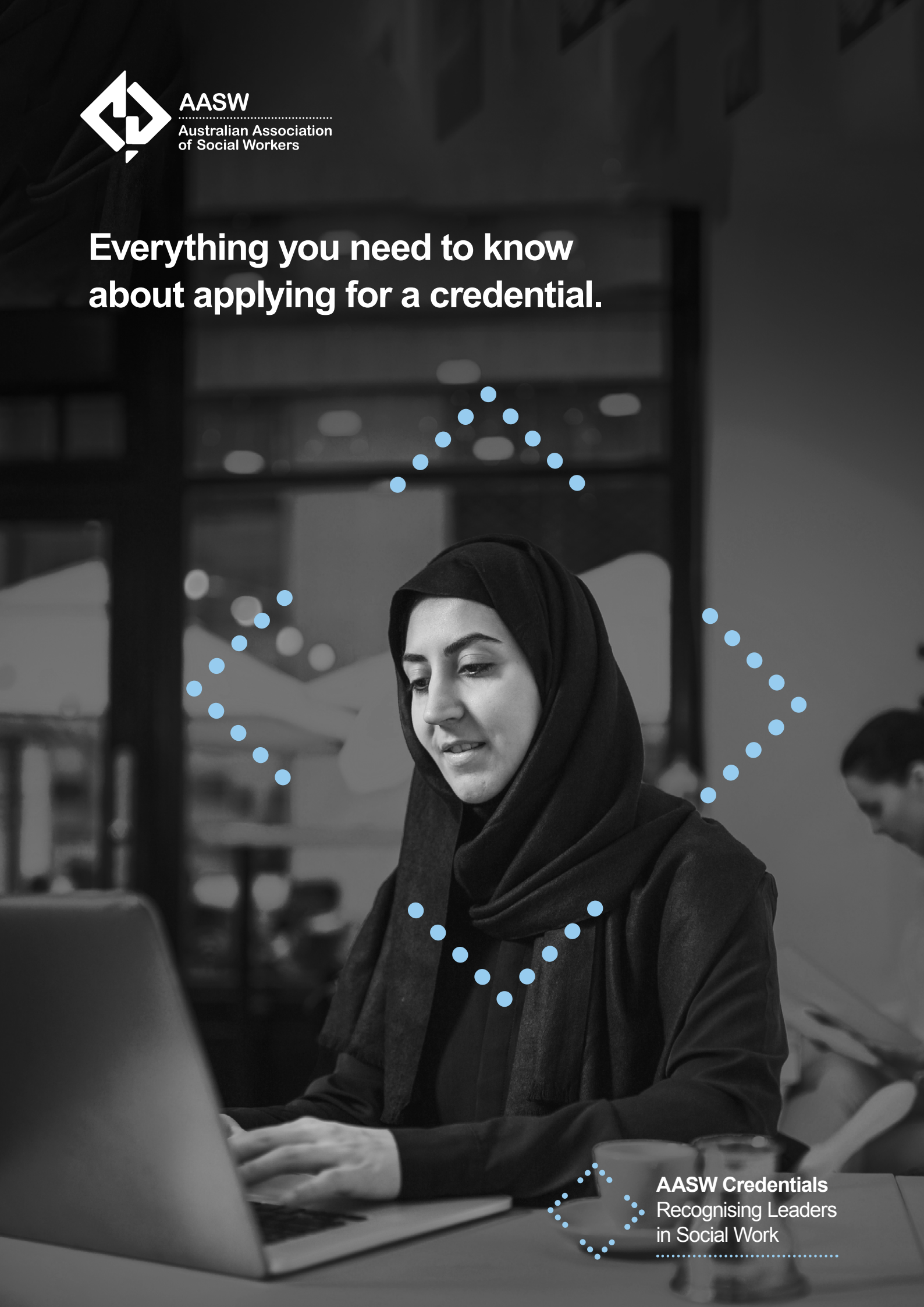




AASW
Australian Association
of Social Workers

**Everything you need to know
about applying for a credential.**



AASW Credentials
Recognising Leaders
in Social Work

Everything you need to know
about applying for a credential.

Thank you for your interest in applying for an AASW credential.



You have started the first step in being recognised for your specialised skills and experience as a leader in social work.

Your social work credential will help employers, agencies and people know that you have the specific experience and capabilities they need.

You are also helping to further define and create best practice benchmarks within areas of social work for the benefit of the community overall.

Although applying for a credential does require an investment of time, we are here to support you through the process.

This guide has been developed to help you understand what's involved and to get you ready to take the next step of applying.

We look forward to helping you along the way and to have your specialist skills and experience recognised.

