

Department of Applied Social Sciences

# Doctor of Social Work

## 社會工作博士

### PROGRAMME REQUIREMENT DOCUMENT For Cohort 2020/2021





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# **Part I**

## **Programme Information**

This Programme Requirement Document is subject to review and changes which the programme offering Faculty/Department can decide to make from time to time. Students will be informed of the changes as when appropriate.

## 1. General Information

### Host Department

Department of Applied Social Sciences (應用社會科學系)

### Programme Title

Title in English	Title in Chinese
Doctor of Social Work	社會工作博士

### Programme Code

Full-time: 54053-DF

Part-time: 54053-DP

### Award

Doctor of Social Work (DSW)

### Mode of Attendance

Mixed-mode

### Total Credits Required for Graduation

Coursework

24 credits

DSW Thesis Seminar and DSW Thesis

24 credits

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48 credits

### Teaching Medium

English

### Normal Duration of Study

Full-time mode: 3 years

Part-time mode: 4 years

## **2. Programme Philosophy, Aims and Objectives**

The DSW Programme aims to develop a critical mass of future social work leaders. It integrates reflective practice, applied research, and professional education into a coherent professional doctorate programme for senior practitioners, human service managers, action researchers, and social work educators in changing contexts. The programme also serves as a platform for global and local dialogues around critical issues in social work practice from inter-disciplinary, multi-dimensional and cross-cultural perspectives of epistemology.

We believe that practice wisdom is rooted in specific political, economic, social, and cultural contexts and evolves through persistent professional and personal commitments. Hence the DSW programme emphasizes the provision of opportunities for students to engage in continual dialogue and critical reflection in social work practice. Social work is an international profession with core values and a common body of knowledge; however, social work is also grounded in local communities requiring an understanding of their specific cultures and contexts, thus, both global trends and local issues are equally emphasized in the DSW curriculum.

### **3. Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)**

DSW graduates are expected to demonstrate critical understanding and integration abilities in the following four dimensions:

#### **i. Theory and practice integration in social work**

Graduates will understand and appreciate that theory and practice are inextricably linked. They will acknowledge that professional practice is informed by formal theories, propositional knowledge as well as being grounded in knowledge that is practical, embodied and situated. Hence, they will master a body of updated literature and research findings relevant to their practice. They will also adopt a reflective and reflexive stance as an integral part of their professional identity, engaging themselves in on-going dialogues with members of a professional community to tap into the rich resources from their shared practice wisdom.

#### **ii. Dialogue between international perspective and local context of social work practice**

Graduates will benefit from the opportunities provided by the DSW Programme to meet their counter-parts from different regions in the world by visiting these communities, to gain multiple perspectives in the ways social problems and issues are conceptualized and how modes of service delivery are designed. In the process they will come to appreciate the different political contexts, economic situations, social structure, cultural values, historical development, and developmental paths that shape the choice of preferred theoretical frameworks and intervention modalities in each local context, including their host countries. They will be able to analyze and compare the benefits and risks of these different endeavours in other parts of the world. Reaping the fruits of such re-examination, they will be able to formulate the best approach for their indigenous practice.

#### **iii. Integration between professional values and personal commitment in the role of a “practitioner-researcher-educator”**

Graduates will realize professional practice is a form of moral-practical engagement predisposed to the pursuit of certain aspired values. They will be fully aware that professional values do not reside on the intellectual plane, but constitute the essential moral core of their practice. Such forms of practice cannot be dissociated from personal emotional engagement and ethical commitment. Graduates will be prepared and committed to such forms of practice. Critically aware of the theory-practice link, they will also be prepared to re-examine and re-define professional values in the context of rapid sociological, political, and technological changes.

**iv. Integration between individual concerns and societal consideration in social work practice**

Graduates will uphold the bi-focal perspective that pays attention to both the individual and societal forces impinging on their practice. They will be keenly aware that professional practice takes place in a web of psychological, familial, organizational, cultural and technological forces. They will gain insights into the social locations of both social workers and service users in such a web of forces. Consequently, they will adopt a multi-dimensional, inter-disciplinary, and inter-professional approach in working with the complex social problems encountered in practice.

The contributions of subjects, including core, compulsory and elective, to learning outcomes in this programme are indicated in [Appendix I](#) and [Appendix II](#).

## 4. Programme Structure and Contents

### 4.1 Curriculum Structure of the Programme

#### i. 24 Credits for Coursework

Eight academic subjects.

Candidacy is confirmed after successful completion of the 24-credit coursework and after a DSW thesis proposal has been successfully defended.

#### ii. 24 Credits for DSW Thesis

The thesis comprises a single piece of applied research work with innovative insights to inform professional practice.

**Total: 48 credits**

### 4.2 Academic Subjects

#### 4.2.1 DSW Core Subjects (5 subjects, 15 credits)

Students are required to take all of the following subjects:

- |    |          |  |             |
|----|----------|--|-------------|
| 1. | APSS611  | Epistemology of Social Work Knowledge                            | (3 credits) |
| 2. | APSS6321 | Social Work Practice Research                                    | (3 credits) |
| 3. | APSS6322 | Pedagogies in Educating and Developing Social Work Practitioners | (3 credits) |
| 4. | APSS6301 | Quantitative Research Methods in Social Work Research            | (3 credits) |
| 5. | APSS6311 | Advanced Qualitative Research Methodology                        | (3 credits) |

#### 4.2.2 DSW Elective Subjects (3 subjects x 3 credits = 9 credits)

Students have to take three subjects, including a guided study subject (3 credits) and select two elective from the following focus areas or to choose no more than two elective subjects at Master's degree level within the Department.

- |    |   |  |             |
|----|---|--|-------------|
| a. | Direct Service Practice (Family Practice & Mental Health)             |  |             |
|    | APSS615   | Advanced Family-Centred Social Work: Theory, Practice and Research | (3 credits) |
|    | APSS616   | Recovery and Emotionality in Mental Health Practice                | (3 credits) |
| b. | Policy & Administration Practice (Social Policy & Social Development) |  |             |
|    | APSS617   | Critical Social Policy in Comparative Contexts                     | (3 credits) |
|    | APSS618   | Pathways to Social Development                                     | (3 credits) |

- c. Social Work Education
  - APSS620 Towards a Personal Stance in teaching Social Work Practice (3 credits)
  - APSS6324 Innovations in Social Work Education (3 credits)

- d. Extra-departmental Elective

With the academic guidance from the DSW Programme Leader and the approval of both APSS and the host department/university of the extra-departmental elective, students may choose one elective subject from another professional doctorate programme of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University or relevant subjects offered by one of the universities engaged in our academic partnership.

#### 4.2.3 **Doctoral Thesis and Research Seminar (24 credits)**

**APSS6221 DSW Thesis Seminar and Proposal Development I (2 credits)**  
**APSS6222 DSW Thesis Seminar and Proposal Development II (2 credits)**  
**APSS6223 DSW Thesis Seminar and Proposal Development III (2 credits)**

Research Proposal, Data Collection and Analysis

#### **APSS627 DSW Thesis (18 credits)**

Each student will have to submit a thesis of approximately 50,000 words. Students are expected to undertake field research or practice-based projects in connection with their DSW thesis.

The Doctoral Thesis and Research Seminar is equivalent, in terms of student effort, to 24 credits (8 doctoral subjects). The DSW thesis comprises a single piece of work. The thesis reflects the candidate's knowledge and understanding of the related literature and of the research methodology appropriate to the investigation. The work should be of a standard worthy of publication in a peer-reviewed professional outlet. The DSW thesis is also a viable demonstration of the candidate's ability to provide innovative insights into social work practice and to apply theoretical and practical knowledge to the solution of a significant social problem of relevance to the field.

An oral examination of the DSW thesis must be held. Students' DSW candidacy will be confirmed after successful completion of the coursework and a DSW thesis proposal is successfully defended.

Students who complete all or part of the coursework requirements of the professional doctorate programme but, for one reason or another, do not satisfactorily complete the thesis may apply for admission to the University's Postgraduate Schemes and be considered for appropriate credit transfer under the regulations applying to these Schemes.

Under special circumstances, a student can be considered for graduation with an exit award at Master's level, to cater for students who may wish or have to terminate their studies at an earlier stage. In the DSW programme, the requirement for an exit award

is to complete the 24 credits of coursework and pass the assessment of the thesis proposal (equivalent to 6 credits). Subject to the approval of Programme Leader, a student who fails the assessment of the thesis proposal may be given an option to study two level 5/6 subjects under APSS postgraduate scheme in order to fulfil the graduation requirement of the exit award. An exit award of MASW (Research Studies) [社會工作文學碩士 (研究)] may be granted subject to the decision of the Board of Examiners. This exit award shall not be classified.

