



THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK &
SOCIAL ADMINISTRATION**

**SOCIAL WORK
FIELDWORK PLACEMENT
HANDBOOK**

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FIELDWORK PLACEMENT HANDBOOK

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Handbook

This is a Handbook on social work fieldwork placement provided by the Department of Social Work and Social Administration of the University of Hong Kong.

The purpose of this Handbook is to present in a concise and convenient form the general fieldwork programme, and the responsibility and contribution of different parties involved in the process of fieldwork placement, namely the student, agency, fieldwork supervisor, Director of Field Instruction/Deputy Director of Field Instruction and the Department of Social Work and Social Administration.

This Handbook is not meant to be a ‘cook-book manual’ setting up rigid, idealistic or minimal standards in fieldwork placement. It facilitates a basic understanding of expectations for the roles played by different parties in the process of fieldwork placement. Thus, it forms a preliminary basis for the parties to communicate among themselves and work jointly towards the objectives of fieldwork placement.

The nature and objective of fieldwork placement

Fieldwork placement is an integral part of social work education with the emphasis on “learning through doing”. In fieldwork, the student, although a learner, is at the same time dealing directly with life situations. He/she works in a social work agency under the guidance of a fieldwork supervisor and is expected to deliver social work service, commensurate with agency services.

Fieldwork placement gives students opportunities to incorporate theoretical knowledge into social work practice, especially in the following areas:

- a) Demonstrating social work principles and values in their actions and attitudes;
- b) Testing out practice theories and models, and developing practice skills;
- c) Enhancing self-understanding, in order to maximise individual potential and changing behaviours that hamper effective practice;
- d) Developing their own personal style of work, within the bounds of professional practice.

CHAPTER TWO: DESCRIPTION OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAMMES

The Department offers both undergraduate and postgraduate training programmes in social work, leading to the degrees of BSW and MSW respectively.

The BSW Programme

The BSW programme aims to provide a first level professional education for entry into the profession of social work. The curriculum includes the knowledge, values, processes and skills that are essential for the practice of social work. Upon graduation, a student should have attained a generalist training, with a beginning professional level of proficiency and an awareness of his/her responsibility to continue his/her professional development. He/she can also register under the Hong Kong Social Workers Registration Board as a Registered Social Worker in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

The 4-year BSW Curriculum

The curriculum normally extends over four academic years consisting of eight semesters of full-time study. All the courses being designed are in accordance with the SWRB's Principles, Criteria and Standards for Recognizing Qualifications in Social Work for Registration of Registered Social Worker. Listed below is a sample sequence of required courses:

Year 1	SOWK1002. Introduction to social work SOWK1004. Human behaviour and the social environment (I) SOWK1008. Social welfare system and social policy SOWK1009. The reflective practitioner PSYC1001. Introduction to psychology SOC11001. Introduction to sociology or SOC11003. Introduction to anthropology CAES1000. Core University English Three Common Core Courses selecting not more than one course from the same Area of Inquiry Remaining credits are for free electives
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Year 2	<p>SOWK2008. Human behaviour and the social environment (II)</p> <p>SOWK2015. Research on social work practice I.</p> <p>SOWK2107. Foundation of social work practice I</p> <p>SOWK3108. Foundation of social work practice II</p> <p>SOWK3109. Foundation of social work practice III</p> <p>CSSC9001. Practical Chinese for social sciences students</p> <p>or</p> <p>CUND9002. Practical Chinese and Hong Kong society (<i>for Putonghua-speaking students</i>)</p> <p>or</p> <p>CUND9003. Cantonese for non-Cantonese speaking students (<i>for Putonghua-speaking Students</i>)</p> <p>CAES9925. Academic and professional literacies in social work</p> <p>Two to Three Common Core Courses selecting not more than one course from the same Area of Inquiry</p> <p>Remaining credits are for disciplinary or free electives</p>
Year 3	<p>SOWK3010. Research on social work practice II</p> <p>SOWK3015. Social work practice laboratory I</p> <p>SOWK3016. Social work practice laboratory II: Field attachment</p> <p>SOWK3030. Law and social administration</p> <p>Zero to One Common Core Courses selecting not more than one course from the same Area of Inquiry</p> <p>Remaining credits are for disciplinary or free electives</p>
Summer between Year 3 & 4	<p>SOWK4006. Fieldwork placement I</p>
Year 4	<p>SOWK4002. Advanced social work practice I</p> <p>SOWK4003. Advanced social work practice II</p> <p>SOWK4007. Fieldwork placement II</p> <p>SOWK4055. Management in human service organizations</p> <p>Remaining credits are for free electives</p>

Fieldwork Placement for Full-time BSW students

BSW students are required to undertake two periods of fieldwork placements in two different social service agencies during their studies.