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Cindy Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. Below the signature is a horizontal dotted line.

Cindy Smith

CEO

Australian Association of Social Workers

Who can apply?

AASW members with at least two years full-time (or full-time equivalent) experience in a specialised setting after qualifying as a social worker are eligible to apply. You may have many more years of experience, however only relevant jobs over the last five years can be counted towards the two years full-time equivalent. You must also be up to date with your continuous professional development (CPD).

Currently you can apply for a credential if you have the relevant experience in any of the following areas of social work.

Mental Health Direct practice	Clinical Direct practice	Family Violence Direct or indirect practice	Disability Direct or indirect practice	Child Protection Direct or indirect practice
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Applicants who are not currently working in direct practice can also be eligible for the family violence, disability and child protection credentials if you can demonstrate that the relevant capability statement is fundamental to your ability to perform your role. This might apply to roles such as research, education and leadership and management roles.

How a credential benefits you.



It sets you apart

A credential formally acknowledges your specialist skills, experience and capabilities in a specific area of social work, which leads to opportunity.



You join a community

When you achieve a credential in the areas of specialisation, you become part of a community of colleagues and stakeholders who also have skills, experience and knowledge in the same area. This recognisable symbol is the doorway to a collaborative community for further development, enrichment and engagement.



You make a difference

Holding a credential means that important collective data, information and experience is shared with the rest of the profession and key stakeholders. This informs continuous improvement, best practice and change.



You create confidence

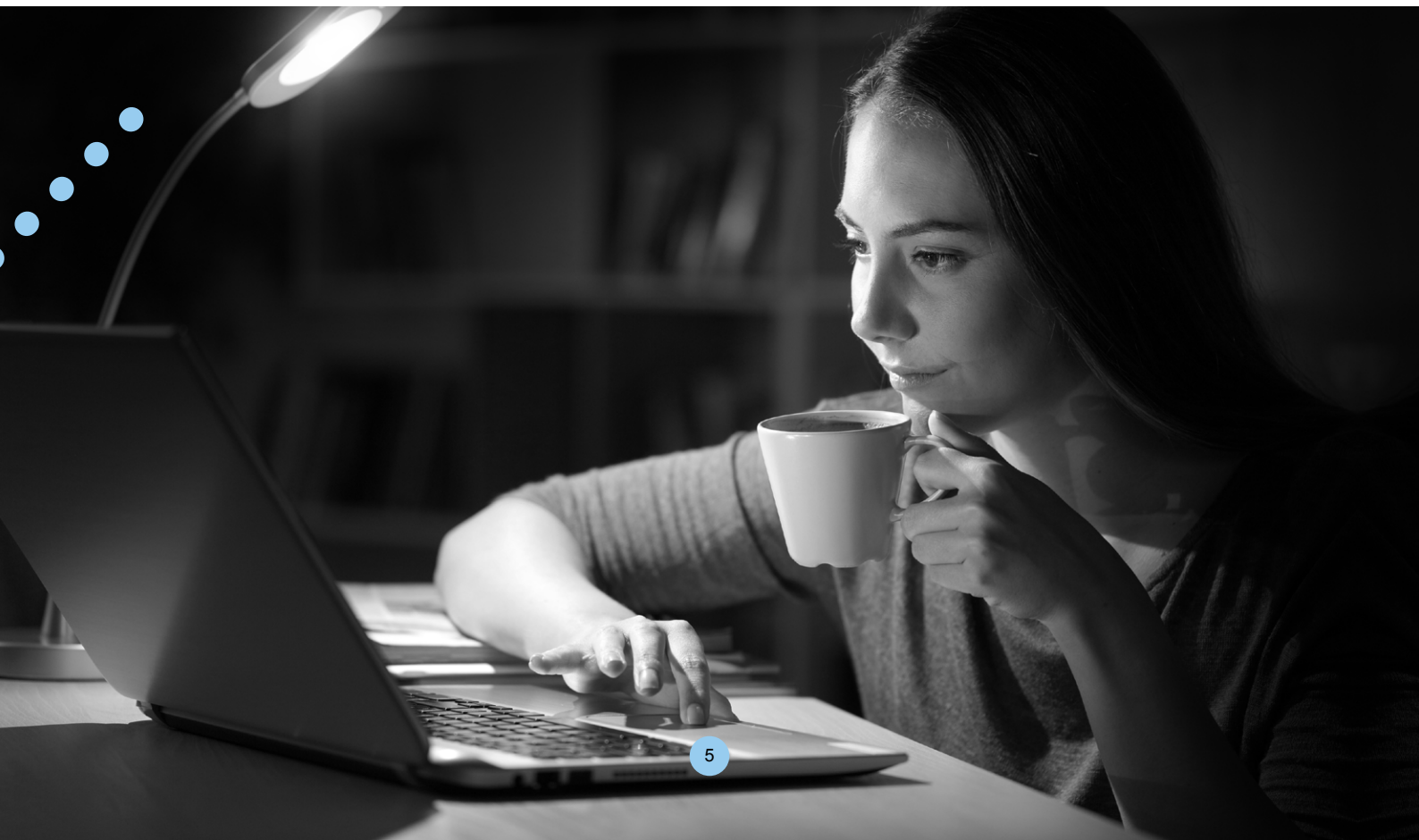
A specialised credential is a symbol to the community, other professionals, employers and the public that you understand the unique challenges in a key area of social work, have committed to ongoing professional development and have been assessed to have the specific skills that they need.

