



Annual Report 2020

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1. Introduction

The Social Work Accreditation and Advisory Board (SWAAB), formerly known as the Social Work Accreditation Board (SWAB), was formed on 1 January 2009. The accreditation of social workers and social service practitioners was implemented on 1 April, the same year. Accreditation is voluntary. It started with manual registration and switched to online system on 1 April 2011.

Registered Social Workers (RSWs) and Registered Social Worker-Provisionals (RSW-P) are professionals who have a recognised degree or graduate diploma in social work. Registered Social Service Practitioners (RSSP) are professionals and practitioners who do not have a degree or graduate diploma in social work but have many years of experience in the field. Accreditation is renewable once every two years upon fulfilment of 60 Continuing and Professional Education (CPE) credits. As the accreditation of Social Service Practitioners was introduced for a limited period of three (3) years, no new practitioners were accredited in this category since 1 July 2012. Those who were accredited could continue to renew their accreditation or pursue a degree or graduate diploma in social work to enable them to convert to RSW-P, followed by RSW.

The Board maintains the Register of RSWs, RSW-Ps and RSSPs, issues certificates of accreditation and promotes the professional standards and good conduct of registered social workers and practitioners. The Board specifies pre-registration requisites, approves Continuing Professional Education (CPE) credits for renewal and investigates into any complaints received against registered professionals. Registrants found to have breached professional conduct may be reprimanded, suspended or removed from the Register. With the transformation of SWAB to SWAAB in January 2014, the Board has expanded its role to provide leadership in the professional development of social workers.

This Annual Report documents the activities and registration statistics as at 31 December 2020.

2. Social Work Accreditation and Advisory Board Members

Position	Name	Designation	Organisation
Chairman	Ms Ang Bee Lian	Director-General of Social Welfare	Ministry of Social and Family Development
Vice-Chairman	Ms Long Chey May	Group Chief Patient Officer Deputy Director, Allied Health President	National University Health System Ng Teng Fong General Hospital and Jurong Community Hospital Singapore Association of Social Workers
Member	Dr Katijah Dawood	Divisional Director, Family Services Division	Thye Hua Kwan Moral Charities / THK Centre for Family Harmony
Member	A/P Esther Goh	Head, Social Work Department	National University of Singapore
Member	Ms Julia Lee	Senior Director, Social Work & TOUCH Professional Deputies & Donees	TOUCH Community Services Ltd
Member	Mr Lee Seng Meng	Executive Director	SHINE Children & Youth Services
Member	Ms Elaine Loo	Director, Membership & Strategy Implementation	National Council of Social Service
Member	Mr Mohd Ali Bin Mahmood	Community Development & Social Work Consultant	BROMOHD – The Practice
Member	Ms Lilian Mark	Head, Medical Social Work	Institute of Mental Health
Member	Dr Vincent Ng	Chief Executive Officer	AMKFSC Community Services Ltd
Member	Professor Seng Boon Kheng	Head, Social Work Programme, S R Nathan School of Human Development	Singapore University of Social Sciences
Member	Ms Morene Sim	Director	Inlingua School of Languages
Member	Ms Tan Sze Wee	Executive Director	Rainbow Centre
Member	Dr Peace Wong	Senior Lecturer, Social Work Department	National University of Singapore

Accreditation Secretariat

Name	Designation	Organisation
Ms Joanna Tan	Head, Accreditation & Programme Director (up to 30 April 2020)	Singapore Association of Social Workers
Ms Theresa Lee	Head, Accreditation & Programme Director (from 18 May 2020)	Singapore Association of Social Workers
Ms Low Li Ming	Assistant Head, Accreditation & Programmes	Singapore Association of Social Workers
Ms Sharon Song	Senior Executive, Accreditation & Programmes	Singapore Association of Social Workers
Ms Grace Teo	Senior Executive, Programmes and Research	Singapore Association of Social Workers

Review of Accreditation Framework Workgroup

Position	Name	Designation	Organisation
Chairman	Ms Julia Lee	Senior Director, Social Work & TOUCH Professional Deputies & Donees	TOUCH Community Services Ltd
Member	Mr Lee Seng Meng	Executive Director	SHINE Children & Youth Services
Member	Mr Mohd Ali Bin Mahmood	Community Development & Social Work Consultant	BROMOHD – The Practice

Supervision Workgroup

Position	Name	Designation	Organisation
Chairman	Dr Peace Wong	Senior Lecturer, Social Work Department	National University of Singapore
Member	Ms Yogeswari Munisamy	Senior Principal Social Worker, Child Protective Service	Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF)
Member	Mr Tony Ong	Senior Therapist & Manager (Counselling Services)	Counselling and Care Centre
Member	Ms Bridget Monica Das	Head, Psychosocial Services	Ren Ci Community Hospital

Social Work Supervision Seminar Organising Committee

Position	Name	Designation	Organisation
Chairman	Dr Peace Wong	Senior Lecturer, Social Work Department	National University of Singapore
Member	Ms Yogeswari Munisamy	Senior Principal Social Worker, Child Protective Service	Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF)
Member	Ms Firdawati Masri	Assistant Director, Strategic Sector & Capability Building, Social Service Institute	National Council of Social Service
Member	Mr Udhia Kumar	SASW Member	Singapore Association of Social Workers
Member	Ms Hilyah Saparin	Divisional Director (Specialist)	AMKFSC Community Services
Member	Mr Pepsi Zewet	Senior Social Worker, Centre Head, Fei Yue Family Services at SSO @ Taman Jurong	Fei Yue Community Services
Member	Ms Siti Adilah Rahiman	Senior Medical Social Worker	Institute of Mental Health
Member	Ms Geraldine Foo	Senior Medical Social Worker	Singapore General Hospital
Member	Ms Jenny Goh	Deputy Head, Medical Social Service Manager, Principal Medical Social Worker	Yishun Healthcare Khoo Teck Puat Hospital
Member	Ms Norriyanah Binte Omar	Assistant Director (Community Corrections Halfway House / Home Detention, Intervention), Community Corrections Halfway House / Home Detention (CHH)	Singapore Prison Service

Member	Ms Ang Seow Ping	Assistant Director, Correctional Rehabilitation Services Branch (Women), Psychological & Correctional Rehabilitation Division	Singapore Prison Service
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Review of Supervision Guidelines Workgroup

Position	Name	Designation	Organisation
Chairman	Dr Peace Wong	Senior Lecturer, Social Work Department	National University of Singapore
Member	Mr Terence Tan	Senior Therapist	Counselling and Care Centre
Member	Ms Petrine Lim	Master Student Welfare Officer	Ministry of Education
Member	Ms Melissa Lim	Principal Social Worker	SHINE Children and Youth Services
Member	Mr Pepsi Zewet	Senior Social Worker, Centre Head, Fei Yue Family Services at SSO @ Taman Jurong	Fei Yue Community Services
Member	Dr Chung You Jin	Senior Lecturer, Social Work Programme & Practicum, S R Nathan School of Human Development	Singapore University of Social Sciences
Member	Mr Paulus Sutjipto	Senior Social Worker, Office of the Director-General of Social Welfare	Ministry of Social and Family Development

3. Chairman's Message

Since the introduction of the Accreditation Framework in April 2009, the Board has accredited 2,084 social workers and social service practitioners as at 31 December 2020. 78% were made up of Registered Social Workers, 17% Registered Social Workers (RSW) – Provisional (RSW-P) and 5% Registered Social Service Practitioners (RSSP). We achieved an overall renewal rate of 77%. This report provides an overview of the activities undertaken by the Board for the past year.

