香港學術及職業資歷評審局
Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of
Academic & Vocational Qualifications

ACCREDITATION REPORT

HONG KONG SHUE YAN UNIVERSITY

LEARNING PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

NOVEMBER 2022

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1.   **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

1.1   Based on the Service Agreement (No.: AA816), the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ), in the capacity of the Accreditation Authority as provided for under the Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications Ordinance (Cap. 592), was commissioned by Hong Kong Shue Yan University to conduct a learning programme accreditation for Master of Social Work with the following Terms of Reference:

(a)   To conduct an accreditation test as provided for in the AAVQO to determine whether the programme of Hong Kong Shue Yan University (the Operator) (Para.2.1) meets the stated objectives and QF standards and can be offered as an accredited programme; and

(b)   To issue to the Operator an accreditation report setting out the results of the determination in relation to (a) by HKCAAVQ.

2.   **HKCAAVQ'S DETERMINATION**

2.1   HKCAAVQ has determined that Master of Social Work meets the stated objectives and QF standard at Level 6, and can be offered as an accredited programme with a validity period from 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2028.

2.2   In order for the validity period to take effect, the [Operator] must be registered as a Post Secondary College under the Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance (Cap. 320) and it must comply with any restrictions stipulated in the Institutional Review (IR) Report. The authority for registration under Cap. 320 rests with the Permanent Secretary for Education who may take into account of the outcome of the IR Report and other considerations as deemed necessary.

2.3   **Validity Period**

2.3.1   The validity period will commence on the date specified below. Operators may apply to HKCAAVQ to vary the commencement date of the validity period. Applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

2.4 The determinations on the Programme are specified as follows:

Name of Local Operator	Hong Kong Shue Yan University 香港樹仁大學
Name of Award Granting Body	Hong Kong Shue Yan University 香港樹仁大學
Title of Learning Programme	Master of Social Work 社會工作碩士
Title of Qualification(s) [Exit Award(s)]	Master of Social Work 社會工作碩士
Primary Area of Study and Training	Social Sciences
Sub-area (Primary Area of Study and Training)	Social Services
Other Area of Study and Training	Not applicable
Sub-area (Other Area of Study and Training)	Not applicable
HKQF Level	Level 6
HKQF Credits	278
Mode(s) of Delivery and Programme Length	▪ Full-time, 2 years ▪ Part-time, 3 years
Start Date of Validity Period	1 September 2024
End Date of Validity Period	31 August 2028
Number of Enrolment(s)	One enrolment per year
Maximum Number of New Students	▪ 32 students per year (Full-time) ▪ 16 students per year (Part-time)
Address of Teaching / Training Venue(s)	10 Wai Tsui Crescent, Braemar Hill, North Point, Hong Kong

2.5   **Restrictions**

2.5.1   The Programme is required to obtain qualification recognition from the Social Workers Registration Board before programme commencement. (Para.4.1.6)

2.6   **Recommendations**

        HKCAAVQ also offers the following recommendations for continuous improvement of the Programme.

2.6.1   The Operator is to continuously review the learning experience of non-social science entrants where applicable to put measures in place to mitigate against any disparities in students' learning experience. These measures might involve interventions such as a preliminary compulsory course, boot camp, or support protocol for individual students. (Para.4.3.8)

2.6.2   The Operator is to review the balance of emphasis within the MSW programme particularly with regards to theories of intervention in the mental health and digital domains, enabling graduates of the MSW programme to be able to engage in other complex and crisis scenarios, such as child abuse, bullying and domestic violence. (Para.4.3.11)

2.7   HKCAAVQ will subsequently satisfy itself whether the Operator remains competent to achieve the relevant objectives and the Programme continues to meet the standard to achieve the relevant objectives as claimed by the Operator by reference to, amongst other things, the Operator's fulfilment of any conditions and compliance with any restrictions stipulated in this Accreditation Report. For the avoidance of doubt, maintenance of accreditation status is subject to fulfilment of any condition and compliance with any restriction stipulated in this Accreditation Report.

3.   **INTRODUCTION**

3.1   HKSYU was granted the university status in December 2006, and was the first private university in Hong Kong. It was founded in 1971 as Hong Kong Shue Yan College, has been registered under the Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance (Cap. 320) since 1976, and

became a recognised private degree-awarding institution in 2001. HKSYU is currently offering 18 bachelor's degree programmes at QF Level 5, 12 master's degree programmes at QF Level 6 master's degree programmes and seven doctor's degree programmes at QF Level 7.

3.2 For this Learning Programme Accreditation exercise, HKCAAVQ formed an expert Panel (Panel Membership in Appendix 1). In view of the outbreak of the Coronavirus Disease-2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, the site visit was conducted via video-conference from 8-9 September 2022 to reduce social contact. HKCAAVQ's Manual for the Four-stage Quality Assurance Process under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (Version 1.2, November 2020) was the guiding document for the Operator and the Panel in conducting this exercise.

4. PANEL'S DELIBERATIONS

The following presents the Panel's deliberations on a range of issues pertinent to its major findings. For aspects of the accreditation standards where no observations are made they are considered to be appropriately addressed by the Operator.

4.1 Programme Objectives and Learning Outcomes

The learning programme must have objectives that address community, education and/or industry needs, with learning outcomes that meet the relevant HKQF standards, for all exit qualifications from the programme.

4.1.1 The Master of Social Work (MSW) programme (the Programme) is hosted by the Department of Social Work (the Department).

