

BASW

The professional association for
social work and social workers

International Recruitment and Induction Standards

for International Social Workers
coming to the United Kingdom



BASW Diaspora
Social Work Special
Interest Group
June 2023

Foreword

The Diaspora Social Work Special Interest Group (SIG) at BASW is delighted to introduce this framework providing guidance on best practice in the recruitment and induction processes for social workers who have qualified outside the UK. Importantly, the standards have been co-produced with social workers who have lived experience of migration to the UK.

The standards have been developed in the context of unprecedented demand for social workers in the UK, with recruitment and retention now being one of the biggest pressures on the profession.

For example, Social Work England reports that the **vacancy rate has increased to 20%**, or one in every five social work positions, **up from 17%** in 2021. This has exponentially increased the recruitment of social workers from other countries. Studies estimate that **over 10 per cent of England's qualified social workers trained abroad**. Social Work England reports the number of overseas social workers applying to work in England annually has risen almost threefold in the past three years, i.e. —**175.3% new applications**.

Elsewhere, there are also a growing number of people who qualified outside the UK on the register in Wales, with Social Care Wales having **received 93 applications** from individuals who qualified outside the UK between October 2022 and April 2023, with **195 already registered**. In December 2022 BBC Wales reported that three Welsh local authorities (out of 22) had social worker **vacancy rates of more than 30%**.

Thus there is a growing number of social workers in the UK who originally qualified and/or have practised outside the UK, including many of the SIG's own members. However feedback received through various surveys indicates the experiences of overseas social workers have often been challenging with poor induction and management support.

The SIG recognise that the transition can be testing for employers and employees alike, resulting in poor retention of these workers. The SIG members have therefore chosen to collaborate on producing this document to provide guidance on the challenges that may be faced and how employers and recruiters can provide appropriate and relevant support. Prospective employers can find in this document a detailed exploration of key issues to consider when recruiting social workers internationally.

International social workers bring with them a wealth of expertise and experience which can be a huge asset to any social work employer. It is our hope that these standards will be used across the UK to ensure international social workers receives the support and training they need to be successful as social workers in the UK and to make a positive difference to their employers and the lives of the people with whom they will work.

Priya David

Duc Tran

Co-chairs, BASW Diaspora Social Work Special Interest Group

Content

A note on structure	4
Social Work in the United Kingdom (UK)	4
Summary: The 10 standards	5
Disclaimer: Immigration advice	6
International Human Resources Recruitment Guidelines	7
International Recruitment and Induction Standards	10
Theme: Recruitment Framework	
Standard 1: Inclusive Recruitment and Selection	10
Engagement and Talent Selection	12
Theme: Recruitment	14
Well-being Support	
Standard 2: Employee Wellbeing and Family Support	14
Theme: Inclusive Induction Framework	15
Standard 3: Comprehensive Orientation Framework	15
Theme: Induction	16
Employee Review and Assessment	
Standard 4: Knowledge, Skills Statements Evaluation	16
Standard 5: Inclusive Formal Assessments	16
Theme: Retention	17
Continuous Professional Development	
Standard 6: Culturally Sensitive Social Work Learning and Development	17
Standard 7: Culturally Sensitive Social Work Learning Assessment and Intervention tools	17
Standard 8: Continuous Professional Education	18
Standard 9: Coaching and Mentoring	18
Theme: Quality Assurance	19
Continuous Improvement	
Standard 10. Continuous Improvement	19
Appendix A: How the Standards were developed	20
Glossary	21
Acknowledgements	23

A note on structure

This document begins by outlining the ten standards, providing a brief overview of each topic covered. These summaries will allow readers to find the appropriate guidelines and further information that they seek easily.

It then moves on to outlining the background to the development of the standards, before providing a detailed exploration of each issue for more information. The standards are divided into the following six themes:

- 1. Recruitment Framework**
- 2. Recruitment:** Well-being Support
- 3. Inclusive Induction Framework**
- 4. Induction:** Employee Review and Assessment
- 5. Retention:** Continuing Professional Development
- 6. Quality Assurance:** Continuous Improvement

These six themes introduce descriptive standards and guidelines to ensure efficient and effective resourcing of international qualified social workers for each function.

Each of the guidelines provide activities and recommendations during the recruitment process leading up to hiring an applicant and through the induction process for all qualified international social worker applicants.

Any future updates or revisions shall be added to these guidelines to ensure most recent information and terms of reference.

Appendix A contains details of how the standards were developed.

The Glossary provides definitions of key terms used throughout the standards.

Social Work in the United Kingdom (UK)

The UK consists of four constituent parts

– England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Under an arrangement known as ‘devolution’, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales all have their own executive (government) and legislative (parliamentary) bodies. Each of the three devolved territories has primary legislative competence for a number of policy issues including health and social care. Decisions for England are made by the UK Government.