In 2020, there were 177 new Registered Social Worker - Provisionals (RSW-P) and 86 new Registered Social Workers (RSW) who were accredited by the Board. A total of 625 renewal applications (17 RSW-P, 543 RSW and 65 RSSP) were also processed. There were 101 RSW-P who converted to RSW and 1 RSSP to RSW-P or RSW during the year.

A new term of office for the Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC) members was approved for Professor Seng Boon Kheng, Ms Morene Sim and Ms Agnes Chia for the period 2020-2021.

As part of our process improvement efforts, a workgroup to review the Social Work Accreditation Framework was formed. The final recommendations would be tabled to SWAAB by end of Dec 2021.

The CPE matrix table was also reviewed to include online training due to the COVID-19 situation impacting in-person training courses to be conducted. The review also provided for Journal Clubs and Mentoring to be considered as CPE credits.

A 'Guide for Social Workers on Recordings by Clients' was completed and which can be accessed via SASW website for reference. An analysis of the trends in the review of data from the accreditation dashboard over the last 5 years was also completed.

Another Workgroup formed is the Supervision Workgroup to enhance the development and promote standards of social work supervision in Singapore. The Workgroup met with champions from the disability sector and would be assisting to review social work supervisory practices.

The 4th Supervision Seminar Organising Committee was formed in July 2020 and we look forward to this Seminar "Riding the Waves and Rethinking Social Work Supervision" to be held on 8 and 9 July 2021. This Seminar would also see the launch of the 2nd edition of the 'Social Work Supervision Guidelines'.

The OSWA's Award presentation ceremony was held virtually on 23 November 2020 due to the COVID-19 situation. It was a first-time experience for all to hold such an auspicious occasion virtually to present the Awards to the 2 OSWA and 2 PSWA winners.

Due to COVID-19, visits to social service and healthcare agencies to promote accreditation was not possible. Nevertheless, 3 virtual sessions were held during the year. The total number of agencies reached to date is 143.

We thank Ms Joanna Tan for her service as Head of Accreditation & Programme Director over the past 2 years and welcome Ms Theresa Lee who has served on SASW's Executive Committee for many years. Finally, I would like to thank my fellow Board members for their service and contributions during the year. My appreciation also goes to the Accreditation Secretariat for their hard work and dedication in ensuring the smooth administration of the accreditation framework and timely support to the Board. I would also like to thank members of the various Workgroups whose names are mentioned in this Report for their expertise and time spent at the meetings of the Workgroups.

Last but not least, I would also like to urge all accredited Social Workers and practitioners to continue to uphold the standards of practice and ethics so as to raise the quality and image of the profession.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ang Bee Lian'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a distinct underline at the end.

Ang Bee Lian (Ms)
Chairman
Social Work Accreditation and Advisory Board

4. Demographics

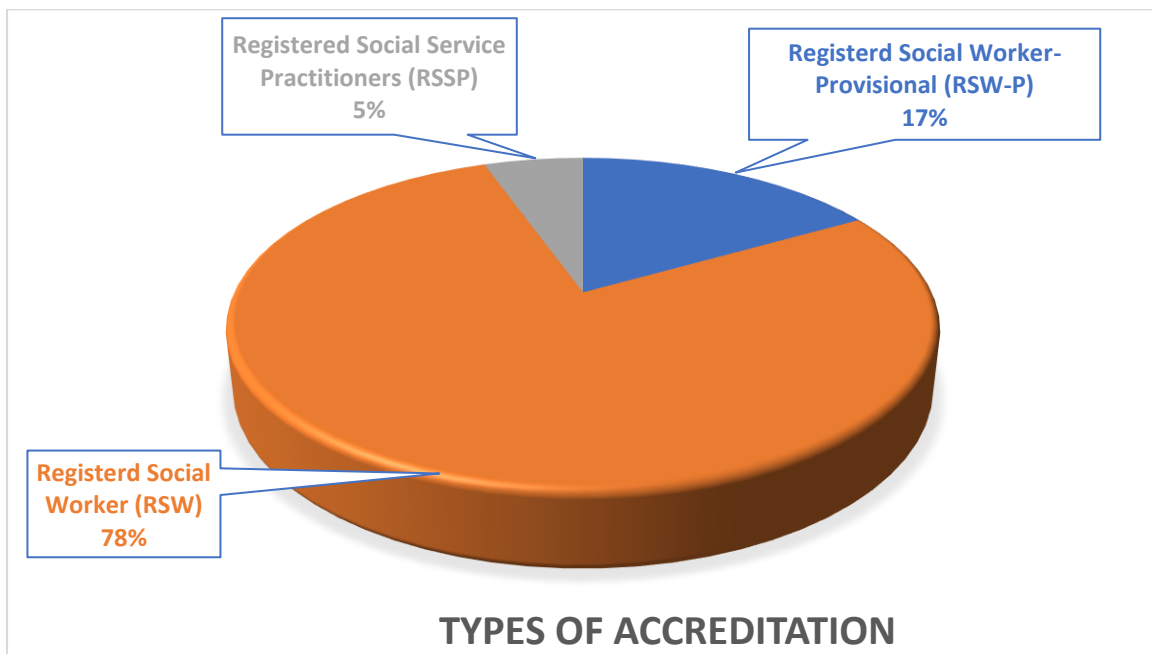
4.1 Number and Types of Accreditation

As at 31 December 2020, there were 2,084 accredited Social Workers and Social Service Practitioners as compared to 2,048 on 31 December 2019. This was an increase of 1.7%.