4.1.2 The Operator informed the Panel that they consider the core competency of social workers should be closely connected to the development of society. With the help of the findings and surveys conducted during the programme development process (with more details mentioned in Para. 4.1.4), the MSW programme was designed to proactively respond to the emerging social needs and the development of the social work profession. The Programme aims not only to cover the essential knowledge, skills, and ethics of social work but also a more advanced level of knowledge, with

emphasis on (a) balancing micro with macro-level interventions, (b) leadership exposure, (c) digital social work practice, (d) global and regional perspectives, (e) sustainable development and (f) Interdisciplinary Collaboration. The mentioned (c)-(f) serve as the niche of the MSW Programme.

4.1.3 The Programme Aims (PAs) and the Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) are:

Programme Aims

PA1	Equip non-social work degree holders with required professional social work knowledge as well as innovative technologies and digital practice skills, enabling them to address the increasingly complicated socio-economic changes in the community.
PA2	Develop students' sense of social responsibility and integrity in upholding the core values and ethics of the social work profession.
PA3	Enhance global and regional outlook, and the leadership skills and corresponding managerial competencies of students, enabling them to contribute to the sustainable development of society through the micro, meso and macro levels of social work practice.
PA4	Enable students to contribute to and apply interdisciplinary practices and research, drawing on their prior academic and disciplinary training, so as to serve people from diverse backgrounds and create social impact.

Programme Intended Learning Outcomes

PILO1	Apply social work knowledge and skills with informed professional judgement and ethical adherence to address and handle complex case situation and social issues.
PILO2	Execute the roles and responsibilities of a social worker with integrity and accountability, exercising the profession's values and ethics in all practices.
PILO3	Apply leadership knowledge and skills leading to the betterment of clients and sustainable development of society at the micro, meso and macro levels.
PILO4	Design interdisciplinary research-based practice and make use of practice-based research to produce

	measurable impact and positive changes at individual and community levels.
PILO5	Critically analyse issues and policies that affect different sections of society, both regionally and globally.

4.1.4   The Panel was provided with the followings to show that the MSW programme meets the QF standard at Level 6:

   (a)   Course outlines which spelt out the Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs), teaching and learning activities, assessment tasks, assessment rubric, distribution of notional learning hours, QF credits, topics, and references;

   (b)   The alignment of courses with PAs and PILOs;

   (c)   The alignment of the PILOs with the Generic Level Descriptors (GLDs) at QF Level 6;

   (d)   The alignment of PILOs with Graduate Attributes; and

   (e)   The alignment of each course of the MSW programme with the SWRB professional standards.

4.1.5   The Operator has presented the following findings and the results of the surveys conducted in the past two years in respect of the demand for the proposed programmes to address the needs of industry and the community for the coming five years.

   (a)   The trends and policies related to local social welfare development, such as pilot projects and service expansion in different sectors initiated by the Government and non-government funding sources and organisations.

   (b)   The short-term and long-term projection of the demand and supply of social work professionals;

   (c)   The recent high turnover rate in the social work sector due to attrition associated with emigration;

   (d)   The search results from the recruitment websites for social work degree holders;

   (e)   The local supply and demand for an MSW programme;

(f) Surveys of prospective employers and students, and in particular, HKSYU degree graduates' interest in an MSW programme; and

(g) The SWOT analysis to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to the strategic positioning of HKSYU in offering an MSW programme.

4.1.6 The Operator also informed the Panel that the MSW programme will undergo validation by the Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB). Upon successful validation, graduates of the MSW programme will be eligible to apply for Registered Social Worker (RSW) status (Category 1) under the Social Workers Registration Board. In this regard, the Panel stated the following restriction. (Para. 2.5.1)

Restriction

The Programme is required to obtain qualification recognition from the Social Workers Registration Board before programme commencement.

4.1.7 After considering the above information, the Panel considered that the PAs could address the community, education and/or industry needs, and the PILOs meet the relevant QF standards.

4.2 Learner Admission and Selection

The minimum admission requirements of the learning programme must be clearly outlined for staff and prospective learners. These requirements and the learner selection processes must be effective for recruitment of learners with the necessary skills and knowledge to undertake the programme.

4.2.1 The admission requirements for the programme are:

Admission Requirements

(i) Applicants for admission to the Master of Social Work (MSW) Programme must be in possession of a bachelor's degree with first- or second-class honours from a recognized local or overseas university; OR

(ii) Applicants who graduated from degree programmes that do not use an honours system should have a minimum GPA of 3.0 out of a maximum of 4.

Preference will be given to applicants who have attained undergraduate training in a social science discipline.

Minimum English proficiency requirements

As the primary language of instruction in the programme is English, applicants whose entrance qualification is issued by an institution where the medium of instruction is not English should also fulfil the following:

- Overall band score ≥ 6.0 in International English Language Testing System (IELTS) (Academic) test; or
- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score of 550 (Paper-based Test) or 79 (Internet-based Test) or 213 (Computer-based Test); or
- Other equivalent qualifications.

Admission interviews will be conducted to select suitable applicants for the programme.

Eligible applicants are required to submit a personal statement, describing their motivation for applying for the MSW programme as well as outlining their future professional development plan.

As the programme includes a practicum component which requires interaction with local social service users, proficiency in Cantonese is preferred.