Summer Block Placement (Fieldwork Placement I)

This is a ten-week “block placement” that takes place from June to August between the third and fourth years of the 4-year curriculum. In this placement, students will undertake prescribed field practice under supervision in government and/or voluntary social service agencies. Within the five days, students, with the consent from both the fieldwork supervisor and the placement agency unit-in-charge, may be allowed to have time to do library and literature search if necessary. Students can also consider undertaking this summer block placement in overseas countries or Mainland China and they have to go through the selection process in meeting the special requirements.

Concurrent placement (Fieldwork Placement II)

A concurrent placement is made up of twenty-five weeks (two days a week) throughout the first and second semesters in the final year of studies. Students work on Tuesdays and Wednesdays in their placement agencies and attend classes on other days of the week.

Before they engage in their first placement, BSW students have to undergo a comprehensive “Social Work Practice Laboratory” which teaches them the basic skills in casework, group work and community work in both simulated and real-life situations.

The MSW programme

The MSW degree is a two-year programme for full-time students and is extended to three years for part-time students. The curricula for full-time and part-time students differ only in schedule but not in content. The degree is designed to provide a first professional training in the theory and practice of social work for those who intend to make this their career or who are already in the profession. All the courses being designed are in accordance with the SWRB's Principles, Criteria and Standards for Recognizing Qualifications in Social Work. Below is the MSW Programme Curriculum Structure:

Foundation Curriculum

10 Required Core Courses

1. SOWK6002 Social policy and administration
2. SOWK6003 Social work research
3. SOWK6243 Social services management
4. SOWK6303 Human behavior and the social environment I
5. SOWK6304 Human behavior and the social environment II
6. SOWK6305 The law, ethics and social work
7. SOWK6306 Theory and practice of social work - Casework
8. SOWK6307 Theory and practice of social work - Group work
9. SOWK6308 Theory and practice of social work - Community Development
10. SOWK7002 Social science theories for social work

+

Advanced Concentration Curriculum

2 concentration core courses from one of the following concentrations + any 2 other elective courses/ dissertation:

1. Children & youth
2. Family social work
3. Gerontology
4. Health & mental health
5. Policy, community & management practice

+

Field Education (Capstone experience courses)

100 hours of pre-placement workshop – SOWK6300
450 hours of foundation fieldwork placement – SOWK6225
450 hours of advanced fieldwork placement – SOWK6231

Fieldwork placement for MSW students

MSW students are required to undertake two periods of fieldwork placements in two different social service agencies during their studies.

Full-time MSW Students

Summer Block Placement (Field Placement I)

The first placement is a summer block placement which takes place in the summer between year one and two. From June to August, students are required to work for 10 weeks, with 450 hours for the placement, which is 45 hours per week that usually spread across 5 or 5.5 working days. Students can also consider undertaking this summer block placement in overseas countries or Mainland China and they have to go through the selection process in meeting the special requirements.

Concurrent Placement (Field Placement II)

The second placement is a concurrent placement. It is made up of twenty-eight weeks of practice learning in a social service agency throughout the first and second semesters of the final year of study. Students will work on Tuesdays and Wednesdays in agencies to complete 450 placement hours and attend classes during the rest of the week.

Part-Time MSW Students

Part-time MSW students are required to undertake two concurrent placements during their studies. Each concurrent placement is made up of 450 hours within twenty-eight weeks (4 sessions per week) throughout the first and second semesters in the second and final year of study.

For part-time students working in social service agencies, they may undergo one on-the-job (attached) fieldwork placement. In such case, the student will be assigned a fieldwork supervisor from the Department who will, after consultation with the student's agency supervisor, work out the student's fieldwork assignments in order to match the student's academic level.

Summer placement for part-time MSW students

For the part-time MSW students, whose application for changing a concurrent placement to a summer block placement has been approved, will undergo a summer block placement during the summer before their graduating year. Students are required to finish the number of working hours (450-hour placement working for 5 or 5.5 days a week for MSW students) within the period of summer block placement. Request for special arrangement will be considered only if sufficient and appropriate reasons are submitted in written application. Students can also

consider undertaking this summer block placement in overseas countries or Mainland China and they have to go through the selection process in meeting the special requirements.