Table 1: Number and Types of Accreditation as at 31 December 2020

Type	2019	2020	Increase / Decrease (Numbers & %)
Registered Social Worker-Provisional (RSW-P)	347	349	2 (0.6%)
Registered Social Worker (RSW)	1,572	1,622	50 (3.1%)
Registered Social Service Practitioner (RSSP)	129	113	-16 (-12.4%)
Total	2,048	2,084	36 (1.7%)

Chart 1: Number and Types of Accreditation as at 31 December 2020



4.2 Sector Distribution

Most of the accredited professionals are in the Social Service Agencies. The second largest group are in the public healthcare sector and are from Restructured Hospitals, Specialist Centres and Polyclinics. The third largest group are in the Government Ministries and Statutory Boards.

Table 2: Sector Distribution by Accreditation Type as at 31 December 2020

Sectors of Employment	Sector Distribution			Total
	RSW-P	RSW	RSSP	
Social Service Agencies	293	1,081	72	1,446
Public Healthcare (Restructured Hospitals, Specialist Centres*, Polyclinics)	28	281	5	314
Government Ministries & Statutory Boards	12	131	21	164
Self-Employed	0	3	1	4
Not in Employment	12	93	5	110
Others	4	33	9	46
TOTAL	349	1,622	113	2,084

*For e.g., National Cancer Centre / National Heart Centre / Singapore National Eye Centre.