What's involved in applying for a credential.

Applying for a credential is easier than ever before with our new online application system. It does still require an investment of your time, however you will benefit from the convenience of instant digital access, ability to attach digital supporting material, and validation of your submission for greater accuracy and confidence you are on the right track.

Understanding what's involved before you get started will make the process more streamlined and improve your chances of obtaining a credential.

The preparation in applying for a credential typically takes an extended period of time (between 10 and 20 hours). Having your supporting documentation available and being well prepared before you start will make the process more seamless.





Getting ready: what to do before you start.

Make sure your Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is up to date and recorded You need to obtain a set amount of CPD hours and demonstrate that the majority of these hours relate specifically to the credential you are applying for. There are specific CPD requirements for each credential, which can be found [here](#). These need to be recorded using the 'My CPD Record' on the AASW website.

Familiarise yourself with the practice standards/ capability statements for the credential you are applying for

Practice Standards for Mental Health Social Workers	Capability Statement for Clinical Social Workers	Capability Statement for Family Violence Social Workers	Capability Statement for Disability Social Workers	Capability Statement for Child Protection Social Workers
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Gather details of your relevant experience and any supervision that might be part of your application You will need to demonstrate that you meet the minimum two years post qualifying employment requirement in your chosen field of practice. Consider which roles would meet this criteria.

Think about your referee Think about who you might ask to be your referee for your application so you can seek their permission in advance. They will also need to agree to provide a written statement as part of your application, confirm your hours of specialised practice, verify the period of time they supervised or managed your work and comment on your practice skills. You must use the correct referee statement for the credential you are applying for: [Mental Health](#); [Clinical](#); [Family Violence](#); [Disability](#); [Child Protection](#).

Remember, you will need one referee statement for each position you have held.

Think about your job descriptions You will need to provide an organisation or agency job description for each position you wish to be considered to meet the minimum two years post-qualifying employment requirement. For example, if you have worked in five jobs for short periods to add to your minimum two years full-time equivalent experience you will need five position descriptions and you will also need five referee statements.

