



**Social Workers
Registration Board**
Kāhui Whakamana Tauwhiro

ENTITLEMENT TO REGISTRATION

COMPETENCE

POLICY STATEMENT

Approved: August 2009
For review: August 2011

INTRODUCTION AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE BOARD

This policy paper addresses competence requirements described in Sections 6(a) 38; 39; 42; 44; of the Social Workers Registration Act 2003.

Section 6 of the Act entitles a person who has a recognised NZ qualification to be registered if the Board is satisfied;

- a) that his or her competence to practice social work has been found satisfactory under Part 3;

Section 38(1) of the Act, requires the SWRB to find a person's competence to practice social work satisfactory for the purposes of the Act only if a competence assessment (set by the Board) has been completed within the last five years. The Board must be satisfied that, as a result of a competence assessment, the applicant has the skill and knowledge required to practice social work and meets the professional standards reasonably to be expected of a registered social worker.

Section 39 permits the Board to review a registered social worker's competence at any time including after being notified of a determination of complaint under section 71(1) (a).

Competence, for the purposes of the SWRB, is primarily defined in Section 42 which outlines the expectations of what may be assessed in any competence assessment processes.

Section 42 states that:

- (1) The Board may from time to time set programmes for the purpose of helping it decide whether people -
 - (a) have the skill and knowledge required to practise social work in accordance with their registration (or proposed registration); and
 - (b) meet the professional standards reasonably to be expected of a social worker
- (2) A competence assessment may comprise 1 or a combination of 2 or more of the following:
 - (a) components entirely set by the Board; or
 - (b) components set by some other person or body, and recognised by the Board without modification; or
 - (c) components set by some other person or body, and recognised by the Board in a modified form.
- (3) At least 1 competence assessment must apply to all social work.
- (4) Any other competence assessment .
 - (a) may apply to all social work; or
 - (b) may apply only to social work of a stated description; or
 - (c) may apply to all social work other than social work of a stated description.

Section 44 outlines the requirement for registered social workers, who wish to retain their practising certificate, to complete a competence assessment every five years.

Core Competence Framework

The Board recognises core competencies that reflect practice standards accepted in New Zealand. These core competencies apply to all competency processes that are set and approved by the Board.

The requirements of the Act, The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) definition of Social Work and the ANZASW standards of practice, served to inform the Board in determining the following as initial core competencies that must apply to all social work: A registered social worker will:

- Be competent to practice social work with M ori
- Be competent to practice social work with different ethnic and cultural groups in New Zealand
- Promote social change
- Promote problem solving in human relationships
- Promote empowerment and liberation of people
- Utilise theories of human behaviour and social systems
- Utilise social work practice approaches
- Promote the principles of human rights and social justice
- Ensure systems of accountability are in place for their work
- Adhere to professional social work ethics

Recognised Competence Assessment Processes

The SWRB is committed to providing a range of competence assessment options for social workers. Social Workers seeking a competence assessment can choose any of the non graduate processes available.

Section 42 states that:

- (2) A competence assessment may comprise 1 or a combination of 2 or more of the following:
- (a) components entirely set by the Board; or
 - (b) components set by some other person or body, and recognised by the Board without modification; or
 - (c) components set by some other person or body, and recognised by the Board in a modified form.

Under Section 42 (2) (a) the Board administers its own competence assessment process. Competence assessment from this process is valid for five years.

For information on the SWRB Competence Assessment process details are available from the Board www.swrb.org.nz

ENTITLEMENT TO REGISTRATION - COMPETENCE

Under Section 42 (2) (b) the Board recognises the following competence assessment processes.

1. The Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers (ANZASW) competence assessment process. Competence assessment from this process is valid for five years. For information on the ANZASW competence assessment process details are available from the ANZASW www.anzasw.org.nz
2. The Te Kaiawhina Ahumahi (TKA) competence assessment process; Competence assessment from this process is valid for five years. For information on the TKA competence assessment process details are available from TKA www.socialservices.org.nz
3. The graduate competence embedded in the recognised social work programmes for students who graduate after 1 August 2008. This competence is valid for two years.
4. Information on recognised social work programmes is available from the Board www.swrb.org.nz/NA_RecQuals

Competence to practise social work with Māori and with different ethnic and cultural groups

Competence to practise social work with Māori and different ethnic and cultural groups is specifically addressed in the SWR Act, 2003. These competencies may be evidenced and based on the inclusion of an appropriate component within the recognised qualification, and/or as the result of completing a separate course or courses of training. The competence is also tested as a part of the general competence assessment and is a requirement for the Annual Practising Certificate.

The Board's policies Entitlement to Registration . Competence to practice social work with Māori and Entitlement to Registration . Competence to practice social work with with different ethnic and cultural groups address these specific competencies in more detail.