Chart 2a: Sector Distribution of Accredited Professionals as at 31 December 2020

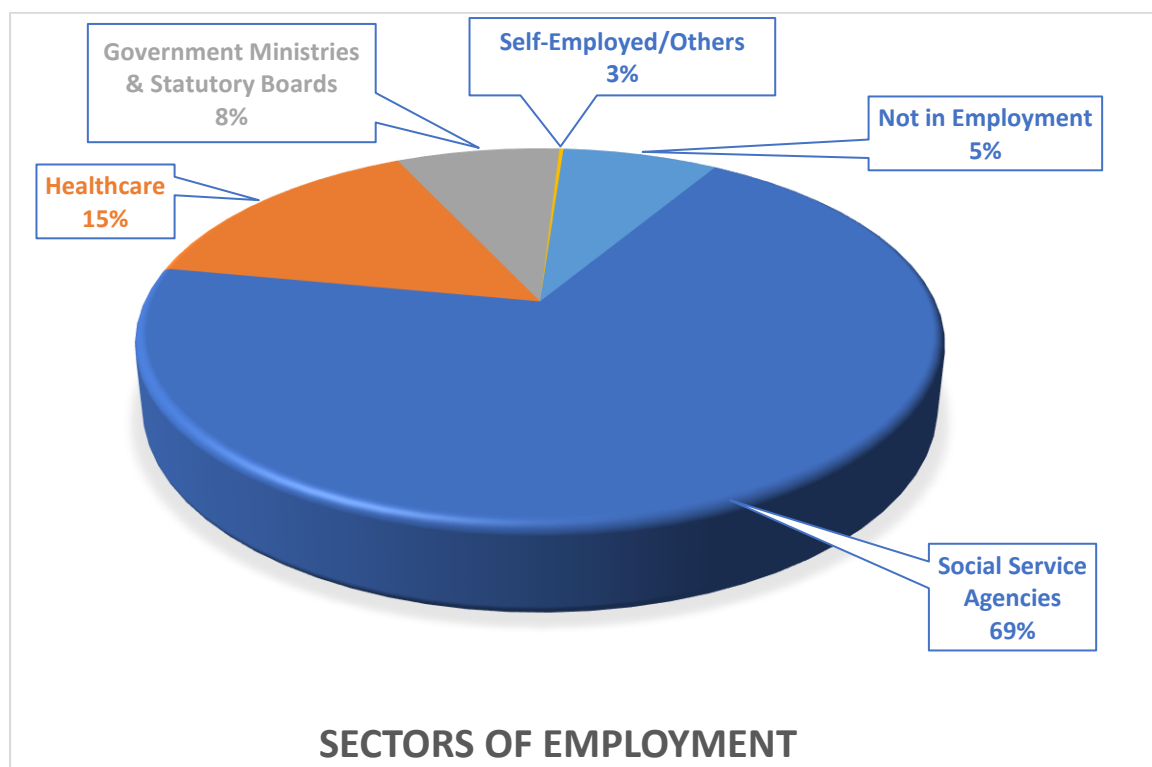


Chart 2b: Sector Distribution of RSW-P as at 31 December 2020

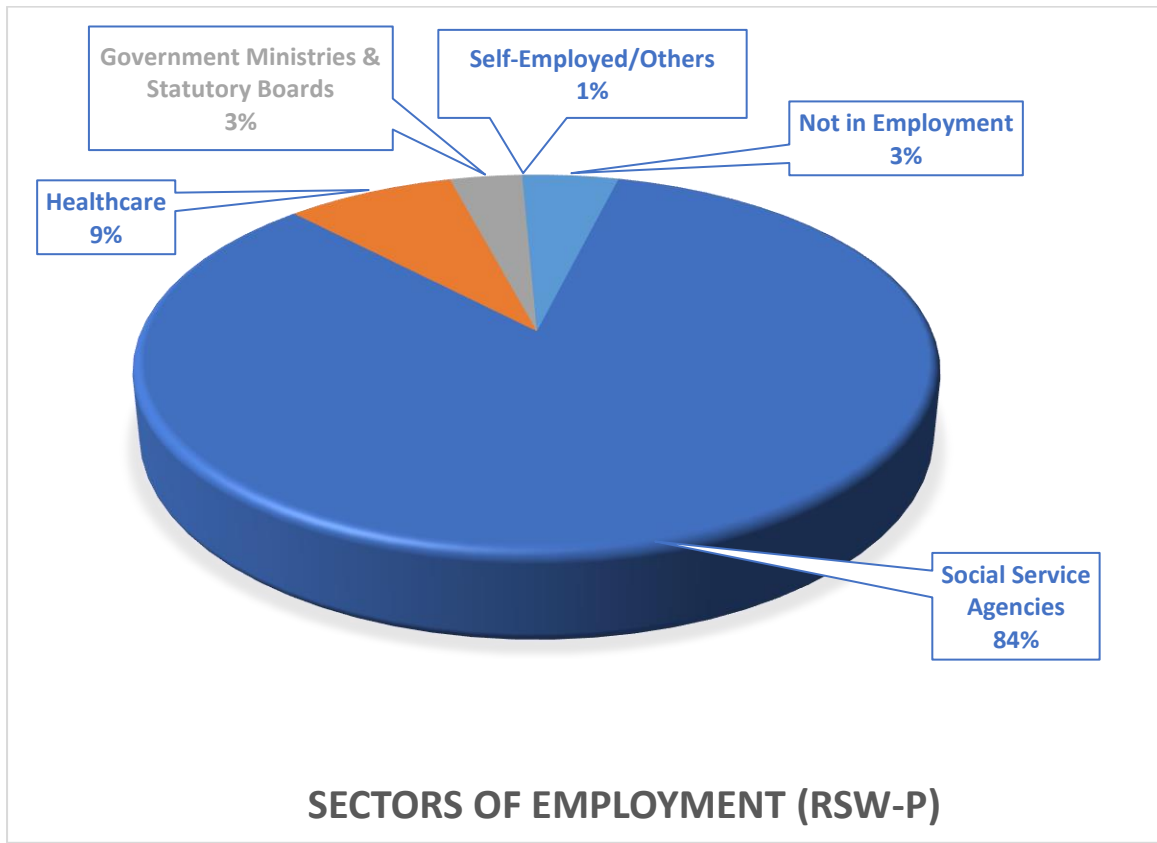


Chart 2c: Sector Distribution of RSW as at 31 December 2020

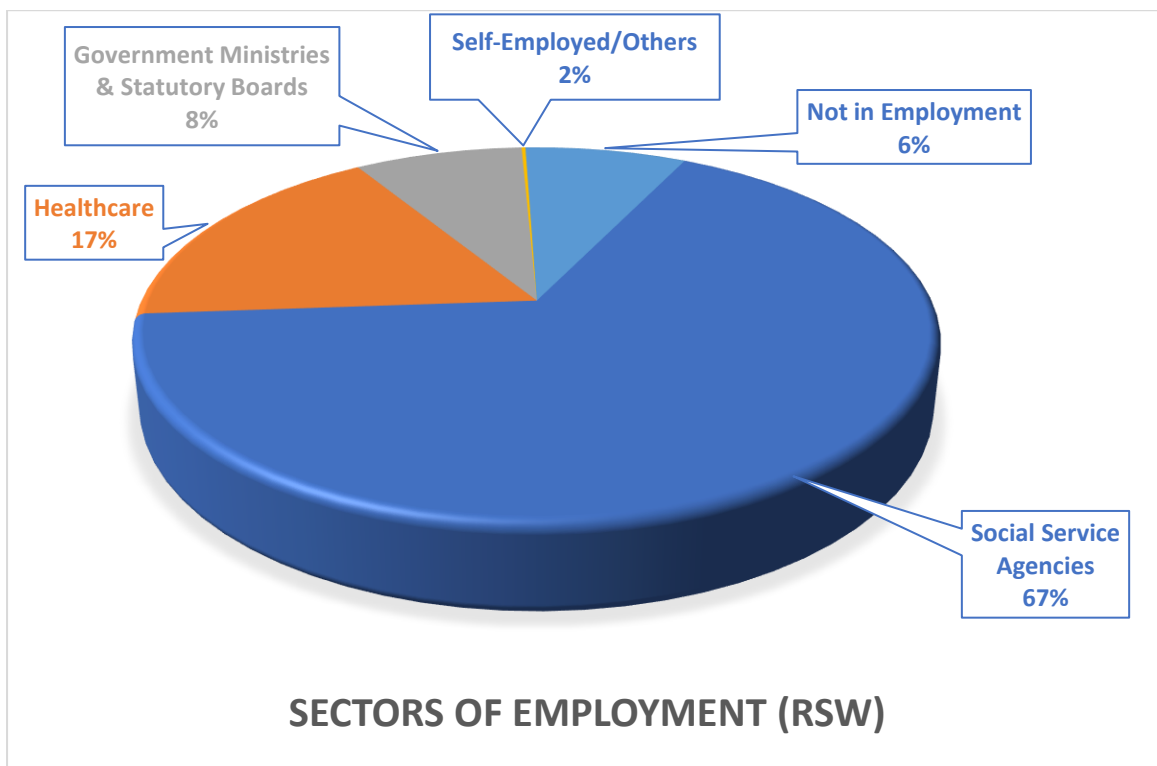
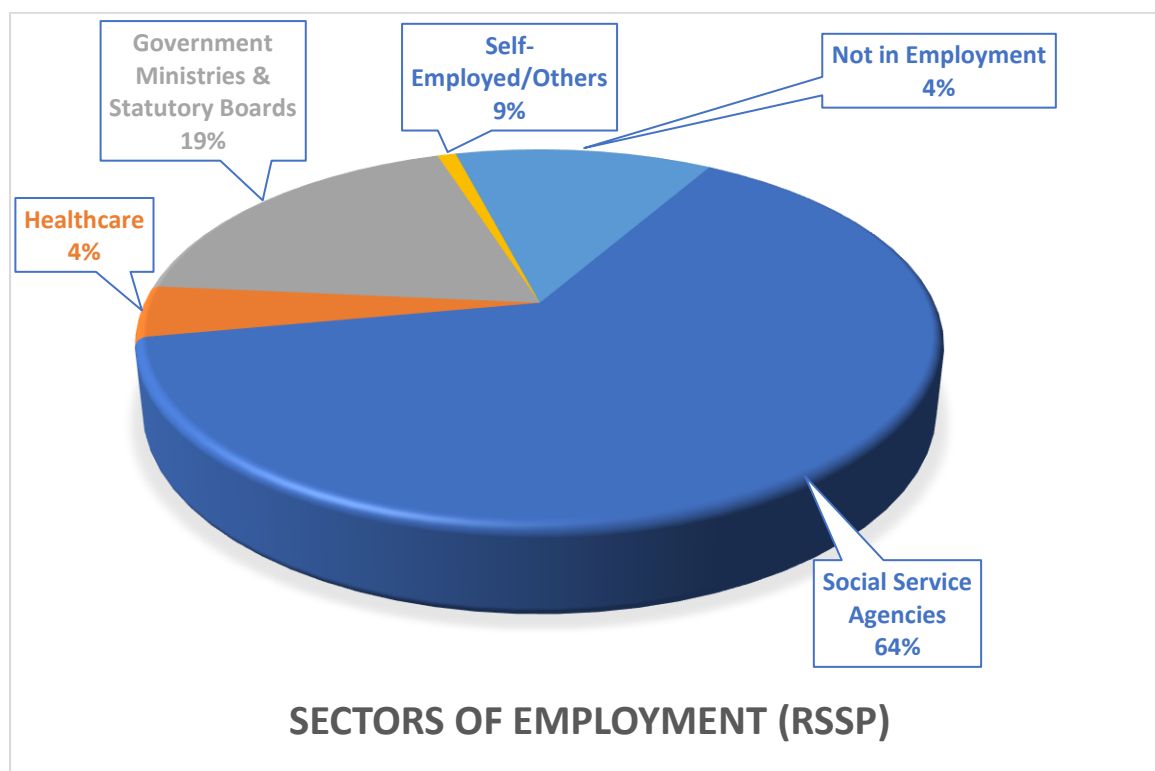