This means that there are four different legislative frameworks and four different regulatory bodies for social work in the UK:

- **England** – Social Work England (SWE)
- **Northern Ireland** – Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC)
- **Scotland** – Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)
- **Wales** – Social Care Wales (SCW)

In order to practise social work in the UK, an individual must be registered with the appropriate regulator for the part of the UK in which they are working or planning to work. This document therefore refers to the ‘relevant national regulator’ as appropriate. Each regulator also has its own guidance and codes of practice.

As a consequence of devolution, the legislative and policy frameworks for social work also differ across the UK.



Summary: The 10 standards

Standard 1: Ethical Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment begins with a comprehensively formulated recruiting process plan guided by inclusive, ethical approaches and international and UK labour employment legislation. Organisations recruiting qualified social workers from other countries should have a robust, coherent and transparent recruitment process assessing all international social workers. Recruiters should comply with and uphold the relevant Codes of Practice on Ethical Recruitment of the relevant UK and devolved Governments and social work regulators and the Conduct for International Recruitment Standards.

Standard 2: Employee Wellbeing and Family Support

This standard looks at ways to collaborate with international social workers to address family and cultural support with modern ways of providing support including face to face, virtual and collaborative team tools/platforms.

Standard 3: Comprehensive Orientation Framework

A clear orientation programme will ensure all new international social workers are provided regular support with their job role and responsibilities, mandatory and job specific training and learning, especially in the area of social work practice in which they are employed.

Standard 4: Knowledge, Skills Statements Evaluation (assessing Social Workers during induction)

Reviews for international social workers should take place after three months, six months, and 12 months to both evaluate a learner's knowledge and capabilities and ensure they are being supported appropriately. This will allow for the time to learn in each induction area and apply what the social worker has learned in real time.

Standard 5: Inclusive Formal Assessments

Assessments should utilise inclusive formal, structured social work practice assessment tools to apply social work knowledge to practice and make use of shared feedback to improve overall course content.

Standard 6: Culturally Sensitive Social Work: Learning and Development

Learning and development content should be culturally sensitive, inclusive, and diverse to ensure that social workers are gaining relevant knowledge and understanding of the subject matter and are proficient in content. Ensure training content is current and organised to facilitate subject matter for international social workers to build their confidence with working in diverse communities so that they can easily adapt to the new environment.

Standard 7: Culturally Sensitive Social Work: Learning Assessment and Intervention tools

The tools for assessment and intervention should be utilised in the application of knowledge and data from various sources analysed to inform further instruction. It is also imperative that applicants are understood by trainers and supervisors with regards to self-assessment and goal setting. Trainers and supervisors must make use of the assessments to share feedback with social workers that aims at improving overall course content while being culturally sensitive.

Standard 8: Continuous Professional Education

Ensure that international social workers enjoy a diverse, fair, and respectful professional life by creating an environment with a variety of learning methods including virtual, face-to-face or hybrid. Promote diverse, fair and respectful professional and personal development for international social workers. Training should encourage positive, constructive, productive and reflective activities among social work learners. It is important to establish a learning environment which allows the safety and security that encompasses a learner's overall well-being.

Standard 9: Coaching and Mentoring

Provide one-on-one coaching, virtual coaching, supervision and mentoring to ensure social workers' transition from their home country to the UK through the identified international mentors. Regular scheduled meetings with the international mentor to understand the overseas social worker's needs, goals and experiences and work with them on creating a plan of action for their work. Supervisors are to provide

continuous coaching and mentoring activities during the induction and beyond induction training.

Standard 10: Continuous Improvement

It is important for organisations to have a continuous improvement plan and evaluation process for international recruiting process and induction programmes.



Disclaimer: Immigration advice

The British Association of Social Workers (BASW) is not authorised to offer advice on immigration issues. Only individuals and

organisations authorised by the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner are able to provide immigration advice.

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RESOURCES RECRUITMENT GUIDELINES

1. Scope

The recruitment and induction standards have been developed to provide hiring employers and recruiters with guidance for international resourcing, attracting talent, assessing and talent selection, relocation and well-being support and developing induction programmes for qualified international social workers. These standards can be used for any size organisation or industry.

The goals of the standards are to:

- Establish clear guidelines and expectations for fair, equal, inclusive and culturally sensitive recruitment practices during the decision-making process.
- Ensure that international recruitment operations by recruiting employers and agencies are within international and UK labour law and practices and aligned with the

Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) Guidance on recruiting and employing overseas workers and the Codes of Practice for the international recruitment of health and social care personnel of the UK and devolved governments.

- Ensure preparation for the development of induction programmes that are inclusive and easily accessible.
- Encourage hired international social workers to actively participate in their personal and professional development towards a successful career.
- Provide a reference for recruiting agencies, applicants and hired international social workers in understanding their rights regarding the international recruitment process.

2. Recruitment guidelines

2.1 Overview

This overview provides details on recruitment activities, processes and approaches to recruiting talent and hiring for available job roles. These guidelines will promote a sustainable and cost-effective approach to resourcing, talent attraction, reviewing and assessing applicants, and retaining international social workers. The recruitment guidelines will ensure that all applicants are recruited in a respectful, fair, and transparent manner.

