

SOCIAL WORK CAREER SNAPSHOT



-  **BOOST YOUR PROSPECTS**
-  Explore your options, clarify your career goals
-  Build your networks
-  Gain course relevant experience
-  Fine tune your job application skills
-  Show initiative, engage in extra-curricular activities and stand out

For further ideas access the [JCU Career Action Plan](#)

Social Workers	
Fast Facts	
	\$1,364 Weekly Pay ⓘ
	28,300 workers Employment Size ⓘ
	Very strong Future Growth ⓘ
	Very high skill Skill level rating ⓘ
	Average unemployment Unemployment ⓘ

Source: [Job Outlook 2018](#)

Social Work

Social Workers aim to help people thrive in and with their environment, promote positive relationships and work towards creating a just and equitable society. They are concerned with the wellbeing of individuals, families, groups and communities, and they promote respect and diversity in our society. Source: [JCU Bachelor of Social Work](#) (Retrieved 18 September 2018)

Social Work career pathways are varied. Depending on the field of practice chosen, Social Workers utilise skills and experience in management, education, research, policy development, politics and community planning.

Services which Social Workers provide include therapy, casework, advocacy, mediation, group work to individuals, couples or families to address issues such as mental health, sexual assault, family violence, loss and grief, illness, separation and substance addiction. Social Workers may contribute to policy development and advise governments on welfare issues.

Social Workers may perform the following tasks:

- Counsel individuals through a crisis that may be due to death, illness,

relationship breakdown or other reasons

- Provide clients with information about services that can assist them
- Help community groups plan and carry out programs to help themselves
- Research community problems, needs and
- Develop policy and evaluate programs

JCU Social Work graduates are employed in a **diverse range of positions** including:

Social worker, child safety officer, family counsellor, family response facilitator, senior adolescent support worker, mental health clinician, disability support worker, youth support coordinator, project officer, foster care case worker, senior policy officer, case manager, and personal support worker.

Source: Graduate Careers Australia, JCU 2015 Australian Graduate Survey

Employers of JCU Social Work graduates include:

Queensland Health; Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors; Department of Education; Department of Human Services; ACT for Kids; Glencore; The Royal Children’s Hospital. Centacare North Queensland, James Cook University.

Source: [James Cook University LinkedIn](#) (Retrieved 18 September 2018)

The **Australian Association of Social Workers** provides a thorough explanation of the scope of social work practice. Check:

- [AASW Careers in Social Work](#)
- [AASW The scope of Social Work Practice](#)

[Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching](#) (QILT) provides graduate outcome information for the JCU Bachelor of Social Work and all other Australian Social Work degrees.

Graduate Employment Bachelor of Social Work		
	James Cook University	National Average
Full-time employment	73.2% 82 responses	69.8%
Overall employment	89.9% 99 responses	86.7%
Full-time study	6.2% 97 responses	10.6%
Median starting salary	\$60,100 48 responses	\$60,000
<small>Data source: Graduate Destinations Survey 2015 and Graduate Outcomes Survey 2016-2017</small>		
<small>Source: QILT retrieved 18 September 2018</small>		

Professional Membership



The JCU Bachelor of Social Work and the JCU Masters of Social Work (Professional Qualifying) degrees are accredited by the **Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW)**. Graduates are eligible for full membership of AASW.

AASW is the professional body that sets standards for social work in Australia, and many jobs require eligibility for membership of AASW.

Consider applying for **student membership** of the AASW whilst at university.

This is an ideal way to gain valuable insight into your future profession, demonstrate interest and meet people in your field who can support you in developing your career. Student members have access to industry news and trends, professional development and networking events.

For information on membership options go to the [Australian Association of Social Workers](#) site.

Job Opportunities

Online job boards and graduate directories provide information on the range of job opportunities available and employer expectations.

You can work towards filling skills, knowledge and experience gaps identified to ensure they are competitive when entering the graduate labour market.

Online Job Boards

- [Seek Social Work vacancies](#)
- [Health and Community Jobs](#)
- [APS Jobs Australian Public Service recruitment](#)
- [Smart Jobs Queensland Government Jobs](#)
- [CareCareers](#)
- [Queensland Health](#)
- [Australian Defence Force](#)
- [CareerOne](#)

For part-time, course relevant and graduate job listings go to JCU's online job board



Graduate Recruitment Directories

- [Queensland Government Graduate Portal](#)
- [APS Jobs Graduate Programs](#)
- [GradAustralia](#)
- [GradConnection](#)
- [Graduate Opportunities](#)

Employers' websites, Facebook pages, LinkedIn accounts and twitter feeds provide information on job opportunities and current topics of interest for Social Work professionals.

Research employer groups within your interest area e.g., Aged Care Facilities Australia; Disability Support Agencies in Australia; Drug and Alcohol Services Australia, Youth and Mental Health One Stop Shops e.g. Headspace.

Search employment fields of interest on **LinkedIn** e.g. Social Work, Community Development, Mental Health.

JCU Alumni LinkedIn Page

Over 5000 JCU alumni have listed **Social Work** within their [LinkedIn profile](#). (Retrieved 31 July 2018)

Investigate JCU [Alumni LinkedIn profiles](#) to identify career pathways and current and past employers of JCU Social Work graduates.

Develop your own LinkedIn profile to ensure you maintain a professional online presence.

Relevant Experience

The JCU Social Work programs place a strong emphasis on **professional practice experience and skill development**.

Maximize every opportunity presented in your degree to develop your skills, knowledge and expertise. Reflect on your experiences and keep records of tasks tackled and skills developed.

In addition to your field placements, it is recommended you actively **seek further social work related volunteer or paid opportunities** to expand your experience and professional networks.

Volunteering

Volunteering is an opportunity to give to the community, grow your professional and community networks

and demonstrate extra commitment to future employers and clients.

You could start with [volunteering on campus](#) as a Student Mentor, Volunteer Note Taker, volunteer at the annual JCU Careers Fair.

Think of areas of Social Work that interest you and seek out volunteer opportunities in that area. For example, if you're interested in working in health, you could volunteer with a patient support group. If you wish to develop your counselling skills or crisis support experience you could be a Lifeline phone volunteer.

Volunteering opportunities are advertised on the [JCU Careers website](#). Check Red Cross, Beyond Blue, Cancer Council, Centacare, Vinnies (Particularly VRAP = Vinnies Refugees Assistance Program), Food Rescue Initiative, Orange Sky, Indigenous Community Volunteers, Lifeline, PCYC, Pyjama Foundation etc.

Further opportunities are advertised through:

- [FNQ Volunteers](#)
- [Volunteering North Queensland](#)
- [Townsville City Council Community Directory](#)
- [Cairns City Council Community Directory](#)

Show Initiative

Employers want to know you can offer more than your educational qualifications.

Be proactive, get involved and stand out from the crowd.

- Become involved in community activities, organisations and events. Employers value community engagement
- Undertake extra courses to build your knowledge – check out the [Mental Health Professional Network](#) seminars or the professional development offered by AASW eg [Social Work Online Training](#) (SWOT) modules. Keep a record of your training on your LinkedIn and resume
- Be involved in the 'JCU Cairns Social Social Work Club'