

# Registration Guide

## General Certificate of Registration for Social Work – Combination of Academic Qualifications and Experience Performing the Role of a Social Worker



Ontario College of  
Social Workers and  
Social Service Workers

250 Bloor St. E.  
Suite 1000  
Toronto ON M4W 1E6

Telephone: 416-972-9882  
Toll Free: 1-877-828-9380  
Fax: 416-972-1512  
ocswssw.org

### Please review this document carefully before completing the application.

You may qualify for a general certificate of registration if you meet the following requirements:

1. You have 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).
2. You have engaged in the practice of social work within the five years immediately before the date of the application or otherwise satisfy the Registrar that you are competent to perform the role of a social worker.
3. You pay the application and registration fees.
4. You meet the requirements set out in sections 4 and 5 of Ontario Regulation 383/00, which is attached as Appendix I.

The following are the criteria to be used as guidelines by the Registrar in determining whether you have a **combination of academic qualifications and experience performing the role of a social worker** that is substantially equivalent to the qualifications required for a degree in social work from a social work program accredited by the CASWE:

- You must possess a minimum of a university-level bachelor's degree, based on the norm of a four-year first degree program (or a three-year bachelor's degree from Quebec), with a minimum of 40% course credits in the liberal arts, humanities and social sciences.
- Included in this degree, or in some combination of acceptable education and training obtained outside of the degree, there must be content, in the content areas and sub-areas described below, judged to be minimally equivalent to at least 10 undergraduate university-level courses. One full university course equivalent is a minimum of 75 hours.
- You must have practised in a situation where you performed the role of a social worker for at least one year.

*“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. (s. 2, Ontario Regulation 383/00)*

- During this year you 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.

### ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

You must demonstrate that you obtained a minimum of a university-level bachelor's degree, based on the norm of a four-year first degree program (or a three-year bachelor's degree in Quebec) with at least 40 per cent of course credits in the liberal arts, humanities and social sciences.

In the Registrar's view, the norm of a four-year first degree program includes a three-year bachelor's degree and a graduate degree, or a three-year bachelor's degree and a further year or more in another focused program of university-level study.

### TRANSCRIPTS

For every academic program or individual course completed at an educational institution in Canada and the United States that you wish to have considered, the Registrar will accept only **original official transcripts received directly from the university/academic institution**. Transcripts issued to applicants are not acceptable, even if sealed.

### INTERNATIONAL DEGREE PROGRAMS

If you would like the Registrar to consider a degree completed at an educational institution outside Canada and the United States, the Registrar will require a report from a third party credential evaluation agency (e.g., International Credential Assessment Service of Canada or World Education Services Canada) that indicates the Canadian equivalents of the program, **and** the credits earned for each course completed. The Registrar will only accept reports received directly from the credential evaluation agency. Having received the official credential evaluation report, the College will not require international degree transcript(s).

Applicants are responsible for the costs of obtaining the report, and should ensure that they also receive a copy of it. If transcripts for such an evaluation are difficult to obtain, you may discuss the matter with the Registration Department.

University-based academic credential assessments (e.g., the Comparative Education Service) are NOT accepted.

## COURSE CONTENT OF DEGREE PROGRAM

When evaluating your application, the Registrar expects an applicant to demonstrate course content in the content areas founded on the CASWE *Standards of Accreditation* (2014) that is equivalent to at least 10 full undergraduate university courses.

The Registrar considers the information provided by the academic institution(s) and by the applicant to determine whether the content areas have been satisfied. You do NOT need to indicate which of your courses you think should meet each area.

## COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

In order to consider any course relative to the content areas, the Registrar requires a copy of the institution's **official course calendar description, course outline or syllabus** that applies to the course **in the year it was completed**. Many universities offer archives of historical course descriptions on their websites.

The College accepts course descriptions in **English or French only**. Descriptions in other languages must be translated by an accredited translator (e.g., ATIO member) at the applicant's expense.

