demonstrated through work experience, internship experience or practicum experience. It cannot be demonstrated through volunteer work.

II. Content Areas:

Content Area 1: Social Work Theory

This content area refers to the applicant's knowledge of various theories within the social work context. The applicant should demonstrate that the applicant's education links together the interdisciplinary theoretical knowledge base of social work and professional practice. Additionally, knowledge encompasses a range of theoretical perspectives and encourages critical thinking, discussion and debate.

The content area may be demonstrated through the completion of courses relating to:

- (a) knowledge of Canadian social work and social welfare history and social policy (full)³;
- (b) knowledge of the origins and dimensions of social problems in Canadian society (full); and,
- (c) an understanding of social work's origins, purposes and practices (full).

³ the term "full" when used to describe these courses means one full credit university level course.



Content Area 2: Social Work Practice

This content area refers to the applicant's knowledge, and/or experience performing the role of a social worker, related to the social work profession including ethical practice and the ability to engage in generalist practice with individuals, families, and groups. The applicant should demonstrate that the applicant:

- is grounded in reflective and culturally competent practice;
- is engaged in persistent inquiry into theoretical and research bases in the field;
- employs professional approaches and interventions to enhance individual, family, group, community, and population well-being;
- identifies as a professional social worker and adopts the value perspective of the social work profession;
- adheres to social work values and ethics in professional practice; and,
- engages with individuals, families, groups, and/or communities through professional practice.

The content area may be demonstrated through the completion of courses relating to:

- (a) an understanding of, and ability to apply, social work values and ethics in professional situations (full);
- (b) practice methods and professional skills required for generalist practice at a beginning level of competence (full);
- (c) awareness of self in terms of values, beliefs and experiences as these impact upon social work knowledge and practice (half)⁴; and,
- (d) understanding of other related occupations and professions sufficient to facilitate inter-professional collaboration (half).

⁴ the term "half" when used to describe these courses means one half credit university level course.



Content Area 3: Support for Social Justice, Human Rights and Awareness of Oppression

This content area refers to the applicant's knowledge of, and/or experience performing the role of a social worker, with diversity⁵, the promotion of social justice, and the impact of oppression, particularly but not exclusively, in the context of Canadian society. This includes knowledge and/or experience of human rights and responsibilities and respect for human diversity. The applicant's knowledge and/or experience seeks to facilitate well-being and participation of people, promote social and economic justice, and address structural and organizational sources of inequities.

The content area can be demonstrated through the completion of courses relating to:

- (a) knowledge related to practising sensitively in a range of geographical regions and with diverse ethnic, cultural and racial populations (half); and,
- (b) knowledge related to practising sensitively with oppressed groups in Canadian society (half).

Content Area 4: Critical Analysis

This content area refers to the capacity of the applicant to use critical thinking in professional practice, including analyzing complex social situations and making professional judgments, consistent with the values of the profession.

The content area can be demonstrated through the completion of courses relating to:

- (a) knowledge related to human development and behaviour in the social environment (full); and,
- (b) knowledge of multiple theoretical and conceptual bases of social work knowledge and practice (full).

⁵ Diversity throughout this document refers to a range of characteristics including, but not limited to: age, colour, culture, disability/non-disability status, ethnic or linguistic origin, gender, health status, heritage, immigration status, geographic origin, race, religious and spiritual beliefs, political orientation, gender and sexual identities, and socioeconomic status.



Content Area 5: Research

This content area refers to the applicant's knowledge of systematic inquiry such as research and evaluation demonstrated by the ability to undertake systematic inquiry and critical evaluation related to social work knowledge and practice (full).