

City University of Hong Kong

Qualification Recognition Review on Bachelor of Social Sciences in Social Work

THE FINAL REPORT BY THE ASSESSMENT TEAM

Executive Summary

The Assessment Team appointed by the Social Workers Registration Board (the Board) reviewed documentation and conducted site visit to the City University of Hong Kong on 5th – 6th January 2023 for qualification recognition review of the Bachelor of Social Sciences in Social Work (BSSSW).

Assessment Team's Recommendation

Assessment Team is of the view that the BSSSW qualification has met the basic requirements laid down in the Principles, Criteria and Standards for Recognizing Qualifications in Social Work for Registration of Registered Social Workers (8th edition); and recommends the Board to recognize BSSSW qualification awarded by the City University of Hong Kong, thereby qualifying its holders for registration as Registered Social Workers, for a period of seven years from 2023/24 to 2029/30.

Commendations

1. AT is impressed by the quality of teaching team of BSSSW programme. Teaching staff are passionate and enthusiastic in delivering teaching and offering administrative support to the best they can to make students' learning fruitful. They are all experienced and tactful in handling challenges in response to societal changes and the emerging needs of students.
2. AT has found constructive and close relationship between teachers and students. Various channels, be it formal, informal or technology-enhanced, have been used to facilitate mutual communication and collaboration. As reflected by student representatives, teachers are highly responsive to issues students encounter in their study. In particular, the department has consulted students on proposed plan of curriculum restructuring. This has shown that the Department has the capacity to engage students as the key stakeholder in programme delivery.
3. BSSSW students and graduates interviewed are satisfied with the support they

received from teaching staff and the Department. Teachers are perceived as accommodating towards their learning needs. Students and graduates are open and expressive in articulating their viewpoint towards the BSSSW programme via existing communication channels.

4. AT also observes that BSSSW students and graduates interviewed are passionate and energetic. They hold positive values and attitudes towards the challenges they faced in the past years. The learning experience gained from the BSSSW has helped them to prepare for work in terms of the necessary competency and attitude.
5. AT appreciates that a comprehensive and well-established mechanism is in place for fieldwork. There are mechanisms of matching students with placement agencies, moderation of fieldwork assessments, and for grade appeal. The Department has engaged with a team of stable, supportive, and experienced part-time fieldwork supervisors. More than half of the supervisors have been working with the BSSSW for over 5 years.
6. AT is impressed by the comprehensive resources available to students of BSSSW including the learning facilities and student support services. Both full-time teaching staff and part-time fieldwork supervisors highly appreciate CityU's provision of ICT facilities in supporting their work and students' learning.
7. AT appreciates the Department's initiative and effort in enriching students' learning experience by mobilizing out-of-classroom activities, down-to-earth community project and service, so as to engage students in the community which is crucial in cultivating competent aspiring social workers.

Summary of Suggestions

1. To enhance sensitivity in handling changes to the curriculum during the period of programme provision granted by the Board. Where appropriate the Board should be consulted on possible changes to the curriculum before seeking approval via CityU's quality assurance mechanism.
2. To revisit the proposal for restructuring the curriculum of BSSSW programme for students to take a minor study, with thoughtful consideration of any potential adverse effect on the quality of social work theories and skills training, before effecting such changes in 2024/25. The Board should also be consulted before the

final proposal is ready.

3. To continuously review the course outlines and assessment criteria and rubrics of practice-related and skill laboratory courses so that they are clear to teaching staff concerned; and to make sure there is mechanism in place to facilitate communication among different staff teaching the same course for minimizing discrepancy in teaching and assessment.
4. To explore ways of enhancing students' competence in work-related English writing to facilitate their future work of proposal writing, and consider to develop a mechanism to monitor students' progress on English learning.
5. To closely monitor each Designated Staff's administrative workload to make sure the individual workload requirement committing to BSSSW is met from time to time during the period of programme provision granted by the Board.
6. To strengthen the engagement with external stakeholders by exploring the mechanism of seeking advice from academic advisor on programme level, instead of departmental level alone, so that the advice obtained can be more focused and specific to the BSSSW; and establishing formal and regular contacts or meetings with employers to keep abreast of the latest development in the field.
7. To reconsider admitting students who have completed Associate Degree or Higher Diploma in Social Work to year 3 study of the BSSSW programme in order to facilitate diploma-holding social workers' career advancement and to meet the manpower demand for degree-holding social workers in the field.

THE FINAL DECISION OF THE BOARD

The Board has resolved to accept the recommendations of the Assessment Team to recognise the qualification for a period of seven years from 2023/24 to 2029/30.