

FIELD COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES**Review of Social Services qualification****National Diploma in Social Work (Level 6) [Ref: 0989]**

The Social Services ITO has completed the review of the qualification above.

Replacement qualification

National Diploma in Social Services (Level 6) [Ref: 1652]

Date new versions published

May 2011

The next qualification review is planned to take place during 2012 as part of a mandatory review of the Human Welfare Studies and Services area.

Summary of review and consultation process

The Social Services ITO conducted an interim review of the National Diploma in Social Work Level 6 (NDSW). The interim review was to address critical issues with the qualification, primarily that it:

- contained too many credits, making it unwieldy for the workplace; and
- is no longer recognised for the purposes of registration as a Social Worker.

To aid the interim review process, two options for the restructure of the NDSW were developed, and feedback was sought from stakeholders on the options. The review centred on developing a qualification that is: smaller (fewer credits); and can be mapped for equivalency to Year 1 of an approved Bachelor's degree in social work. The aim was to create a semi-professional qualification that gives the industry confidence that graduates are safe and competent practitioners within the multitude of roles in the social services sector, and will also enable those graduates wanting to be registered Social Workers a pathway onto degree level study in Social Work.

Consultation with stakeholders (NGOs, Peak Bodies, assessors and existing trainees) was overwhelmingly in support of a slimmed-down qualification that could have immediate currency in the sector and also provide credit transfer possibilities into existing social work degree programmes.

Main changes resulting from the review

- The new qualification was developed due to the significant nature of the changes required to the Diploma in Social Work which comprises a larger compulsory section and two small elective sections.
- The total credits were reduced from 286 in the replaced qualification Ref: 0989 to 180 in the new qualification Ref: 1652.
- Title of the new qualification is the National Diploma in Social Services to better describe the content, and to ensure that it does not mislead trainees or employers in terms of its relationship with Social Worker registration. It also provides a visible pathway from the National Certificate in Social Services (Level 4) [Ref: 0250].

- Removal of supervised clinical placement unit standard 19415, as credit for this standard is not recognised by the Social Workers Registration Board for the purpose of registration as a Social Worker.

National Diploma in Social Work (Level 6) [Ref: 0989]

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Review category	C	See Key to Qualification Review Categories at the end of report
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Transition

People currently working towards the National Diploma in Social Work (Level 6) [Ref: 0989], may either complete the requirements for that qualification or transfer their results to the National Diploma in Social Services (Level 6) [Ref: 1652].

The start date for programmes or courses for the new qualification is June 2011.

Final date for entry to training programmes for the National Diploma in Social Work (Level 6) [Ref: 0989] is 30 June 2012. Final date for assessment of the National Diploma in Social Work (Level 6) [Ref: 0989] is 31 June 2016.

It is the intention of the Social Services ITO that no existing candidate is disadvantaged by these transition arrangements. Any person who considers they have been disadvantaged should contact the Social Services ITO at the address given below.

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Key to Qualification Review Categories

Category A The qualification is published as a new version with the same NQF ID	Changes are made to SSB name, contact details or purpose statement
	No change is made to title, rules or components of the qualification
	No transition arrangements are required
Category B The qualification is published as a new version with the same NQF ID	Changes are made to title, rules or components
	The new version of the qualification recognises a similar skill set to that recognised by the previous version
	The SSB is confident that people awarded the new or previous version are comparable in terms of competence
	Transition arrangements are required if candidates must gain additional/different credits for the new version
Category C A new (replacement) qualification is published with new NQF ID	Significant changes are made to the qualification in terms of components, structure, type or level
	The SSB views people with the replacement qualification as being significantly different in terms of competence from those with the replaced qualification
	Transition arrangements are required
	Transition may be limited to phase-out dates
Category D Qualification will expire. There is no replacement qualification	Qualification is no longer required by industry
	The qualification is designated as expiring and a last date for meeting the qualification requirements is set