Chart 2d: Sector Distribution of RSSP as at 31 December 2020



4.3 Country of Qualifying Qualification of Accredited Professionals

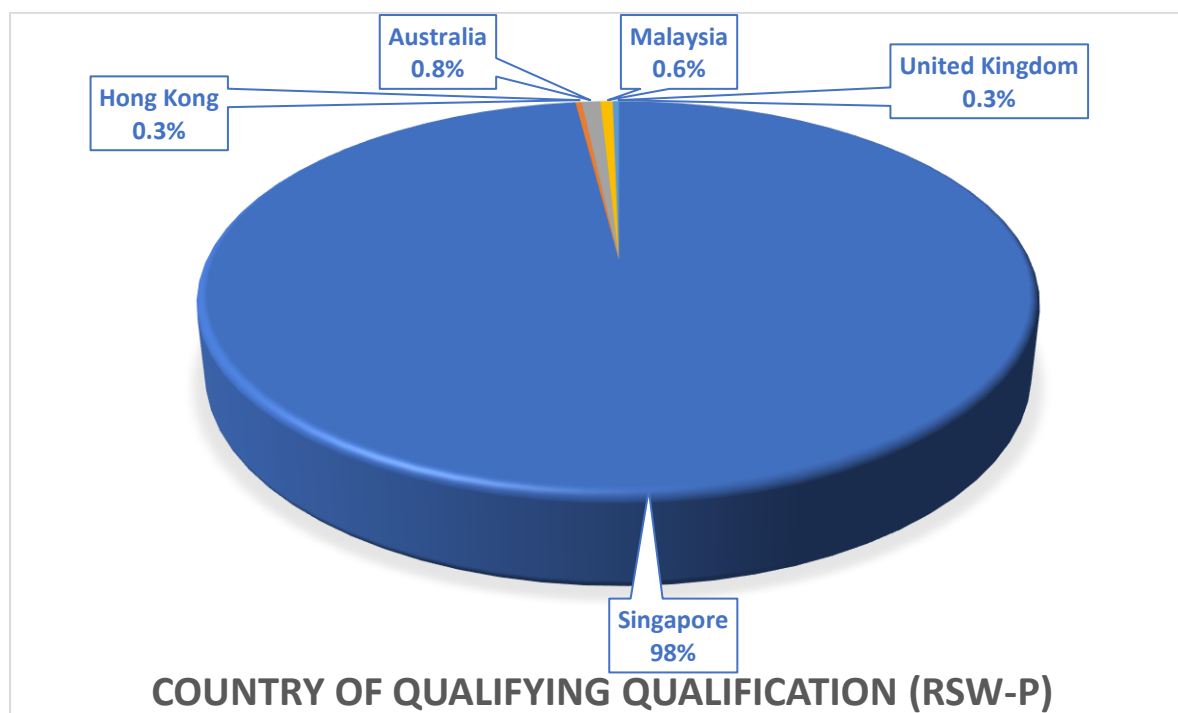
4.3.1 Registered Social Worker – Provisionals (RSW-P)

Majority of the Registered Social Worker – Provisionals with Social Work qualification are from Singapore. Other countries where RSW-Ps obtained their qualifications includes Australia, Malaysia, Hong Kong and United Kingdom.

Table 3: Country of Qualifying Qualification for RSW-Ps as at 31 December 2020

Country of Qualifying Qualification	2020
Singapore	342
Hong Kong	1
Australia	3
Malaysia	2
United Kingdom	1
Total	349

Chart 3: Country of Qualifying Qualification for RSW-Ps as at 31 December 2020



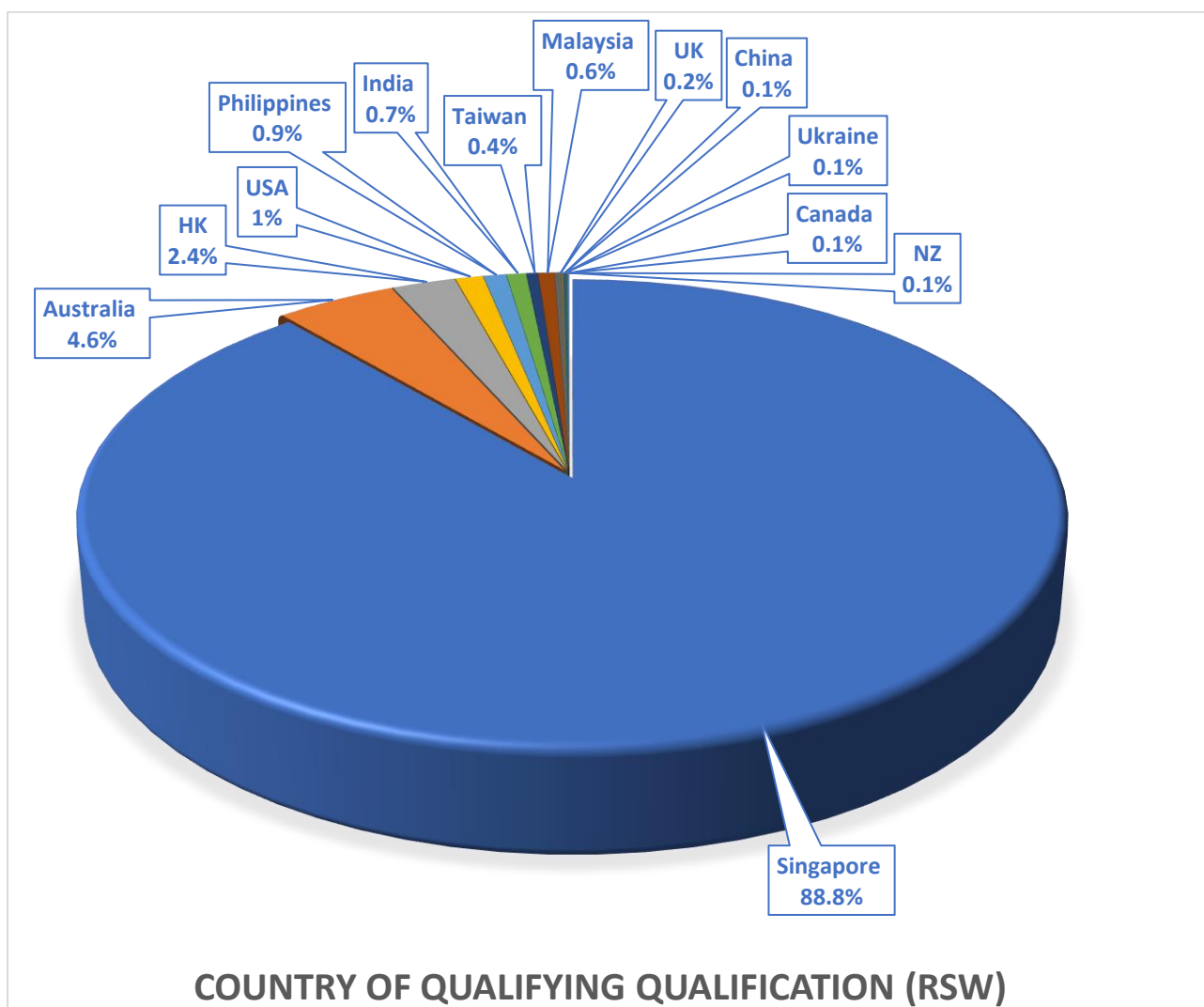
4.3.2 Registered Social Workers (RSW)