### **4.3 DSW Study Plan**

The normal period to complete the DSW programme is three years for full-time students and four years for part-time students. The programme offers a structured progression pattern, and students are highly encouraged to follow the pattern to benefit from a cohort-based study and utilize the summer term to complete the programme in two years. However, being credit-based, the programme allows you the flexibility to proceed at your own pace according to your time commitment and learning needs, while not exceeding the prescribed normal duration for completion of the programme.

Patterned subjects on offer are subject to change. It depends on the availability of teaching faculty and resources. Students can enquire the class timetable of the semester concerned via <http://www.polyu.edu.hk/student> upon release of the relevant class timetable.

#### 4.4 Recommended Study Pattern

##### Full-time Mode

<i>Year</i>	<i>Semester</i>	<i>Subject Code</i>	<i>Subject Title</i>	<i>Core / Elective / Compulsory</i>	<i>No. of Credits</i>
<b>2020/21</b> <b><u>(Year One)</u></b>	One	APSS611	Epistemology of Social Work Knowledge	Core	3
		APSS6321	Social Work Practice Research	Core	3
		APSS6221	DSW Thesis Seminar and Proposal Development I	Compulsory	2
		One Elective Subject <sup>1</sup>		Elective	3
	Two	APSS6301	Quantitative Research Methods in Social Work Research	Core	3
		APSS6311	Advanced Qualitative Research Methodology	Core	3
		APSS6222	DSW Thesis Seminar and Proposal Development II	Compulsory	2
		APSS6807	Guided Study	Compulsory	3
<b>2021/22</b> <b><u>(Year Two)</u></b>	One	APSS6322	Pedagogies in Educating and Developing Social Work Practitioners	Core	3
		APSS6223	DSW Thesis Seminar and Proposal Development III	Compulsory	2
		One Elective Subject <sup>1</sup>		Elective	3
	Two	DSW Candidacy Presentation		-	-
		APSS623	DSW Thesis <sup>2</sup>	Compulsory	6
<b>2022/23</b> <b><u>(Year Three)</u></b>	One	APSS624	DSW Thesis (cont'd) <sup>2</sup>	Compulsory	6
	Two	APSS625	DSW Thesis (cont'd) <sup>2</sup>	Compulsory	6
	Summer	Thesis Oral Examination		-	-

<sup>1</sup> Students should take two elective subjects or to choose no more than two elective subjects at Master's degree level within the Department.

<sup>2</sup> "APSS627 DSW Thesis (18 credits)" will be used when students complete the whole thesis.

**Part-time Mode**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Semester</i>	<i>Subject Code</i>	<i>Subject Title</i>	<i>Core / Elective / Compulsory</i>	<i>No. of Credits</i>
<b><i>2020/21</i></b> <b><i>(Year One)</i></b>	One	APSS611	Epistemology of Social Work Knowledge	Core	3
		APSS6321	Social Work Practice Research	Core	3
		APSS6221	DSW Thesis Seminar and Proposal Development I	Compulsory	2
	Two	APSS6301	Quantitative Research Methods in Social Work Research	Core	3
		APSS6311	Advanced Qualitative Research Methodology	Core	3
		APSS6222	DSW Thesis Seminar and Proposal Development II	Compulsory	2
<b><i>2021/22</i></b> <b><i>(Year Two)</i></b>	One	APSS6322	Pedagogies in Educating and Developing Social Work Practitioners	Core	3
		APSS6223	DSW Thesis Seminar and Proposal Development III	Compulsory	2
		One Elective Subject <sup>3</sup>		Elective	3
	Two	APSS6807	Guided Study <sup>4</sup>	Compulsory	3
		One Elective Subject <sup>1</sup>		Elective	3
	Summer	DSW Candidacy Presentation		-	-
<b><i>2022/23</i></b> <b><i>(Year Three)</i></b>	One	APSS623	DSW Thesis <sup>5</sup>	Compulsory	6
	Two	APSS624	DSW Thesis (cont'd) <sup>3</sup>	Compulsory	6
<b><i>2023/24</i></b> <b><i>(Year Four)</i></b>	One	APSS625	DSW Thesis (cont'd) <sup>3</sup>	Compulsory	6
	Two	Thesis Oral Examination		-	-

<sup>3</sup> Students should take two elective subjects or to choose no more than two elective subjects at Master's degree level within the Department.

<sup>4</sup> Students can register "APSS6807 Guided Study" at the beginning of any Semester during their DSW coursework period.

<sup>5</sup> "APSS627 DSW Thesis (18 credits)" will be used when students complete the whole thesis.

#### 4.5 Elective Subject Offering Pattern

Year	Semester	Subject Code	Subject Title	No. of Credits
2020/21	One	Elective subject(s) at Master's degree level within the Department.		3
2021/22	One	APSS616	Recovery and Emotionality in Mental Health Practice	3
		APSS617	Critical Social Policy in Comparative Contexts	3
		APSS6324	Innovations in Social Work Education	3
	Two	APSS615	Advanced Family-centred Social Work: Theory, Practice and Research	3
		APSS618	Pathways to Social Development	3

Remarks:

\* The department reserves the right to alter the subject offering. Please note that not all elective subjects will be offered every year and registration is subject to the availability of quota.

## **5. Admission and Registration**

### **5.1 Entrance Requirement and Admission**

- 5.1.1 MSW, MASW, MSocSc (Social Work) or a Master's degree in related disciplines

For all applicants, five years of relevant work experience is preferred.

Applicants with a master's degree in related disciplines other than social work are required to take two additional subjects (total: 6 credits) at master's level related to social work theory and practice. Students are required to pay the additional credit fees.

- 5.1.2 Applicants who obtain a degree from a university of which the language of instruction is not English are normally required to fulfil the following minimum English proficiency requirement:

- (a) A Test of English as a Foreign Language (**TOEFL**) score of 80 for the Internet-based test, or 550 or above for the paper-based test; **OR**
- (b) An overall Band Score of at least 6 in the International English Language Testing System (**IELTS**).

### **5.2 Registration, Deregistration and Subject Registration**

- 5.2.1 On admission to the programme, students will be registered with the University as a Mixed-mode student studying for a Doctorate award.

- 5.2.2 A student will cease to be registered (Deregistration) for the award without exception if he/she falls within any one of following categories:

- (i) the student has reached the final year of the normal period of registration, unless approval has been given for extension; or
- (ii) the student has reached the maximum number of retakes allowed for failed compulsory subject; or
- (iii) the students Grade Point Average (GPA) is lower than 1.70 for two consecutive semesters and the Semester GPA in the second semester is also lower than 1.70; or
- (iv) the student's Grade Point Average (GPA) is lower than 1.70 for three consecutive semesters.

- 5.2.3 Students need to register for the subjects at specified periods prior to the commencement of semester. Students are recommended to take required subjects and elective subjects according to the requirement in their own specialism of study.

- 5.2.4 An add/drop period will be scheduled for each semester/term. Students are not

allowed to drop subjects after the add/drop period.

- 5.2.5 Pre- and co-requisite knowledge may be required for some subjects and certain students may even be required to audit subjects at Master's degree level if, in the judgement of the Programme Leader, this can make up for what was lacking in their previous education.
- 5.2.6 Mixed-mode students may engage in a full-time or part-time study load. If the mixed-mode students take subjects with a study load of 9 credits or more in a semester, are classified as full-time students, they will be given full-time status in that semester. Students with a study load less than 9 credits in a semester, are classified as part-time students.
- 5.2.7 Part-time students will normally be expected to take two subjects while full-time students will take three subjects in one semester. However, the speed of study can be determined by the student himself/herself subject to certain regulations on registration and assessment.
- 5.2.8 Subject to the maximum study load of 21 credits per semester and the availability of study places, students are allowed to take additional subjects on top of the prescribed credit requirement for award before they become eligible for graduation.
- 5.2.9 Students who wish to change their study status (e.g. from full-time to part-time or from part-time to full-time) or registration status (e.g. deferment of study or zero subject enrolment), will have to seek prior approval from the Department. As for non-local students, they will have to seek prior approval from both the Department and the Director of Immigration.