4.2.2 The Operator informed the Panel that they will consider non-standard admission on a case-by-case basis, which refers to applicants who do not have a bachelor's degree. These non-standard applicants will be required to attend an admission interview and to meet the minimum English proficiency requirements equivalent to their standard applicants' counterpart. The Operator also provided the following examples of non-standard applicants who may be considered acceptable for admission:

(a) Applicants holding a diploma in social work or related disciplines, and show evidence of outstanding contribution to social services or related fields, or demonstrate sufficient motivation, knowledge and potential to indicate a high

capability to complete the MSW programme successfully. Examples of related disciplines are social studies, counselling and psychology.

(b) Applicants holding a diploma that is not in social work or related disciplines, but has at least eight years of experience in social services or holds a middle management/ leadership position in a social service agency/ NGO/ social enterprise. Examples of non-social work diplomas are Diplomas in Business, Management, or Legal Studies, etc.

(c) Applicants without first- or second-class honours degrees from degree programmes that use an honours system; or applicants who had attained a minimum GPA of 3.0 out of a maximum of 4 but from degree programmes that do not use an honours system. Such applicants should have at least eight years of experience in social services or be in a middle management position in a social service agency/ NGO/ social enterprise.

4.2.3 The Panel reviewed the criteria to be used for determining the admissibility of an applicant based on the personal statement and the relevant template to be adopted.

4.2.4 The Operator assured that the maximum number of non-standard admission (including mature-aged students) for the MSW programme will always be capped at a maximum of 5% of the actual number of new students of the year so as to align with the general expectation of self-financed degree-awarding institutions in safeguarding teaching and learning quality and thereby upholding the credibility and recognition of their qualifications.

4.2.5 The Panel was provided through the *MSW Programme Handbook* with the policies on *Transfer of Study* and *Course Exemption and Credit Transfer*. The Operator elaborated that the transfer of study is not applicable for students of the MSW programme. And a student who has been granted exemption from any course, he/ she is still required to fulfil the same number of courses and credits as specified in the programme by substituting the exempted course(s) with the other course(s) approved by the Head of Social Work Department, and in no case will his/ her normative period of study be shortened.

4.2.6 The yearly maximum numbers of new students proposed for each delivery mode of the Programme and the planned review schedule in the coming five years are as follows. The Operator also informed

that the relevant review results will be reported in the Programme's Annual Postgraduate Programme Review Report and reviewed through the respective committee structures of the Operator.

	2024/2025		2025/2026		2026/2027		2027/2028		2028/2029		
1. MSW Launch & Development Goal: Student intake review and mixed mode development											
	N	P	N	P	N	P	N	P	N	P	
1.1 Full-time (FT) mode (no. of student intake)	1st Cohort (32)	--	2nd Cohort (32)	1st Cohort (32)	3rd Cohort (32)	2nd Cohort (32)	4th Cohort (32)	3rd Cohort (32)	5th Cohort (32)	4th Cohort (32)	
1.2 Part-time (PT) mode (no. of student intake)	1st Cohort (16)	--	2nd Cohort (16)	1st Cohort (16)	3rd Cohort (16)	2nd Cohort (16) / 1st Cohort (16)	4th Cohort (16)	2nd Cohort (16) / 3rd Cohort (16)	5th Cohort (16)	3rd Cohort (16) / 4th Cohort (16)	
Total no. of student intake of the year	48		96		112		112		112		
1.3 Review student intake number/ explore to increase number of intakes					✓				✓		
N = New students; P = Progressing students											

4.2.7 Having considered the staffing (Section 4.5 below) and physical resources (Section 4.6 below), the Panel considered that the proposed yearly maximum numbers of 32 new students (Full-time) and 16 new students (Part-time) of the Programmes are appropriate.

4.2.8 Based on the above information, the Panel formed the view that the minimum admission requirements are clearly outlined for staff and prospective learners. The requirements and the learner selection processes are appropriate for recruiting learners with the necessary skills and knowledge to undertake the programme.

4.3 **Programme Structure and Content**

The structure and content of the learning programme must be up-to-date, coherent, balanced and integrated to facilitate progression in order to enable learners to achieve the stated learning outcomes and to meet the programme objectives.

4.3.1 The MSW programme is operated with full-time and part-time modes of delivery. The normal duration is two years and three years for full-time and part-time modes respectively. The Programme comprises 16 core courses and one elective carrying a total of 278 QF credits.

4.3.2 The Operator provided the conceptual mapping of the MSW programme curriculum in response to the Panel's initial comments to facilitate the Panel in gaining a thorough understanding of the conceptual bases upon which the study path, course sequencing and intended learning outcomes of the MSW programme are designed.

4.3.3 The individual programme structure of the full-time and part-time modes are depicted in the table below.

The 2-Year Full-time MSW programme

Full-time (YEAR I)				Credit*			QF credit
Learning Areas^	Course Name	Contact Hours	Self-Study Hours	Semester#			
				I	II	III	
1	SW501 Human Diversity, Behaviour and Social Environment			3			12
3	SW502 Interprofessional Collaboration in Social Work Practice			3			12
3	SW503 Agency, Community, Stakeholders and Systems Engagement – Social Work Meso Practices			3			12
3	SW504 Sustainable Development and Social Work Macro Practices			3			12
3	SW505 Advanced Interviewing Skills and Modalities – Social Work Micro Practices				3		12
4	SW506 Globalisation and Regionalisation in Social Welfare and Social Policy				3		12
2	SW507 Law and Ethics in Social Work				3		12
5	SW508 Practice-based Research, Evaluation and Social Impact Assessment				3		12
6	Pre-Placement Exposure (PPE)			0	0		5
6	SW509 Fieldwork I – Summer Block Placement					8	50
Sub-total:				12	12	8	151
(YEAR I) Total:					32		151

