



Registration Policy of the College Regarding Academic Qualifications and Experience Performing the Role Determined to be Substantially Equivalent to a Diploma in Social Service Work¹

Approved May 6, 2022

Background:

Under the terms of the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act*, 1998 (the “**Act**”) and the regulations made under the Act, the Registrar may grant a certificate of registration for social service work to an applicant who “has a combination of academic qualifications and experience performing the role of a social service worker that the Registrar determines is substantially equivalent to the qualifications required for a diploma in social service work from a social service work program offered in Ontario at a College of Applied Arts and Technology” (Ontario Regulation 383/00 s. 8.(1)1.iv.).

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to assist the Registrar in making such a determination. (This policy has been adapted from the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities - *Social Service Worker Program Standard*, 2018, (MTCU funding code 50721).

Policy:

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

“**role of a social service worker**” means the role of a person who assesses, treats and evaluates individual, interpersonal and societal problems through the use of social service work knowledge, skills, interventions and strategies, to assist individuals, dyads, families, groups, organizations and communities to achieve optimum social functioning.^[1]

“**substantially equivalent**” means equal in value in essential and material requirements to the qualifications required for a diploma in social service work from a social service work program offered in Ontario at a College of Applied Arts and Technology (CAAT).

^[1] section 1, O. Reg. 383/00.

(Approved May 26, 2003, March 22, 2011, May 6, 2022)



Criteria

Set out in sections I and II below are the criteria to be used by the Registrar to assist them to determine whether an applicant possesses a combination of academic qualifications and experience performing the role of a social service worker that is substantially equivalent to the qualifications required for a social service worker diploma from a social service work program offered in Ontario at a CAAT.

This Registration Policy is a guide. However, it is a guide based on the Program Standard for social service work diploma programs set out by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. 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 8(1) iv 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 service work. It is not intended to alter the standards of professional competence, and the foundation of those standards is a diploma from a social service work program at a CAAT in Ontario.

I. Academic Qualifications

1. The applicant must possess a minimum of a diploma from a two-year program at an Ontario College of Applied Arts and Technology or a diploma equivalent to a diploma from a two-year program at an Ontario College of Applied Arts and Technology or a degree from a university program that is at least two years in length. (In this policy, such diploma or degree program is referred to as the “academic program”). The academic program must be a minimum of 4 academic semesters in duration.
2. The applicant must demonstrate that they meet the **Vocational Learning Outcomes**, **General Education Requirement**, and **Essential Employability Skills** in the manner set out below.

Vocational Learning Outcomes

1. The applicant must demonstrate that they have achieved, through the course credits obtained in the academic program, the following ten **Vocational Learning Outcomes**:



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- i. develop respectful and collaborative professional and interpersonal relationships that adhere to professional, legal, and ethical standards aligned to social service work.
- ii. record information accurately and communicate effectively in written, digital, verbal and non-verbal ways, in adherence to privacy and freedom of information legislation, in accordance with professional and workplace standards.
- iii. integrate a practice framework within a service delivery continuum, addressing the needs of individuals, families and communities at micro, mezzo, macro and global levels, and work with them in achieving their goals.
- iv. plan and implement accessible and responsive programs and services, recognizing the diverse needs and experiences of individuals, groups, families and communities, and meeting these needs.
- v. examine current social policy, relevant legislation, and political, social, historical, and/or economic systems and their impacts for individuals and communities when delivering services to the user/client.
- vi. develop strategies and approaches that support individual clients, groups, families and communities in building the capacity for self-advocacy, while affirming their dignity and self-worth.
- vii. work from an anti-oppressive, strengths-based practice, recognizing the capacity for resilience and growth of individuals and communities when responding to the diverse needs of marginalized or vulnerable populations to act as allies and advocates.
- viii. develop strategies and approaches to implement and maintain holistic self-care as a member of a human service profession.
- ix. work with individuals, groups, families and their communities to ensure that service provider strategies promote social and economic justice, and challenge patterns of oppression, discrimination and harassment, and sexual violence with clients, coworkers and communities.
- x. develop the capacity to work with the Indigenous individual, families, groups and communities while respecting their inherent rights to self-determine, and to identify and address systemic barriers that produce ill-effects, developing appropriate responses using approaches such as trauma informed care practice.



