MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

Social work is a profession committed to the pursuit of human rights and social justice, to the enhancement of the quality of life, and to the development of the full potential of each individual, group and community in society.

SOCIAL WORK AT MONASH?
The Department of Social Work was established at Monash University in 1973. Since then the department has become one of the most respected social work schools in Australia.

The vision statement for the Department is: Social Work – leading socially just and sustainable change.

The Department of Social Work was one of the first to receive national accreditation of its reputation. We get an international reputation for our research into child and family wellbeing, criminal justice, health and mental health, and young people transitioning from out-of-home care.

WHAT PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS WILL I GAIN?
The Master of Social Work is an Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) accredited professional training course that qualifies students for work as Social Workers.

The course is designed to ensure students acquire the higher level knowledge and skills for professional practice as Social Work practitioners as well as for research and policy development in Social Work. The course encompasses the requisites AASW knowledge of the four core learning areas – mental health, child, youth and family well-being, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and cross cultural practices.

Our graduates have an excellent record in gaining employment. Social work has been identified as one of the fastest growing professions and it provides a wide range of employment opportunities. For example, Monash graduates find work as family counsellors, child protection workers and school counsellors. They work in hospitals and community health centres, mental health services and palliative care programs.

They work in youth services, in family violence and sexual assault services, neighbourhood houses and in services for migrants and refugees. They work with youth and adult offenders, and with people who have drug and alcohol problems. They also work in community development, in policy development and in management in human service organisations.

ON-CAMPUS AND OFF-CAMPUS STUDY

The Master of Social Work is offered both on-campus and off-campus.

The on-campus courses are offered at Caulfield and involve regular class attendance. Students are able to enjoy the general benefits of student life and the on-campus facilities.

The off-campus program requires attendance at twice-yearly workshops. It is particularly attractive to applicants already in the field who wish to increase their career prospects; for parents who wish to study while caring for children; and for people living in rural areas.

SUPERVISED PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Students complete two 500 hour placements during their degree. These are undertaken in human service agencies, and are supervised by agency staff. The placements make for a long academic year and students should ensure that they are able to fit the placements in with their other commitments.

Off-campus students may undertake the placements part time; under special circumstances on-campus students may do so as well. Please note that all students will be subject to a police check and Working with Children Check before undertaking a placement.

MSW 2 YEAR POSTGRADUATE DEGREE

Applicants must have completed an undergraduate degree at a recognised university, including two full semester units in the study of society (as required by the AASW). Units fulfilling studies of society are broadly assessed and include, for example, studies in sociology, social science, social psychology, human development, anthropology, philosophy, history, gender, law, politics, media, the arts, technology, and multicultural society.

TEACHING METHODS AND ASSESSMENT

A wide variety of teaching methods are used in the course. These include lectures, small group discussions, and experiential programs where students are given an opportunity to develop and practice skills in interviewing. Assessment methods include written assignments, class and take-home examinations, group projects and submission of video and/or audiotapecs. Off-campus students are also given detailed course material.

WORKSHOPS FOR OFF-CAMPUS STUDENTS

Two compulsory workshops are held per year for off-campus students. Each workshop is of 2½ days duration for part time students and five days for full time students.

The workshops are designed to enable students to acquire skills and to clarify theoretical and practice issues, and to ensure that students have face to face input from lecturers. Students must meet their own travel and accommodation costs. The Caulfield campus is centrally located with plenty of transport, accommodation and restaurants.

STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

In Year 1 students build on their previous education and experience to focus on the history, values and context of the social work profession, as well as beginning practice theories and skills. Units covering social work perspectives on human rights, social policy and social change, as well as legal and ethical issues, prepare students for further units where they begin to develop the practice skills for working with individuals, families and communities. The first supervised professional practice placement is completed in the second semester. In Year 2, students build on their learning from Year 1, to study social work practice research methods; engage with community organisations to experience working in groups; explore leadership in human services; and integrate social work knowledge about community work and social action. There is also an opportunity to choose a specialist field elective. Choices include units with a focus on climate change and sustainability, child wellbeing, mental health and criminology. The second supervised professional practice placement is completed in second semester, where students complete a piece of practice research.

COURSE CONTENT

The MSW curriculum meets AASW requirements and builds on Monash Social Work areas of strength, especially in gender, sustainability, child and family wellbeing, criminal justice, health and mental health and social policy.

The degree includes considerable emphasis on community engagement and leadership, and provides opportunities to work with organisations to complete projects and research. The MSW is a coursework degree with theoretical, skills development, and supervised professional practice units. The course provides opportunities for group-based learning, community engagement, practice research and integrative theory and practice. Theoretical content builds on knowledge acquired by graduates in previous higher education, while social work skills components and professional practice units introduce students to contemporary social work practice.

QUALIFICATION

Master of Social Work

PROFESSIONAL ACCREDITATION

The course is accredited by the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW), including 1000 hours of supervised professional practice.
FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information visit:
study.monash/courses
med.monash.edu.au/socialwork/postgraduate/mswq.html

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