Full-time (YEAR II)				Credit*			QF credit
Learning Areas^	Course Name	Contact Hours	Self-Study Hours	Semester#			
				I	II	III	
3	SW510 Digital and Technology Advancement			3			12

	Applications in Social Work Practice						
6	SW511 Integration and Consolidation in Interdisciplinary Social Work Practice I			3			12
7	*One Elective:*						
	SW516 Managing Crisis and Trauma *OR*			3			12
	SW517 Professional Practice with Families and Complex Issues in Contemporary Society *OR*						
	SW518 Social Work in Public Health *OR*						
	SW519 Practice-based Research Project						
3	SW512 Advanced Intervention in Mental Health and Wellness				3		12
5	SW513 Impact Creation and Leadership in Social Service Management				3		12
6	SW514 Integration and Consolidation in Interdisciplinary Social Work Practice II				3		12
6	Pre-Placement Exposure (PPE)			0	0		5
	Sub-total:	0	0	9	9	/	
6	SW515 Fieldwork II – Concurrent Placement			8			50
	(*YEAR II*) Total:				26		127
	Full programme total:				58		278

* Minimum Credit Requirement for Graduation: 58

\# Semester III is the summer semester

^ Learning Areas

1	Human Behaviour and Social Environment
2	Values and Ethics in Social Work Profession
3	Social Work Professional Practice
4	Social Welfare and Social Policy
5	Social Administration and Management
6	Fieldwork
7	Elective

The 3-Year Part-time MSW programme

	Part-time (YEAR I)			Credit*			QF
Learning Areas^	Course Name	Contact Hours	Self-Study Hours	Semester#			credit
				I	II	III	
1	SW501 Human Diversity, Behaviour and Social Environment			3			12
3	SW502 Interprofessional Collaboration in Social Work Practice			3			12
3	SW505 Advanced Interviewing Skills and Modalities –			3			12

Learning Areas^	Course Name	Contact Hours	Self-Study Hours	I	II	III	QF credit
	Social Work Micro Practices						
2	SW507 Law and Ethics in Social Work				3		12
3	SW503 Agency, Community, Stakeholders and Systems Engagement – Social Work Meso Practices				3		12
5	SW508 Practice-based Research, Evaluation and Social Impact Assessment				3		12
3	SW504 Sustainable Development and Social Work Macro Practices					3	12
5	SW513 Impact Creation and Leadership in Social Service Management					3	12
6	Pre-Placement Exposure (PPE)			0	0		4
	Sub-total:			9	9	6	
	(YEAR I) Total:				24		

Part-time (YEAR II)				**Credit***			**QF credit**
Learning Areas^	Course Name	Contact Hours	Self-Study Hours	Semester#			
				I	II	III	
3	SW512 Advanced Intervention in Mental Health and Wellness			3			12
4	SW506 Globalisation and Regionalisation in Social Welfare and Social Policy				3		12
3	SW510 Digital and Technology Advancement Applications in Social Work Practice					3	12
7	*One Elective:*						
	SW516 Managing Crisis and Trauma *OR*						
	SW517 Professional Practice with Families and Complex Issues in Contemporary Society *OR*					3	12
	SW518 Social Work in Public Health *OR*						
	SW519 Practice-based Research Project						
6	Pre-Placement Exposure (PPE)			0	0		4
	Sub-total:			3	3	6	
6	SW 520 Fieldwork I – Concurrent Placement				8		50
	(YEAR II) Total:				20		

Part-time (YEAR III)				**Credit***			**QF credit**
Learning Areas^	Course Name	Contact Hours	Self-Study Hours	Semester#			
				I	II	III	
6	SW511 Integration and Consolidation in Interdisciplinary Social Work Practice I			3			12
6	SW514 Integration and Consolidation in Interdisciplinary Social Work Practice II				3		12
6	Pre-Placement Exposure (PPE)			0	0		2

	Sub-total:			3	3	
6	SW 515 Fieldwork II – Concurrent Placement			8		50
	(YEAR III) Total:			14		
	Full programme total:			58		278

* Minimum Credit Requirement for Graduation: 58

Semester III is the summer semester

^ Learning Areas

1	Human Behaviour and Social Environment
2	Values and Ethics in Social Work Profession
3	Social Work Professional Practice
4	Social Welfare and Social Policy
5	Social Administration and Management
6	Fieldwork
7	Elective

4.3.4 Placements are credit-bearing. Upon the completion of each placement, the Fieldwork Coordinator will arrange Post-placement Workshops to enhance reflection, sharing and exchange of fieldwork experience among students and consolidate the integration of theories and practice of the students.

4.3.5 According to the proposed admission requirements of the Programme, it is noted that most students to be admitted (if not all) would be degree holders of non-social-science disciplines. The Panel shared in the initial comments that for many undergraduate qualifying BSW programme, an introductory course in social work, is compulsory. The course aims to prepare students with no understanding of social work prior to admission with a basic understanding of the discipline. However, in the proposed MSW programme, it is unclear to the Panel which course is the overarching introductory course to assure the common basic understanding of social work and social work practice of students from different backgrounds with different levels of preparation for the social work education.

