

Guide for a doctoral degree application

The Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) is the professional association for qualified social workers in Australia. It is a self-regulating profession. The AASW is an assessing authority on behalf of the Australian Government for migration purposes against the Criterion set out below.

The Migration and Eligibility Assessment (MEA) Team assesses:

- overseas social work qualifications for migration purposes
- overseas social work qualifications to determine eligibility for AASW membership for employment purposes.

The AASW is also able to assess a Doctorate of Philosophy majoring in Social Work for migration assessment, first and foremost the applicant must hold a specific social work qualification that must be comparable to a Bachelor of Social Work or a Master of Social Work (qualifying) in Australia which has been assessed by AASW.

A Doctorate Degree Assessment is an additional optional assessment that applicants can apply for: (the applicant must have had their international SW qualification or AASW accredited SW qualification assessed prior to this)

The qualification of a Doctorate in Philosophy is NOT accepted as an entry to practice social work qualification in Australia and thus not a specific social work qualification. Applicants must be a professionally qualified Social Worker and thus hold tertiary qualifications in social work.

If they hold international social work qualification it must be comparable to a Bachelor of Social Work or a Master of Social Work (qualifying) in Australia.

Criteria

There are four criterion which must all be met for a for a positive doctorate degree assessment:

Criterion 1: Proof of identity.

Criterion 2: A previously successful AASW application file reference number (in the case of a individual lodged PhD application). Or the lodgement of a doctorate assessment application combined with a migration and eligibility assessment application.

Criterion 3: The qualification must be a specific PhD in social work comparable to a Doctorate of Philosophy in Australia.

Criterion 4: A high level English language skill (as per the AASW English language policy) is demonstrated.

Fees

Please refer to the [schedule of fees](#).

GST stands for Goods and Services Tax; this is applicable to any goods and services transaction made within Australia. Fees are non-refundable and will be charged in Australian dollars.

Please ensure that you have the correct amount of funds available in your account before processing payment. Your application cannot be submitted until payment has been processed.

Once payment has been made, you will receive an email from the AASW by confirming payment. The receipt can be used for tax purposes where applicable.

Criteria and how to provide evidence

Criterion one

Once you have lodged your application, you will receive an email inviting you to verify your identity with One Click Verify (OCV).

One Click Verify is a separate entity from the AASW and is used by the AASW to manage sensitive information (such as your identity documents).

Verification of identity is an important part of submitting your application. Your application will not be assessed by our team until you have completed the identity verification with One Click Verify. One Click Verify will verify the authenticity of your identity documents

NOTE: Please do not upload any identity documents in to the MyAASW portal when lodging your application.

The AASW requires for all applicants to upload a minimum of three identity documents to the One Click Verify Portal. Please ensure that at least two of the three documents uploaded are photo ID documents.

The following documents can be uploaded to verify your identity:

- Passport (mandatory)
- Birth Certificate
- Australian Visa
- Immi Card issued by the Australian Government
- Driver's Licence
- Proof of Age Card
- National ID card
- Marriage Certificate
- Change of Name Certificate
- Divorce Certificate
- Change of Name by Deed Poll
- Relevant Adoption document
- IELTS Test Report

Criterion two

The Applicant must have had their social work qualifications assessed by the AASW and gained a positive outcome prior to a Skilled Employment application being lodged. The AASW requires for all applicants to provide their previous file reference number (e.g. MIG 21/01234 or MIGMEM 21/01234).

If you are unable to find your file reference number, please contact the AASW MEA team at aaswiqa@asw.asn.au. We will require your full name, date of birth and the qualification you had assessed in order to check your previous file reference number.

Criterion three

The qualification must be a specific PhD in social work. Related qualifications such as Social Care, Sociology or Psychology for example will not be accepted.

How to evidence this:

1. Certified copy of qualification papers for your PhD
2. Certified copy of academic transcript/s for your PhD
3. Certified copy of your PhD abstract
4. An academic reference from your PhD supervisor at the higher education program where you completed your PhD studies, verifying the specific focus of your PhD.

Documentation checklist

Qualification papers (award received e.g., Diploma, Degree, Masters paper). If your qualification is higher than Bachelor degree level please include additional documents for your undergraduate studies.

Previous MEA File reference number.

PhD award.

PhD abstract.

PhD transcript.

Third party authorisation form (to be used by a third party who is not a registered migration agent in Australia) /956 migration agent form. (When applicable).

If documents are issued in a language other than English, the AASW requires a NAATI translated version of the document/s and the original language document/s.

Criterion four

High-level English language skills are essential to the practice of social work in Australia. All applicants applying to have their qualification assessed must provide evidence with their application that they have proficient English language skills to work as a social worker in an English language environment.

How to evidence this:

Submit evidence of one of the following:

OPTION 1: A minimum overall score of 7.0 achieved in one sitting of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Academic test;

For example:

- IELTS Academic Test: Writing 7.5, Reading 7.0, Speaking 7.5, Listening 7.0

or

OPTION 2: A minimum score of 7.0 in each of the four components (listening, reading, writing and speaking), achieved in in a maximum of two sittings in a six (6) month period; and no component score is below 6.5;

For example:

- Test 1: Writing 6.5, **Reading 7.0**, Speaking 6.5, **Listening 7.0**
- Test 2: **Writing 7.0**, Reading 6.5, **Speaking 8.0**, Listening 6.5

or

OPTION 3: One test sitting of the IELTS Academic Test with a minimum score of 7.0 in three of the four components of the test **AND** the inclusion of one IELTS Academic One Skill Retake test.

