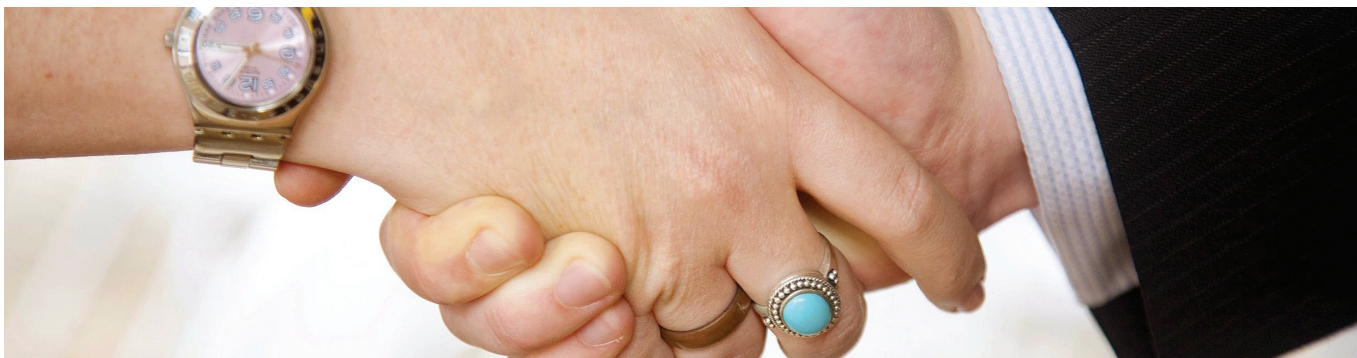




# CAPABLE NZ

NEW ZEALAND CENTRE FOR ASSESSMENT OF PRIOR LEARNING

> Health and Community Careers > Social Services



## Bachelor of Social Services - Via Assessment of Prior Learning

The Bachelor of Social Services is awarded to students with recognised knowledge and skills as a counsellor or career practitioner or in the wider field of social services. People with substantial experience in one or more of these fields may be able to obtain all or part of this degree via assessment of prior learning (APL) through Capable NZ, New Zealand's Centre for the Assessment of Prior Learning.

### WHAT IS APL?

APL is an internationally-recognised, academically valid way of recognising the understandings that individuals have gained through their experience.

Capable NZ, the New Zealand Centre for Assessment of Prior learning at Otago Polytechnic, provides an alternative pathway for you to gain a formal recognised qualification. This pathway utilises story telling and sharing experiences – paradigms recognised in the field of social services – to provide you with a unique pathway to a full (or part) qualification in the social services. It focuses on your own experiential learning using skilled facilitators, and takes an holistic, integrated view of a qualification.

In the APL process, you are encouraged to identify, demonstrate, articulate and reflect upon the understandings and skills you have developed in your life (both through your work and any other relevant learning experiences). This provides the opportunity to explore all aspects of your work and shape these into your personal integrated Model of Practice.

This process of reflecting upon experience not only enables you to gain valid qualifications, but it is also personally very valuable. The group workshops that may be part of this process can be particularly useful for you and others belonging to the same profession. They provide a forum for you to share ideas, compare your practice with others, build relationships, and strengthen a sense of shared purpose, ethics and values.

Our APL process provides you with an opportunity to grow academically, in competence and confidence; it is not merely a credentialing process.

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Capable NZ  
(New Zealand Centre for Assessment of Prior Learning)  
info@capablenz.co.nz

### WHAT DOES THIS QUALIFICATION INVOLVE?

As a graduate of the Bachelor of Social Services you will be a self aware, motivated, flexible and evidence-informed practitioner. You will grow in your chosen specialty through postgraduate learning and continuing experience, and be able to contribute to the development of new knowledge and the profession. While educationally prepared for practice as a career practitioner, counsellor or in a specialty area of social services, you will also have a broad foundation in sociology and the history of social services, and knowledge of social issues and social services provision in Aotearoa New Zealand.

You will uphold recognised standards of practice and ethics as set by the relevant professional bodies such as New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists, the New Zealand Association of Counsellors and the Career Development Association of New Zealand. Your work will be supported by professional supervision and informed by knowledge and skills in the application and implementation of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. You will have developed a cohesive integrated model of practice inclusive of professional standards and reflective practice.

### APL PROCESS FOR EXPERIENCED SOCIAL SERVICES PRACTITIONERS:

If you think you match the description of someone who has the level of competence, knowledge, and skills required for professional social services practice as described above and are interested in gaining this qualification through APL, then contact Capable NZ (see details on the reverse of this sheet). The process is then as follows.