4.3.6 The Operator responded in writing that after benchmarking the proposed MSW programme with five local MSW programmes, they found that none of them has an overarching introductory course. The Operator also clarified that in the proposed MSW programme, the common basic understanding of social work and social work practice is incorporated into the essential knowledge of micro, meso and macro social work practice and interprofessional collaboration

covered in the core courses of the programme SW502 to SW505. The Operator also added that students who have graduated from a non-social science degree programme can attend, on a non-credit bearing basis, the course *SW100 Introduction to Philosophy of Social Welfare and Social Work* at QF Level 5 offered by the Department in their first semester of study. The course will cover foundational knowledge of the social sciences such as theoretical knowledge of psychology and sociology, and knowledge about human services and welfare systems. This option allows students to strengthen their basic knowledge of the social sciences.

4.3.7   At the meetings with the Operator, the Panel shared that even though some students might have already possessed experience from one or some specialised area of the social work field, the experience might not be comprehensive enough for starting their MSW studies. The Operator responded and added that in Year One of the Programme, they would arrange visits to social work agencies; plus, the delivery of the Pre-Placement Exposure course, which could both help the students to gain direct contact with the industry. Nonetheless, they are open to making the *SW100* course becomes a compulsory course for the non-social science entrants.

4.3.8   Based on the above information, the Panel still has some minor concerns regarding the learning experience of non-social science entrants, and the support available to them to safeguard a successful completion of the Programme. The Panel therefore RECOMMENDS that the Operator is to continuously review the learning experience of non-social science entrants where applicable to put measures in place to mitigate against any disparities in students' learning experience. These measures might involve interventions such as a preliminary compulsory course, boot camp, or support protocol for individual students. (Para.2.6.1)

4.3.9   The Panel are also concerned about the balance of emphasis within the Programme particularly with regard to theories of intervention in other contexts beyond mental health and digital domains. For example, the Panel noted that among the social work practice courses, there is a substantial weighting on the learning of intervention skills in Mental Health and Wellness, namely the *SW512 Advanced Intervention in Mental Health and Wellness*. Although the Panel also noted from the accreditation document that based on the results of a survey of the expectations of an MSW programme from potential employers (representatives of NGOs), the Operator has chosen mental health as one of the special features of the MSW programme.

4.3.10 The external stakeholders whom the Panel met also shared that they expected the graduates of the Programme should be capable of handling complex cases as supervisors/ managers of services.

4.3.11 Based on the above information and the discussion with the external stakeholders, the Panel therefore RECOMMENDS that the Operator is to review the balance of emphasis within the MSW programme particularly with regard to theories of intervention in the mental health and digital domains, enabling graduates of the MSW programme to be able to engage in other complex and crisis scenarios, such as child abuse, bullying and domestic violence. (Para.2.6.2)

4.3.12 The Panel was informed in the accreditation document that

(a) The 2021 Policy Address emphasised the development of the northern part of Hong Kong into a metropolitan area covering the Shenzhen-Hong Kong Boundary Control Points Economic Belt. The development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) will bring more job opportunities while at the same time creating demand for social service support for family relocation, immigration, adjustments in new communities, neighbourhood development, schooling, employment and other tangible and intangible needs;

(b) In tandem with the policy initiative of the government to strengthen collaboration with institutions in the GBA, the Department has recently launched a research project with a social service agency in Macau. The relevant findings on the ageing of persons in recovery will be shared in the course *SW512 Advanced Intervention in Mental Health and Wellness* course; and

(c) The Programme will arrange short term study visits to the GBA or overseas social service agencies to broaden students' exposure.

4.3.13 In light of the above mentioned, the Panel ADVISES the Operator to ensure that social context from the perspective of the Greater Bay Area and Mainland China is explicitly addressed throughout the MSW programme so that the employment opportunities of the graduates can be increased.

4.3.14 Notwithstanding the recommendations above, the Panel considered that the structure and content of the learning programme are up-to-date, coherent, balanced and integrated to facilitate progression in

order to enable learners to achieve the stated learning outcomes and to meet the programme objectives.

4.4 Learning, Teaching and Assessment

The learning, teaching and assessment activities designed for the learning programme must be effective in delivering the programme content and assessing the attainment of the intended learning outcomes.

4.4.1 The MSW programme employs a range of teaching and learning activities such as lectures, tutorials, case studies, role-play, experiential practices, individual/ group consultations, e-learning activities, as well as guest sharing by social work practitioners, interdisciplinary activities/ interviews, agency visits and technology learning activities. The medium of instruction is English.

4.4.2 The Operator informed that to comply with the relevant requirements of the Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB), small class teaching will be adopted for not less than one-third of the teaching hours of courses under the social work subject areas in the Programme. The relevant maximum class sizes for different course types are set as follows:

Course type	Class size
Social Work Core Knowledge Courses	20
Social Work Practice courses	15
Fieldwork supervision	1

4.4.3 The Panel was provided with the following documents and information regarding the learning, teaching and assessment of the Programme:

(a) Information mentioned in Para. 4.1.4;

(b) HKSYU's assessment policy for taught postgraduate programmes; and

(c) The MSW Programme Fieldwork Handbook (Full-time & Part-time).