### **5.3 Normal Duration for Completion of a Programme (applicable to students admitted in or after 2020/21)**

- 5.3.1 Students should complete the programme within the normal duration of the programme as specified in the Programme Requirement Document. Those who exceed the normal duration of the programme will be de-registered from the programme unless prior approval has been obtained from relevant authorities. The study period of a student shall exclude deferment granted for justifiable reasons, and the semester(s) when the student has been approved to undertake internship. Any semester in which the students are allowed to take zero subject will be counted towards their total period of registration.
- 5.3.2 Students who have been registered for the normal duration of the programme may request extension of their studies for up to one year with the approval of the Head of Department. Applications for extension of study period beyond one year and up to two years will require the approval from Faculty Board.
- 5.3.3 For part-time Taught Postgraduate Programmes, The Head of Department may approve the extension of studies up to two years, and Faculty Board may approve the extension of studies beyond two years and up to four years.
- 5.3.4 Students who have exceeded the normal duration of the programme for more than two years (four years for part-time Taught Postgraduate Programmes) and

have been de-registered can submit an appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee to request further extension. If the appeal fails, the student shall be de-registered.

#### **5.4 Credit Transfer for Previous Study**

- 5.4.1 Students may be given credits for previous doctoral level studies that have or have not already contributed to an award, and for previous Master's level study that has not already contributed to an award.
- 5.4.2 Normally, not more than 50% of the required number of credits for the academic award requirement may be transferable from approved institutions outside the University.
- 5.4.3 For transfer of credits from programmes within the University, normally not more than 67% of the required credits for the award requirement of the Programme can be transferred.
- 5.4.4 In the cases where both types of credits are transferred (i.e., from programmes within the University and from approved institutions outside the University), not more than 50% of the required number of credits for the award requirement of the Programme may be transferred.
- 5.4.5 All credit transfers approved will take effect only in the semester for which they are approved. A student who applies for transfer of credits during the re-enrolment or add/drop period for a particular semester will only be eligible for graduation at the end of that semester, even if the granting of the credit transfer will immediately enable the student to satisfy the total credit requirement for the award.
- 5.4.6 The validity period of subjects earned is eight years from the year of attainment, i.e., the year in which the subject is completed. Credits earned from previous study should remain valid at the time when the student applies for credit transfer. For exceptional cases such as those stated in (i) to (iii) below, subject offering departments shall have the discretion to approve the transfer of credits which have exceeded the validity period on a case-by-case basis. All such exceptional cases must be reported to the Faculty Board with full justifications.

##### Exceptional cases

- (i) Mature learners whose previous studies were mostly completed a long time before their admission to this University, but who have working experience which would have kept them actively involved in the relevant area of study. The flexibility to be granted to these students based on academic comparability of subjects is in line with the policy of the university in promoting life-long learning.
- (ii) Students for whom the expiry of validity of credits is beyond their control such as medical reasons.
- (iii) Students have been approved for deferment of study, or approved for going beyond the maximum period of registration (applicable to students

admitted before 2020/21).

- 5.4.7 For credit transfer of retaken subjects, the grade attained in the last attempt should be taken in the case of credit transfer with grade being carried over. Students applying for credit transfer for a subject taken in other institutions are required to declare that the subject grade used for claiming credit transfer was attained in the last attempt of the subject in their previous studies. If a student fails in the last attempt of a retaken subject, no credit transfer should be granted, despite the fact that the student may have attained a pass grade for the subject in the earlier attempts.
- 5.4.8 Students should not be granted credit transfer for a subject which they have attempted and failed in their current study.

## **5.5 Subject Exemptions**

Students may be exempted from taking any specified subjects if they have successfully completed similar subjects previously in another programme. Subject exemption is normally decided by the Department. If students are exempted from taking a specified subject, the credits associated with the exempted subject will **not** be counted towards the award requirement. It will therefore be necessary for the students to take another subject in order to satisfy the award requirement for the Programme.

## **5.6 Zero Subject Enrolment**

- 5.6.1 Students will not be allowed to take zero subject in any semester unless they have obtained prior approval from the Department, otherwise they will be classified as having unofficially withdrawn from their study. Students who have been approved for zero subject enrolment (i.e., taking zero subject in a semester) are allowed to retain their student status and continue using campus facilities and library facilities.
- 5.6.2 All semesters in which the students are allowed to take zero subject will be counted towards the total period of registration. A fee for retention of study place will be charged.

## **5.7 Deferment of Study**

- 5.7.1 Students may apply for deferment of study if they have a genuine need to do so such as illness or posting to work outside Hong Kong. approval from the Head of the Department is required. The deferment period will not be counted towards the total period of registration.
- 5.7.2 Application for deferment of study from students who have not yet completed the first year of a full-time programme will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.
- 5.7.3 Application for deferment of study for the current academic year/semester must be submitted before the commencement of PolyU's scheduled examination period. Applications submitted after the commencement of the examination period will not be processed. For deferment of study for the following academic year/semester, application should be submitted before the

commencement of that academic year/semester and application will only be considered after finalization of examination result of the current semester.

5.7.4 Where the period of deferment of study begins during a stage for which fees have been paid, no refund of such fees will be made.

5.7.5 Students who have been approved for deferment are not entitled to enjoy any campus facilities during the deferment period.

## **5.8 Withdrawal from a subject**

5.8.1 Students may apply for withdrawal of their registration on a subject after the add/drop period if they have a genuine need to do so. The application should be made to the Department and will require the approval of both the subject teacher and the Programme Leader concerned. Applications submitted after the commencement of the examination period will not be considered.

5.8.2 For approved cases, a handling fee will be charged. The tuition fee paid for the withdrawn subject will be forfeited. The withdrawal subject will be shown reported in the Assessment Result Notification and Transcript of Studies although they will not be counted in the GPA calculation.

## **6. Teaching and Learning**

### **6.1 Mode of Study**

A student progresses by accumulating credits for each subject passed. The syllabus and level of treatment for all subjects in the Programme is at doctoral level. Each subject offered is subject to a process of review and validation, which strives for a standard of excellence in terms of subject contents, professional qualification of the lecturers, and teaching and learning approaches. The effort required of a DSW student on one subject (3-credit) is equivalent to a total of 105-135 hours. Most of the subjects are offered in the evenings and weekends.

### **6.2 Teaching and Learning Strategies**

#### **6.2.1 Integrative Epistemological Stance --“Practitioner-Researcher-Educator” in Social Work**

In the DSW programme, we advocate an integrative stance of epistemology. In the profession, the three roles of “practitioner”, “researcher”, and “educator”, should not be separated, but should underpin and enrich each other. A social worker, regardless of whether he/she is working in a human service organization or teaching in a university, should possess the qualities of reflective practice, action research, and lifelong learning.

The DSW programme aims to uphold and upgrade the capacities of students in these three roles as an integrated whole. This explains why the DSW programme requires applicants to have at least five years of working experience. The programme wishes to emphasize practice-related reflection, exploration, and to provide an educational vision in both university and agency contexts (shown in [Diagram 1](#)).

For the teaching & learning strategies of DSW programme, please refer to [Appendix III](#).

#### **6.2.2 International and Local Dialogues: International Network of Doctoral Social Work Education**

The DSW programme is not only an educational programme, it is also an international platform for teachers, students, practitioners, and researchers to have professional exchanges around critical issues.

We have invited the faculty of the following universities to join the network as our academic partners:

Department of Social & Policy Sciences  
University of Bath  
United Kingdom

The School of Social Work  
University of British Columbia  
Canada

Sociology Department  
Peking University  
China

School of Social Work and Human Services  
University of Queensland  
Australia

Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work  
University of Toronto  
Canada

George Warren Brown School of Social Work  
Washington University in St. Louis  
United States

The faculty members of the above top schools of social work in the world are ready to serve as subject teachers, external mentors, or thesis supervisors for our DSW students. Our students may also visit their campuses and stay there as exchange students. At the same time, their doctoral students are welcome to join the classes and workshops in the DSW programme. This international network of doctoral social work will be a valuable forum for social work as an international profession. It will also provide opportunities to explore indigenous role in Asian cultures and contexts.

#### 6.2.3 Intensive Interaction between Teachers and Students - Guided Study and Professional Mentorship

In the DSW curriculum, the guided study (3 credits) provides an opportunity for the student to propose a topic of interest related to social work research or practice. Under the teacher's guidance, the student will have to complete the guided study before he/she starts the DSW thesis.

In the first year, a local mentor from the teaching faculty of APSS will be matched with the student based on the student's learning needs and research interests. The student will have personal tutorials with the local mentor. In the second year, an external mentor from the academic partners will also be matched on a need based. The student may have on-line communication with the external mentor. The student is also encouraged to visit the university where the mentor is working. Both the local and external mentors will share their values, knowledge, and skills with the student.