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### Step 1. Profiling:

You will have an interview with a Capable NZ staff member to discuss your experiences, understandings, and goals. This is to ensure that this degree is the correct qualification for you, and that you are suitable for the APL process, which can be a demanding if rewarding one. Note that you can also be assessed for part of the qualification, and then complete the degree through the further new learning you need.

### Step 2. Case Studies Review:

A Capable NZ facilitator will contact you to help you identify case studies from your work practice which highlight some of your experience, skills and insights. This is in preparation for the following intensive facilitated process.

### Step 3. Facilitated Preparation for Assessment:

In this stage you will work with your facilitator to enable you to express your understandings appropriately in developing your presentation to the assessment panel. Capable NZ facilitators take an holistic approach to ensure all of your understandings are valued, explored and expressed. During facilitation you will be supported in shaping and articulating your unique, personal integrated Model of Practice. Facilitation can be at a distance and/or face-to-face. It will include ongoing individual support and may include group workshops. The time taken for this stage depends upon your requirements.

### Step 4. Assessment:

In your presentation for assessment you will demonstrate that you match the description of your selected assessment areas in an holistic way. You will be presenting to a panel of assessors, which will include academics and practicing experts in your field of practice who have been trained in APL.

### Step 5. Report on Assessment:

You will receive a written report which will either confirm that you match all the requirements for the degree, or will identify the number of credits gained through APL, and the new learning that needs to occur.

### Step 6. Graduation:

You either:

- Graduate with the Bachelor of Social Services – or
- Achieve APL credits towards the degree, move into structured learning to complete the balance of the qualification and then graduate.

### FEE:

Available on application.

### COMMENTS FROM APL GRADUATES:

“It was incredibly real for all of us – the sense of engagement in trying to actually look at our practice – you just don’t get that kind of attention to what we do very often. I’m a huge fan of the whole process. I think it’s the best thing I’ve seen come into education in a long time.”

– *Raewyn Perkins, Diploma of Applied Social Services (Career Practice)*

“I found this exercise compelling and personally very very valuable. All teachers at 20 years’ service should be compelled to do it. It is one of the very few times I have ever taken the opportunity to bring my thinking about teaching and learning into a coordinated form, enabling one area of thought to be reflected into another in a systematic way. It was certainly the most effective. The study allowed me to critically reflect on the justification of what I do for kids.”

– *Bruce McKenzie, New Zealand Diploma in Specialist Subjects (Secondary Teacher) Division II*

“It forces you to ask the deeper questions about why you are doing the work and why you do the things you do...so it drags you away from all the hustle and bustle of your work to actually look at what you are doing.”

– *Glen Barnes, Diploma of Applied Social Services (Career Practice)*

“I am very pleased that I took on the challenge of APL in my specialist field. I have gone from QBE (qualified by experience) to being armed with a recognised tertiary qualification – acknowledged as appropriate by the professional organisations to which I belong. I could never have contemplated the travel time involved in ‘regular study’. I am so glad that I was able to choose this ideal alternative.”

– *Pat Papa, Diploma of Applied Social Services (Career Practice)*

“The process enabled me to reflect on my teaching practice in a very deep and real way that has had a number of flow-on effects. Prior to engaging in APL I had gotten to the point in my teaching where teaching theory was something I no longer really considered – I just taught. The APL process enabled to spend time rekindling the connection between theory and practice. This has been incredibly valuable and rewarding.”

– *Kate Timms-Dean, Graduate Certificate in Tertiary Learning and Teaching*

“In a role like this which is very general management, having gone through the CAPABLE NZ process you’re used to having things pulled apart and put back together again, and so that’s what I do here every day. What are the priorities? How does that fit together? Which is the most important? Not which is screaming loudest.”

– *Lindsay Smith, Bachelor of Applied Management (Strategic)*

### MORE QUESTIONS:

**If you have further questions, please contact Capable NZ.**

Phone: 0800 762 786

Email: [info@capablenz.co.nz](mailto:info@capablenz.co.nz)

[www.capablenz.co.nz](http://www.capablenz.co.nz)

\*DISCLAIMER: While every effort is made to ensure that this sheet is accurate, Otago Polytechnic reserves the right to amend, alter or withdraw any of the contained information. Otago Polytechnic is accredited under the provisions of the Education Act 1989 to provide this programme. Otago Polytechnic gained “Quality Assured” status in 2003 when the quality management systems were accredited by ITP Quality. This status has been confirmed and maintained following subsequent biennial external audits.