

Short to medium-term flexibilities in response to COVID-19 levels three and four

The SWRB has agreed to the following supports:

1. Programme re-recognition process and panel composition:

- a) Reschedule current 2020 programme re-recognition assessments to after 30 June 2020.
- b) Existing programme recognitions dated to 31/12/2020 may need to be extended to 2021. This decision will be made after 30 September 2020.
- c) Re-recognition panel composition will be amended so that the international social work academic may be replaced by a second senior New Zealand social work academic nominated by the SWRB secretariat.

2. Mid recognition cycle assessment and panel composition:

- a) Trial the first scheduled mid-cycle assessment virtually. (Currently this is scheduled for May 2020.)
- b) Reschedule the remaining three 2020 mid-cycle assessments to after June 2020 and plan for them to be undertaken virtually.
- c) Amend the panel composition to include one SWRB official/staff member and one other New Zealand social work academic or senior practitioner nominated by the SWRB secretariat, who is conversant in Mātauranga Māori, Tikanga and Te Reo.

3. Programme Recognition Standards (PRS):

a) PRS 2.9 - Distance programmes will have a minimum of 20 days face to face social work skills teaching over the course of the programme.

- a. Whilst COVID-19 alert levels are at levels three or four, no face to face social work skills teaching should occur.
- b. The SWRB supports institutes delivering distance programmes to develop alternative and innovative means of delivering face to face social work skills teaching, whether that be through the use of social media platforms or other virtual means. It remains the responsibility of institutes to assure the SWRB that students have developed sufficient skills and are competent to practice as a beginning social worker.

b) PRS 2.10 - All students must have marae-based experience.

- a. Whilst COVID-19 alert levels are at levels three or four, no marae-based experiences should occur.
- b. The purpose of the marae-based experience is to prepare students for their field work education experience. Completion is expected at an early stage within a programme, to ensure that students have core competencies to work with Māori.
- c. Therefore, the SWRB considers that very few students who are anticipating graduation this year, would not have already had a marae-based experience.
- d. The SWRB requires any institutes with final year students in this position to make early contact.

c) PRS 3.1 - The programme will require students to undertake a minimum of 120 days of field education in the final two years of the programme. A day is not less than 7.5 hours.

- a. The SWRB expects all students to complete 120 days of field education, which may be counted in hours. (900 hours)
- b. Any days or hours completed on a placement that is suspended, as a result of COVID-19 will count towards this standard.

- c. Blocks of field education that are less than 7.5 hours in duration can be counted towards this standard.
 - d. The SWRB's strong preference is for all social work students to have two placements in two different agencies, totalling 120 days/900 hours. However, the SWRB will allow the 120 days/900 hours to be completed within a single agency where students experience **at least two different fields of practice, with two different field education supervisors.**
- d) PRS 3.2 - Field education will be delivered through a collaboration between the tertiary education provider, the agency, and practitioners supporting the students in the field education.**
- a. If required, TEIs can develop online alternatives to face-to-face fieldwork education, for part or all of one placement of no more than 60 days, as long as the learning experiences offered ensure that the placement learning outcomes and competencies can be met. Any alternative fieldwork education experiences can be supervised by an experienced social work practitioner, or a Registered Social Worker (RSW) member of academic staff.
- e) PRS 3.9 – There will be at least two placements, both of which must be a minimum of 50 days duration over a minimum of three days a week.**
- a. If a placement is suspended before planned completion for COVID-19 related reasons, the student may continue fieldwork at another agency or in an alternative fieldwork experience.
 - b. Any days or hours completed on a placement that is suspended will count towards the 120 days/900 hours requirement.
 - c. Placements may be divided across more than one agency or team setting and separated by time if necessary. Placements may be shorter than 50 days, but must be at least 20 days, as long as assurance can be provided to the SWRB that the student experiences at least two separate fields of practice.
- f) PRS 3.11 - A student will undertake no more than one field education experience within the student's place of work.**
- a. A student may undertake both placements in their place of work providing that both placements meet the requirements of 3.10 & 3.12 and placements are in two different fields of practice, and both field placements have separate field education supervisor.
- g) PRS 3.13 - Supervision will be the joint responsibility of the educational institute and the agency providing the field education experience.**
- a. Supervision will remain a joint responsibility. However, where a student is undertaking an alternative field work placement due to COVID-19, they may be supervised by an RSW member of academic staff.
- h) PRS 3.14 – All students doing field education will have supervision, of at least a minimum of 1 hour per week or equivalent, provided by a social worker with full registration, at least 2 years of supervised social work practice in New Zealand and a current Practising Certificate.**
- a. This supervision may now be done remotely.
- i) PRS 3.15 – Wherever possible, at least one field education experience will be supervised on site by a social worker who holds full registration, at least 2 years of supervised social work practice and a current Practising Certificate.**
- a. Students may be able to have external supervision by a RSW in both of their placements, or by an RSW member of academic staff in an alternative fieldwork experience.