Master of Social Work (Qualifying)

Information for prospective students

OVERVIEW
The MSW(Qualifying) prepares students to practise as qualified social workers in a range of fields including health, mental health, corrections, community work, aged care, women’s services, disability, child and family services, migrant and refugee services and international development. Applicants should have a bachelor’s degree as well as extensive experience working in the area of human services. Drawing on local and international perspectives, the program aims to produce graduates who are critically reflective and who can accept leadership roles in and field of the social work profession.

The goal of social work education is to provide a rigorous program that produces graduates who are competent, effective, skilled, knowledge-based, ethically aware and confident practitioners. Given the nature of social work and the diverse and changing labour market, it is important that students have the capacity to transfer knowledge and skills across different contexts and levels of intervention from interpersonal to institutional to societal. The acquisition of generic skills is integral to this, particularly in relation to social policy, social work practice, levels of intervention (methods) and research.

Inductive learning is encouraged and greater self-directedness is expected as students gain experience and increased confidence.

The content of the MSW (Qualifying) is based on the values set out in the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) Code of Ethics and the AASW Practice Standards. A commitment to social justice is a core value of the University of Sydney MSW (Qualifying). The program will:

– incorporate a constructive and critical approach to knowledge-building and application
– promote sensitivity to, and incorporate content on, culture, ethnicity, race, gender and sexual orientation
– identify and select curricula determined by local, national and/or regional/international needs and priorities
– incorporate knowledge about the history, culture, strengths, and disadvantage suffered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities
– incorporate knowledge from other disciplines, in particular, the social and behavioural sciences.

The program responds to the key priority learning areas that are identified by the AASW accreditation process: child protection, cross-cultural practice, mental health, and standards for social work practice with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.

Students completing the MSW (Qualifying) would be required to complete at least 12 units of study, including 140 days field education. At least one master’s level research unit must be taken as an elective.

The program aims to incorporate greater flexibility for students and enable greater choice in tailoring a program to their own learning goals.

HOW TO APPLY
Apply to the University directly, not through the UAC. First-round applications must be received between August 30 and November 22, 2013. Applications received after November 1 will be assessed for the second round, which will close on January 17, 2014. To apply, visit <http://sydney.edu.au/education_social_work/future_students/graduate_entry/MSWQ_applications.shtml> and follow the instructions on that page.

There is no Semester Two intake.
ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA
People applying for entry into the MSW(Qualifying) will be required to:
– hold a recognised bachelor’s degree (excluding BSW)
– have a minimum of three (3) years’ full-time experience in the human and community services industry in the past eight (8) years
– provide a written statement (500 words) addressing their suitability for the program and the prerequisite knowledge
– provide referee report/s outlining their suitability for the program (domestic students must provide one report; international students must provide three).

Because social work draws on knowledge from a range of disciplines, students are required to enter the program with: (a) an understanding of society and how it has developed and is organised, and (b) knowledge of human behaviour and development.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE
The MSW(Qualifying) is a two-year full-time (four-year part-time) program. The program is timetabled to enable students to continue to work on at least a part-time basis, in recognition of their different life stages to most undergraduate students. The AASW guidelines indicate all students must complete 140 days practice learning under the direct supervision of a suitably experienced and qualified social work practitioner.

Arrangements for practice learning will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis with students, exploring the possibilities for recognition of prior learning, as well as for placement in existing workplaces. These negotiations will be with the faculty’s director of field education and will be consistent with the requirements of the AASW for accredited practice.

Current units of study include Child Wellbeing & Protection; Health & Inequality; Violence Against Women; and Social Perspectives on Ageing.

FEES
Local students
$2934 per semester (indicative for Commonwealth-supported place in 2012; subject to change in 2014)

International students
$15,000 per semester (subject to change in 2014)

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
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