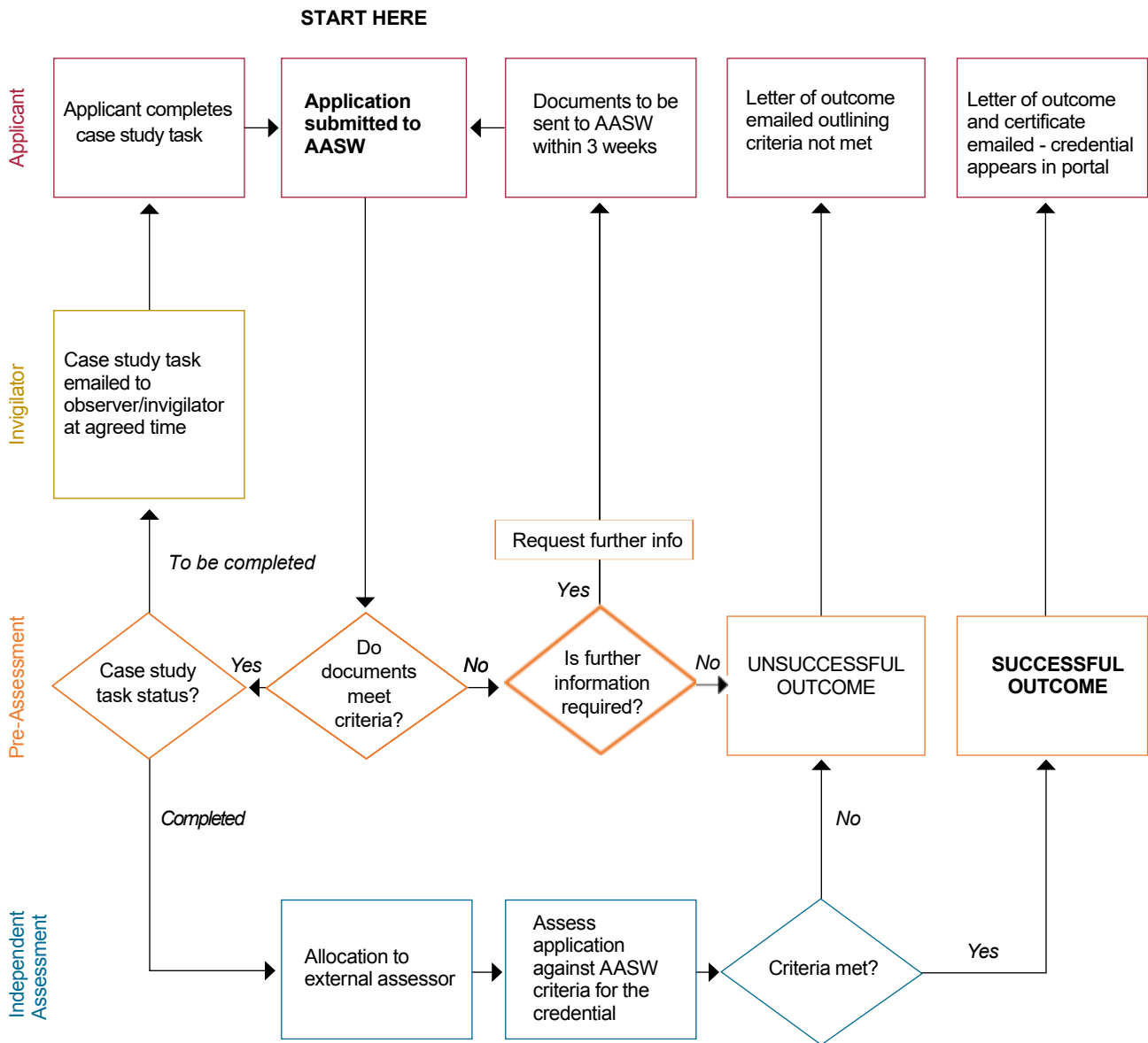
Make sure your curriculum vitae (CV) is up to date You will need to provide an up-to-date version of your CV as a part of the application so make sure it is current.

What's involved in the credential application.

Your application must meet these seven criteria.

- 1 Current membership** Ensure that your AASW membership is up to date and the annual membership fee paid.
- 2 Relevant post-qualifying experience** Demonstrate that you have a minimum of two years post-qualifying full-time equivalent social work specific practice experience in the past five years, in the specialised credential area you are applying for. This will require details of your employment positions in the last five years that are relevant to the credential you are applying for, including:
 - weeks worked
 - the hours worked per week for each position
 - key roles and responsibilities of each position.
- 3 Details of how you have met the individual practice criteria** Demonstrate your understanding of the practice standards/ capabilities for the credential you are applying for using case examples of your practice in the roles identified in the employment history component of the application.
- 4 Details of your experience receiving supervision** Demonstrate at least two years full-time equivalent supervised social work practice within the past five years in the credential you are applying for. You'll need to include supervisor's details as part of this.
- 5 Evidence of your Continuing Professional Development** An up to date CPD Record in the [AASW's online system](#) for the current or previous financial year.
- 6 Case studies** A detailed analytical response for two case studies (each 1500 words in length). This will take place in a supervised, time-limited manner, arranged by the applicant in conjunction with the AASW.
- 7 Payment of the application fee** Provide payment details for the credential application fee.

How your credentials will be assessed.



How to make the most of your credential.

A credential is a valuable asset to your professional career, social work itself and the community you serve. It identifies you as a highly skilled practitioner who specialises in this area of practice and it is unique to social workers.

By receiving an AASW credential you are seen as a leader in your profession, building trust amongst the community due to your specialist skills.

When you successfully qualify for an AASW Credential you have permission to use the AASW Credential logo for the credential you applied for.

Recommended uses for the trademark credential:

- On your business card
- On your letterhead
- On your email signature (with agency/organisational approval if necessary)
- On your website
- On your LinkedIn profile
- On windows and door decals
- On your CV



We are here to support you.

Applying for a credential is an investment in an asset that can assist in your career and build important trust amongst employers and the community.

We have a dedicated team ready to help you through the application process, combined with a much easier online application process.

If you have questions or need further support to start your application, please contact our dedicated credentials support team.

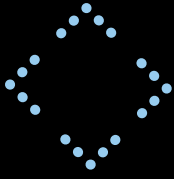
Mental Health credential
mentalhealth@asw.asn.au

All other credentials
credentialing@asw.asn.au

Contact (03) 9320 1000



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