

Membership Assessment Criteria for Admission to Full Membership of the Australian Community Workers Association

1. Introduction

This document provides the criteria by which the Australian Community Workers Association (ACWA) will assess applications for Full Membership or applications to be certified as eligible for ACWA membership for the purposes of migration to Australia.

This document is current as at [01/08/2011], but may be varied by ACWA from time to time. Persons enrolling in welfare or community work courses, or related qualifications, who wish to be considered for future admission as a member of ACWA, may need to meet different criteria in the future.

Prior to submitting an application, applicants must check the ACWA website for an up-to-date list of membership assessment criteria.

Definitions

- **“ACWA” Australian Community Workers Association**
- **“Approved Course”** means a course which has been approved by ACWA as one which is designed to meet the training needs of the welfare and community worker profession.
- **“Education Provider”** includes a University, TAFE College and Registered Training Organisation (RTO).
- **“Fieldwork Placement”** means the placement of a person at an agency for the purposes of gaining practical experience in the profession of community welfare work.
- **Membership Application Form** means the document “ACWA Application for Membership”
- **Pre-Migration Qualification Assessment** refers to assessment of qualifications from ACWA for the purpose of seeking skilled migration.
- **Relevant Professional Experience** shall mean work which involves direct service provision to clients at an individual, group, family and/or community level and relates to the roles and framework of community welfare work.

2. Two pathways to eligibility for membership

Eligibility for full membership of ACWA arises under two pathways.

- (a) Pathway A requires satisfactory completion of an ACWA Approved Course together with evidence demonstrating the candidate has completed appropriate Fieldwork Placements or, where applicable, industry experience
- (b) Pathway B requires satisfactory evidence of the attainment of ACWA Core Competencies through the completion of appropriate qualifications and Relevant Professional Experience.

3. Pathway A

- (a) An individual eligible for membership may apply via Pathway A where he or she meets each of the following requirements:
- (i) The individual has graduated from an **ACWA Approved Course**; and
 - (ii) The individual has met the **ACWA Fieldwork Placement Requirement** or, where applicable, industry experience requirements.
- (b) The following additional conditions and definitions apply:
- (i) An “**ACWA Approved Course**” means a specified course of study, offered by a specified Education Provider which has received ACWA’s approval. Such approval may be limited to a specified campus or location. Applicants are responsible for checking the ACWA website to confirm the approval status of their course at any given time.
 - (ii) Until **[01/04/2011]** an Applicant is considered to have graduated from an Approved Course if s/he has graduated from a course of study which held a current approval from ACWA at the time that the Applicant initially enrolled in that course, even if ACWA approval of that course expires before the student completes that course.
 - (iii) After **[01/04/2011]**, if ACWA’s approval of a course of study does not remain current throughout the period of study, the graduate will need to apply for membership under Pathway B.
 - (iv) A course that has been approved by the Australian Association of Social Workers (**AASW**) as a qualification for admission to membership of the AASW is also taken to be an ACWA Approved Course. Where the approval of the AASW lapses prior to the Applicant completing such a course, the conditions referred to at 3(b)(ii) and 3(b)(iii) will take effect.
 - (v) From **[01/04/2011]** the **ACWA Fieldwork Placement Requirement** is considered to be met as follows:
 - (A) For an Applicant who completed an ACWA Approved Course **more than 10 years before applying under Pathway A**, by that Applicant submitting with his or her application any information required by ACWA to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Membership Assessment Officer (MAO), that ACWA’s industry experience requirements have been met.
 - (B) For an Applicant who enrolled in an ACWA Approved Course on or from **[01/04/2011]**, by that Applicant submitting with his or her application any information required by ACWA to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the MAO that ACWA’s Fieldwork Placement requirements have been met.
 - (vi) Applicants applying for a Pre-Migration Qualification Assessment under Pathway A, who were enrolled in an ACWA Approved Course after 31 July 2008 and who are not Residents of Australia will also need to meet the English Language Requirement for Welfare Workers as published by ACWA. (Details of this requirement can be found on SACWA’s website www.org.au or can be obtained by contacting ACWA’s National Office).

