



## AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF HEADS OF SCHOOLS OF SOCIAL WORK

### ASWEAS Position Statement

Communication to AASW 16 February 2018

We have dedicated time at this Council meeting to deliberate about the ASWEAS, and the considerable work that Council has undertaken since we met last year, about which we wrote to AASW with our concerns. The work of the sub-committee of the Council has been significant in reinforcing the Council's concerns - we now have a literature review and policy paper, and we have looked in depth at processes of accreditation. This has had consequences for the Council. It has enabled us to undergo an informed and critical reflection of the situation, and the options that are available moving forward. So, the experience of the poor process relating to the ASWEAS review, and the recognition that the 2017 ASWEAS falls well short of what is acceptable has had consequences. The Council is very clear about what it believes is important moving forward, enabling the Council to arrive at a unanimous position.

In the context of self regulated professions, the joint statement between Universities Australia and Professions Australia notes the critical importance of being in agreement in setting standards. We indicated at the end of last year that we are not in agreement, and despite efforts to rework the 2017 ASWEAS, this continues to be the case. The Council therefore does not accept the reworked 2017 Standards or any subsequent revisions. We appreciate that it will take some time to reach a resolution regarding this, but to be clear, the Council's experience in the review of the ASWEAS highlighted the need for a new approach to the development of the standards and associated processes.

In this regard we invite AASW to work with us in a planned, formal process toward the development of a more appropriate structural model and process of accreditation. This is a very different process to the development of standards we have experienced so far, and provides an opportunity to also explore where the regulatory framework might sit. We expect this work to be principle- and evidence-based with agreed criteria that would guide both the process and the development of the model moving forward.

We appreciate that schools will need to continue to undergo accreditation in the meantime, and signal that Council will be involved with AASW to work out how this happens as it is important that schools are not disadvantaged in this process.



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