



# SOCIAL WORK CAREER SNAPSHOT


 **BOOST YOUR EMPLOYMENT 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 [JCU Job Ready](#)

## Social Work

'Social Workers assess the social needs of individuals, families and groups, assist and empower people to develop and use the skills and resources needed to resolve social and other problems and further human wellbeing and human rights, social justice and social development'.

Source: [Job Outlook](#) (retrieved October 2020).

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.



Source: [Job Outlook, October 2020](#)

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
- Develop policy and evaluate programs

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](#)

**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.

## JCU Employment Outcomes

**Employers of JCU Social Work graduates include:**

James Cook University; Queensland Health; Queensland Department of Education, Department of Communities; Child Safety and Disability Services; Queensland University of Technology; Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women; Townsville Hospital and Health Service; Department of Social Services; NSW Health; Headspace.

Source: [JCU Alumni LinkedIn](#) (retrieved October 2020)

The Australian government [ComparEd](#) site 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
<b>Full-time employment</b>	<b>83.6%</b> 73 responses	<b>71.4%</b>
<b>Overall employment</b>	<b>91.1%</b> 90 responses	<b>85.7%</b>
<b>Full-time study</b>	<b>5.9%</b> 85 responses	<b>9.4%</b>
<b>Median salary</b>	<b>\$65,000</b> 54 responses	<b>\$65,400</b>
Data source: Graduate Outcomes Survey 2017-2019 Source: <a href="#">ComparEd</a> , retrieved 13 October 2020		

## 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 an insight into employer expectations.

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

### Online Job Boards

- [Seek](#)
- [APS Jobs Australian Public Service recruitment](#)
- [Smart Jobs Queensland Government Jobs](#)
- [CareCareers](#)
- [Queensland Health](#)
- [Australian Defence Force](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [CareerOne](#)

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



## Graduate Recruitment Directories

- [Queensland Government Graduate Portal](#)
- [Australian Government Graduate Programs](#)
- [GradAustralia](#)
- [GradConnection](#)

### Employers' Websites and Social Media

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

Research employer groups and fields of interest on **LinkedIn** e.g. Aged Care Facilities Australia; Disability Support Agencies in Australia; Drug and Alcohol Services Australia, Youth and Mental Health or Social Work, Community Development, and Mental Health.



### JCU LinkedIn

The JCU LinkedIn site connects you to over 5900 JCU alumni who have listed **Social Work** within their LinkedIn profile. (Retrieved 20 October 2020)

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 program places 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. This will greatly assist your future job applications and interview responses.

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 or Volunteer Note Taker.

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 Telephone Crisis Supporter](#).

Volunteering opportunities are advertised on the [JCU Careers website](#). Also check Red Cross, Beyond Blue, Cancer Council, Centacare, Vinnies, Food Rescue Initiative, Orange Sky, Indigenous Community Volunteers, Lifeline, PCYC, Pyjama Foundation volunteer opportunities.

Further opportunities are advertised through:

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

## Show Initiative

Employers are interested in what you can bring to the position and the organization that will set you apart from other applicants.

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, e.g. [Social Work Online Training \(SWOT\)](#) modules. Keep a record of your training on your LinkedIn and resume
- Join [JCU Social Work students](#) or [JCU Cairns Social Social Work Students](#).