- (vii) If the Applicant is submitting under Pathway A has completed his or her ACWA Approved Course more than 10 years before the day on which his or her application is received, the following additional criteria will need to be met:
- (A) The Applicant must have at least 5 years of Relevant Professional Experience (of at least 15 hours per week) in the past 10 years, which can be paid or voluntary, but if the Relevant Professional Experience is voluntary, the voluntary Relevant Professional Experience must be adequately supervised by a professional and must have been experience undertaken in the past 7 years. The Relevant Professional Experience may be obtained through work in another relevant occupation such as psychologist, community nurse, social policy analyst or planner, residential care worker, and the like; and
 - (B) The Applicant must provide evidence of Professional Development of at least 20 points per year (1 point = 1 hour of Professional Development) for each of the preceding 2 years.
 - (C) Professional Development will be demonstrated where the Applicant can produce evidence (certificates of attendance, conference notes, seminar papers or lecture notes) which shows that they have completed, in the 2 years prior to their application for membership, 20 points per year of, for example:
 - (I) Attendance at seminars, workshops, conferences, forums, etc;
 - (II) Contributions to seminars, workshops, conferences, etc;
 - (III) Writing or editing academic papers;
 - (IV) Formal or informal training courses, either within or outside the workplace;
 - (V) Participation in network, management or community meetings where the processes are conducive to Professional Development. (Excluded from these participations are activities of a primarily administrative, clinical or supportive nature, and where routine or common procedures are employed);
 - (VI) Writing for such publications, including letters to the editor; and
 - (VII) Professional supervision, as either supervisor or supervisee.Matters which will constitute Professional Development may be amended by ACWA from time to time.
- (c) Graduates with a CSTP Diploma in Community Services Work or Diploma in Community Welfare Work from a campus which has not held ACWA Approved Course status will be required to apply through Pathway B.

4. Pathway B

- (a) An individual applying for membership may apply via Pathway B where he or she meets each of the following requirements:

- (i) That the Applicant has graduated from a course of study that is deemed by ACWA to be relevant to and sufficient to qualify the person to meet the ACWA Core Competencies as amended or replaced from time to time;
- (ii) That person has at least three years of Relevant Professional Experience;
- (b) The following additional conditions and definitions apply:
 - (i) ACWA Core Competencies are grouped under the broad heading of:
 - Practices social welfare in an ethical manner in accordance with values and ethics of the profession
 - Communicate with a broad spectrum of people and organisations using appropriate techniques and media.
 - Assesses, plans, implements and evaluates programs, projects and work programs with clients
 - Plan, organise and carry out work autonomously and as part of a team
 - Uses one's personal attributes to effect in dealings with clients, colleagues, employers, and the general community and demonstrates an awareness of both formal and informal societal structures and systems and their implications for clients, workers and community services organisations
 - (ii) **“Relevant Professional Experience”** can be paid or voluntary, but must be adequately supervised by a professional and be for at least 30 hours per week for an aggregate of 3 years during the past 10 years.. The person must provide written evidence as required by the MAO(Membership Assessment Officer) or their delegate to demonstrate that the professional experience demonstrates that the person has attained ACWA Core Competencies.

REQUIRED documents

- (c) Applications for assessment under Pathway A or Pathway B(Applicants for Pathway B are requested to refer to *Pathway B Information Sheet* to obtain detailed information on the assessment process and evidence requirements) must be accompanied by:
 - (i) A completed Membership Application Form or an Application for Assessment of Welfare Work Qualifications – Non-Residents- Form 1182 / SWRN (whichever is appropriate);
 - (i) Certified copy of the relevant Diploma or other qualification (or letter of completion from the Education Provider – showing the start date and a precise date of when the applicant was deemed to have completed all requirements for the qualification);
 - (ii) Where the Applicant is applying for a Pre-Migration Qualification Assessment, a certified copy of Evidence of English Language Proficiency is also required;
 - (iii) Certified copy of Academic Transcript of Results;
 - (iv) Such evidence of the satisfactory completion of Fieldwork Placements as may be requested by ACWA and varied from time to time (Pathway A);
 - (v) Such evidence of the applicant's ability to satisfy the ACWA Core Competencies (Pathway B) as may be requested by ACWA and varied from time to time;

- (vi) Certified copy of marriage certificate or other evidence of name change if name on qualification documents are different to the name on the application for assessment;
 - (vii) Authorisation of agent, if you are submitting your application through an agent.
 - (viii) The relevant application and assessment fees.
- (b) Where an Applicant is currently working in the field and is applying under Pathway B, a letter from the current employer accompanied by the current Position Description or Duty Statement is also required.
- (c) Where an application is made for Pathway A or Pathway B membership by an Applicant who is currently only or predominantly engaged in volunteer work (that is, they perform more volunteer work than paid work) a letter from the organisation with whom they volunteer confirming their status as a volunteer is required to be submitted with the application.

Any enquiries should be addressed to:

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