If you would like the Registrar to consider courses that have a generic official description, such as "selected topics", independent research, or thesis courses, the Registrar's ability to evaluate the courses will depend upon the quality of the information received about the specific topic, research or thesis. Please provide independent verification of the content covered, such as an official outline for a selected topics course, a summary and/or evaluation for an independent research course, and the cover page, with title and abstract, for a major paper or thesis.

## FIELD PLACEMENT / PRACTICUM / INTERNSHIP

If you completed a field placement, practicum or internship as part of your academic program which you wish the Registrar to consider, you must provide a written description as follows:

- brief description of agency/setting
- brief description of client population(s)
- brief description of roles/responsibilities
- duration (start/end dates; number of hours per week/month)

## CONTENT AREAS

Set out below are the content areas and sub-areas with descriptions of the relevant content and course weight sought by the Registrar (i.e., half or full university course) for each. One full university course equivalent is a minimum of 75 hours (typically two semesters). One half university course equivalent is a minimum of 37.5 hours (typically one semester).

Normally, the Registrar believes that a course may be applied in only one content area.

In certain content areas, as indicated below, the Registrar is also willing to consider experience performing the role of a social worker which is obtained outside the academic degree program. However, because the Registrar believes that most content areas should be demonstrated by university courses, such experience may be used to demonstrate a maximum of two full (or four half) university courses, and only in the content areas identified as open to the substitution of experience.

### 1. SOCIAL WORK THEORY

#### a. Knowledge of Canadian social work and social welfare history and social policy

Content can only be demonstrated by a minimum of a full university course, or two half university courses.

The Registrar considers courses which emphasize critical analyses of the Canadian social welfare system from a historical and/or contemporary perspective and which address the analysis of the social work profession in terms of its functions, theoretical base, methods of interventions and fields of practice. The Registrar also considers courses that address the Canadian institutional response to social, political and economic change.

#### b. Knowledge of the origins and dimensions of social problems in Canadian society

Content can only be demonstrated by a minimum of a full university course, or two half university courses.

The Registrar considers courses which examine historical or contemporary Canadian social problems such as social inequality, poverty, family violence, violence against women, addictions, corrections and unemployment from a planning and policy perspective. The Registrar also considers courses which focus on analyzing comparative social welfare programs or policies.

#### c. Understanding of social work's origins, purposes and practices

Content can only be demonstrated by a minimum of a full university course, or two half university courses.

The Registrar considers courses which address the philosophical and historical bases of modes of helping as they apply to practising social work sensitively and competently with a variety of client systems. The Registrar considers courses that focus on the development of social work skills in assessment, intervention and problem solving techniques required for professional social work practice.

## 2. SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

### a. Understanding of, and ability to apply, social work values and ethics in professional situations

Content can be demonstrated by a minimum of a full university course, or the equivalent in half university courses and/or acceptable experience obtained outside a degree program.

The Registrar considers courses or experience obtained outside the degree which demonstrate the development and awareness of the values of respect for the best interests of the client; an ability to practice with integrity and objectivity; respect for confidentiality; and an ability to practice in such a way so as not to diminish the public's trust in the profession.

### b. Practice methods and professional skills required for generalist practice at a beginning level of competence

Content can be demonstrated by a minimum of a full university course, or the equivalent in half university courses and/or acceptable experience obtained outside a degree program.

The Registrar considers courses or experience obtained outside the degree which would provide the essential skills necessary to practise within a generalist practice framework. Acceptable courses or experience obtained outside the degree would address the broad range of skills needed to intervene at the level of the individual, family, group, organization and community and to promote social justice. Key skills include the ability to: conduct assessments from a person-in-environment perspective; establish accountable relationships that foster empowerment; demonstrate an eclectic application of theories and techniques; and evaluate one's own social work interventions. Course content or experience obtained outside the degree would emphasize techniques in assessment, communication, interviewing and problem-solving.

### c. Awareness of self in terms of values, beliefs and experiences as these impact upon social work knowledge and practice

Content can be demonstrated by a half university course, or the equivalent in acceptable experience obtained outside a degree program.