Most of our Registered Social Workers qualified in Social Work are from Singapore. Other countries where RSWs had obtained qualification in Social Work include Australia, Hong Kong, United States of America, Philippines, India, Malaysia, Taiwan, United Kingdom, China, Ukraine, Canada and New Zealand.

Table 4: Country of Qualifying Qualification for RSWs as at 31 December 2020

Country of Qualifying Qualification	2020
Singapore	1,440
Australia	74
Hong Kong (HK)	39
United States of America (USA)	17
Philippines	14
India	12
Malaysia	10
Taiwan	7
United Kingdom (UK)	4
China	2
Ukraine	1
Canada	1
New Zealand (NZ)	1
Total	1,622

Chart 4: Country of Qualifying Qualification for RSWs as at 31 December 2020



4.3.3 Registered Social Service Professionals (RSSP)

No information is provided in this section for RSSP as they were not accredited based on having social work qualification but on having other qualifications and/or certain number of years of experience in the sector.

4.4 Demographic Profile of Accredited Professionals

The social work and social service professionals are relatively young and female dominated, with majority of them within the age group of 30-39, followed by those in the 40-49 range.

Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents (PRs) make up 98% of the pool across the three accreditation groups. Table 5 shows the demographic profile of accredited professionals by gender, age and nationality.

Table 5: General Profile of Accredited Professionals as at 31 December 2020

Demographic Profile	Number and Percentage of Each Group			Total
	RSW-P	RSW	RSSP	
Gender				
Male	91	395	33	519
Female	258	1,227	80	1,565
Age				
20 - 29	191	220	0	411
30 - 39	109	707	12	828
40 - 49	27	451	32	510
50 - 59	15	191	38	244
60 and above	7	53	31	91
Nationality				
Singapore Citizens & PRs	346	1,589	113	2,048
Non-Citizens	3	33	0	36