Communication shall be transparent at all times regarding the overall recruitment process, hiring organisation information, location of organisation, the average costs of living for the location being recruited, job role information, applicant fees, relocation fees, and the selection criteria.

During the recruitment process all applicants should have the opportunity to contact the recruiting agency to ask questions regarding their job roles, expectations, relocation costs, and other well-being services as well as receive a timely response back to make an informed decision regarding future employment.

All applicants shall receive timely communication by the recruiting organisation during the recruitment process regarding international job role and other company information.

All applicants should receive timely communication of what stage they are at in the recruitment process.

Five key areas of International Human Resources planning for recruiting international social workers.

Figure 1 shows the key areas of the international recruitment process which occur in an organisation to be efficient and understanding what factors are important to successfully recruit talented international social workers.



Figure 1: International Recruitment Planning Process and flowchart for recruiting Qualified Social Workers

1 Resourcing Talent

In this stage recruiting agencies or employers review and determine how applicants will be communicated and/or what methods or avenues to contact potential applicants. Recruiters shall look for several different ways to contact a wider and diverse pool of candidates.

2 Attract Talent

This stage is where recruiters find ways to engage applicants to encourage applicants to review and apply for vacant positions.

3 Applicant Assessment and Selection

During this stage, applicants are tested on their English skills. Applicants CVs are reviewed to determine skills, capabilities, and knowledge of applicant for the vacant role.

4 Relocation and Well-being Support

This stage is where recruiters review and determine relocation support, relocation costs, and relocation support and other resources that are offered to international social workers to ease their transition from their country origin to the UK.

5 Induction

This stage is where recruiters review and other leading specialists train and mentor new candidates during orientation. New candidates learn about the company policies and procedures, UK culture, UK Social Work regulations for children, adults and family, working with multi-ethnic families. New candidates are assessed on their capabilities and skills.

The recruitment process flowchart demonstrates the steps in the recruitment process which occurs from a recruiting agency participating in recruiting from other countries for talent as part of an organisation's international human resources recruitment strategy. There may be some steps skipped, based on the need of the recruiting employers.

This process demonstrates the flow of activities from the beginning of the recruitment process to the retention stage of coaching and mentoring for international social workers in Figure 2.

International Recruitment Process Flowchart



Figure 2: International Recruitment Process Flowchart



INTERNATIONAL RECRUITMENT AND INDUCTION STANDARDS

Theme: Recruitment Framework

Standard 1: Inclusive Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment begins with a comprehensively formulated recruiting process plan guided by inclusive, ethical approaches, international and UK labour employment legislation. Organisations recruiting qualified social workers from other countries should have a robust, coherent and transparent recruitment process assessing all international social workers. Recruiters should comply with and uphold the relevant Codes of Practice on Ethical Recruitment of the relevant UK and devolved Governments and social work regulators and the Conduct for International Recruitment Standards.

- Recruiting employers work to promote, engage, and demonstrate ethical recruiting principles including fair treatment, honesty, and transparent recruitment practices.
- Promote fair, inclusive, and equal recruitment practices and treatment of all international social workers.
- Ensure linguistically non-biased interviewing questionnaires focus on behaviour-based skills, capabilities, and knowledge.
- Demonstrate international recruiting practices complying with all international, UK and devolved employment and labour laws.

Inclusive Resourcing and Recruitment Preparation Process

Deciding on which talent should be resourced is based on the job requirements and job specification for each role. Recruiting efforts should include inclusive recruiting methods to source talent including virtual and non-virtual methods of communication. During this process hiring organisations can review a wider range of locations for international talent pool of social workers.

Requisition

During the pre-planning recruitment process, the recruiting agency or HR professional will determine the current need to fill vacancy requirements. The type of international method of recruitment must be embedded in the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion mandate throughout the process. Applicant tracking systems shall be reviewed to ensure inclusive language to attract a diverse talent pool of applicants. To ensure the planning and recruitment process is culturally sensitive and inclusive to all applicants, recruiting organisations and agencies shall ensure that their staff are culturally competent to undertake international recruitment.

Job advertisements

Should promote inclusive and diverse images of employees in a positive way on all advertisements to demonstrate the hiring organisation's commitment to promoting equal opportunities within the organisation.

Applicant Fees

- Ensure that applicants are not charged fees for recruitment services in relation to gaining employment in the UK, as set out in the Codes of practice for international recruitment of health and social care personnel.
- Promote transparent fee schedule of services

Job description

- The job description must have a clear summary of the job role, tasks, essential skills, and capabilities.
- Ensure the use of inclusive language in job descriptions for sourcing diverse candidates from other countries.

- Clearly state salary and include job classification.
- Job descriptions should catch the eye of future international social workers but have transparent information for applicants to understand job role and expectations.
- Provide clear, transparent and accessible information on job roles in advertisements, ensuring that UK-specific terminology, e.g. safeguarding, can be easily understood by applicants.

