

The SSI Higher Diploma in Social Service (HDSS)

1. What is this programme about?

The SSI Higher Diploma in Social Service (HDSS) is a programme for new entrants and existing Social Service Professionals in the Social Service Sector who aspire to be Social Work Associates. This programme aims to equip learners with the skills and knowledge to be collaborative, client-centric, strategic, and compassionate individuals who can play their roles effectively with clients and stakeholders. The programme covers a wide range of concepts which consists of human behaviour, family life cycle, psychology, sociology, and culture.

In addition, it also offers learnings on writing and presentation skills, usage of online information and legal frameworks to help the vulnerable. Successful applicants would also get to attend a session of Academic Integrity Workshop and Social Service Field Experience to better prepare them for the programme and help them in their learning journey.

2. Why is this programme suitable for me?

The qualification under this programme is suitable for learners who are keen to embark on a new career in the social service sector or for existing social service professionals in support level functions who wish to further their career progression in the social service sector. This programme will promote the development and enhancement of horizontal skills necessary to perform the role of a Social Work Associate.

Successful completion of the programme will provide learners with the academic/qualification pathway to progress further in their journey to upskill themselves. HDSS provides an articulation pathway into the Bachelor in Social Work Degree Programme offered by the Singapore University of Social Services (SUSS).

3. How will this programme help me with my further studies?

This programme provides learners with the qualification and academic pathway to progress further in their journey to upskill themselves. The programme provides graduates with the opportunity of furthering their studies in the Bachelor of Social Work programme offered by the Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS). However, learners will still need to meet the minimum requirements for the Bachelor of Social Work programme to qualify. For more information, please refer to this [link](#).

4. Are there significant differences in this new programme as compared to the WSQ Diploma in Social Service (DSS) which was previously offered by SSI?

HDSS is a non-WSQ programme, the duration is reduced from 18 months to 16 months.

The career progression pathway for the new programme is the same as the WSQ DSS programme. The knowledge and skills covered in the new programme is equivalent to what was covered in the WSQ DSS, with enhancements to ensure its relevance keeps pace with developments in the social service sector.

5. I had previously completed some modules for the WSQ DSS, am I entitled for exemptions for my studies under the Higher Diploma in Social Service (HDSS)?

There will be no exemptions. Learners will have to undertake the entire programme if they wish to further their studies.

6. Who are the trainers for the programme?

At SSI, our trainers are known as Adult Educators (AEs). SSI's AEs possess a degree, and either a WSQ Advanced Certificate in Training and Assessment (ACTA) or WSQ Advanced Certificate in Learning and Performance (ACLP) certification and have 3 years of working experience covering different client groups and community settings in the social service sector.

7. What are the eligibility criteria for SSG funding?

Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents are eligible for SSG funding. Learners eligible for SSG funding must achieve at least 75% attendance per module and be certified competent in all the assessment components. Learners or their sponsoring organisations will have to bear the full course fees if learners fail to meet the attendance and/or assessment requirements as well as any other terms and conditions for SSG funding eligibility. Please refer to this [link](#) for more information on SSG funding. This funding is subjected to the relevant terms and conditions.

8. Where can I find resources on the social service sector to help me in my studies?

Our reference library collection comprises of both print and electronic resources, ranging from books to periodicals to journals. You will be able to find resources on the social service sector through GatherHere as well. GatherHere is an online community where the Social Service Tribe meets and collaborates. The various online Resource Hubs on GatherHere provide information and resource materials on local, regional, and international developments regarding the social service sector.

For more information on GatherHere, you may view the introductory video at this [link](#).

9. What are the admission requirements for this programme?

All candidates must meet all 4 entry requirements^:

1. A minimum grade of C6 for GCE 'O' level English (or its equivalent)
2. At least 2 years of full-time work experience
3. Achieved one of the following:
 - A. WSQ Advanced Certificate in Social Service
 - B. SSI Advanced Certificate in Social Service (ACSS)
 - C. SGUS Social Service Assistant Programme
 - D. SSI Diploma in Social Service
 - E. SSI Diploma in Disability Studies
 - F. SIM-SSTI Specialist Diploma in Human Services
 - G. Diploma from a local polytechnic
 - H. 2 GCE 'A' and 2 'AO' Levels
4. Complete the **Singapore's Social Compact e-Learning course** offered by SSI.

^All eligible applicants for SSI HDSS will be notified to sit for a compulsory Written Aptitude Test administered by SSI. In addition, some applicants may be required to undergo an interview with SSI.

