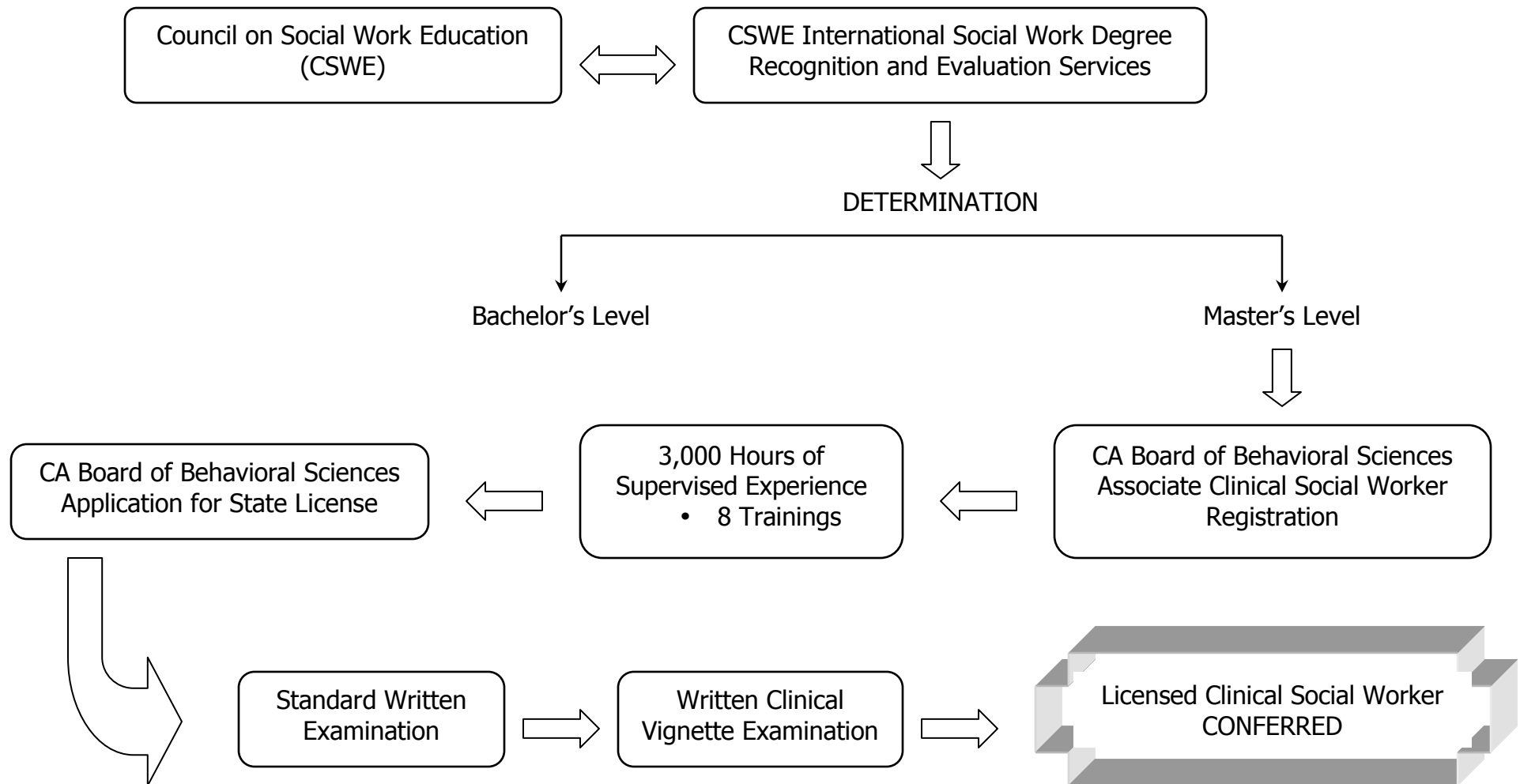




U.S. Licensing Process for Foreign Social Workers

Overview



Disclaimer: This information is provided only as an overview. All programs, processes, and/or fees are subject to change. Please verify above information with appropriate agency or governing body.