Person Specification

Should clearly communicate job roles, requirements and expectations of social work posts, including working conditions using inclusive language.

Compensation

Ensure international social workers' pay is equitable and commensurate based on experience and education obtained from their home countries with consideration of transferrable soft and hard skills adaptable to social work in the UK and any language requirements stipulated by the UK or devolved governments or relevant national social work regulator.

Scheduling

Set up recruitment schedules to plan activities for each phase of the recruitment process. This includes scheduling applicants for phone interviews, web conference calls, the process for progressing candidates to the assessment stage, contacting unsuccessful candidates and successful candidates, and final assessment and selection information.

Applicant data protection and confidentiality

Recruitment activities require hiring organisations to obtain sensitive and confidential information regarding prospective candidates. In order to maintain confidentiality and data security, Hiring organisations should:

- Develop clear standards on how candidates' personal data is stored on file by the Employer, HR Professional, or Temporary Staffing agency.
- Explain to all applicants what the United Kingdom data protection laws are, what the data is used for, and what are the limited uses, and how it can be used or obtained.

Relocation Support Communication

- Demonstrate clear knowledge of international recruitment relocation supportive services and communicate to candidates what is included in the relocation package.
- Have a fair and equal transparent relocation package.



Engagement and Talent Selection

Attract Talent

Attracting talent is about communicating and making candidates aware of the prospective employer, where the organisation is located, what benefits it offers, why they should want to move and relocate to work as an international social worker in the UK. This is an opportunity where recruiters can communicate how the company is inclusive and values diversity.

Applicant Selection

Identify applicants based on job specification underpinned by objectivity, impartiality, consistency and non-discriminatory criteria. Organisations recruiting qualified social workers from other countries must develop a process for interviewing and selecting international social workers that is fair and equal in conducting interviews and evaluating applicants for each available job role. Hiring Organisations should:

- Ensure effective recruitment, talent selection activities and induction processes are detailed including inclusive application forms, self-disclosure, and robust interviews that cover safeguarding, equality, diversity knowledge and skills.
- Ensure recruited social workers are offered a supported probationary period involving robust safeguarding training including safeguarding adults at risk.
- As an indication of best practice, offer a remote/virtual/hybrid pre-induction or early induction as an option prior to international social workers' arrival in the UK.

Applicant Assessment

Assessments are used to determine which candidates will be selected based on knowledge, skills, and capabilities. This process shall be inclusive and fair to all applicants during the recruiting process.

- The assessments generated to assess international social workers shall be in accordance with local UK employment statutory laws and regulations.

- Any and all applicant assessment fees shall be fully disclosed and communicated to social workers.
- Facilitate Employment English for Foreign Language tests for the relevant national social work regulator and employment regulations and criteria

Transferrable Skills

Ensure potential candidates' work experience, knowledge and skills are reviewed as transferable due to different terminology used in their country of origin to describe a skill required in the UK but that has similar context and/or meaning.

Fair and equal verification process

Hiring organisations should have clear guidelines on a fair and equal employment verification process including:

- a) verification of qualification and experience,
- b) reference checks
- c) criminal background check from their country of origin, any other country and all current and previous employers similar to DBS where they were previously practising.

Contract of Employment and Written Statement of Particulars

During the talent selection stage, recruiting employers shall have clear written, transparent, and linguistically friendly employee contracts with a copy for the employees who have been selected and hired that must cover the four key elements: agreement, capacity, consideration, and intention. Employers should provide notification to a candidate in writing if an offer is rescinded, modified employment offers and work location for candidate to mitigate the impact of modifying of contract.

The contract shall include:

- a) Welcome Letter
- b) Job title and brief description of job
- c) Basic terms and condition of employment
- d) Employment start date
- e) Probationary period

- f) Working hours
- g) Hired employee pay salary
- h) Frequency of pay
- i) Holiday and paid holidays
- j) Sick leave
- k) Any other organisation benefits
- l) Period of contract
- m) Grievance procedures

Trade Union Support

Provide advice to international applicants about access to independent advice from regulators and unions.

Relocation Disclosure statements

- To assist international social workers with relocation support, the recruiting agency shall communicate and disclose the financial assistance package.
- All transportation, hotel, and freight should be disclosed for families to plan accordingly for relocation

Relocation/Mobility Support

Relocating to a new country can be a very stressful and expensive process for international social workers and their families. Employer mobility resources and services will assist international social workers and their families with transitioning to their new country. These resources should be available for employees to access immediately.

Hiring Organisations should:

- Ensure a family relocation assessment is completed to determine who is included in the family, those who are relocating to the UK with the employee.
- Develop a relocation financial assistance package including, but not limited to, the following: visa processing, legal and Home Office fees, social work registration, flight and any other preferred travel costs childcare, relocation moving, temporary lodging and housing relocation, transportation, obtain UK driver license and driver testing information.
- Ensure provision of information regarding freight rates, shipping costs, export and import of furniture and other personal items to the UK for the employee.