#### 6.2.4 Contextual Social Work Education - Case Studies Approach

As the DSW students are well-experienced practitioners, administrator, researchers, or educators in the profession from different communities, they will be expected to bring the experiences from their own practice settings and practice contexts to share with others. Real life cases in policy, administration, and direct practice in social work will be discussed and analyzed in classes, seminars, and workshops. The cases can be generated from subject teachers, local case materials, international case materials, universities as academic partners, and also from DSW students. Both teachers and students are encouraged to write up their own practice cases for sharing and these will become an asset of the DSW programme.

## **7. Assessment**

### **7.1 Award**

The degree of Doctor of Social Work (DSW) will be awarded to successful candidates without classification or division.

### **7.2 Examination Rules and Procedures**

Examination rules and procedures for the coursework component follow the University practice governing taught programmes.

### **7.3 Procedures to be followed in the Coursework Component**

#### **7.3.1 Purposes of Assessment**

Assessment in this programme serves two main purposes. The first concerns facilitating students to meet course objectives, and the second with evaluating the curriculum in action. The processes of assessment, with the participation of the students and the teachers, help both parties to:

- (i) identify the student's strengths and weaknesses;
- (ii) place the student in the most beneficial educational situation;
- (iii) assess the extent to which the student has benefited from the programme;
- (iv) improve the student's academic performance in the interim period;
- (v) predict the student's academic performance at the end of semester; and
- (vi) monitor the effectiveness of teaching methods.

#### **7.3.2 Assessment Strategies**

The performance of a student is assessed in most subjects by means of continuous assessment. Continuous assessment has been chosen for most subjects partly to give recognition to the persistent efforts put in by students, and partly because of the conviction that the various components in continuous assessment should help to test and develop student abilities more comprehensively. A variety of assessment strategies will be used. For details, please refer to [Appendix IV](#).

### **7.4 Progression**

7.4.1 The Board of Examiners shall, at the end of each semester, determine whether each student is

- (i) eligible for progression towards the award; or
- (ii) eligible for the award; or

- (iii) required to be de-registered from the programme.

When a student has a Grade Point Average (GPA) lower than 1.70, he/she will be put on academic probation in the following semester. If a student is able to pull the GPA up to 1.70 or above at the end of the semester, the status of “academic probation” will be lifted. The status of “academic probation” will be reflected in the examination result notification but not in the transcript of studies.

- 7.4.2 To help improve the academic performance of students on academic probation, these students will be required to take a reduced study load. The maximum number of credits to be taken by the students will be set on student-specific and subject to the approval of the Programme Leader.
- 7.4.3 A student will have ‘progressing’ status unless s/he falls within any one of the following categories which shall be regarded as grounds for deregistration from the programme:
  - (i) the student has reached the final year of the normal period of registration for the programme, unless approval has been given for extension; or
  - (ii) the student has reached the maximum number of retakes allowed for failed compulsory subject; or
  - (iii) the student’s GPA is lower than 1.70 for two consecutive semesters and his/her Semester GPA in the second semester is also lower than 1.70; or
  - (iv) the student’s GPA is lower than 1.70 for three consecutive semesters.

When a student falls within any of the categories as stipulated above, except category (i) with approval for extension, the Board of Examiners shall de-register the student from the programme without exception.

- 7.4.4 A student may be de-registered from the programme enrolled before the time frame specified in Sections 7.4.3 (iii) or 7.4.3 (iv) above if his/her academic performance is poor to the extent that the Board of Examiners deems that his/her possibility of attaining a GPA of 1.70 at the end of the programme is slim or impossible.
- 7.4.5 If the student is not satisfied with the de-registration decision of the Board of Examiners, he/she can lodge an appeal. All such appeal cases will be referred directly to Academic Appeals Committee (AAC) for final decision. Views of Faculties/ Departments will be sought and made available to AAC for reference.

## **7.5 Recording of Disciplinary Actions in Students’ Records**

- 7.5.1 With effect from Semester One of 2015/16, disciplinary actions against students’ misconducts will be recorded in students’ records.

- 7.5.2 Students who are found guilty of academic dishonesty will be subject to the penalty of having the subject result concerned disqualified and be given a failure grade with a remark denoting ‘Disqualification of result due to academic dishonesty’. The remark will be shown in the students’ record as well as the assessment result notification and transcript of studies, until their leaving the University.
- 7.5.3 Students who have committed disciplinary offences (covering both academic and non-academic related matters) will be put on ‘disciplinary probation’. The status of ‘disciplinary probation’ will be shown in the students’ record as well as the assessment result notification, transcript of studies and testimonial during the probation period, until their leaving the University. The disciplinary probation is normally one year unless otherwise decided by the Student Discipline Committee.
- 7.5.4 The University reserves the right to withhold the issuance of any certificate of study to a student who has unsettled matters with the University, or subject to disciplinary action.

## **7.6 Plagiarism and Online Tutorial on Academic Integrity**

- 7.6.1 The University views plagiarism, whether committed intentionally or because of ignorance or negligence, as a serious disciplinary offence. Excuses such as “not knowing that this is required” or “not knowing how to do it” are not accepted. It is the student’s responsibility to understand what plagiarism is, and take action steps to avoid plagiarism in their academic work. The golden rule is: “if in doubt, acknowledge”.
- 7.6.2 Students are required to submit their original work and avoid any possible suggestion of plagiarism in the work they submit for grading or credit.
- 7.6.3 To help students understand the importance of academic honesty and learn ways to ensure that their work and behaviour at PolyU are acceptable in this regard, students are required to complete the Online Tutorial on Academic Integrity before the end of week 5 in the first-year first-semester (see [Appendix V](#) for details of the Online Tutorial on Academic Integrity).
- 7.6.4 The Online Tutorial on Academic Integrity forms part of the programme graduation requirements.

## **7.7 Retaking of Subjects**

- 7.7.1 Students may only retake a subject which they have failed (i.e. Grade F or U). Retaking of subjects is with the condition that the maximum study load of 21 credits per semester is not exceeded.
- 7.7.2 The number of retakes of a subject should be restricted to two, i.e. a maximum of three attempts for each subject is allowed.
- 7.7.3 In cases where a student takes another subject to replace a failed elective

subject, the fail grade will be taken into account in the calculation of the GPA, despite the passing of the replacement subject.

7.7.4 Students need to submit a request to the Faculty Board for the second retake of a failed subject.

7.7.5 Students who have failed a compulsory subject after two retakes and have been de-registered can submit an appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee (AAC) for a third for a third chance of retaking the subject.

7.7.6 In relation to 7.6.5 above, in case AAC does not approve further retake of a failed compulsory subject or the retake of an equivalent subject with special approval from the Faculty, the student concerned would be de-registered and the decision of the AAC shall be final within the University.

## 7.8 Exceptional Circumstances

7.8.1 Absence from an assessment component

If a student is unable to complete all the assessment components of a subject due to illness or other circumstances beyond his/her control, and which are considered by the Subject Assessment Review Panel as legitimate, the Panel will determine whether the student will have to complete the assessment and, if so, by what means. This late assessment shall take place at the earliest opportunity, and before the commencement of the following academic year. In the case of assessments required to be completed after the Summer Term, the assessment may take place within 3 weeks following the finalisation of Summer Term results.

## 7.9 Grading

7.9.1 Assessment grades shall be awarded on a criterion-referenced basis. A student's overall performance in a subject shall be graded as follows from 2020/21 onwards:

<i>Subject grade</i>	<i>Short description</i>	<i>Elaboration on subject grading description</i>
A+ A A-	Excellent	Demonstrates excellent achievement of intended subject learning outcomes by being able to skillfully use concepts and solve complex problems. Shows evidence of innovative and critical thinking in unfamiliar situations, and is able to express the synthesis or application of ideas in a logical and comprehensive manner.
B+ B B-	Good	Demonstrates good achievement of intended subject learning outcomes by being able to use appropriate concepts and solve problems. Shows the ability to analyse issues critically and make well-grounded judgements in familiar or standard situations, and is able to express the synthesis or application of ideas in a logical and comprehensive manner.

<i>Subject grade</i>	<i>Short description</i>	<i>Elaboration on subject grading description</i>
C+ C C-	Satisfactory	Demonstrates satisfactory achievement of intended subject learning outcomes by being able to solve relatively simple problems. Shows some capacity for analysis and making judgements in a variety of familiar and standard situations, and is able to express the synthesis or application of ideas in a manner that is generally logical but fragmented.
D+ D	Pass	Demonstrates marginal achievement of intended subject learning outcomes by being able to solve relatively simple problems. Can make basic comparisons, connections and judgments and express the ideas learnt in the subject, though there are frequent breakdowns in logic and clarity.
F	Fail	Demonstrates inadequate achievement of intended subject learning outcomes through a lack of knowledge and/or understanding of the subject matter. Evidence of analysis is often irrelevant or incomplete.