- 1. Council of Social Work Education (CSWE)** The CSWE is the national accrediting agency for Social Work education in the US. The first step is to contact the CSWE. You can go to their website at www.cswe.org, click on Accreditation and then to International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Service. Their address and phone and fax numbers are: 1725 Duke Street, Suite 500, Alexandria, VA 22314-3457, (703) 683-8080 and FAX (703) 683-8099.
- 2. International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Services –ISWDRES-** The Office of Social Work Accreditation and Educational Excellence (OSWAE) part of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), is recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation as the sole accrediting agency for social work education in the United States. The office's International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Service (ISWDRES) recognizes academic credentials in social work that are comparable to accredited baccalaureate and master's degrees in social work in the United States. Recognition is necessary to establish qualifications for employment, graduate school admission, membership in the National Association of Social Workers, state licensing, and/or certification. Recognition is based on the general comparability of the program objectives (as stated in the program catalogue or program's official memorandum) and level of the applicant's social work education to social work education in the United States. Follow the application instructions posted on the website <http://www.cswe.org/cms/22213.aspx> . Complete the Screening form, with a fee of \$25. The Application fee is based on the ISWDRES fee schedule (\$125-\$450 depending which country the applicant is from.)
- 3. Board of Behavioral Sciences.** Contact the Board of Behavioral Sciences to obtain the “Associate Clinical Social Worker Registration Application Packet.”, The fee is \$75 for the AWS Registration Application. Their address is 1625 North Market Blvd., Suite S-200, Sacramento, CA 95834, Phone: (916) 574-7830, Fax: (916) 574-8625, www.bbs.ca.gov. The LCSW License Examination Application fees are: \$100 application, \$100 standard written exam.
- 4. Supervised Experience.** The experience requirements for licensure are 3,200 hours of supervised experience gained in not less than two calendar years obtained over a period of not less than 104 weeks. All experience must be gained within the six years immediately preceding the date the application for licensure was filed, except that up to 500 hours of clinical experience gained in the supervised practicum shall be exempt from the six-year requirement.
- 5. Additional Training:** There are eight additional educational requirements that you must obtain before submitting your application for a license. These are: 1) Alcoholism and Other Chemical Substance Dependency (15 hours), 2) Human Sexuality (10 hours), 3) Child Abuse (7 hours), 4) Spousal or Partner Abuse Assessment, Detection, and Intervention (15 hours), 5) Aging and Long-Term Care (10 hours), 6) California Law and Professional Ethics (2 semester or 3 quarter units), 7) Psychological Testing (2 semester or 3 quarter units), 8) Psychopharmacology (2 semester or 3 quarter units.) All of the additional training listed above may be taken on-line as long as the training meets the specific requirements outlined in the Board's Licensing Laws and Regulations and the participant receives a certificate of completion.
- 6. Board of Behavioral Services:** After you've completed the 3,200 hours of supervised practice and the additional training required, contact the Board of Behavioral Services to obtain the “Licensed Clinical Social Worker Application Packet.” Their address is 1625 North Market Blvd, 2nd Floor, Suite S-200, Sacramento, CA 95834. Phone: (916) 574-7830, Fax: (916) 574-8625, <http://bbs.ca.gov>. Submit a \$75.00 check or money order made payable to the Behavioral Sciences Fund. To become licensed, LCSW and MFT candidates are required to pass both the Standard Written examination and the Written Clinical Vignette examination. Submit a Request for Examination form and \$100 fee to the Board. First-time candidates should allow three weeks for processing and notification of eligibility. Candidates who are retaking the examination will be notified of eligibility approximately 160 days from the initial test date (if 160 days has already passed when the Request for Examination is submitted, allow three weeks for processing.) Request for Examination forms are available on the website and at testing centers. You will receive a Request for Initial License Issuance form, which must be submitted with the required fee prior to issuance of a license. This fee will not exceed \$130 (MFT) or \$100 (LCSW) and will be established and prorated according to the issuance and expiration date of your license.

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EMPLOYMENT TIPS FOR FOREIGN TRAINED PSYCHOLOGISTS AND SOCIAL WORKERS

Do I need a license in order to work?

Not necessarily. Psychologists and social workers need a license to practice psychotherapy whether in an organization or in their own private practice. However, there are many jobs available that do not require a license and that utilize the skills and knowledge of psychologists and social workers.

Most of these job opportunities are with “Community Based Organizations” or CBO’s that provide a range of social services. CBO’s are non-governmental organizations which are private and not for profit, commonly known as non-profit organizations. Generally these organizations are funded through a mix of government funds and private donations.

Services provided by non-profit or community based organizations include services for youth, children and the elderly; services to persons with disabilities including mental health disabilities, services for abused women, services to persons with substance abuse problems etc.

Should I validate my education/credentials?

Most employers will not require you to validate your credentials. However, since employers are generally not familiar with the education systems of other countries, it may be helpful for them to see the equivalency of your education in the United States. Some employers may also be interested in seeing the course content of your education.

What about having work experience in the United States?

Employers generally look for people with experience with the populations the serve. For example, if you are applying for a job as a “youth counselor”, the employer will want to see that you have experience working with young people. You need to decide your areas of interest in the human services field and consider doing some volunteer work in those areas to increase your opportunities of employment. Volunteer work can give you valuable experience in the United States, connect you with other professionals and facilitate local letters of recommendation.

Job Titles/Position Description

- Counselor
- Case manager
- Outreach Worker
- Social Worker
- Residential Counselor

Job Areas

- Human Services
- Social Services
- Health Services
- Non-profit Sector
- Substance Abuse
- Children Services
- Youth Services
- Senior Services

Web-sites

- www.craigslist.com
- www.monster.com
- www.opportunityknocks.org

Evaluation of Credentials

- International Education Research Foundation
www.ierf.org
- Council on Social Work Education www.cswe.org
(social workers only)