- Ensure transitional resources and opportunities are distributed in a fair, equal and transparent process.

Visa Sponsorship Support

Employees should be provided with the estimated visa processing time and continuous follow-up with Home Office and the employee to keep them abreast of new updates or any other information needed for visa processing.

All the necessary immigration and visa paperwork (sponsorship, visas, passports and etc.) should be provided to new overseas social workers to ensure they have the necessary information to work and live in the UK.

Candidates shall be informed of any other costs associated with visa processing fees which the hiring employer does not cover.

Housing

Communicate temporary lodging and housing relocation information in a timely manner.

Ensure appropriate lodging is available, preferably near grocery stores and near public transport for easier access to get to and from community resources.

Travel and Transportation costs

Communicate information on obtaining UK driver license and driver testing information.

Provide information on flights and any other preferred travel costs, and public transport.

Childcare costs

Communicate the average childcare costs for the area in which international social workers are being recruited. Communicate community resources which are available to assist with issues related to schools and child enrolment requirements.

Social Work Regulator Registration Fees

Communicate social work registration requirements and costs associated with registering as a social worker in the UK.

Well-being Support

Standard 2: Employee Wellbeing and Family Support

Collaborate with international social workers to address family and cultural support with modern ways of providing support including face to face, virtual and collaborative team tools/platforms.

Hiring Organisations should:

- Provide cultural community resources that are culturally and linguistically diverse to assist employees and their families with psychological, medical, child learning support programmes and religious support programmes.
- Ensure continuous wellbeing and transitional support for families for a specified time.

- Link international social workers to local community resources which would help them assimilate in the new environment.
- Promote community resources to empower international social workers to engage in community and cultural wellness resources including psychological, health, wellness, support for those who have experienced trauma, domestic abuse etc.
- Ensure international social worker has a mentor or "buddy" to assist transitioning and tapping into community resources.

Figure 3 demonstrates what supportive services can make a difference to social workers migrating to the UK and assist them with easing into the community culture and accessing community resources.



Figure 3: Support that can make a difference

Theme: Inclusive Induction Framework

Standard 3: Comprehensive Orientation Framework

A clear orientation programme will ensure all new international social workers are provided regular support with their job role and responsibilities, mandatory and job specific training and learning, especially in the area of social work practice in which they are employed.

Hiring Organisations should:

- Provide up to date information on BASW Code of Conduct and Standards for Social Work, Code of Professional Practice for Social Care, the relevant regulatory body and Code of Practice for Social Workers and Employers.
- Establish employee-centred Continuing Professional Development goals and activities that shall occur as a written action plan.
- Design a work plan for employee-centred career goals and activities that they may need to accomplish.
- Arrange for a three-year period to allow international social workers to acclimatise and adapt to practising social work in the UK as guided by the relevant regulatory body.
- Provide guidance on the standard requirements for knowledge and skills as stipulated in the guiding regulatory frameworks and specialised skills set that they need to attain during induction.
- Recognise the impact of international social worker's work experience and promote international social workers as a unique group within the induction process.

New Hire Orientation design and planning

- Ensure all social workers receive an orientation schedule prior to arriving to the UK.
- Integrate principles of equality, diversity and inclusion and support training to managers.
- Design and implement a training plan on how international social workers will be

trained on social work regulations, mental health codes, social work evaluation tools and assess and offer appropriate support to enable in-depth learning and proficiency in their specialised area of practice.

- A well designed and structured induction programme should minimise the anxieties and transitional challenges new employees may experience when moving and adjusting to a new culture and community.
- Plan and structure a comprehensive and supportive orientation plan which determines essential outcomes, activities, a specified time, and a plan for continuous assessment and evaluation of how international social workers are being impacted by the induction programme.
- Clear and transparent understanding of trade unions, accessible information on how to get support from independent advocacy and support groups. The recruiting employer should make accessible information on Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) role in conciliation and mediation for grievances.
- The Induction should provide international social workers with the expectations of their new job role and responsibilities.
- Orientation will address any knowledge and skills gaps which international social workers may have.

Social Work practice and legislation in the UK

- Provide information on their social work agency and the wider organisation in which the agency is based; other relevant agencies and links; local and community resources.
- Orientation should include support in understanding and transitioning into the UK culture and local culture.
- Orientation should ensure that the international social worker is clear about the legal and policy aspects of practice and their specific area of practice in the part of the UK in which the appointee will be working, and in understanding the relevant national social work regulations, registrations, and codes of practice.

Employee Review and Assessment

Standard 4: Knowledge, Skills Statements Evaluation (assessing Social Workers during induction)

Reviews for international social workers should take place after the three-month period of working, six months, and 12 months to both evaluate a learner's knowledge and capabilities and ensure they are being supported appropriately. This will allow for the time to learn in each induction area and apply what the social worker has learned in real time.