The Registrar considers courses or experience obtained outside the degree which provide content in interviewing skills focusing on critical self-reflection and self-awareness.

### d. Understanding of other related occupations and professions sufficient to facilitate inter-professional collaboration

Content can be demonstrated by a half university course, or the equivalent in acceptable experience obtained outside a degree program.

The Registrar considers courses or experience obtained outside the degree which focus on the elements of inter-professional collaboration (respect, client-focused, conflict resolution).

## 3. SUPPORT FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE, HUMAN RIGHTS AND AWARENESS OF OPPRESSION

### a. Knowledge related to practising sensitively in a range of geographical regions and with diverse ethnic, cultural and racial populations

Content can be demonstrated by a half university course, or the equivalent in acceptable experience obtained outside a degree program.

The Registrar considers courses or experience obtained outside the degree which focus on diversity and cultural competence and how these impact practice.

### b. Knowledge related to practising sensitively with oppressed groups in Canadian society

Content can be demonstrated by a half university course, or the equivalent in acceptable experience obtained outside a degree program.

The Registrar considers courses or experience obtained outside the degree which address systemic issues of oppression and privilege with respect to identified oppressed groups in society.

## 4. CRITICAL ANALYSIS

### a. Knowledge related to human development and behaviour in the social environment

Content can only be demonstrated by a minimum of a full university course, or two half university courses.

The Registrar considers courses that emphasize cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects of personality development. Courses in psychology, life cycle development, life cycle relationships, human sexuality, personality and/or aspects of atypical personality disorders are considered.

**b. Knowledge of multiple theoretical and conceptual bases of social work knowledge and practice**

Content can only be demonstrated by a minimum of a full university course, or two half university courses.

The Registrar considers courses which would provide a foundation for generalist practice. The values, principles, generic processes and holistic perspective of generalist social work practice are essential to substantially equivalent courses in this content area. Course content would include an integration of: a person-in-environment perspective that is informed by ecological systems theory, a multiple systems analysis, and a strengths-based problem-solving approach that focuses on client empowerment and social justice. Courses in counselling, policy or community practice may demonstrate this generalist practice perspective.

## 5. RESEARCH

**a. Ability to undertake systematic inquiry and critical evaluation related to social work knowledge and practice**

Content can only be demonstrated through a minimum of a full university course, or two half university courses.

The Registrar considers courses in research methodology and statistics, with a focus on methodological and statistical procedures required to implement elementary research procedures in the social or human services field and utilize research principles and results.

### EXPERIENCE PERFORMING THE ROLE OF A SOCIAL WORKER

In addition to the formal education described above, you must have practised in a situation where you performed the role of a social worker for at least one year. During this year, you 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. The social work practice can take place in the workplace or as part of an academic practicum experience.

**This criterion cannot be satisfied by volunteer work.**

To evaluate whether you meet these requirements, the Registrar requires a Length of Practice and Supervision Confirmation Form (Part II) completed by a past or current employer or supervisor. If necessary, you may arrange for the College to receive more than one completed Form.

Section II of the Length of Practice and Supervision Confirmation Form must be completed entirely including date and signature by your employer or supervisor and the form must be sent by them directly to the College. **The College will not accept forms from the applicant, or forms that are completed by the applicant, even if signed by the employer or supervisor.**

### CURRENCY OF PRACTICE OF SOCIAL WORK

You must have engaged in the practice of social work within the five years immediately before the date of the application or otherwise satisfy the Registrar that you are competent to perform the role of a social worker. This requirement does not apply to an applicant who has obtained the academic qualification and experience required for registration with the College within the five years immediately before the date of the application.

The application form asks you if you have engaged in the practice of social work within the five years immediately before the date of your application. It also asks you to provide information regarding your experience performing the role of a social worker, starting with your current or most recent employer.

If you engaged in the practice of social work in private practice, you must provide information regarding your private practice, starting with your current or most recent private practice. You must also enclose an original business card, letterhead or other evidence that confirms your private practice.

If your answer is “No”, and you have not engaged in the practice of social work within the five years immediately before the date of the application, you must submit a completed Supplemental Form regarding Competence to Perform the Role of a Social Worker.