'F' is a subject failure grade and all others ('D' to 'A +') are subject passing grades. No credit will be earned if a subject is failed.

Notes:

- Marking rubrics aligned with these Grade Descriptors need not include all aspects of the grade descriptor.
- Marking rubrics aligned with these Grade Descriptors may include other aspects aligned with particular subject matter or field of study requirements but are not included in the grade descriptor.

#### Indicative descriptors for modifier grades

Main Grade (solid)	The student generally performed at this level, indicating mastery of the subject intended learning outcomes at this level.
+ (exemplary)	The student consistently performed at this level and exceeded the expectations of this level in some regards, but not enough to claim mastery at the next level.
- (marginal)	The student basically performed at this level, but the performance was inconsistent or fell slightly short in some regards.

Note: The above indicative descriptors for modifier grades are not applicable to the pass grades D and D+

7.9.2 A numeral grade point is assigned to each subject grade. The grade points assigned to subject grades attained by students from 2020/21 are as follows:

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Grade Point for grades attained from 2020/21</i>
A+	4.3
A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3.0
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2.0
C-	1.7
D+	1.3
D	1.0
F	0.0

## 7.10 Grade Point Average (GPA)

7.10.1 At the end of each semester/term, a Grade Point Average (GPA) will be computed as follows, and based on the grade point of all the subjects:

$$GPA = \frac{\sum_n \text{Subject Grade Point} \times \text{Subject Credit Value}}{\sum_n \text{Subject Credit Value}}$$

where n = number of all subjects (inclusive of failed subjects) taken by the student up to and including the latest semester/term, but for subjects which have been retaken, only the grade point obtained in the final attempt will be included in the GPA calculation

7.10.2 In addition, the following subjects will be excluded from the GPA calculation:

- (i) Exempted subjects
- (ii) Ungraded subjects
- (iii) Incomplete subjects
- (iv) Subjects for which credit transfer has been approved without any grade assigned
- (v) Subjects from which a student has been allowed to withdraw (i.e. those with the grade 'W')

7.10.3 The GPA is the unweighted cumulative average calculated for a student for all relevant subjects taken from the start of the programme to a particular reference point of time. GPA is an indicator of overall performance and ranges from 0.00 to 4.30 from 2020/21.

7.10.4 If a student attempts more elective subjects (or optional subjects) than those required for graduation in or before the semester in which he becomes eligible for award, the elective subjects (or optional subjects) with a higher grade/contribution shall be included in the grade point calculation (i.e., the

excessive subjects attempted with a lower grade/contribution, including failed subjects, will be excluded).

## **7.11 Eligibility for Award**

7.11.1 A student will be eligible for award if he/she satisfies all the conditions listed below:

- (i) Accumulation of 48 credits for the DSW award, as defined in the programme requirement document;
- (ii) Satisfying all the 'core', 'compulsory' and 'elective' requirements as defined in the programme requirement document;
- (iii) Having a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.7 at the end of the programme.
- (iv) Completing the Online Tutorial on Academic Integrity and obtain a satisfactory score (over 75%).

7.11.2 As stated in Section 4.2.3, subject to the approval of Programme Leader, a student who fails the assessment of the thesis proposal may be given an option to choose the MASW(Research Studies) exit option, he/she will be eligible for this award if he/she satisfies all the conditions shown below:

- (i) Accumulation of 30 credits for the MASW award, as defined in the programme requirement document;
- (ii) Satisfying all the 'core', 'compulsory' and 'elective' requirements as defined in the programme requirement document;
- (iii) Having a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 1.7 at the end of the programme.

7.11.3 For both the DSW and MASW(Research Studies) awards, a student must satisfy the residential requirement whereby he/she must complete at least 1/3 of the normal credit requirement for the award he/she is currently enrolled, unless the professional bodies stipulate otherwise.

7.11.4 The University reserves the right to withhold the issuance of an award parchment to a student who has unsettled matters with the University, or subject to disciplinary action.

## **7.12 Role of Subject Assessment Review Panel**

7.12.1 Subject Assessment Review Panel (SARP) is responsible for monitoring the academic standard and quality of subjects and ratifying of subject grades. The Panel will review the distribution of grades within a subject and finalize the grades at the end of each semester/term before submission to the Board of Examiners, if appropriate.

7.12.2 SARP shall include the Head of the Department offering the subjects (as

Chairperson), the Chair of Departmental Learning and Teaching Committee, the relevant Subject Panel Chairperson, and where appropriate, the Internal Subject Examiners and the Programme Leader.

7.12.3 The Chairman will take Chairman's action in most straightforward cases. To speed up the process, subject examiners will only be involved in problematic cases.

### **7.13 Role of Board of Examiners**

7.13.1 The major role of the Board of Examiners (BoE) is maintaining programme standards.

7.13.2 The Board will have to meet at the end of each semester and is responsible to the Senate for making decisions on:

- (i) straight forward progression and deregistration cases
- (ii) the classification of awards to be granted to each student on completion of the programme
- (iii) cases with extenuating circumstances

7.13.3 This Board will not attempt to change grades for any student in any subject nor condone failures. The above decisions of the BoE, except those on straight forward progression and deregistration cases, shall be ratified by the Faculty Board. The Faculty Board may refer the decisions back to the BoE for further consideration and explanation.

7.13.4 The composition and membership of a BoE shall be approved by the Faculty Dean. The Head is to be the BoE Chairperson. The minimum number of a BoE's membership (including the Chairperson, but excluding the Secretary) should be five, and it should be composed of subject teachers of the DSW programme and some other senior staff members.

### **7.14 Role of Faculty Board**

7.14.1 The Faculty Board will ratify the decisions made by the BoE without duplicating the effort of the latter. It should deal with individual cases outside programme regulations but within the general assessment regulations of the University.

7.14.2 For cases outside the provision of programme requirements and University regulations, the decisions of the Faculty Board (in accordance with the existing terms of reference) will be referred to the Academic Planning and Regulations Committee for ratification.

7.14.3 The Faculty Board should be presented with statistical information on student performance in each programme.

### **7.15 Procedures for assessment of the thesis**

7.15.1 Thesis Submission

If the supervisor agrees that the thesis is ready for submission, the student must submit a Thesis Submission Form and electronic copy (in pdf format) of the thesis together with the originality report generated by Turnitin for plagiarism check and output of the thesis (e.g. refereed journal articles, conference presentations, publications/books, chapters in books). Students can refer to the “Thesis Handbook” for details.

#### 7.15.2 Assessment Panel

(i) Internal Examiners:

The Chair of the Panel shall be appointed by the Thesis Committee. They shall be at Associate Professorial level or above, or the equivalent. The Chief Supervisor shall be a member of the Panel but shall not be the Chair of the Panel.

(ii) External Examiners:

There shall be two external examiners who are not members of the University, and at least one should already be based in Hong Kong. The two external examiners will be nominated by the supervisor with the endorsement of the Chair of the Assessment Panel. The nomination is subject to the approval of the Thesis Committee. Both external examiners should normally be at the Associate Professorial level or above, or the equivalent. External examiners should have appropriate expertise related to the research programme, should not have acted previously as the student’s supervisor, and should be in a position to be impartial. In cases where appropriate expertise is not available at the levels of seniority as specified, then an examiner at a lower level may be appointed provided that he/she has an appropriate scholarly record of distinction in the relevant field.

#### 7.15.3 Assessment of Thesis

- (i) The thesis submitted and the output shall be read by the Chair of the Assessment Panel who shall decide whether the thesis should be sent out to the external examiners.
- (ii) The Chair of Assessment Panel may require the student to revise and resubmit the thesis before it is considered acceptable to be sent out to the external examiners. The student is limited to two sets of revisions and a maximum of six months shall be allowed each time for each set.
- (iii) In the event that the Chair of the Assessment Panel finds the thesis unacceptable for release to the external examiners after two sets of revisions, the thesis shall be read by the external examiners nevertheless.
- (iv) The oral examination is compulsory. The Assessment Panel shall decide whether any additional form of examination is necessary.

#### 7.15.4 The Assessment Panel, following reading of the thesis, shall recommend

- (i) that the thesis forms an adequate basis for an oral examination (and other examinations as required); or
- (ii) that the thesis be revised once within twelve months and resubmitted for the oral examination (and other examinations as required); or
- (iii) that the thesis be deemed unsatisfactory, no resubmission be permitted, and that the student fail.