Where the component score did not achieve the minimum score of 7.0 it must not be below 6.5. The IELTS Academic One Skill Retake test must achieve a minimum score of 7.0 in the retaken component.

Eligibility for IELTS One Skill Retake occurs when applicants have **completed a full [IELTS on computer](#)** test at an eligible test centre, and they have received their IELTS test score. The IELTS One Skill Retake must be taken within 60 days of the original test date.

For example:

- IELTS Academic Test: **Writing 6.5**, Reading 7.0, Speaking 7.5, Listening 7.0
- One Skill Retake: **Writing 7.0**

Test results must be obtained within three (3) years prior to submitting an AASW qualification assessment.

Where Option 3 applies, applicants must have obtained their IELTS Academic One Skill Retake test within 12 months of the date of their AASW Migration Eligibility and Assessment (MEA) application.

These requirements may be waived where applicants have met the educational requirements for English language proficiency. See Exemptions below.

Exemption Grounds

Applicants may be exempt from completing an academic IELTS test where the following evidence is provided:

- completed all secondary education (years 7 to 12), that was taught and assessed in English, in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Republic of Ireland, South Africa, United Kingdom or United States of America,
- AND;**
- successfully completed (with a pass grade or higher) the equivalent of three years or more full-time tertiary study (at Bachelor Degree level or higher), that was taught and assessed in English, in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Republic of Ireland, South Africa, United Kingdom or United States of America.

Applicants can evidence this with the following:

- Submission of secondary education (high school) results
- A letter from your secondary school or the relevant department of education in the country of study which states that your secondary education was successfully completed and were taught and assessed in the English language,
- Submission of tertiary results evidencing that you successfully completed and were taught and assessed in the English language.
- Where secondary and/or tertiary results cannot be supplied, a Statutory Declaration certifying that your secondary education was successfully completed, taught and assessed in the English language may also be acceptable. This must include name of school/s, years studied and country in which studied.

If you have not completed your **secondary and tertiary education (years 7 to 12)** in English, in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Republic of Ireland, South Africa, United Kingdom or United States of America, you will not be exempt from sitting an IELTS Academic test.

The AASW reserves the right to ask an applicant to take the IELTS Academic test if there is uncertainty about their level of English proficiency.

For more information about statutory declarations please read our [Frequently Asked Questions page](#). Please see the AASW English Language Policy document ([Link to be provided once updated AASW ELP document is live](#)) for further details.

Submit your application

To apply online you will need to create an account in the [MyAASW portal](#). You will be prompted to login/create an account when you start your online application. You will receive your account ID via email once you have created your account.

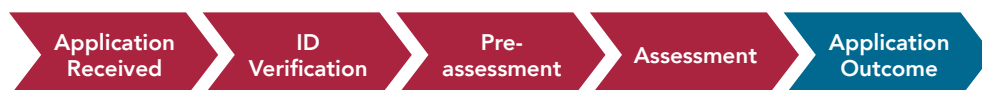
Complete your profile details, upload all the required documents, and submit your application. At the end of your application you will be prompted to securely submit payment for your application via credit/debit card.

Note that the AASW only accepts payment by credit/debit card.

You'll receive an email confirmation and receipt of payment when your application has been successfully submitted.

Assessment processing times

Once you have submitted your application, you can login to your account on the [MyAASW portal](#) to check the status of your application. Online status updates appear throughout the assessment process until a decision has been made.



Please note that you will receive a status update in relation to your application during the following stages:

- Application received
- ID verification via One Click Verify
- Pre-assessment
- Assessment
- Application outcome

Application received

Your application has just been submitted to the AASW. The AASW has received your application.

ID verification

You will be prompted by One Click Verify to verify your identity. The AASW may contact you if a manual verification check is required as part of this process.

Pre-assessment

The AASW will review the documentation and information submitted in your application.

NOTE: The MEA team may contact you at this stage if further documentation or clarification is sought during the pre-assessment of your application. Please note that not all applicants will be contacted at this stage of the application.

When your application is deemed complete, you will receive an email from the MEA Team informing you of this.

Assessment

When your application is ready to be assessed by an AASW assessor, you may be contacted if further documentation/clarification is sought during this stage of your application. **Please note that not all applicants will be contacted at this stage of the application if no further information is required.**

In some instances, further information may be required to clarify issues related to the Criteria your application is assessed against. Where this is the case, your application will be placed on hold, awaiting the required further information. If no further information is required, the assessor will process the assessment of your application and determine the final outcome.

Application outcome

You will receive an email from the AASW to inform you of the outcome of your application. If your application is successful, you will also receive a migration skills assessment outcome letter which you can use for migration purposes.

If your application is unsuccessful, you will receive an outcome letter providing details as what Criterion has been met and what Criterion have not been met in your application. Recommendation/s will be provided to you in the outcome letter advising you of what steps can be taken to obtain a successful outcome.

For migration skills assessment purposes:

Your assessment letter is valid for 3 years from the date of your assessment outcome letter from the AASW. You'll need to check the [Department of Home Affairs website](#) for how long your letter is valid for migration visa applications.

Outcome decisions

If you think there has been an error at any stage of your AASW skills assessment process, you have the option to an internal review, and an external appeal, if you meet the requirements. Please refer to the [Reassessment, Internal review and External appeal page](#) on our website for further information.

- **An internal review** can be lodged when an applicant receives an unsuccessful outcome and when they believe error/s have been made in the qualification assessment or in administration of the application.
- **An external appeal** can only be lodged when an internal review has already taken place and it was unsuccessful.