Chart 5a: Total number of Accredited Professionals by Gender

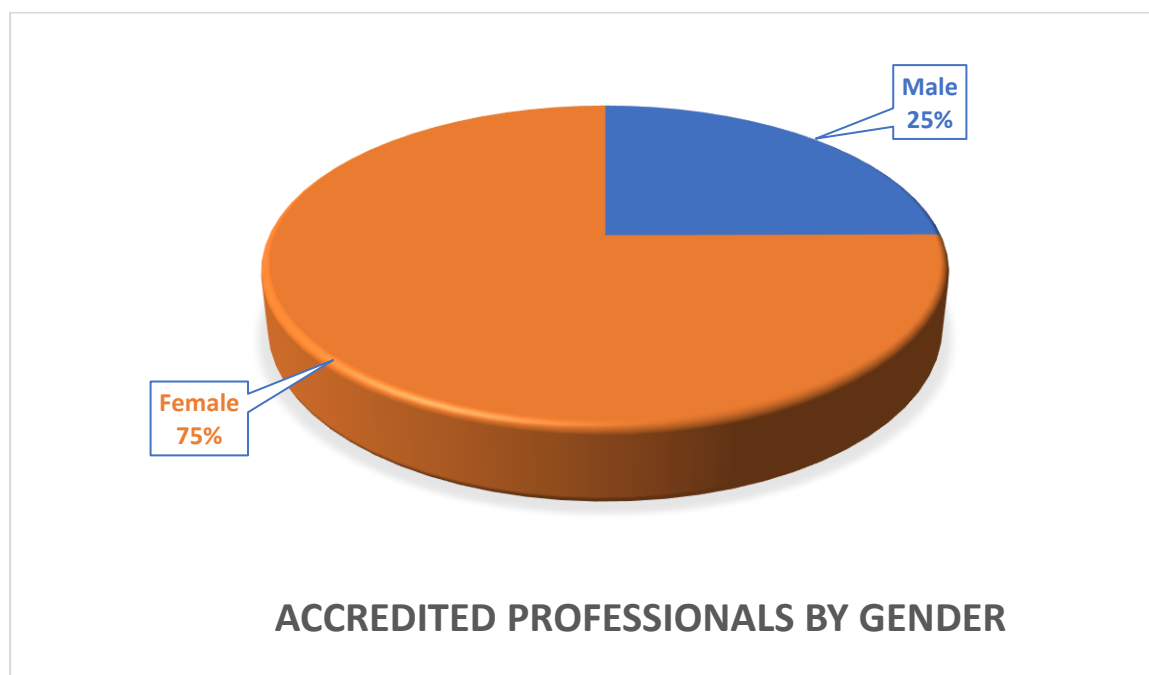


Chart 5b: Total number of Accredited Professionals by Age Group

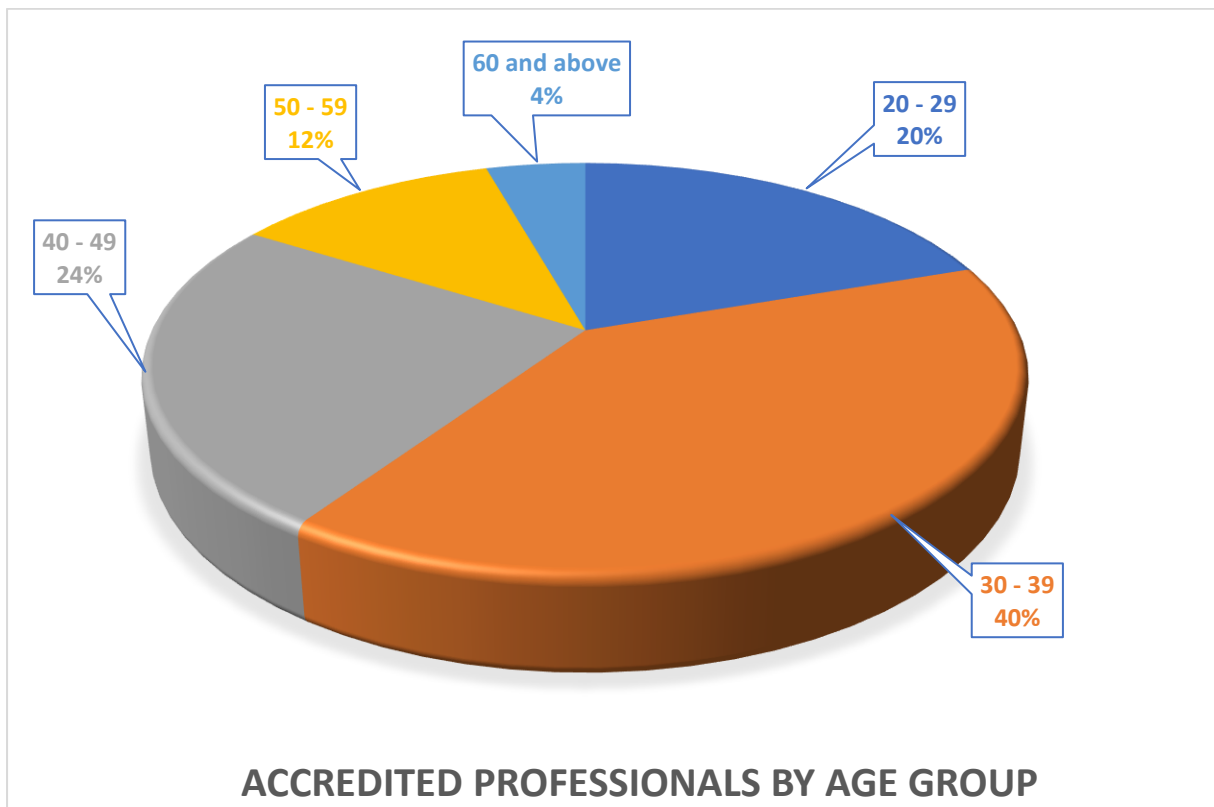
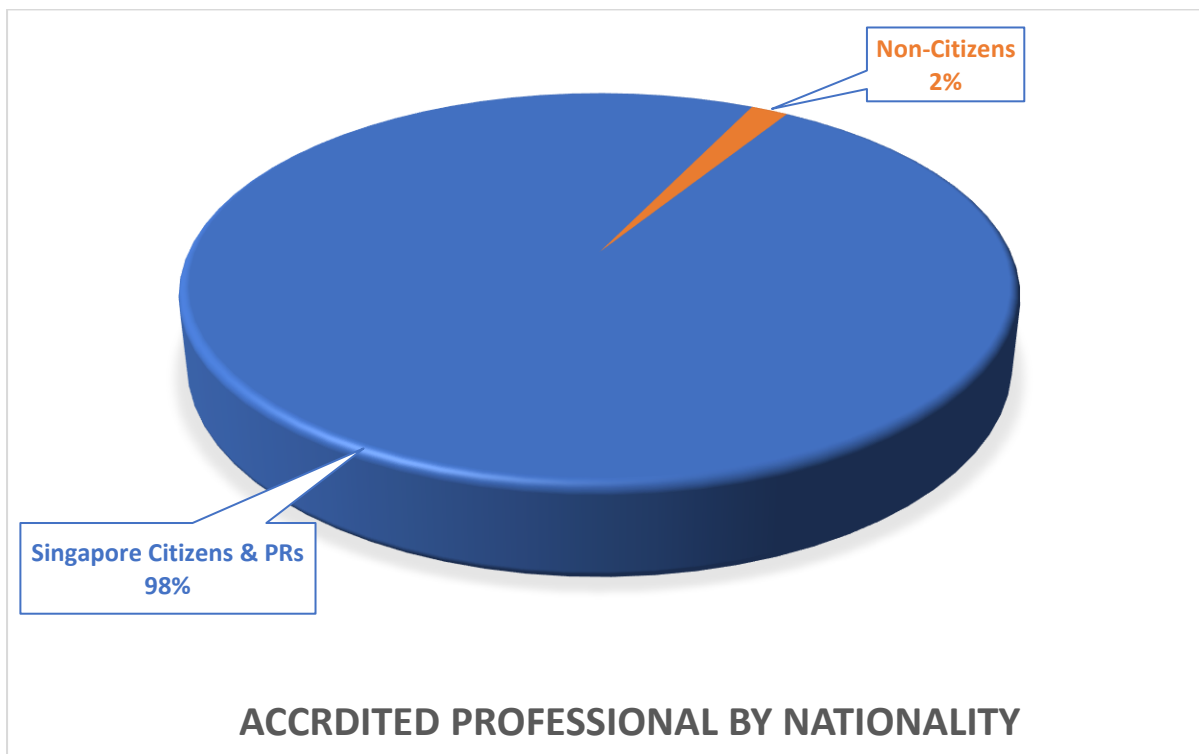


