

- **Bachelor of Human Services (course SWK201)**
- **Bachelor of Social Work (course SWK300)**
- **Master of Social Work - qualifying (course SWK700)**

N.B - Students must submit their RPL application for a social work or human services field placement course, one semester prior to the semester in which they are due to undertake placement. It takes approximately 6 months to coordinate and prepare student placements. Please refer to the key dates outlined below.

Please consider the following:

- Students can apply for RPL for their first placement only.
- Work experience in isolation is not enough to be successful in an application for RPL.
- To be eligible for RPL for a field placement course, you will need to document learning obtained from work experience and not academic achievements.
 - The UniSC process for applying for RPL for a first field placement course in social work or human services, adheres to the *ASWEAS March 2020 V2.2 August 2023* (Australian Social Work Education and Accreditation Standards) as well as the *ACWA Course Accreditation Guidelines Jan 2023* (Australian Community Workers Association Accreditation Guidelines.) This ensure that the UniSC RPL application process meets accreditation, whilst also giving due consideration to the course learning outcomes students achieve, upon successful completion of SWK201, SWK300 and SWK700.
- Students are strongly encouraged to make a meeting time to discuss the process and their individual circumstances, with the Course Coordinator and Lead for Social Work and Human Services Field Education. Please contact Rachel McCarthy on rmccarthy@usc.edu.au to organise a meeting before an application is submitted.
- **KEY DATES:**
 - For students due to undertake placements in semester 1 of any given year, RPL applications are due by 5pm Friday in week 6 of semester 2.
 - For students due to undertake placements in semester 2 of any given year, RPL applications are due by 5pm Friday in week 6 of semester 1.
 - Applications will be assessed, and decisions finalised by the end of week 10 of each semester (or earlier where possible.)

ASWEAS Accreditation Requirements:

- The Accreditation Standards are informed by the principles, values and professional competencies outlined in the:
 - AASW Code of Ethics 2020
 - AASW Practice Standards 2023
- The following ASWEAS standards are particularly referred to when assessing applications for RPL for field placement courses:

4.1 Field education learning experiences will enable graduates to demonstrate their ability to meet AASW practice standards across a range of diverse client groups and environments.

4.1.5 500 hours of placement time will be undertaken in a direct practice role involving the application of professional interpersonal skills .

4.2 The scope of assessment of field education activities will cover all learning outcomes required to ensure graduates are safe, ethical and competent to practise.

4.2.3 Assessment of student performance on placements will provide clear evidence that they have achieved the specified learning goals and performance standards required.

4.7 The conditions under which work experience may be recognised as credit for prior learning will ensure that students can achieve the learning outcomes of the program.

4.7.1 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can be used only for part or all of the first placement.

4.7.2 A student who is approved RPL must undertake a final placement in an organisation that provides onsite supervision by a qualified social worker.

4.7.3 The student must have worked for at least the equivalent of three full-time years in a setting deemed appropriate as a field education setting required for a first placement student and demonstrate competencies against AASW practice standards.

4.7.4 At least the final year of the student's work experience will be within three years of applying for RPL.

4.7.5 Assessment of applications for prior learning will be undertaken by a social worker eligible for AASW membership with at least five years post-qualifying experience including as a Field Educator of students on first placement.

- The following ACWA accreditation guideline is also referred to, when RPL is approved for a field placement course:

Section 2. 6 b) Where no RPL or credit is obtained, one placement may be undertaken in a student's current workplace, however, it must comply with Fieldwork placement requirements.

UniSC RPL application process:

Part A) for SWK300 or SWK700:

Social Work students are required to submit a written application to UniSC Student Central containing the following forms of evidence for RPL:

1. Completed Recognition of Prior Learning application form – available from Student Central or the UniSC website.
2. Detailed current Resume outlining relevant work experience and including the names and contact details of two referees.
 - a. ***Clear evidence of years/months worked and fraction of FTE for each role must be outlined.***
 - b. ***Students need to have worked for at least the equivalent of three full-time years in an appropriate setting; and at least the final year of the student's work experience, will be within three years of applying for RPL.***

3. Position descriptions for each position relevant to the RPL application, stating the roles and tasks undertaken.
4. A written reference from a qualified social worker (minimum of 2 years post-qualifying work experience) who has provided regular social work supervision to the applicant (N.B recommendation is a minimum of 60 – 90mins/month over a 12-month period.) The reference should attest to the applicant’s practice being in accordance with social work values and ethics, the type of work undertaken and any examples of practice in accordance with AASW practice standards. Please use the reference proforma in *Appendix A* attached to this policy.
5. An overall statement outlining why you believe your work experience reflects beginning competency in demonstrating the AASW Practice Standards (2023) (to the standard of a student who has completed the first social work field placement.) In this statement, students are required to connect their learning and practice in prior work experience, to the 9 practice standards. Students are encouraged to include a brief outline of their beginning social work practice framework in this statement. **(This statement is a summary and should be no more than 2 - 4 pages in total.)**

N.B If any of the requirements outlined above are not submitted with the application, it will not be assessed further, nor will it progress to the next stage (Part B) listed further below.