CHAPTER THREE: FIELDWORK PLACEMENT: STRUCTURE AND ADMINISTRATION

General information

The Fieldwork Placement is designed in such a way that individual students will, as far as possible, experience a variety in their fieldwork placements of different settings dealing with a wide range of problems and situations, and have the opportunities to learn how to use at least two methods of social work. Placements are classified according to settings and natures of work, such as:

1. Community Development Services
2. Services for the Elderly
3. Family Services
4. Medical Social Work Services
5. Multicultural Social Work Services
6. Rehabilitation Services
7. School Social Work Services
8. Services for Children and Youth
9. Overseas/Mainland Fieldwork Placement

Students may be placed alone or in a group of two or three students. A fieldwork supervisor will be responsible for the field teaching. The fieldwork supervisor can either be a fieldwork supervisor employed by the University or an agency staff member appointed by the agency. The fieldwork supervisor will hold regular individual and group supervision with the students in planning their assignments, discussing their work and to make ongoing assessments of the students' performance. (Please refer to Chapter Four for a more detailed description of the role of a fieldwork supervisor).

Generally speaking, all placements are concerned with the same broad areas of learning/teaching i.e. knowledge, skills and attitudes. However, as students progress through different levels of learning and training in their curriculum, their needs at these different stages require different considerations. Thus, the learning/teaching goals of the first placement are somewhat different from those of the final one.

The emphasis of the first placement is to help students to acquaint themselves with social work values and assumptions, to embark on a process of continuous self-assessment and self-analysis

for the purpose of learning, to develop a professional stance and attitude in their work and to acquire some basic social work skills. As beginning student workers, students are expected to learn how to establish their role in the agency, start to build up their knowledge on community resources and attempt to apply what is learnt in class to the field situation. They have also to learn listening, observation, organising, planning and relating skills. They have to start developing a systematic approach towards exploration, analysis and taking action.

The final placement serves as a transition in role-learning from being a student social worker to a full-fledged social worker. Students are encouraged to develop self-responsibility and greater sophistication in their work. They are expected to have consolidated the knowledge and experience gained in their previous placement. They have to take more initiative, and use their judgement and personal abilities in carrying out their work, systematically and independently. They have also to be prepared to cope with work pressure and deal with emergency and crisis situations. Students should be aware of their own strengths and weaknesses and be ready to make continuous efforts to further develop in professional competence after graduation.

Specific expectations on student's performance are listed in details in the *Explanatory Notes on Student Fieldwork Practice Evaluation Report (A-10b)*.

Allocation of fieldwork placements

The essential task of allocation of fieldwork placement is done by the Director of Field Instruction/Deputy Director of Field Instruction together with fieldwork supervisors and teaching staffs of the Department.

The Director of Field Instruction/Deputy Director of Field Instruction will be responsible for the exploration of suitable fieldwork placements and the initial negotiation with agency personnel about the number and types of students, the nature of work and the fieldwork period. He/she will be responsible for making the arrangements taking into consideration the overall needs for types and numbers of placements.

In allocating students to placement settings the following factors are taken into consideration:

1. Number of offers from different agencies
2. Special requirements stated by agencies (e.g. maturity, year of study, program of study, sex and religion, etc.)
3. Students' choices

4. Students' learning progress and learning needs, based on recommendations on their performance by their teachers and their previous experiences
5. Total number of students in competing for the same placement choice
6. Students' academic performance
7. Suitability of students (e.g. physically, psychologically and academically)

Unless sufficient reasons are given, appeal from the students for any change of placement arrangements is normally not considered.

Evaluation

Student's performance in the fieldwork will be evaluated and assessed by the fieldwork supervisor throughout the placement; **and a passed grade for Student Fieldwork Placement will only be awarded if the student obtains a grade D or above for BSW and MSW students, in the Section One (Professional Requirements) of the Fieldwork Placement Student Evaluation Report (A-10a). A failed grade in "Professional Requirements" will lead to a failed grade in this Student Fieldwork Placement regardless of student's performance in other assessment areas.**

When a placement ends, the student has to round up his/her task assignments in the agency properly according to the administrative requirements of the placement agency and to submit relevant written assignments to both the agency and the fieldwork supervisor within two weeks or according to the request of the placement agency.

Student is required to complete the *Student's Review of the Placement Experience Report (A-08)* and submit it to the fieldwork supervisor before the final evaluation.

The *Fieldwork Placement Student Evaluation Report (A-10a)* should be prepared by the fieldwork supervisor within one month after the end of placement. The supervisor should discuss with the student about the content and result of the evaluation. It should be submitted to the Department according to requirements.

If a student fails to finish and hand in written assignments within two weeks after the placement ends, he/she is deemed to be given a failed grade of the placement for being not able to complete the placement properly.

The fieldwork grade given by the fieldwork supervisor is a recommended grade only. The proposed grade will be reviewed and endorsed by the Internal Examiners assigned by Department. The recommendation given by the Internal Examiners and BoE of Department

are the “final grade”.