Hiring Organisations should:

- Promote BASW Professional Capabilities Framework.
- Assess and support international social workers' progress and offer training for skills gaps which may arise.
- Utilise any relevant modern and inclusive knowledge and skills frameworks tools, for example the Knowledge and Skills Statement (KSS) in England, which can be provided to review development throughout the induction programme.
- Listen to voices of international social workers and learn from them to determine what is going well, what is not going well and what needs improvement.
- Recognise the professional development, knowledge, skills and work experiences of international social workers who have been in a variety of clinical, managerial, and entry(novice) level roles in their home country.
- Set a specific timeline for international social workers to practice as entry level or novice and promote to the next level of social work practice.

Standard 5: Inclusive Formal Assessments:

Utilise inclusive formal, structured social work practice assessment tools to apply social work knowledge to practice. Make use of shared feedback to improve overall course content.

Hiring Organisations should:

- Ensure clinical or direct social work practice is observed by the immediate supervisor.
- Create shadowing opportunities where international social workers observe local practice in real time to acclimatise to new ways of working.
- Utilise BASW and other UK guidelines for newly qualified and registered social workers as guidance for an assessment that is inclusive and culturally sensitive.
- Support social worker learners in self-assessments, goal setting and monitoring of their own progress in learning.



Continuous Professional Development

Standard 6: Culturally Sensitive Social Work Learning and Development:

Learning and development content should be culturally sensitive, inclusive, and diverse to ensure that social workers are gaining relevant knowledge and understanding of the subject matter and are proficient in content. Ensure training content is current and organised to facilitate subject matter for international social workers to build their confidence with working in diverse communities so that they can easily adapt to the new environment.

Hiring Organisations should:

- Signpost international social workers to relevant learning, training and professional development resources.
- Produce inclusive learning and development content on international social workers' experience, skills, and capabilities to assist with planning, implementing, and assessing culturally sensitive subject matter for professional development activities in consultation with relevant social work regulatory bodies.
- Promote international social workers to accept their own cultural identity, biases and perspectives and identify opportunities to foster inclusive knowledge and diverse social work practices through the various support and advocacy organisations.
- Organise learning content to incorporate equality, diversity and inclusive principles in effective social work practice.
- Use culturally sensitive approaches and evaluation tools to evaluate the culturally sensitive content to review its effectiveness.
- Ensure international social workers can practise and reflect on their attitudes and biases they may have toward different cultures, religions and ethnicities through respective supervisors.

- Utilise a uniform but inclusive culturally sensitive skills gap assessment to address international social workers' skill gaps to promote professional development.

Standard 7: Culturally Sensitive Social Work Learning Assessment and Intervention tools:

The tools for assessment and intervention should be utilised in the application of knowledge and data from various sources analysed to inform further instruction. It is also imperative that applicants are understood by trainers and supervisors with regards to self-assessment and goal setting. Trainers and supervisors must make use of the assessments to share feedback with social workers that aims at improving overall course content while being culturally sensitive.

Hiring Organisations should:

- Develop and promote standardised social work report writing templates specific to the goals and vision of the organisation.
- Review and utilise the multi-dimensional model to Assessment of International Students and adopt it to assess social work practice competencies met with a culturally sensitive angle.
- Train managers and supervisors on adopted culturally sensitive assessment tools like the Inclusive Pedagogy Toolkit, the Mandela model for supervision and the Multi-dimensional model to assess international social workers' competencies.
- Source international social workers who have experimental knowledge as experts who can offer unique content and/or training on migration, their lived experiences, cultural differences, and adjusting to a new country.

- International social workers should demonstrate they are registered as a qualified social worker to practice in the UK and maintain their registration with the relevant national regulator.
- Ensure social workers are participating in CPD that is aligned with their desired social work practice specialisations.
- Promote a culture which encourages international social workers to advance their knowledge and skills and progress in their career.
- Ensure social workers are participating in CPD that aligns with their desired social work practice specialisations.
- Promote a business culture which encourages international social workers to advance their clinical knowledge and skills.

Standard 8: Continuous Professional Education:

Ensure that international social workers enjoy a diverse, fair, and respectful professional life by creating an environment with a variety of learning methods including virtual, face-to-face or hybrid. Promote diverse, fair and respectful professional and personal development for international social workers. Training should encourage positive, constructive, productive and reflective activities among social work learners. It is important to establish a learning environment which allows the safety and security that encompasses a learner's overall well-being.

Hiring Organisations should:

- Communicate the importance of BASW CPD guidance for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and capabilities to social workers.
- Communicate clear expectations of required learning content and the opportunities for practical application.
- Identify and ensure an ongoing learning environment which supports all learners of diverse backgrounds and capabilities enabling social workers to learn.
- Ensure compulsory continuous learning opportunities on culture differences, religious and/or cultural sensitivities of cultural groups that international social workers will service including but not exhaustive indigenous populations, LGBTQ+, Gypsy, Roma & Travellers, Indian, Asian, African, Caribbean, Jewish and other underrepresented cultures, especially where their practice in the home country is different from the UK in terms of types and availability of services and the professional image.

