

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title	Professor of Social Work		
Organisational Unit	Faculty of Health Sciences		
Functional Unit	Social Work (Melbourne)		
Nominated Supervisor	National Head of School		
Career Pathway	Teaching and Research		
Classification	Academic Level E Increment 1		
CDF Level	CDF1	Position Number	10608898
Attendance Type	Full Time	Date reviewed	20-MAY-2026

ABOUT AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

ACU has a bold vision for its future. Our Vision 2033 is our landmark statement of strategic direction for ACU's mission as a Catholic university to constitute a 'Christian presence in the university world confronting the great problems of society and culture'. Our mission is to help shape the coming generations in Australia and beyond, by enabling flourishing lives, fostering thriving communities, and building a more ethical future.

Our Catholic mission informs everything we do – challenging us to respect the dignity of the human person, serve the common good, and embed ethical and social justice considerations throughout our teaching and research. We strive to live our core values of truth, excellence, and service.

We are a publicly funded university, and while we are young, we have grown significantly and we and we are making our mark: we are one of the largest university contributors to the care economy in Australia and rank among the top universities worldwide. We have seven campuses around Australia, more than 200 partner universities on six continents, and a campus in Rome, Italy.

We prioritise our staff, supporting their growth with a positive culture, generous leave, and flexible work arrangements. We invite all staff to engage with our mission in whatever way is most meaningful to them – whether as Catholics, as members of other churches and faiths, or as people with no religious affiliation but who are willing to embrace our vision, mission and strategic direction. We continue to invest in our facilities and workplaces and actively involve staff in shaping the future direction of the organisation.

For further information about the university please refer to ACU's [organisational structure](#).

ABOUT THE FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

The Faculty of Health Sciences comprises three schools:

- Allied Health
- Behavioural and Health Sciences
- Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedicine

There are currently approximately 14,000 students (EFTSL) and 520 (FTE) staff in the faculty under the disciplines: occupational therapy, speech pathology, social work, exercise science, exercise physiology, nutrition science and dietetics, biomedical science, nursing, midwifery, paramedicine, digital health, physiotherapy, psychology and public health. The Faculty is represented across seven ACU campuses.

The Faculty's research broadly addresses the Future Healthcare Worker, Health across the Lifespan, and Human Performance, with some of our current research focused on Cardiovascular Disease, Metabolism, Health Services Research, Nutrition, Sports Performance and Rehabilitation, Psychology, and Mental Health.

An expanding portfolio of postgraduate courses is also available in coursework and research. Many postgraduate courses within the Faculty have been developed in conjunction with industries to meet specific needs of the professions and industry. Some postgraduate units are offered in flexible learning mode by online study. All students have professional and clinical experience that is supervised by specially qualified practitioners. Catholic hospitals and other public, private and specialty organisations, as well as schools and the health and sports industry, are involved with preparing for, promoting, and offering this valued and essential experience.

The goals of the Faculty are closely linked to and emanate from the Mission of the University. The areas of achievement by the Faculty include the key areas of teaching and learning, research and scholarship, community engagement in addition to specific objectives regarding internationalisation, quality and resource management. It has well-established procedures for evaluating performance and ensuring quality which involve students and representatives of the various statutory registration authorities and professional organisations, as well as recent graduates and employers.

Further information about the Faculty can be found at:

<https://www.acu.edu.au/about-acu/faculties-directorates-and-staff/faculty-of-health-sciences>

ABOUT THE NATIONAL SCHOOL OF ALLIED HEALTH

The National School of Allied Health is located on six of the University's campuses: Brisbane, Strathfield, North Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne and Ballarat and is responsible for delivery of programs in four professional disciplines:

- Occupational Therapy
- Speech Pathology
- Physiotherapy
- Social Work / Human Services

Further information about the School can be found at: <https://www.acu.edu.au/about-acu/faculties-directorates-and-staff/faculty-of-health-sciences/school-of-allied-health>.

The School welcomes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, students, and community perspectives in our commitment to culturally responsive classrooms and culturally safe environments. Substantial work has been undertaken over the last 10 years to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being, and doing in curricula, as well as to build cultural capability and responsiveness in staff. Our aim is to create sustained working and teaching environments where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, cultural mentors and academics can thrive. Underpinning this work is a strong ongoing focus on community engagement both within and external to ACU to truly privilege the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People within co-design, delivery, and evaluation of

all of the School's activities. Support to undertake cultural activities is available and encouraged within the school, faculty and university for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants.

POSITION PURPOSE

The Professor of Social Work provides strategic, academic and professional leadership for the discipline, ensuring excellence in teaching, research, practice education and the overall student experience. The role is responsible for guiding the strategic direction of the discipline, fostering a collaborative and high performing culture, and strengthening partnerships with community organisations, government agencies and the broader social services sector.

A central responsibility of this position is to lead the development, implementation and accreditation of national Social Work curricula. The Professor of Social Work ensures that programs meet professional standards, reflect contemporary practice, and support high quality learning outcomes for students.

In addition to educational leadership, the Professor of Social Work is expected to provide leadership in research, contributing to the advancement of knowledge in the discipline. This includes driving a strong research agenda, supporting staff research capability, leading major research initiatives, and producing original, high impact scholarship that shapes the field of Social Work.

