

***Memorial University School of Social Work***  
***MSW Field Education Manual***  
***CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards (2014):***  
***Principles Guiding Accreditation***

***CASWE-ACFTS Standards for Accreditation***

The mission of social work education, at Baccalaureate and Master levels, is to promote excellence in social work education, scholarship, and practice with a human rights and responsibility and social justice focus. To achieve these goals, social work education fosters learning objectives for students, statements of what students are expected to know and to be able to do, which link student learning objectives to the promotion of excellence in social work education, scholarship, and practice with a social justice focus.

The Canadian Association for Social Work Education-Association canadienne pour la formation en travail social (CASWE-ACFTS), through its *Standards for Accreditation*, accredits Baccalaureate and Master level social work programs. These standards are normative in nature and support academic excellence for professional education, as well as the relevance of education programs to professional practice. In linking social work theory, research, policy and practice, social work education is grounded by intended learning objectives for students defined in this document. This document is aimed at strengthening both education and the profession, a much needed development in a time when social work identity and domain have been increasingly challenged. However, these policies and standards are not aimed at uniformity of social work education; instead, they are intended to promote the uniqueness and diversity of social work programs across Canada and enable them to better respond to their respective contexts and partners.

**Principles Guiding Accreditation of Social Work Education Programs**

1. The purpose of Standards for Accreditation is to ensure excellence in social work education and continuing quality improvement in social work curriculum and pedagogy across Canada.

All programs must address the principles that follow.

2. Guided by the principles of fundamental human rights and responsibilities and respect for human diversity, social work seeks to facilitate well-being and participation of people, promote social and economic justice, address structural sources of inequities, and eliminate conditions that infringe human and civil rights. Grounded in reflective practice and engaged in persistent inquiry into theoretical and research bases in the field, social work employs professional approaches and interventions to enhance individual, family, group, community, and population well-being.

3. Social work education links together the interdisciplinary theoretical knowledge base of social work and professional practice.

4. Core learning objectives for students link student learning objectives to the promotion of excellence in social work education, scholarship, and practice with a social justice focus and guide both curriculum design and the delivery of field education.

5. The integration of knowledge, values and skills in the context of field education is a critical and distinctive aspect of social work education; therefore, field education is considered the central component of social work education.

6. Within the framework of accreditation standards, social work academic units have flexibility to deliver programs that highlight their uniqueness and respond to particular socio-cultural and political-economic contexts.

7. All social work program locations and formats, e.g., on-campus, decentralized, intensive, and Information and Communication Technology (ICT)-driven approaches, are encompassed by the standards.

8. Social work programs encompass a range of theoretical perspectives and encourage critical

thinking, discussion and debate. Social work core values and ethical practices are explicitly articulated in Canadian social work programs.

9. Standards encourage and support diversity and social justice in all aspects/ domains of social work programs. Diversity throughout this document refers to a range of characteristics including, but not limited to: age, colour, culture, disability/ non-disability status, ethnic or linguistic origin, gender, health status, heritage, immigration status, geographic origin, race, religious and spiritual beliefs, political orientation, gender and sexual identities, and socioeconomic status.

10. Social work programs acknowledge the importance and complexity of Canadian society, including the dynamics affecting Anglophone, Francophone, Indigenous peoples, and newcomer populations.

11. Social work programs acknowledge and challenge the injustices of Canada's colonial history and continuing colonization efforts as they relate to the role of social work education in Canada and the self-determination of the Indigenous peoples.

12. Francophone people are specifically highlighted as constituents of Canadian history and identity and social work education programs ensure representation of related concerns and issues.

13. Partners/constituents include but are not limited to: social work students, social work educators, alumni, employers, practitioners, professional associations, regulators, service users, and community members.

14. Standards identify a clear distinction between the intended learning objectives for students of Baccalaureate level (BSW) and Master level (MSW) university education.