Standard 9: Coaching and Mentoring

Provide one-on-one coaching, virtual coaching, supervision and mentoring to ensure social workers' transition from their home country to the UK through the identified international mentors. Regular scheduled meetings with the international mentor to understand the overseas social worker's needs, goals and experiences and work with them on creating a plan of action for their work. Supervisors are to provide continuous coaching and mentoring activities during the induction and beyond induction training.

- Coaching and Mentoring programmes should be offered from senior level social workers to assist new candidates with their professional career goals.
- Identify Lead Practitioners within organisations to advocate and champion international social workers.
- Ensure mentoring and coaching roles are clearly defined in the programme and expectations for mentors and participants.
- Adapt coaching and mentoring programmes to embed cultural diversity and the coaching and mentoring learning needs of international social workers.
- Engage international social workers who have experiential knowledge and have transitioned to the UK as experts within the coaching and mentoring programme to enhance transitioning international social worker learning process.
- Identify and produce a current list of qualified Social Work practitioners who are willing to act as a coach/mentor.
- Promote a culture of spotting and developing talented and skilled overseas workers for managerial positions, thus encouraging diverse leadership.

Continuous Improvement

Standard 10: Continuous Improvement

It is important for organisations to have a continuous improvement plan and evaluation process for international recruiting process and induction programmes. The benefits of applying and evaluating what works with the induction programme include:

- a) To see what works and what areas to improve.
- b) To determine the value of the programme and how it has helped to improve experiences and improve social work practice.
- c) To determine organisational results of how effectively the recruitment standards and induction programme meet an employer recruitment need.

Hiring organisations should:

- Analyse and collect data from the recruitment process and sources and data to inform further process improvements for future recruitment initiatives.
- Monitor the international social worker's progress throughout the first year of employment to ensure international social workers can demonstrate knowledge and understanding.
- Trainers, supervisors, managers use the continuous improvement and quality assurance tools to share feedback with international social workers which is culturally sensitive and to improve overall induction course content.
- Collect coaching and mentoring programme data to analyse the performance of international social workers and mentors receiving coaching and mentoring to regularly review and improve overall effectiveness of the coaching and mentoring programme.
- Identify the social worker's needs and modify social work instruction accordingly.
- Monitor unconscious bias, religious, and cultural sensitivity content to include in instructional materials on self-awareness, biases, prejudices and to promote cultural equality, diversity and inclusion in social work practice.
- Benchmark with other local and national organisations regarding how effective standards are and what areas to improve.



Appendix A: How the Standards were developed

The International Recruitment and Induction Standards were developed utilising a co-production framework using input from multiple local focus groups which included academic researchers, lecturers, international social workers, social work organisations, local authority constituents, local regulating body members, and human resources consultants.

We have developed and agreed to these minimum standards as guidance for international recruitment planning, talent selection criteria, shortlisting candidates, interviewing, relocation and transition support, coaching and mentoring for recruiting and retaining social workers hired from overseas.

These standards were formulated on the basis of ensuring that all international social workers who have different cultural backgrounds, diverse educational specialisations, and levels of practical work experiences have the right to be recruited under ethical standard practices.

These standards outline best practices for ensuring the recruiting process is transparent to allow international social workers to make informed decisions regarding their future employment, migration decisions, and ensure professional growth opportunities. The relocation needs of the candidates should be taken into consideration during the recruitment planning process to ensure they are provided with good working conditions, adequate employee relocation and acclimation support, and employee well-being support as well as including culturally sensitive and linguistic induction programming for better integration into both their new role and life in the UK.

Recruiting employers and agencies should ensure their recruitment planning and processes are non-discriminatory but inclusive and tailored to international social workers' needs from recruiting and selection, induction training, and continuous development for retention of international social workers.



Glossary

This section provides the definitions of terms used within this document which apply to these standards.

“Applicant” means people who are interested in a particular job and interested in applying for the job role.

“Assessment” means manual or automated systematic approach used to measure a candidate’s skills, personality, capabilities, and work knowledge.

“Attract” means activities set forth to attract applicants during the recruitment planning process.

“Attrition” means the rate at which employees vacate or leave their job role.

“Candidate(s)” means individual or individuals who are being considered for a specific role.

“Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD)” regulating and accrediting body who set standards for HR and development of people.

“Cultural Sensitivity” means the ability to have the knowledge and skills to understand people who have different backgrounds and be supportive of an individual’s differences.

“Continuous Improvement” means a process to continuously analyse and improve systems, workflow processes, policies and procedures for errors or risks in an organisation.

“Contract of Employment” means a written contract agreed and entered into between the hiring organisation or director of an organisation and the applicant who is employed for the purpose of performing specific duties for a specified period of time and where the terms of conditions of employment are outline and provided to the employee in a written contract.

“Dependents” means legalised spouse, children (biologically or legally adopted), and/or others who are under legal court appointed guardianship of care.