Part A for SWK201:

Human Services students are required to submit a written application to UniSC Student Central containing the following forms of evidence for RPL:

1. Completed Recognition of Prior Learning application form – available from Student Central or the UniSC website.
2. Detailed updated Resume outlining relevant work experience and including the names and contact details of two referees.
 - a. **Clear evidence of years/months worked and fraction of FTE for each role must be outlined.**
 - b. **Students need to have worked for at least the equivalent of two full-time years in an appropriate setting; and at least the final year of the student’s work experience, will be within three years of applying for RPL.**
3. Position descriptions for each position relevant to the RPL application, stating the roles and tasks undertaken.
4. A written reference from a suitably qualified supervisor (meeting ACWA requirements) who has given regular supervision to the applicant and can attest to their practice, to the type of work undertaken, frequency of supervision, their emerging practice framework, the type of work undertaken and that the applicant’s practice is in accordance with ACWA values and ethics. Please use the reference proforma in *Appendix B*, attached to this policy.
5. An overall statement outlining why you believe your work experience reflects beginning competency in demonstrating the **ACWA Practice Guidelines (2021)** (to the standard of a student who has completed the first human services field placement.) In this statement, students are required to connect their learning and practice in prior work experience, to the 8 practice guidelines. Students may wish to include an outline of their beginning framework for

practice as part of this overall statement. (***This statement is a summary and should be no more than 2 - 4 pages in total.***)

- The Practice Guidelines and Code of Ethics for Human Services students can be accessed from the ACWA website. The Guidelines include:
 - Guideline 1 Ethical practice
 - Guideline 2 Provision of service and supports
 - Guideline 3 Confidentiality in the workplace
 - Guideline 4 The regulatory framework
 - Guideline 5 Diversity
 - Guideline 6 The workplace
 - Guideline 7 Professional development
 - Guideline 8 Professional standing

N.B If any of the requirements outlined above are not submitted with the application, it will not be assessed further, nor will it progress to the next stage (Part B) listed below.

Part B) for SWK201, SWK300 and SWK700:

Following assessment that the written application outlined in Part A) above successfully meets the initial requirements for RPL, a student meeting with the Clinical Educator (Course Coordinator) and/or Associate Clinical Educators from the UniSC Field Education Unit will be arranged. During this meeting, the student applying for RPL will be invited to further discuss and outline their work experience. This will include demonstrating integration of theory and practice, articulating a basic emerging practice framework, identifying social work/human services values and ethics and highlighting a beginning level competency (to a first placement standard) with the AASW Practice Standards and/or the ACWA Practice Guidelines. Students should also refer to the learning objectives from first placement found on the course outlines (SWK201, SWK300 or SWK700.)

Applications must be submitted to UniSC Student Central, marked ***RPL application for placement***, noting the course details. Applications for RPL may be discussed with staff members in the Field Education Unit and/or the Program Lead before a final decision is made. The Course Coordinator may contact the student directly to discuss the application.

ASWEAS Standards March 2020 V2.2 updated March 2023 [ASWEAS-March-2020-V2.2-Aug-2023.pdf \(amazonaws.com\)](#)

AASW Practice Standards 2023: [AASW-Practice-Standards-FEB2023-1.pdf \(amazonaws.com\)](#)

AASW Code of Ethics 2020: [AASW Code of Ethics 2020 \(amazonaws.com\)](#)

ACWA Practice Guidelines: [ACWA-Practice-Guidelines-Aug-2021.pdf](#)

ACWA Code of Ethics 2023: [ACWA-Code-Of-Ethics-Jan-2023.pdf](#)

Appendix A

Letter of reference from a social work supervisor – SWK300 or SWK700

(Please provide this appendix to your social work supervisor to complete. Please include this completed document with your application for RPL.)

Social work supervisor details	
Name:	
Phone number:	
Email address:	
Current professional role:	
Degree obtained:	
Institution and year of completion:	
Signature:	
Details of Supervision	
Dates of supervision:	<i>(i.e. date commenced and concluded, e.g. March 2021 – September 2022.)</i>
Frequency of supervision:	
Brief overview of topics/themes addressed in supervision:	
Additional comments:	<i>(i.e. any comments in relation to the applicant's practice aligning with social work values and ethics, the type of work undertaken, any examples of practice in accordance with AASW practice standards and/or the applicant's emerging practice framework.)</i>

Appendix B

Letter of reference from a human services supervisor – SWK201.

(Please provide this appendix to your human services supervisor to complete. Please include this completed document with your application for RPL.)

Human Services supervisor details	
Name:	
Phone number:	
Email address:	
Current professional role:	
Degree obtained:	
Institution and year of completion:	
Signature:	
Details of supervision	
Dates of supervision:	<i>(i.e. date commenced and concluded, e.g. March 2021 – September 2022.)</i>
Frequency of supervision:	
Brief overview of topics/themes addressed in supervision:	
Additional comments:	<i>(i.e. any comments in relation to the applicant’s practice aligning with human services values and ethics, the type of work undertaken, any examples of practice in accordance with ACWA practice guidelines and/or the applicant’s emerging professional framework.)</i>