²List of qualifications currently available that are equivalent to the GCE 'O' Level English

1. A minimum score of 5.5. for IELTS; or
2. A minimum score of 79 for TOEFL Internet-based test; or
3. A minimum score of 213 for TOEFL Computer-based test; or
4. A minimum score of 550 for TOEFL Paper-based test; or
5. At least a Statement of Attainment at Level 5 in Workplace Literacy (WPL) – (Comprehensive) (covering Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing under SSG's Employability Skills System) (prior to 31 Dec 2019)
6. At least a Level 5 in Workplace Literacy and Numeracy (WPLN) – (covering Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing, and Numeracy)

To register for the WPLN assessment, please visit British Council (Singapore) Limited's website (<https://www.britishcouncil.sg/exam/wpln>)

For enquiries, please contact British Council (Singapore) Limited at 6807 1599 or its main assessment venues at:

- British Council (Napier Road Centre) 30 Napier Road Singapore 258509; or
- British Council (Paya Lebar) Lifelong Learning Institute, 11 Eunos Road 8, Level 2 Singapore 408601

10. Can I apply for the Higher Diploma in Social Service if I do not meet all the entry requirements?

Applications that do not meet all the entry requirements will not be considered for admission. Please ensure that you meet all the entry requirements before applying. There will be no refund for the registration fee if you are unsuccessful in your application for admission.

11. What is the course fee for the Higher Diploma in Social Service?

The full course fee is \$10,800 (before GST) The nett course fee after SSG funding is \$3870¹ (before GST).

12. Are there other funding options available?

The other funding options are as shown below.

a) SkillsFuture Credit

The SkillsFuture Credit aims to encourage individuals to take ownership of their skills development and lifelong learning. All Singaporeans aged 25 and above will receive an opening credit of S\$500 from January 2016. Your credit will not expire, and the government will provide periodic top-ups, so you may accumulate your credits.

You may use your credit to offset the nett course fee payable by applying for a claim for each module. Visit this [link](#) to find out more about SkillsFuture Credit.

¹ Learners eligible for SSG funding must achieve at least 75% attendance per module and be certified competent in all the assessment components. Learners or their sponsoring organisations will have to bear the full course fees in the event that the learners fail to meet the attendance/assessment requirements and terms and/or any other terms and conditions for SSG funding eligibility. Visit this [link](#) for more information on the SSG funding eligibility requirement.

b) Post-Secondary Education Account (PSEA)

The PSEA is administered by the Ministry of Education (MOE) and can be used to supplement the nett course fee payable for the programme. Eligible individuals are required to inform SSI about their intention to use their PSEA funds and are required to complete payment for the nett course fee first. You are required to download the PSEA withdrawal application form from the MOE website and submit the completed application form to SSI. The application is subject to MOE's approval and SSI will notify you about the outcome of your application. Upon successful application of the use of PSEA fund amount, SSI will refund the amount that was paid upfront by the learner. Please refer to this [link](#) to view the eligibility criteria for the PSEA and more information about this fund.

13. Where can I find out more about this programme?

You may refer to this [page](#) for more information. Alternatively, you may email us at socialserviceinstitute@ncss.gov.sg.

14. What is the term structure like?

Classes for the 16-month Higher Diploma in Social Service (HDSS), are held two evenings per week, with each session lasting 3 hours. Classes may fall on different days of the week for each module. You will be informed of the class schedule during orientation.

Application Procedure

1. How many intakes are there per year?

There are two intakes per year. ,

2. How long does it take for my application to be processed and for me to be notified of the outcome?

You will be informed of your application outcome via email four to six weeks after the application period has closed. No verbal offers of admission shall be made or accepted.

3. How do I apply for the programme?

Applicants can register for the programme on [SSI website](#). The registration link will be provided when the application is open for the new intake.

The online application must be submitted together with the following documents.

- Copies of **relevant** academic certificates and transcripts.
- Copy of your **NRIC** (showing the last 3 digits and last alphabet of your NRIC).
- A **non-refundable** registration fee of S\$53.50 (inclusive of 7% GST).

Payment for the registration fee can be made online via credit/ debit cards. Other modes of payment are not accepted.

Applications without the necessary supporting documents (i.e., PDF copy of academic certificates and transcripts) and which are not accompanied with the registration fee payment will be deemed as incomplete and will not be processed.

4. Will the application fee be refunded if my application is unsuccessful?

The application fee is neither refundable nor transferable.

5. I am unable to attend the Written Aptitude Test and online interview. Would SSI be able to arrange for another date/time for me to attend the online interview?

Applicants may be called to attend an online interview with the selection panel. The Written Aptitude Test and interview dates are indicated in the programme webpage. Applicants must ensure that they are available for the interview as alternative arrangements will not be considered.

6. Will career services be provided for learners in this programme?

Please visit the Social Service Tribe's webpage through this [link](#) to find out more about the career opportunities available in the social service sector. Through this webpage, you can find:

- Information about the social service sector.
- Career guides.
- The Social Service Tribe job portal.

Refer to the table below for more information on career services.

Career Advisory	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WSG Career Connect Telephone: 6883 5885 2. e2i Telephone: 6474 0606
Courses and training	<p>SSI Website: www.ssi.gov.sg</p> <p>Email: socialserviceinstitute@ncss.gov.sg</p>
Professional Conversion Programme (for mid-career entrants who wish to become social workers)	<p>WSG Professional Conversion Programme for Social Workers</p> <p>Website: http://www.wsg.gov.sg/programmes-and-initiatives/professional-conversion-programmes/social-services-social-workers.html</p>