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2. The course credits obtained in the academic program that are used to demonstrate achievement of the ten Vocational Learning Outcomes must be equal to a minimum of 680 instructional hours (approximately 17 vocational courses).²
3. The course credits obtained in the academic program that are used to demonstrate achievement of the ten Vocational Learning Outcomes cannot be applied to demonstrate achievement of the General Education Requirement or the general education instructional hour requirement.

Essential Employability Skills

1. The applicant must demonstrate, in the manner set out below, that they have achieved the following 11 **Essential Employability Skills**:
 - i. the ability to communicate clearly, concisely, and correctly in the written, spoken, and visual form that fulfils the purpose and meets the needs of the audience.
 - ii. the ability to respond to written, spoken, or visual messages in a manner that ensures effective communication.
 - iii. the ability to execute mathematical operations accurately.
 - iv. the ability to apply a systematic approach to solve problems.
 - v. the ability to use a variety of thinking skills to anticipate and solve problems.
 - vi. the ability to locate, select, organize, and document information using appropriate technology and information systems.
 - vii. the ability to analyze, evaluate, and apply relevant information from a variety of sources.
 - viii. the ability to show respect for the diverse opinions, values, belief systems, and contributions of others.
 - ix. the ability to interact with others in groups or teams in ways that contribute to effective working relationships and the achievement of goals.
 - x. the ability to manage the use of time and other resources to complete projects.
 - xi. the ability to take responsibility for one's own actions, decisions, and consequences.

² A typical course at a College of Applied Arts and Technology in Ontario is comprised of 39-45 instructional hours and has an evaluative component.



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2. The applicant must demonstrate that they have achieved the 11 **Essential Employability Skills** described in paragraph 6 above principally by obtaining course credits that form part of the academic program.

General Education Requirement

1. The applicant must demonstrate that they have achieved, through the course credits obtained in the academic program, the **General Education Requirement**, in at least one of the following areas of study:
 - i. Arts in Society: recognize and evaluate artistic and creative achievements.
 - ii. Civic Life: understand the patterns of human relationships that underlie the orderly interactions of a society's various structural units.
 - iii. Social and Cultural Understanding: gain an awareness of one's own place in contemporary culture and society by acquiring knowledge of the patterns and precedents of the past.
 - iv. Personal Understanding: develop and understand oneself as an integrated physiological and psychological entity in order to be a fully functioning person.
 - v. Science and Technology: understand the basics of scientific inquiry that deals with fundamental or basic questions of science and technology in a non-applied manner.
2. The course credits obtained in the academic program that are used to demonstrate achievement of the General Education Requirement, must be equal to a minimum of 120 instructional hours (typically 3 to 5 courses).
3. The course credits obtained in the academic program that are used to demonstrate achievement of the General Education Requirement cannot be applied to demonstrate achievement of the Vocational Learning Outcomes or the vocational learning outcomes instructional hour requirement.



II. Experience Performing the Role of a Social Service Worker

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

1. In addition to the formal education described in paragraphs 1 to 10 above, the applicant must have practised in a setting where they performed the role of a social service worker for at least one year.³
2. The social service work practice can take place in the workplace or as part of an academic practicum experience which meets all the requirements, or a combination of the foregoing. The requirement for social service work practice cannot be satisfied through volunteer work.
3. During the year of experience performing the role of a social service worker, the applicant must have had direct responsibility for providing social service work services to individuals, dyads, families, groups, organizations, and communities or any of the foregoing.

Supervision

1. During the period of time the applicant performed the role of a social service worker, at least 650 hours must have been supervised by a person holding an accredited degree in social work, an approved diploma in social service work, and/or is a registered social worker or registered social service worker in Ontario.

³An applicant must demonstrate at least one year of performing the role of a social service worker on the basis that the applicant has not had the benefit of attending field seminar/field placement or integrated seminar courses which are part of a social service work program. Field seminar/field placement or integrated seminar courses typically link the theoretical curriculum with the applied learning that is acquired in a practicum.