4.4.4 The Panel was informed that an assessment moderation system will be applied in the Programme consisting of three components, namely

(a) Internal moderation - To ensure that the proposed assessment tasks are appropriately aligned with the CILOs, the course outlines, which include the proposed assessment tasks, methods adopted and the corresponding weightings assigned, are submitted to the Programme Director or the Departmental Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) representative for moderation, and are then sent to the Associate Academic Vice President (Graduate School) for further review.

(b) Double marking scheme - For each course, the responsible teaching staff is required to select six samples for each assessment task (two samples each from upper, middle and lower levels of performance), and pass them to the Programme Director or another teaching staff with the expertise of that course for review. In addition, all Practice-based Research Projects are marked by both the chief supervisor and second examiner. When there is a serious grade difference (i.e. two subgrades discrepancy or more), further discussions would be carried out. The final grades, examiner reports and student final reports for the Projects are also reviewed by the EE.

(c) External moderation by External Examiner (EE) - In each academic year, all course outlines, assessment rubrics and samples of student assessments are sent to the EE for review and comments. Every semester, all the grade distributions would be sent to the EE for review before obtaining the approval of the Graduate Studies Committee and releasing the final grades.

4.4.5 The MSW programme (full-time and part-time modes) includes Fieldwork Placement for 110 QF credits to be conducted in 1100 hours.

4.4.6 The Operator informed the Panel that the Department has established close collaboration with over 77 social welfare agencies, schools and the Social Welfare Department, which would be able to offer fieldwork placements to MSW students. Contacts have also been established with overseas social service organisations to provide overseas fieldwork placements.

4.4.7 The graduation requirement for the MSW programme is:

A student must have
- obtained at least a Grade of C+ in all compulsory and elective courses and fieldwork placement in the programme;
- completed all coursework and fieldwork placement requirements;
- obtained a cumulative GPA of at least 2.5.

4.4.8 After considering the above information, the Panel formed the view that the learning, teaching and assessment activities designed for the programme are appropriate for delivering the programme content and assessing the attainment of the intended learning outcomes.

4.5 **Programme Leadership and Staffing**

The Operator must have adequate programme leader(s), teaching/training and support staff with the qualities, competence, qualifications and experience necessary for effective programme management, i.e. planning, development, delivery and monitoring of the programme. There must be an adequate staff development scheme and activities to ensure that staff are kept updated for the quality delivery of the programme.

4.5.1 The MSW programme is managed by two Programme Directors, one for each of the delivery modes.

4.5.2 The Panel reviewed the appointment criteria for professorial staff and the profiles of ten existing academic staff of the Department and their proposed roles in the MSW Programme.

4.5.3 The Operator also informed the Panel that the Department currently has a pool of 50 part-time fieldwork supervisors, of which 38 possessed at least a master's degree with more than five years of clinical experience in direct services, the SWRB's minimum requirements of a fieldwork supervisor for master of social work programmes. The Operator added that the Programme will use the *Agency Feedback Form* and the *Student Feedback Form* to formally collect feedback for reviewing the work quality of the part-time fieldwork supervisors.

4.5.4 The Panel noted from the accreditation document that the Department has already started the process of recruiting teaching staff with expertise in digital social work while examples were presented to show that some of the existing teaching staff are contributing to the practice and research in the relevant areas, such

as the data collection for research projects on the digital competency of social work practitioners and older adults.

4.5.5   The Panel also reviewed the Programme's 3-year recruitment plan from AY2023/24 for hiring Associate/ Assistant Professor or Senior Lecturer and Part-time Fieldwork Supervisors. And the Operator committed in the accreditation documents that they will continue recruiting experienced social work practitioners, especially those with experience in interdisciplinary collaboration, to be fieldwork supervisors of the MSW programme.

4.5.6   Having considered the information above, the Panel formed the view that the respective appointment criteria, the qualifications and experience of the existing academic staff and the ongoing staffing plan are commensurate with the Programme, and the recruitment plan for hiring teaching staff as appropriate.

4.5.7   The Operator informed that the workload of full-time teaching staff is capped at 30 credit hours per staff per academic year, course teaching, Honours Project, fieldwork supervision and administrative duties inclusive.

4.5.8   The Operator informed that they would offer to the teaching staff the following internal professional development activities.   It is mandatory for all academic staff to attend at least one training activity in each semester. The teaching staff can also apply for training subsidies and the University Conference Grant for attending external activities and conferences.

(a)   The Teaching and Learning Development Office (TLDO) of the Operator would regularly organise different training activities to promote excellence in teaching and learning, support continuous improvement of pedagogical strategies, application of educational technologies and interdisciplinary collaboration in teaching and learning;

(b)   The Teaching Excellence Series promote the sharing of innovative teaching practices, such as gamification and flipped classrooms among colleagues;

(c)   The Technology in Teaching Series promotes the effective use of the technologically integrated classrooms (TICs) on campus and the use of different educational technologies, such as classroom interaction platforms and immersive technologies to support students' learning; and

(d) The Department would organise training for teaching staff in areas such as research, social policies and clinical practice.

4.5.9 The Operator also informed that it is part of the duties of full-time academic staff to engage in research and in development activities. Details of the relevant support can be found in Para.4.6.5.

4.5.10 Based on the above information, the Panel considered that the Operator has adequate programme leaders, teaching and support staff with the qualities, competence, qualifications and experience necessary for effective programme management. And the staff development scheme and activities are adequate to ensure that staff are kept updated for the quality delivery of the programme.