The position will be held by a senior academic leader with a distinguished record of innovation and contribution in Social Work education, research and/or practice. The Professor will make a significant contribution to the governance and collegial life of the University and will actively represent the discipline within professional, academic and community networks.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Introduction

A number of frameworks and standards express the University's expectations of the conduct, capability, participation and contribution of staff. These are listed below:

- [ACU's Vision 2033](#)
- [Catholic Identity and Mission](#)
- [Code of Conduct for all staff](#)
- [ACU Capability Development Framework](#)
- [Higher Education Standards Framework](#)
- [ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement 2022-2025](#)
- [ACU Staff Reconciliation Action Plan](#)

The following two frameworks are important in understanding the expectations of an academic position and the required qualifications and capability of a position holder:

- The [Academic Performance Matrices and Evidence Framework](#) which describes the performance standards in areas of academic activity.
- The [Capability Development Framework](#) which describes the core competencies needed in all ACU staff to achieve the University's strategy and supports its mission.

All academic staff are allocated workload comprising a range of academic duties/activities that fall within the following three broad areas of academic activity in line with the relevant Academic Career Pathway and Academic Level.

- Teaching
- Curriculum Development and Scholarship of Teaching
- Research
- Academic Leadership/Service

Responsibility	Broad Area of Academic Activity
Provide academic leadership for the Social Work Discipline within the School and Faculty, reporting to and working with the National Head of School to ensure a cohesive approach within the Discipline and School.	Academic Leadership and Service
Undertake Social Work-based representation and leadership through responsiveness to, and with, relevant industry, government and non-government organisations, accreditation and/or registration bodies, and relevant committees.	Academic Leadership and Service
Contribute to building leadership and performance capability and administrative and management expertise within the academic staff of the Discipline.	Academic Leadership and Service
Develop and implement strategies for a well-managed and sustainable Discipline through appropriate course offerings, staff profile, productivity and satisfaction, fostering a dynamic, service-oriented and enterprising culture within the Discipline, and strong local, national and international external relations.	Academic Leadership and Service
In collaboration with the School of Allied Health leadership group and Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) develop initiatives to continuously improve the provision of a high-quality student learning experience and ensure that the Discipline's programs meet students' and employers' expectations about content and quality and are well regarded by academic peers.	Academic Leadership and Service
Engender commitment to the Catholic intellectual tradition through a strong focus on social justice and the common good in the activities of the Discipline.	Academic Leadership and Service
Provide leadership of the Social Work profession's courses and programs including ongoing development and review of courses, achievement and maintenance of course accreditation and quality assurance in collaboration with campus-based course coordinators.	Teaching/curriculum development/scholarship of teaching
Deliver high quality teaching and learning in appropriate areas of the curricula. Ensure Social Work cross campus collaboration in curriculum development, teaching, learning and assessment.	Teaching/curriculum development/scholarship of teaching
In collaboration with the School of Allied Health leadership group and the Associate Dean (Research) develop an active research and research training	Research

Responsibility	Broad Area of Academic Activity
environment to continuously improve in the key result areas of research focus, culture and infrastructure, productivity, research training, and intellectual engagement.	
Conduct research in Social Work which is nationally competitive and of value to the Faculty and the University.	Research

SELECTION CRITERIA

Qualifications, skills, knowledge and experience:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualification - A doctoral qualification in social work or equivalent, as well as eligibility for membership to the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW). It is desirable that applicants have experience in social work practice. • Knowledge - A significant academic teaching profile in a relevant area in Social Work, with evidence of design, delivery and evaluation of innovative and quality learning environments. • Skill - The ability to manage a range of educational and administrative processes including planning, marketing, and continuous quality improvement of programs and courses. • Experience - An established national and international academic research profile in a relevant area in Social Work, including a strong relevant publication record, success in competitive grants, and dissemination in high impact quality journals. • Experience - Demonstrated quality research leadership, including quality supervision of candidates for Higher Degrees by Research, effective mentoring to develop the research capability and capacity of individual and teams of Mid- and Early-Career Researchers; substantial leadership contributions that strengthen the University's research capacity, capability and culture; and a consistent record of service on nationally recognised grant assessment panels. • Experience - Demonstrated ability to provide academic leadership in teaching and learning, research, professional activities and internationalisation including the ability to think and act strategically, particularly in planning and decision making. • Experience - Strong interpersonal ability and communication skills to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes that are aligned with the Mission, Vision and Values of the University including: -Strong relationship management experience including negotiation and liaison skills with a range of people at different levels; -Ability to work with others to achieve outcomes and continual improvement, including the ability to lead and implement change, and to lead and motivate staff.
Core Competencies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate confidence and courage in achieving ACU's Mission, Vision and Values by connecting the purpose of one's work to ACU's Mission, Vision and Values. • Keep stakeholder interest at the core of ACU business decisions and ACU service excellence as a top priority. • Work collaboratively internally and externally to ACU to capitalise on all

	available expertise in pursuit of excellence. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate with purpose. Gain the support of others for actions that benefit ACU. Negotiate for mutually beneficial outcomes that are aligned with the Mission, Vision and Values of the University. • Coach and develop self and others through setting clear expectations, managing performance and developing required capabilities to establish a culture of learning and improvement.
Essential Attributes:	Demonstrated commitment to cultural diversity and ethical practice principles and demonstrated knowledge of equal employment opportunity and workplace health and safety, appropriate to the level of the appointment.
Working with children and vulnerable adults check	Evidence of the ability to work with children and/or vulnerable adults, and contribute to and protect their safety and wellbeing. The successful applicant of this position will be required to hold a valid working with children clearance for the State or Territory in which the position is located.
Pre-employment declaration and background check	Preferred candidates will be required to complete mandatory pre-employment declarations and background checks, including those related to gender-based violence and foreign interference, in line with ACU's compliance requirements.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

For further information about the structure of the University, refer to the Organisation Chart <https://www.acu.edu.au/about-acu/leadership-and-governance/leadership/organisational-structure>

