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## HSW Professional Reference Information Sheet

The HSW programs have a strong social justice base, and therefore, the type of experience that best assesses a student's aptitude for this field is that which involves work with people facing barriers in society, such as the marginalized or disadvantaged. You should be aware that there are work experience environments for other disciplines that can be confused with those that are most suitable to human service work. For example, child care centers are more suited as work experience towards Early Childhood Education. Volunteer work in hospitals or institutionalized health care facilities may be more suited for Nursing or Care Aide programs.

The professional reference form should be filled out by the person in the organization/ agency who is responsible for supervising your volunteer hours. A private individual, family member or colleague will not be accepted as a professional reference.

### Examples of work/volunteer positions that would satisfy the HSW programs requirements include:

- Working with youth at risk (drop-in centres, community agencies, jails, etc)
- Working with children or adults with special needs (group homes, community access programs)
- Working with individuals in poverty (soup kitchens, grass-roots community agencies)
- Working with women experiencing barriers in society (women's centres)
- Working with an agency that assists people to overcome addictions (Alano Club, Beacon Club)
- Working in agencies that assist families to function more effectively together (Family Services, John Howard Society)
- Working in mental health agencies
- Providing advice at crisis centres
- Working in school programs that assist students with developmental or behavioural disabilities
- Working with immigrant or multicultural populations (community based agencies)
- Assisting participants in Special Olympics events
- Working in recreational centres in programs involving youth or individuals with special needs
- Working with indigenous people (Friendship Centres or community agencies)
- Working in care facilities
- Assisting individuals through an employment program

### Examples of work/volunteer positions that would not satisfy the HSW programs requirements include:

- Jobs centered on filing, photocopying, reception or administrative work
- Committee work that does not engage directly with agency clients
- Work that does not provide an opportunity for supervisory assessment
- Teaching Sunday School
- Private business (other than a counselling practice)
- Counselling, personal or professional growth courses
- Single camping event with a school or Scout group
- Participation in an employment program
- High school work experience programs
- Hairdressing
- Bartending

**Note:** If you have questions about whether a particular work/ volunteer position will satisfy the admission requirement, please contact the admission officer at your local campus prior to beginning your volunteer/ work experience.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Letter of reference for applicant to the Human Service Workers Department (Educational Assistant/ Community Support or Educational Assistant/ Community Support, Indigenous Focus program at North Island College, Social Services Diploma and Human Services Diploma).

**Note:** *Volunteer/ work reference forms may be submitted with the student's admission package ONLY if they are in a sealed envelope with the Referee's signature across the seal. Otherwise, the Referee must submit the form directly to the address below.*

**To be completed by the Applicant:**

Applicants Name: \_\_\_\_\_ NIC Student Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person supplying the reference: \_\_\_\_\_

North Island College may be verifying this reference prior to acceptance into the program. I give permission to North Island College to check the reference below.

Applicants Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**To the person providing a professional reference:**

We would appreciate your taking the time to complete this reference to help us make an informed decision about the named applicant's ability to undertake the HSW Program in which they have applied.

With an Educational Assistant/ Community Support certificate, graduates assist individuals who are challenged by behavioural, physical, mental or psychiatric disabilities. Common employment settings include the public school system, vocational day programs, residential facilities and proprietary care. We would like a frank appraisal of the abilities of the applicant to undertake this program.

Graduates with a Social Service or Human Service Diploma work with individuals accessing services from agencies in areas such as financial assistance, advocacy, parenting, employment, or life-skill acquisition, family violence, youth justice, mental health, substance abuse, and other community-based programs.

The applicant's work/ volunteer experience must involve direct interaction with participants in the agency's programs, either one-on-one or in a group setting. These activities could include guiding or coaching individuals, listening to concerns, assisting with problem-solving and-or supportive assistance to accomplish specific goals or tasks.

**HSW Professional Reference Form**

A minimum of 20 hours of volunteering is required and must be completed within the last three years. If the volunteer works requires training, the training time is not applicable towards the 20 hour fulfillment.

The reference becomes a part of the student's personal information and can be requested under the Freedom of Information/ Protection of Privacy Act. Your identity will be protected should such a request be made.

Please complete and sign the Referee Information Section that follows:



**HSW Professional Reference Form**

**To be completed by the Referee:**

Applicants Name: \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: The person providing a professional reference must be from outside the applicant's family and should be someone in a supervisory position who is able to offer independent judgment based on first-hand observation from work or volunteer experience.*

1. Relationship to applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Type of volunteer work or employment (specify activities person performed).  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

3. Dates of work or volunteer time for applicant:  
 Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Total number of hours worked/volunteered: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Volunteer or work references are based on the following criteria. Please assess the applicants abilities, to the best of your knowledge, by placing a check mark in the most appropriate column below:

		Above average	Meets expectation	Needs works	Don't know
a)	Communicates easily with others (orally)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	Demonstrates mature judgment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c)	Able to work independently and perseveres with tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d)	Able to organize time and tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e)	Maintains confidentiality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f)	Is reliable (attendance, punctuality, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Please comment on the applicant's strengths and areas of growth:  
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 \_\_\_\_\_  
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7. Please note briefly any other information you would like to add. We may contact you for verification.

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8. Have you discussed this reference with the applicant?  Yes  No

9. Please complete and sign the Referee Information below.

Referee Information: *(Must not be related to the applicant)*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Referee's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail the completed forms directly to:

**North Island College**

Admissions Office - Comox Valley Campus

2300 Ryan Road

Courtenay, BC V9N 8N6

**Note:** Reference letters may be submitted with the student's admission package ONLY if the reference letter is in a sealed envelope with the Referee's signature across the seal.

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