7.15.5 It is a requirement that the thesis should be of a standard worthy of publication in a peer-reviewed professional outlet in the form of articles in refereed journals, conference presentations, publications/books, and/or chapters in books. If the thesis output has not been accepted in any peer-reviewed professional outlet, the Assessment Panel will also assess whether the output of the thesis is to the standard required for publication in a peer-reviewed professional outlet. Although the Assessment Panel would normally decide by consensus, there is provision for individual members, who hold a different view, to make a submission to the Thesis Committee, which can then make a final decision, taking into account the views expressed.

7.15.6 Following the oral examination, the Assessment Panel shall recommend to the Board of Examiners:

- (i) that the student be awarded the degree of DSW; or
- (ii) that the student be awarded the degree of DSW subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis or an additional assignment being completed to the satisfaction of the Chair of the Assessment Panel or his/her nominee by a specified date but normally within a period not longer than 12 weeks; or
- (iii) that the student revise and resubmit the thesis and/or that another oral examination and/or other form of examination be required. The student is limited to one opportunity of reexamination within 12 months; or
- (iv) that the thesis be deemed unsatisfactory, no resubmission be permitted, and that the student fail.

7.15.7 If there is no consensus view among members of the Assessment Panel after the oral examination or re-examination, the Chairman of the Panel shall present the case to the DSW Programme Committee, which shall make a final decision.

## **7.16 Withdrawal before Completion and Failure**

A student who withdraws before completion, or, who fails it, but has fulfilled the 24 credits coursework requirement and passed the assessment of the thesis proposal (6 credits) may be considered for the exit award of MASW (Research Studies), subject to the decision of the Board of Examiners. The exit award shall not be classified.

**7.17 Appeal**

Appeals will be handled in accordance with Academic Regulations and Procedures.

Note: Students should read the above regulations together with the academic and assessment regulations of the University as detailed in the Student Handbook and on the student intranet.

## **8. Programme Operation and Management**

### **8.1 Programme Operation**

The day-to-day operations, quality assurance and improvement of the DSW Programme will be maintained at all levels, capitalizing on the infrastructure of the quality assurance mechanism set up within the Department and the University. The DSW programme will be monitored at both the subject and programme level. At the subject level, each subject leader will be responsible for facilitating effective quality learning. Different communication channels, including student/staff informal consultative groups and student feedback questionnaires, will be used to solicit feedback and opinions from students/staff to continuously improve subject delivery.

At the programme level, the DSW Programme Executive Group will be set up to monitor operations. The Chair of the DSW Programme Executive Group reports to the Postgraduate Programme Committee (PPC) and then to the Departmental Learning and Teaching Committee (DLTC). At the departmental level, APSS is responsible to the Faculty Board which will be accountable to the Quality Assurance Committee at the policy-making level of the University.

### **8.2 Membership Composition of the Programme Executive Group**

The programme will operate under the direction of a Programme Executive Group, following normal University procedures.

The Group should be organized by the Programme Leader and typically include the Assistant Programme Leader and staff with key programme responsibilities.

### **8.3 Programme Leader and Assistant Programme Leader**

The Programme Leader and Assistant Programme Leader are responsible for overseeing and coordinating all matters relating to issues of teaching and learning in the programme, including complaints and feedback on quality of teaching, timing of assignments, resources, workloads and learning outcomes. They are also expected to keep close contact with students and act as a bridge between the department and students.

The Programme Leader in this current academic year 2020/21 is Dr Ku Hok Bun, Ben. His contact details are as follows:

Office: GH420

Contact number: 2766 4553

E-mail: [hok.bun.hk@polyu.edu.hk](mailto:hok.bun.hk@polyu.edu.hk)

The Assistant Programme Leader for this academic year is Dr Leung Tsin Yee, Janet. Her contact details are as follows:

Office: GH408

Contact number: 2766 7944

E-mail: [janet.leung@polyu.edu.hk](mailto:janet.leung@polyu.edu.hk)

## 8.4 Academic Counselling Team

The Academic Counselling Team, comprising of the Programme Leader and Assistant Programme Leader as front-line advisors to students, are responsible for providing students with relevant and current information about curriculum and programme requirements, advising students of the suitable combination of subjects before subject registration in each semester, giving academic advice to students related to their studies, assisting students in solving problems encountered in their studies, and referring students to other helping resources for further information.

## 8.5 Programme Administration Team

The Programme Administration Team is responsible for matters relating to course administration, such as credit transfer, deferment and problems in registration.

Ms Angel Shing  
Executive Officer  
Contact number: 2766 4315  
Office: HJ402  
E-mail: [angel.shing@polyu.edu.hk](mailto:angel.shing@polyu.edu.hk)

Mr Ken Wan  
Clerical Officer  
Contact number: 2766 5784  
Office: HJ402  
E-mail: [ken.wan@polyu.edu.hk](mailto:ken.wan@polyu.edu.hk)

## 8.6 Student/Staff Consultative Group

8.6.1 It is important that there are adequate and effective opportunities for discussion of the programme between students and staff, in a context which allows wide student participation. The nature and extent of student interaction and feedback is one of the issues covered in the annual programme report and the programme review report, to be considered in a Departmental Review exercise.

8.6.2 A mechanism should be established to provide a formal channel through which student views can be obtained. This may be by means of a Student/Staff Consultative Group (SSCG). In this connection, Departments are required to set up a SSCG for all taught postgraduate programmes, and to use it as the formal channel for soliciting student feedback. Departments may decide to set up the SSCG on departmental, programme, scheme or subject basis (in the case of servicing Departments). The SSCG must meet at least once per semester, and the report of SSCG will need to be included in the annual programme review documents.

8.6.3 The Departmental Programme Committee should consider whether to use other means of collecting student feedback, in addition to the SSCG.

8.6.4 It is suggested, as general guidelines, that the Group should have equal numbers of students and staff, that student membership should include all years of study under the normal progression pattern and other major student groupings, and that staff membership should cover all the main subject areas and activities of the programme. A member of staff may chair the Group and a student act as the secretary. The Group should meet whenever felt necessary by its members.

## **8.7 Quality Assurance Mechanism**

There is a rigorous quality assurance mechanism, Departmental Learning and Teaching Committee (DLTC) for quality education in curriculum design, pedagogical design, implementation of quality teaching, outcome assessment and resource allocation in the programme.

## **8.8 Curriculum Design**

The Postgraduate Programme Committee and the Programme Management Group are the main venues for constantly updating syllabus, making proposal for curriculum changes. Endorsed changes in curriculum are further discussed and sanctioned in the Departmental Learning and Teaching Committee.

## **8.9 Pedagogical Design**

The pedagogical design had been carefully debated in the validation process taking into the consideration of the learning needs of post-graduate students. The Postgraduate Programme Committee and the Programme Management Group are the venue where revision and changes are discussed and decided on thereafter. Endorsed changes in pedagogical design of any subjects are further discussed and sanctioned in the Departmental Learning and Teaching Committee.

## **8.10 Implementation of Quality Teaching**

Each subject teacher follows the Subject Description Form and makes appropriate modification based on experience and feedback from students and Internal Examiners. The Programme Leader is responsible to liaise with the subject teachers teaching subjects in that Programme. The Integrative Project Coordinator is responsible in monitoring the research projects. Meetings are held to deal with matching of supervisors, accepting research project proposals for registration and monitoring of students' progress in different stages of research project.

## **8.11 Outcome Assessment**

The outcome is first reflected by the assessment results of students which are carefully monitored by the Board of Examiners. Students' feedback will be collected through various channels such as 'Student Feedback Questionnaires' and discussion sessions with students/graduates. Informal discussion between students and the Chair of Postgraduate Programme Committee and Programme Leader also provide feedback on the quality of teaching as perceived by the students.

## **8.12 Resource Allocation**

The Head of Department decides on the allocation of resources in terms of teaching manpower, staff development resources and administrative support in consultation with the Programme Leader. The Head of Department, the Chair of Departmental Learning and Teaching Committee, the Chair of Postgraduate Programme Committee, and the Programme Leader keep looking at how such resources are utilized.