4.6 **Learning, Teaching and Enabling Resources/Services**

The Operator must be able to provide learning, teaching and enabling resources/services that are appropriate and sufficient for the learning, teaching and assessment activities of the learning programme, regardless of location and mode of delivery.

4.6.1 The Panel was provided with the information on the e-Learning Platform and the Library holdings and e-resources which support the learning, teaching and assessment activities of the Programme. The Operator also provided the Panel with the departmental library budget and the estimated allocation of this budget to kinds of resources, in particular those for the MSW programme.

4.6.2 During the site visit that was conducted via video conferencing, the Operator showed three videos to the Panel introducing the campus and facilities and equipment of the offering site at North Point, Hong Kong Island.

4.6.3 Regarding financial resources for the Programme, the Operator provided to the Panel the *Estimated MSW Programme Income and Expenditure Budget* (2024/25 to 2027/28) based on the proposed yearly maximum student intake and also for scenarios where enrolment falls short by 30%, 50% and the minimum viable number of the target yearly intake.

4.6.4 The Operator informed the Panel that a budget is to be set aside to provide direct financial support to students to participate in overseas studies, conferences and visits to social service agencies and for the

teaching staff to organise similar kinds of learning experiences for the students. The Operator would also provide consultation and assist students in obtaining other financial resources to join overseas studies, conferences and visits.

4.6.5   To support full-time academic staff's duties in engaging in research and in (academic, professional and teaching) development activities, the University has set up the University Conference Grant and University Research Grant to support academic staff attending conferences and start-up research projects. The Department has also reserved the resources to sponsor teaching staff to present research papers in local/ international conferences, or publish academic journal(s).

4.6.6   The Operator provided the Panel with the *Postgraduate Student Handbook* which covers information about student support services offered by the Office of Student Affairs (OSA). The Panel noted that the OSA also arranges student activities such as the Whole Person Development Programs, Career Talks, Sports Activities and Academic Exchange Programs.

4.6.7   The Operator informed the Panel that for each delivery mode of the Programme, they would assign one Student Advisor for each cohort to organize activities to help students adjust to their study life in HKSYU and to provide on-going academic consultations and emotional support to the students. For low-performing students in the Programme, the Board of Examiners will take note and refer them to the Student Advisors for appropriate follow-up and support. Referral to other proper professional supports when considered necessary.

4.6.8   After considering the above information, the Panel is of the view that the Operator provided appropriate and sufficient resources for the learning, teaching and assessment activities of the programmes.

4.7   **Programme Approval, Review and Quality Assurance**

The Operator must monitor and review the development and performance of the learning programme on an on-going basis to ensure that the programme remains current and valid and that the learning outcomes, learning and teaching activities and learner assessments are effective to meet the programme objectives.

4.7.1   The Operator has put in place internal and external quality assurance (QA) processes for programme planning, development and review.

4.7.2   The Panel noted that the programme quality of the MSW programme is being upheld internally by the Postgraduate Programme Quality Assurance mechanism. This internal QA mechanism includes input from the Academic Board (AB), Quality Assurance Committee (QAC), Graduate Studies Committee (GSC), Departmental Committee, Board of Examiners (BoE), Programme Committee as well as students.   The external QA mechanism includes input from the Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB), the Social Work Academic Advisory Board (SWAAB), the Fieldwork Education Advisory Committee (FEAC), External Examiner (EE), and External Programme Assessor (EPA).

4.7.3   The Operator provided the Panel the documentary evidence showing that the MSW programme had undergone the requisite quality assurance process for programme development and approval.

4.7.4   The Operator also provided the following templates to show how the programme quality will be monitored upon the launching of the Programme:

(a)   Student Learning Experience Questionnaire;

(b)   Student Feedback Form (fieldwork practicums);

(c)   Annual Postgraduate Programme Review;

(d)   External Programme Assessor Report;

(e)   Graduate Survey;

(f)   Graduate Employment Survey – Students and Employers;

(g)   Fieldwork Supervisor Feedback Form; and

(h)   Agency Feedback Form (Fieldwork).

4.7.5   Based on the above information, the Panel concluded that the development of the programme has been properly monitored; and also believed that by following the above mentioned programme approval, review and quality assurance mechanisms, the programmes will be monitored and reviewed on an on-going basis to ensure that the programmes remain current and valid and that the

learning outcomes, learning and teaching activities and learner assessments are effective to meet the programme objectives.

5. IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING THIS ACCREDITATION REPORT

5.1 Variation and withdrawal of this Accreditation Report

5.1.1 This Accreditation Report is issued pursuant to section 5 of the AAVQO, and contains HKCAAVQ's substantive determination regarding the accreditation, including the validity period as well as any conditions and restrictions subject to which the determination is to have effect.

5.1.2 HKCAAVQ may subsequently decide to vary or withdraw this Accreditation Report if it is satisfied that any of the grounds set out in section 5 (2) of the AAVQO apply. This includes where HKCAAVQ is satisfied that the Operator is no longer competent to achieve the relevant objectives and/or the Programme no longer meets the standard to achieve the relevant objectives as claimed by the Operator (whether by reference to the Operator's failure to fulfil any conditions and/or comply with any restrictions stipulated in this Accreditation Report or otherwise) or where at any time during the validity period there has/have been substantial change(s) introduced by the Operator after HKCAAVQ has issued the accreditation report(s) to the Operator and which has/have not been approved by HKCAAVQ. Please refer to the '*Guidance Notes on Substantial Change to Accreditation Status*' in seeking approval for proposed changes. These Guidance Notes can be downloaded from the HKCAAVQ website.

