



Social Workers Registration Board

Kāhui Whakamana Tauwhiro

ENOUGH PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

POLICY STATEMENT

Approved: August 2009
Last reviewed: February 2017
For review: March 2019

ENOUGH PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

This policy statement is based on the Social Workers Registration Act 2003 (the Act)

1. Introduction and Obligations of the Board

The Social Workers Registration Act (2003) requires the Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB) to establish clear criteria for the registration of social workers.

- Section 6 entitles a person who has a recognised NZ qualification to be registered subject to meeting competence requirements; being a “fit and proper” person; being competent to practice social work with Maori and different ethnic and cultural groups, and that “he or she has enough practical experience in practising social work.” s6(d).
- Section 7 (e), in referring to registration of a person with an overseas qualification, also requires that “he or she has enough practical experience in practising social work”.
- Section 13 (b)(i) empowers the Board to fully register an applicant with neither a recognised NZ qualification nor an overseas qualification equivalent to a recognised NZ qualification where the Board is satisfied that “his or her practical experience in practising social work in New Zealand is enough to compensate for the lack of such a qualification”.

2. Enough Practical Experience as Social Workers

The Act enables the Board to develop a framework to determine what is “enough” experience.

The Board considers that:

- enough practical experience for a Social Worker who has graduated with a recognised NZ social work qualification, or equivalent, will be 2000 hours supervised practice in New Zealand, post-qualification;
- enough practical experience for a social worker who has graduated with an overseas qualification will be 2000 hours of supervised social work practice in New Zealand. This supervision is to be provided by a social worker who has 5 years of experience working as a social worker in New Zealand with full registration;
- for applicants who are eligible for registration under Section 13, enough practical experience is addressed in the Policy Entitlement to Registration – Criteria for Section 13 Registration.

3. Rationale

- Supervised practice experience is considered paramount for competence to practice.
- A period of supervised practice in New Zealand following qualification complements the knowledge, skills and practical experience gained during the programme of study.
- A period of supervised social work practice in New Zealand for overseas qualified social workers is considered essential to develop skills to practise social work with Māori and the different cultural and ethnic groups in New Zealand.
- The required number of hours fits within a range when benchmarked with other professions.