Chart 5c: Total number of Accredited Professionals by Nationality



5. Accreditation Status in the Past Five Years

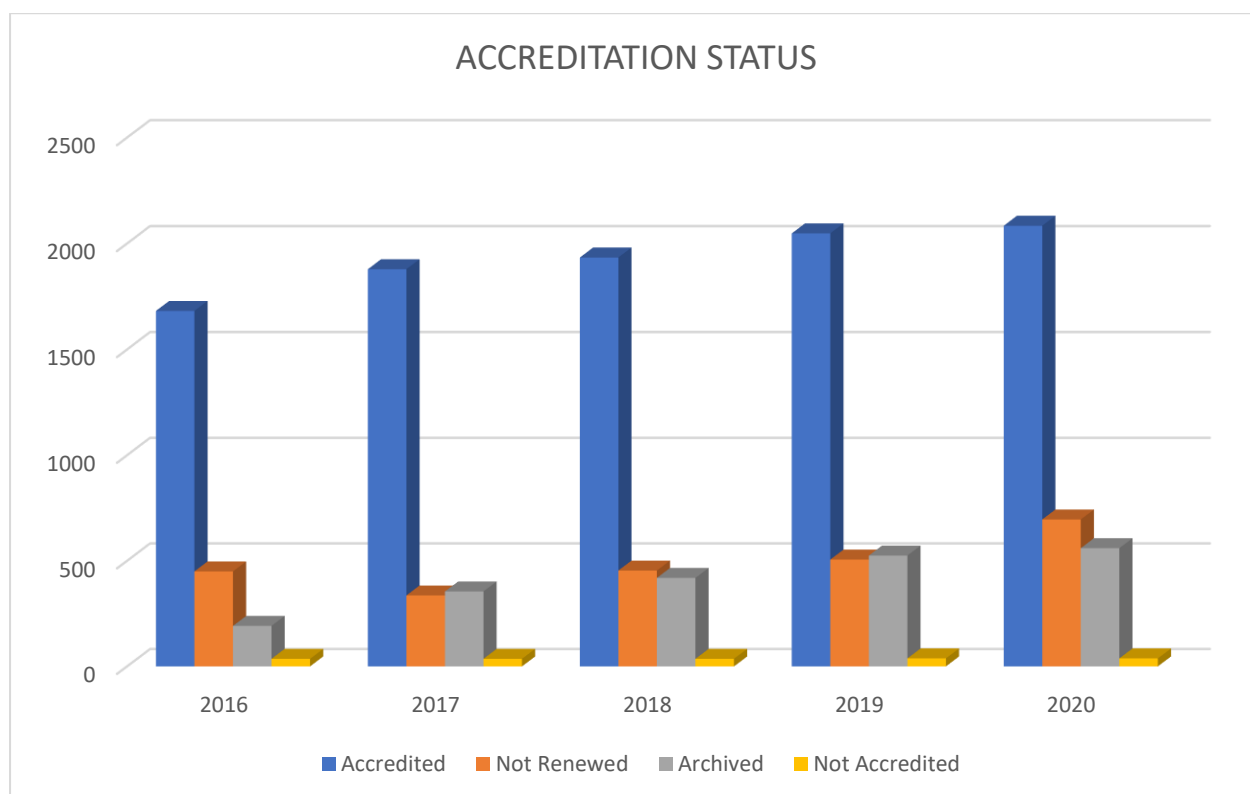
Table 6: Accreditation Status from 2016 to 2020

Status	as at 31 December 2016	as at 31 December 2017	as at 31 December 2018	as at 31 December 2019	as at 31 December 2020
Accredited	1,682	1,879	1,934	2,048	2,084
Not Renewed*	450	336	454	506	696
Archived**	192	355	419	525	560
Not Accredited	36	36	36	38	38

*These are members who have yet to renew their accreditation within the grace period of 3 years. Key reasons given on non-renewal are they have retired / resigned from organization / left the sector / moved overseas.

** These are members who have lapsed their 3 years grace period for renewal.

Chart 6: Accreditation Status from 2016 to 2020



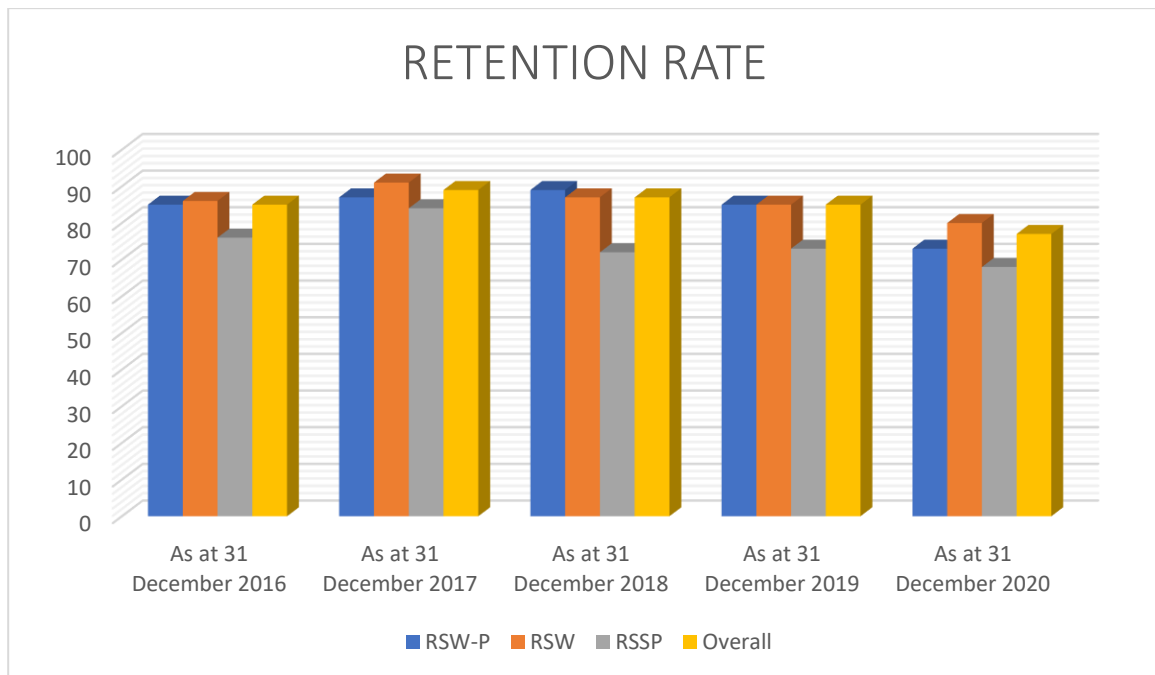
6. Retention Rates in the Past Five Years

Table 7: Retention rates from 2016 to 2020

Retention Rate	As at 31 December 2016	As at 31 December 2017	As at 31 December 2018	As at 31 December 2019	As at 31 December 2020	Average
RSWP	85%	87%	89%	85%	73%	84%
RSW	86%	91%	87%	85%	80%	86%
RSSP	76%	84%	72%	73%	68%	75%
Overall	85%	89%	87%	85%	77%	85%

Over the last 5 years, the average retention rate is 85%. However, in comparison to 2019, the year 2020 saw an overall lower retention rate of 77% as compared to the previous year at 85%. The retention rate is affected by the number of renewals in relation to the total number accredited. One of the factors contributing to the lower retention rate in 2020 was the impact of COVID-19 on the cancellation of training courses which caused some of the Registered Social Workers not being able to fulfill their CPE credits by Dec 2020.

Chart 7: Retention Rates from 2016 to 2020



7. Queries / Feedback Reviewed

In 2020, Secretariat received and handled three (3) queries / feedback. The cases were referred to the Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC) for appropriate follow-up actions to be taken.

The nature of feedback was in relation to the professionalism of social workers in their practice.

- a. Anonymous feedback from client on social worker who was deemed unprofessional and biased when handling their case.
- b. Feedback from client that social worker had provided them with inaccurate information.
- c. Feedback from fellow social workers that no proper handover of cases prior to social worker's departure from organization.