“Diversity” means respecting and valuing differences of individuals despite their backgrounds or characteristics.

“Employee” means any applicant who has been hired directly by an employer or staffing agency which includes full-time staff fixed term contract position, part-time, or short-term employment.

“Employer” means the hiring organisation who outsourced recruiting agencies to seek candidates on their behalf.

“External Recruitment” means activities to recruit or hire an applicant through external sourcing from local temporary, staffing agencies, or other international recruiting agencies.

“Human Resources planning” means the process by which organisations source, develop, and retain talent to meet an organisation’s strategic goals and objectives.

“Inclusive” means the process of valuing and including underrepresented individuals or groups of people who offer unique contributions from different backgrounds and perspectives.

“Induction” means a formalised training process to support new hires with transition into the new organisation and learn about the organisation’s culture, policy and procedures.

“Internal Recruitment” means recruitment or hiring activities of an applicant or candidate through internal sourcing by current Human Resources staff.

“International Social Workers” means social workers who are currently registered to work overseas in a social work capacity.

“International Recruitment” means recruitment activities where talent is attracted and resourced from countries outside the United Kingdom or country of origin.

“Job Description” means a clear and detailed explanation of job requirements for candidates to understand the responsibilities and the essential skills needed for a job role.

“Native Language” means language(s) of a region in which an applicant or candidate lives, identifies, and understands from childhood.

“Pre-Onboarding” means the recruitment process flow where candidates are moved from being hired, candidate accepting job role to starting on their scheduled date of employment.

“Person Specification” means clear inclusive language, and detailed criteria used for all candidates during the recruitment planning process.

“Qualified International Social Workers” means social workers who are recruited internationally who meet the qualifications standards and registration criteria of one of the four national regulators to work in the UK.

“Recruiting or Temporary Staffing Agency” means a business processing outsourcing organisation hired to perform recruitment services on behalf of the hiring organisation.

“Recruitment” means a process to plan for fair and equal resourcing, attracting, and selecting applicants to a vacant job role.

“Requisition” means a formal process to request for job vacancies.

“Resourcing” means the process of attracting, selecting, and retaining talent for a job role within an organisation.

“Retention” means the ability to address and prevent employee turnover.

“Salary” means a fixed amount which is payable to employees weekly, monthly, or annually.

“Statutory” means the regulatory and administrative laws enacted by statutes which were written and defined by a legislature.

“Talent” means an individual who has the capacity to develop further knowledge and skills to perform specific tasks for a role.

“Talent Pool” means a group of candidates who have the characteristics, knowledge and/or skills a hiring organisation is seeking.

“Talent Selection” means selecting a suitable candidate for a job role.

“Trade Unions” means a group of employees who join together in activities to improve their working conditions in the workplace. Most trade unions are independent of any employer.

“Written Statement of Employment Particulars” refers to the Employment Relations Act 1996 which entitles employees to a written statement of initial employment particulars within two months of start date. This section covers terms of employment and is updated when terms change.



Acknowledgements

The Special Interest Group would like to thank the following for their engagement in the production of these standards:

Kwaku Afram, Chairman, Ghanaian Social Worker Association

Jemimah Beauty Boateng, CLA Social Worker, former Membership officer for Diaspora SIG

Priya David, Co-Chair of the Diaspora Special Interest Group, BASW

Anstance Fometu, Registered Manager and philanthropist; co-vice chair of the Diaspora Special Interest Group, BASW

Dr Yohai Hakak, Senior Lecturer in Social Work, Brunel University London

Crystal Howell, Interim Manager, Practice Improvement and Development Team, Surrey County Council

David N Jones, former Chair, BASW International Committee (2017-2021)

Varghese Kuppamadathil Kuruvila, Social Worker

Kelly McAleese, Team Manager, Rutland County Council

Irine Mano, Senior Lecturer in Social Work - Practice Learning, Anglia Ruskin University

Omar Mohamed, Social Worker, Lecturer and Researcher

Christine Mungoshi; Senior Practitioner

Michael Nwoye, Intercountry Social Worker, Children and Families Across Borders (CFAB)

Ama Ofuso, Senior Practitioner

Tamara Pachner, Senior Practitioner, Rutland County Council

Duc Tran, Co-Chair of the Diaspora Special Interest Group, BASW

Katrina Williams, MSW, MBA, Global HR Consultant & Trainer, Lawlah Group Ltd

The SIG would also like to acknowledge and thank all those who spoke to us in confidence

Contact the SIG:

Website: <https://www.basw.co.uk/diaspora-special-interest-group>

Email: diaspora@baswnetwork.co.uk

BASW

The professional association for
social work and social workers

Cite as: BASW Diaspora Social Work Special Interest Group (2023): *International Recruitment and Induction Standards for International Social Workers coming to the United Kingdom*. (June 2023, Birmingham: BASW.)
© BASW June 2023

Users are welcome to quote from this document so long as the source is correctly cited as above. Unattributed quotes are forbidden under copyright protection.