## 9. Other Important Information

### a. Communication Channel

- **PolyU Connect email account:** The PolyU Connect account is for life time use which can be retained after graduation. It is also the main communication channel between the University and Students. See <http://www.polyu.edu.hk/connect>
- **eStudent:** Students can access to the various study-related matters provided by the Academic Secretariat via the eStudent including the information for Subject Registration Exercise, Academic Calendar and Application forms for Study Related Changes. Notices on important upcoming activities related to study will also be posted on this page. See <http://www.polyu.edu.hk/student>
- **Student Handbook:** It contains essential information concerning general academic matters, general regulations and procedures, services and facilities for students and various communication channels. This is accessible from eStudent or at the University Portal.

### b. Plagiarism and How to Avoid It

- **Student Handbook** (see *Academic Studies* in the *Regulations and Rules* section) <http://www.polyu.edu.hk/ar/>
- The **Online Tutorial on Academic Integrity** has been developed to help you understand the importance of honest behaviours in academic pursuits and how to avoid plagiarism in your work. It is available at LEARN@PolyU (理學網). For more information on the Online Tutorial, refer to the *Online Tutorial on Academic Integrity: A Student Guide*.  
[https://www.polyu.edu.hk/ogur/academic\\_integrity/Student\\_Guide.pdf](https://www.polyu.edu.hk/ogur/academic_integrity/Student_Guide.pdf)
- *The English Language Centre (ELC) in A core provides resources and services.*
  - The Centre for Independent Language Learning (CILL) provides information about in-text referencing, quoting, summarising, paraphrasing, and how to write a bibliography: <http://elc.polyu.edu.hk/CILL/reference.aspx>. Also read “English for Academic Purposes” (book available in CILL) for advice and examples.
  - The Referencing Guides provide detailed explanations on citation mechanics of different referencing styles as well as examples on referring to different types of sources: <http://elc.polyu.edu.hk/referencing/>
  - The Reference Machine formats references for you: <http://elc.polyu.edu.hk/CILL/referenceMachine.aspx>
  - The Writing Assistance Programme offers individual help with your writing: <http://elc.polyu.edu.hk/WAP/>
- **The Pao Yue-kong Library** offers workshops, online programmes and facilities for students:
  1. Workshops:
    - Citing References and Avoiding Plagiarism (LS039)
    - Using EndNote workshops (LS056, LS057)

<https://www.lib.polyu.edu.hk/workshops>

## II. Citation Guides: by Subjects

- A useful guide to refer to before students start their assignments and research work. The guide provides a list of citation styles used in different subject areas.

<http://libguides.lb.polyu.edu.hk/citation-subject>

## III. Online Information Literacy Programme: **InfoLit for U MOOC**

- Learn what is plagiarism, how plagiarism is detected, and tips to avoid plagiarism.

<https://www.lib.polyu.edu.hk/literacy/avoid-plagiarism>

(Login KEEP with your university account)

## IV. Reference management tool EndNote – it could help you manage your citations.

- You can find more information on using EndNote from the Library website:

<http://www.lib.polyu.edu.hk/research-support/tools/ref-management-tools>

### c. **Ethical Clearance to Research involving Human Subjects**

It is a requirement for all research projects involving human subjects be reviewed for ethical appropriateness in accordance with the guidelines of the Human Subjects Ethics Sub-committee (HSESC). Human Ethics Approval **MUST** be sought before the fieldwork could be commenced. For details of the guidelines and application procedures, please access <http://www.polyu.edu.hk/hsesc/index.html>. For application, please login the Human Subjects Ethics Application Review System (HSEARS) at <http://www.polyu.edu.hk/ro/rohsears>.

### d. **Student Resources & Support**

- Visit the Student Resources and Support Section (SRSS) of Student Affairs Office (SAO) for **non-local student services** and **special needs support**.

<https://www.polyu.edu.hk/sao/srss/non-local-student-services/introduction/>

- See Important Notes for Non-local Students at Section 10 of the Student Handbook.

### e. **Policy on Assessment**

The University has adopted criterion-referenced assessment associated with outcome-based approach in all curriculum design and student assessment. See <http://www.polyu.edu.hk/obe/GuideOBE/GuidelinesforImplementationOnCriterionReferencedAssessment.pdf>

### f. **Appeal against Assessment Results**

Details of the procedures and grounds for appeal against de-registration decisions and appeals against decisions other than de-registration are accessible from Section 5-I of the Student Handbook.

**g. Policy on Sexual Harassment**

<https://www.polyu.edu.hk/about-polyu/general-information/policy-on-sexual-harassment/>

**h. Emergency Service**

○ *Emergency Care*

During office hours:

Call UHS at 2766 5433 for advice; OR  
Call FMO Security control at 2766 7999; OR  
Dial 999 for serious conditions without  
delay

After office hours:

Call FMO Security control at  
2766 7999; OR  
Dial 999 for serious conditions  
without delay

○ *Emergency Procedure at Campus*

<https://www.polyu.edu.hk/fmo/en/services/security/emergency-management/>

**i. Counselling Service**

<https://www.polyu.edu.hk/sao/cws/>

## Appendix I: Mapping of Subjects and Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcomes of the Programme	Required Subjects					Elective Subjects						Compulsory Subjects				
	APSS611	APSS6321	APSS6322	APSS6301	APSS6311	APSS615	APSS616	APSS617	APSS618	APSS620	APSS6324	APSS6221	APSS6222	APSS6223	APSS627	APSS6807
1. Theory and practice integration in social work	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Dialogue between international perspective and local context of social work practice		✓				✓		✓	✓						✓	✓
3. Integration between professional values and personal commitment in the role of a “practitioner-researcher-educator”	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4. Integration between individual concerns and societal consideration in social work practice	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

## Appendix II: Curriculum Map

This curriculum map gives a holistic view of the degree to which each intended learning outcome will be taught and assessed in the Doctor of Social Work programme.

**The following indicators (I, R, A) show the treatment of the programme outcome in a subject:**

I (Introduced) That the learning leading to the particular intended outcome is introduced in that subject.

R (Reinforced) That the learning leading to the particular intended outcome is reinforced in that subject.

A (Assessed) That the performance which demonstrates the particular intended outcome is assessed in that subject.

Programme Learning Outcomes	Required Subjects					Elective Subjects						Compulsory Subjects				
	APSS611	APSS6321	APSS6322	APSS6301	APSS6311	APSS615	APSS616	APSS617	APSS618	APSS520	APSS6324	APSS6221	APSS6222	APSS6223	APSS627	APSS6807
1. Theory and practice integration in social work	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A
2. Dialogue between international perspective and local context of social work practice		I/R/A				I/R/A		I/R/A	I/R/A						I/R/A	I/R/A
3. Integration between professional values and personal commitment in the role of a “practitioner-researcher-educator”	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A		I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A
4. Integration between individual concerns and societal consideration in social work practice	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A	I/R/A

### Appendix III: Teaching and Learning Strategies

Teaching & Learning Strategies	Special Features
1. Interactive lecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Interaction between teacher and students and among students.</li> <li>❖ Foster deeper processing of content through dialogical discussion.</li> </ul>
2. Small group seminar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Tutorial is used to bring about deeper understanding and further exploration of the concepts, theories and principles being touched upon in lectures.</li> <li>❖ It is also used to enable students to actively participate in the exploration of some given topics through presentation and leading of group discussion.</li> </ul>
3. Problem-based learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ This strategy invites students to identify real life practice problems, to examine the various issues arising and explore their own responses.</li> <li>❖ Students are also invited to undertake investigations and explorations that lead to the learning of substantive knowledge, practice skills and reflective thinking of moral and ethical stances.</li> <li>❖ Students take up the active learning role whereas the teachers' role is mainly supportive.</li> </ul>
4. Case studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Students are provided with a professional practice situation prior to encountering real-life situations as a means of ensuring students' readiness.</li> <li>❖ Going through these practice scenarios, students are invited to formulate solutions to practice problems and to come up with possible intervention strategies.</li> </ul>
5. Role Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Students are invited to play a certain role in a simulated scenario as a way of experiencing, or effectively tuning in to that role as a means to obtain some first hand experiences.</li> <li>❖ Other students are invited to be the observers whose role is to analyse or even evaluate the simulated practice in the role play.</li> <li>❖ Although the teachers' role is facilitative, pre-planning is necessary to make the exercise conducive to learning.</li> </ul>
6. Experiential learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Since students' different backgrounds and learning styles, will be taken into consideration, each of them may have a different starting point in the Four-stage Experiential Learning Cycle.</li> <li>❖ Irrespective of the starting points, students are invited to make links between the 'thinking' and the 'doing' in the teaching and learning of professional practice.</li> </ul>
7. Skills laboratory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Students are invited to practice the skills necessary for carrying out the practical activities in a laboratory setting.</li> <li>❖ This mode of teaching and learning is mostly designed for subjects that have substantive practice components.</li> </ul>
8. Field visits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ This is a component in the professional education programme in APSS.</li> <li>❖ Through field visits, students get to understand the real life situation of social problems and people.</li> </ul>

