

**Final Assessment Report**  
Submitted by SUPR-G to SCAPA

<b>Program:</b>	<b>Social Work, King's University College</b>	
Degrees Offered:	MA in Social Work (MSW)	
Approved Fields:	Direct Social Work Practice	
External Consultants:	Dr. Marion Bogo University of Toronto	Dr. Jackie Sieppert University of Calgary
Internal Reviewers:	Dr. Catherine Nolan Don Wright Faculty of Music	N/A
Date of Site Visit:	April 28-29, 2015	
Evaluation:	<i>Good Quality</i>	
Approved by:	<i>SUPR-G on September 14, 2015</i> <i>SCAPA on September 30, 2015</i>	

### Executive Summary

While this was a cyclical review of the Master of Social Work program at King's University College, it also served as a review of a proposal for a major modification to the MSW program. The reviewers noted the transitional time in which the MSW program finds itself. As of July 1, 2015, the program will have a new Director after 13 years of committed leadership by the outgoing Director. Further, the program has proposed a major modification from the current 1-year (3-term) for students holding a BSW degree to a 2-year (6-term) program, with a Foundation Year and a Specialization Year—for students holding an honors undergraduate degree in a related program. Students holding a BSW degree will be advanced into year 2 of the proposed program.

The proposed program differs from the current program not only in terms of length and target students, but also in professional orientation from Advanced Generalist Practice to Direct Social Work Practice. The reviewers wrote positively about the integration of program learning outcomes, GDLEs, courses, and evaluation methods in both the existing and the proposed new programs, and expressed full support for the direction of the proposed program revisions; these align well with the accreditation standards of the Canadian Association of Social Work Education. The reviewers support the new direction in Direct Practice, which will provide the King's MSW program with an opportunity to stand out among existing programs. They note the full support of the faculty and the strength of resources needed, and they note the alignment of the program with the mission of King's.

The existing program and the proposed new program have appropriate admission requirements, though the reviewers note the need for increased flexibility in admission requirements in the new program. The program is well aware of this need.

The reviewers caution that the program may wish to reevaluate its plans to separate two cohorts of students—one entering the program with a BSW degree, and one without. The rationale for this separation, based on the different backgrounds of the two cohorts, as their experience is that students with diverse backgrounds are generally combined, and can learn from each other. The program is well aware of the issues involved, and will assess this matter on an ongoing basis.

The reviewers also note the primary challenge of implementing introductory practicum requirements in the Foundation Year in terms of student preparation (for those without a BSW degree) and expectations of community agencies.

In summary, the reviewers note: “The School of Social Work is a healthy, vibrant unit that fulfills its mandate well. It has established a strong base from which to consider its future development.”

**Significant Strengths of Program:**

- **Strength of faculty**
  - Faculty members show a wide range of professional experience and educational backgrounds.
  - Faculty members show a wide range of areas of research productivity
  - Faculty commitment to research is noteworthy among professors occupied extensively in this professional program.
  - Faculty members are well equipped with core strength in direct practice approaches to social work education.
  - Students noted the high level of engagement, collegiality, and accessibility of the faculty.
- **Strength of library resources, facilities, and services**
  - Currency and comprehensiveness of library holdings in the dedicated library
  - Full access to Western Libraries resources and services
- **Quality of space**
  - Meticulously maintained, modern, bright, and welcoming
  - Relative new office and administrative spaces
  - Quality meeting and teaching spaces

**Suggestions for improvement & Enhancement:**

- In future reviews, it would be advisable to include contact with representatives from social service and health agencies, and field instructors.
- Engage these community representatives in gaining feedback on the MSW curriculum.
- Ensure continuing assessment of issues such as whether to merge the Foundation and Specialization Year students into common courses.
- The planned cohort of 45 students is reasonable. Any increase would require additional faculty.

<b>Recommendations required for Program sustainability:</b>	Responsibility	Resources	Timeline
Institute a formal mentoring program for faculty.	Academic Dean	None	September 2017
Ensure continued conversations about curriculum planning in implementing the proposed new program.	Director	None	Ongoing
Address the challenge of finding suitable field placements for Foundation Year students	Director Field Education Administrative Assistant	None	September 2016
Enhance student access to scholarships and bursaries	Director	None	Ongoing