5.1.3 If HKCAAVQ decides to vary or withdraw this Accreditation Report, it will give the Operator notice of such variation or withdrawal pursuant to section 5(4) of the AAVQO.

5.1.4 The accreditation status of Operator and/or Programme will lapse immediately upon the expiry of the validity period or upon the issuance of a notice of withdrawal of this Accreditation Report.

5.2 Appeals

5.2.1 If the Operator is aggrieved by the determination made in this Accreditation Report, then pursuant to Part 3 of the AAVQO the Operator has a right of appeal to the Appeal Board. Any appeal must be lodged within 30 days of the receipt of this Accreditation Report.

5.2.2 If the Operator is aggrieved by a decision to vary or withdraw this Accreditation Report, then pursuant to Part 3 of the AAVQO the Operator has a right of appeal to the Appeal Board. Any appeal must be lodged within 30 days of the receipt of the Notice of Withdrawal.

5.2.3 The Operator should be aware that a notice of variation or withdrawal of this Accreditation Report is not itself an accreditation report and the right to appeal against HKCAAVQ's substantive determination regarding accreditation arises only from this Accreditation Report.

5.2.4 Please refer to Cap. 592A (http://www.legislation.gov.hk) for the appeal rules. Details of the appeal procedure are contained in section 13 of the AAVQO and can be accessed from the QF website at https://www.hkqf.gov.hk.

5.3 Qualifications Register

5.3.1 Qualifications accredited by HKCAAVQ are eligible for entry into the Qualifications Register ("QR") at https://www.hkqr.gov.hk for recognition under the QF. The Operator should apply separately to have their quality-assured qualifications entered into the QR.

5.3.2 Only learners who commence the study of the named accredited learning programme during the validity period and who have graduated with the named qualification listed in the QR will be considered to have acquired a qualification recognised under the QF.

Hong Kong Shue Yan University

Learning Programme Accreditation for Master of Social Work

8 - 9 September 2022

Panel Membership

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* The Panel Secretary is also a member of the Accreditation Panel.

Graduate Profile
Master of Social Work

Qualification Title	Master of Social Work
Qualification Type	Master Degree
QF Level	Level 6
Primary Area of Study and Training	Social Sciences
Sub-area (Primary Area of Study and Training)	Social Services
Other Area of Study and Training	Not applicable
Sub-area (Other Area of Study and Training)	Not applicable
Programme Objectives	1. Equip non-social work degree holders with required professional social work knowledge as well as innovative technologies and digital practice skills, enabling them to address the increasingly complicated socio-economic changes in the community. 2. Develop students' sense of social responsibility and integrity in upholding the core values and ethics of the social work profession. 3. Enhance the global and regional outlook, and the leadership skills and corresponding managerial competencies of students, enabling them to contribute to the sustainable development of society through the micro, meso and macro levels of social work practice. 4. Enable students to contribute to and apply interdisciplinary practices and research, drawing on their prior academic and disciplinary training, so as to serve people from diverse backgrounds and create social impact.
Programme Intended Learning Outcomes	1. Apply social work knowledge and skills with informed professional judgement and ethical adherence to address and handle complex case situation and social issues. 2. Execute the roles and responsibilities of a social worker with integrity and accountability, exercising the profession's values and ethics in all practices.

	3. Apply leadership knowledge and skills leading to the betterment of clients and sustainable development. 4. Design interdisciplinary research-based practice and make use of practice-based research to produce measurable impact and positive changes at individual and community levels. 5. Critically analyse issues and policies that affect different sections of society, both regionally and globally.
Education Pathways	Graduates can pursue their professional development in Master programmes in areas such as Family Therapy, Mental Health Practice, or Social Service Administration. They can also further their study in PhD or Doctor of Social Work (DSW) programmes.
Employment Pathways	Graduates of the programme can register as Registered Social Worker (RSW) (Category 1) with the Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB). Graduates are eligible to take up Assistant Social Work Officer (ASWO) post in Social Welfare Department or equivalent post in Non-governmental organizations (NGOs).
Minimum Admission Requirements	(i) Applicants for admission to the Master of Social Work (MSW) Programme must be in possession of a bachelor's degree with first- or second-class honours from a recognized local or overseas university; OR (ii) Applicants who graduated from degree programmes that do not use an honours system should have a minimum GPA of 3.0 out of a maximum of 4. Preference will be given to applicants who have attained undergraduate training in a social science discipline. Minimum English proficiency requirements As the primary language of instruction in the programme is English, applicants whose entrance qualification is issued by an institution where the medium of instruction is not English should also fulfil the following: ▪ Overall band score ≥ 6.0 in International English Language Testing System (IELTS) (Academic) test; or ▪ Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score of 550 (Paper-based Test) or 79 (Internet-based Test) or 213 (Computer-based Test); or

	▪ Other equivalent qualifications that are acceptable to the University, including degrees from a recognized English medium institution in good standing. Admission interviews will be conducted to select suitable applicants for the programme. Eligible applicants are required to submit a personal statement, describing their motivation for applying for the MSW programme as well as outlining their future professional development plan. As the programme includes a practicum component which requires interaction with local social service users, proficiency in Cantonese is preferred.
Operator	Hong Kong Shue Yan University 香港樹仁大學