<b>Teaching &amp; Learning Strategies</b>	<b>Special Features</b>
9. Web-based learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ The use of information technology and e-learning platform can provide a range of possible learning experiences that supplement the face-to-face classroom teaching and learning.</li> <li>❖ Depending on the nature of the subject and the desirable mode of teaching and learning, some subject teachers opt for the e-learning mode, which ranges from the simple email questions and answers to online forums, and to highly sophisticated simulation exercises or self-administered tests.</li> </ul>

## Appendix IV: Special Features of the Assessment Methods

Methods of Assessment	Special Features
1. Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Students are given factual information/description of a problem or situation and are asked to conduct an analysis followed by the formulation of an intervention plan.</li> <li>❖ This method is commonly used in subjects that are practice-oriented.</li> </ul>
2. Term paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ This is commonly used by many subject teachers and both structured and unstructured questions are given.</li> <li>❖ In most term papers, students are expected to describe how a ‘theory’ is used in a practice situation, and based on this experience, to reflect on the relevance of the theories learned.</li> <li>❖ Often, students are also required to reflect on their ethical stance and personal and professional values when encountering moral and ethical dilemmas in practice.</li> </ul>
3. Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Students are invited to conduct project work around real problems of various kinds. Upon completion, students will conduct presentations as well as submit written reports.</li> <li>❖ Project work requires students to develop their own hypothesis and to conduct real life or participant observation for data gathering purposes.</li> <li>❖ In this project work, students are required to demonstrate the application of a particular theory to analyse, synthesise, evaluate, generalize, and even theorize from a particular real life problem/context.</li> </ul>
4. Reflective journal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Students are invited to record thoughts and insights about their own learning experience after they have been exposed to a particular concept, theory, model of practice or a critical incident.</li> <li>❖ In these journals, students will also write about their reflective thoughts on their personal life experience, values and ethical stance, as well as how they resolve dilemmas and issues arising from a practice situation.</li> </ul>
5. Seminar presentation & discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ In most subjects, students will have to be responsible for taking the initiative in structuring their own learning experiences around a given topic and for presenting them to the seminar group.</li> <li>❖ Normally students have to work in a team to discuss the problem formulation, conceptual tools to be used, information gathering and framework of their presentation, with facilitation from the seminar teacher.</li> <li>❖ Students will be graded both individually and collectively and both ‘formatively’ and ‘summatively’ on the quality of their work.</li> </ul>
6. Fieldwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Students may undertake fieldwork to collect data for applied research projects.</li> <li>❖ Students will receive on-going feedback from thesis supervisors throughout the process.</li> </ul>
7. Portfolio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Some subject teachers invite students to produce a portfolio which contains a collection of all the subject-related work performance.</li> <li>❖ The reflective journal and other types of more formal written work or presentation materials may be included in the portfolio.</li> <li>❖ Students will normally have the chance to continually discuss and reflect on their performance as well as their personal learning experiences with the subject teachers throughout the subject.</li> </ul>

## Appendix V: Online Tutorial on Academic Integrity

To help you understand the importance of academic honesty and learn ways to ensure that your work and behaviour at PolyU are acceptable in this regard, you are required to complete the Online Tutorial on Academic Integrity available to you on LEARN@POLYU (理學網).

To access the Tutorial, simply:

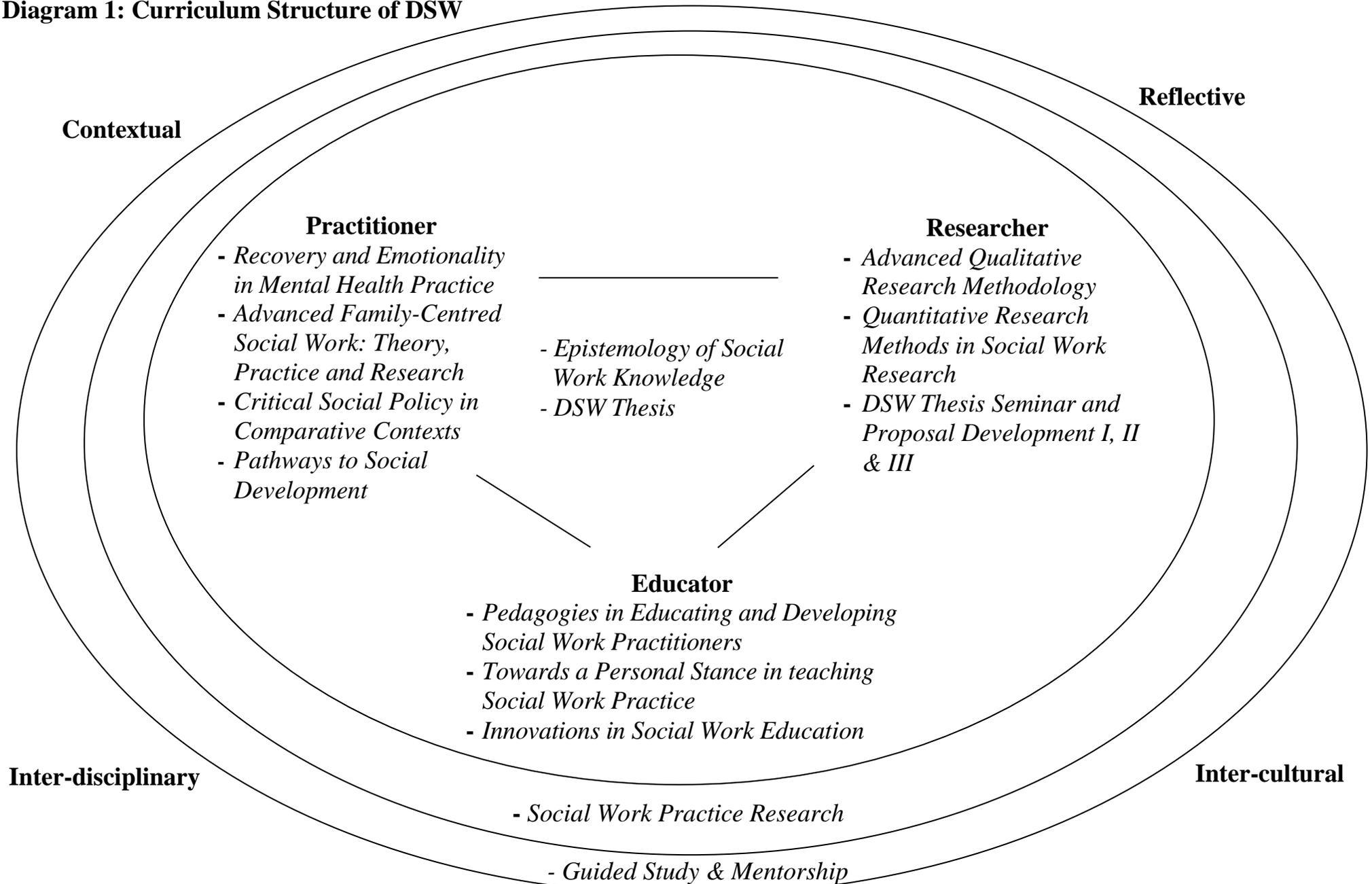
1. Log in to LEARN@POLYU (理學網) using your NetID and password.
2. Go to “My Course” and click on the link to **PolyU1001: Online Tutorial on Academic Integrity (Compulsory Completion)**.

For more information on the Online Tutorial, please refer to *Online Tutorial on Academic Integrity: A Student Guide* ([http://www.polyu.edu.hk/ogur/academic\\_integrity/Student\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.polyu.edu.hk/ogur/academic_integrity/Student_Guide.pdf)). Detailed instructions are available in the Online Tutorial.

### Suggested schedule for students

Week 1	Introduction to the Online Tutorial, the completion requirements and the assignment schedule
Weeks 1-4	Completion of the Online Tutorial (All five steps must be completed) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attempting the pre-test</li><li>• Learning from the modules and exercises</li><li>• Completing the post-test and obtain a satisfactory score (over 75%)</li><li>• Submitting the Honour Declaration</li><li>• Receiving the eCertificate via your PolyU Connect Email Account</li></ul>
Week 5	Tutorial completion due date

**Diagram 1: Curriculum Structure of DSW**



## **Part II**

# **Subject Description Forms**

Please refer to <http://www.polyu.edu.hk/apss/subject/>