### CONSENT TO THE RELEASE OF INFORMATION FROM THE REGISTER FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES

Please indicate whether or not you consent to the release of information pertaining to you for the purpose of research by checking the appropriate box. If you do not complete this section, the College will assume that you do not consent. Completion of this section enables the College to respond to requests for information contained in the Register from persons or organizations conducting research. In accordance with the policy approved by Council respecting such requests, with your consent, the only information contained in the Register that may be released includes some or all of the following: your name, category of membership, name of your business or employer, your business address and your business telephone number.

### PAYMENT

- **A non-refundable application fee of \$100 is required.**
- A registration fee of \$360 is required.
- Payment in full must be submitted with the completed application form.
- Post-dated payments will not be accepted.
- Payment may be made by cheque or money order, payable to the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers.

- Payment may also be made by Mastercard or Visa, including Visa debit and Mastercard debit. Ensure that you complete all sections of the credit card authorization section.
- A charge of \$25 will be levied on each cheque that is not honoured.

The registration fee is pro-rated on a quarterly basis according to the date the certificate of registration is issued. A refund, if applicable, will be sent to you when the certificate of registration is issued.

Applicants are responsible for all costs of the application.

**Please email [equivalency@ocswssw.org](mailto:equivalency@ocswssw.org) if there are questions regarding the application or the application process.**

## Appendix 1

### Excerpts from Ontario Regulation 383/00 made under the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998*

4. It is a requirement for the issuing of a certificate of registration of any class that the applicant pay the fees prescribed by the bylaws.

5.(2) The following are registration requirements for a certificate of registration of any class.

5.(2) 1. The applicant must disclose, at the time the application is made and at the time the certificate of registration is issued, the following information relating to the applicant and to the practice of social work, social service work or any other profession, whether in Ontario or in any other jurisdiction.

5.(2) 1.i Every finding of professional misconduct, incompetence or incapacity and every other similar finding, including a finding of professional misconduct, incompetence or incapacity made by a professional association or other body that has self-regulatory responsibility.

5.(2) 1. ii Every current proceeding in relation to professional misconduct, incompetence or incapacity and every other similar proceeding, including a proceeding relating to professional misconduct, incompetence or incapacity held by a professional association or other body that has self-regulatory responsibility.

5.(2) 2. The applicant must disclose, at the time the application is made and at the time the certificate of registration is issued, every finding of guilt in relation to a criminal offence, an offence under the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* (Canada) or the *Food and Drugs Act* (Canada) or any other offence relevant to the applicant's suitability to practise social work or social service work, as the case may be.

5.(2) 3. The applicant's past and present conduct must afford reasonable grounds for the belief that the applicant,

- i. does not have any physical or mental condition or disorder that could affect his or her ability to practise social work or social service work, as the case may be, in a safe manner,
- ii. will practise social work or social service work, as the case may be, with decency, integrity and honesty and in accordance with the law, including but not limited to the Act, the regulations and the bylaws, and
- iii. has sufficient knowledge, skill and judgment to practise social work or social service work, as the case may be.

5.(2) 4. The applicant must demonstrate the ability to speak and write either English or French with reasonable fluency.

5.(2) 5. The applicant must be a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident of Canada or be authorized under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (Canada) to engage in the practice of social work or social service work, as the case may be.

5.(3) Despite any other provision in this Regulation, an applicant who makes a false or misleading statement, representation or declaration in or in connection with his or her application, by commission or omission, shall be deemed thereafter, with respect to the application, not to satisfy, and not to have satisfied, the requirements for a certificate of registration of any class.

5.(4) An applicant who, after having applied for but before being issued a certificate of registration, becomes the subject of a finding or a proceeding described in subparagraph 1 i or ii of subsection (2) or is found guilty of an offence described in paragraph 2 of subsection (2), shall immediately inform the Registrar.

This Registration Guide reflects requirements set out in the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998*, regulations made under the Act, bylaws of the College, and policies and guidelines of the Council.