Student should sign his/her name on the last page of the Form A-10a to **acknowledge that he/she has read through the report**. The student could state his/her comment(s) on the part of “student’s remarks” of the report, if any.

Failed in field practice

A student who fails a placement is normally required to undertake another period of fieldwork practice to make up for the failure. According to the degree regulations of the BSW/MSW program, if he/she fails again, he/she may be required to discontinue his/her study of the programme. If a fieldwork supervisor finds that a student is at risk of failing, he/she should give early warning to the student, at the mid-placement evaluation or at time appropriate, specifying the areas that need to be improved and stating clearly the expectations. He/she may also keep the Director of Field Instruction/Deputy Director of Field Instruction informed of the situation. At the end of the placement period, if a fieldwork supervisor decides to fail a student, he/she must let the student know as soon as possible.

However, during the placement period, a student may be discontinued from fieldwork placement and be given a failed grade if he/she displays one or more of the following kinds of behaviour:

1. Behaviour so damaging to others that his/her immediate removal from placement is necessary to protect the agency, the community, the student and/or clients. Examples of such are physically and/or psychologically abusing a client; extremely inappropriate behaviour which is disruptive to the reputation or functioning of the agency and/or to its clients; illegal or immoral behaviour.
2. A recurrent series of irresponsible and/or inappropriate behaviour with no signs of improvement despite repeated assistance, and/or verbal and written warning from the fieldwork supervisor over a reasonable period of time. An example is chronic absenteeism from work and/or supervision.

A student who has failed his/her fieldwork practice because of the above-mentioned behaviour may not necessarily be offered another placement opportunity.

A student who objects to being given a failed grade by the fieldwork supervisor or disagrees with not being offered a chance to repeat after being discontinued from a placement under circumstances stipulated above, may appeal to the Department Head and request for a review.

However, he/she should first of all consult the Director of Field Instruction/Deputy Director of Field Instruction. The Head then will appoint an “Appeal Board” to look into the issue. (For details, please refer to the paper on “*Appeal Procedures for a Student who Objects to Being Given a Failed Grade by the Fieldwork Supervisor*” (A-13))

CHAPTER FOUR: RESPONSIBILITIES OF FIELDWORK SUPERVISORS

The fieldwork supervisor's role

The fieldwork supervisor is the main person responsible for the student's learning in the field, other than the student him/herself. The fieldwork supervisor acts as a model for the student; he/she transmits to the student his/her own knowledge, skills and attitudes relevant to his/her field of practice and to social work in general. Moreover, the fieldwork supervisor has the primary responsibility to create and maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning, based on the understanding that each student has his/her own values, attitudes and learning pattern.

One basic element within this atmosphere is the relationship between the fieldwork supervisor and the student. It is a relationship based on mutual respect for each other's ideas and feelings. Trust is essential, as the teacher and student will be looking at personal strengths and weaknesses, in relation to the work, which inevitably involves self-disclosure. The student may need time to adjust to this new experience and to the individual fieldwork supervisor's style of teaching.

To ensure that a student maximizes his/her learning in fieldwork placement, the fieldwork supervisor carries triple roles: as an administrator, an educator, and a facilitator. As an administrator he/she prepares the student for placement, promotes the "goodness of fit" between the student and the placement agency, plans and monitors the student's work throughout the placement period. As an educator he/she helps the student to apply theory to practice and teaches the student practice skills, to enable student to reflect upon his/her own values. As a facilitator he/she supports the student in the setting and enhances the student's self-understanding and development. For a more detailed description of the fieldwork supervisor's responsibilities, please refer to the "*List of Fieldwork Supervisor's Tasks*" (A-01).

Preparation for placement

Before the placement starts, the fieldwork supervisor can get a preliminary understanding of the student by reading his/her file, which contains his/her basic personal data, autobiographical essay, coursework grades, tutor's comments and any previous evaluation reports. (Students' files are available in the Department Office).

If the fieldwork supervisor is not a staff of the agency in which the student will be placed, he/she should arrange a preparatory meeting with the agency or service unit supervisor to familiarise himself/herself with the services, organisation and style of the agency, to establish

partnership with the agency in-charge and to explore into the possible fieldwork assignments for the student. This preparatory meeting is particularly essential if the fieldwork supervisor is new to the service unit or the unit is receiving HKU students for the first time.

A pre-placement meeting with the student is also useful, where an initial contract should be discussed. Learning objectives are then negotiated and mutually agreed upon. Student's learning needs and objectives should be relating to academic and practice expectations as well as the opportunities provided by the agency, while taking the student's own special interests and capabilities into consideration. These learning objectives should be spelt out clearly, and going through the *Fieldwork Placement Student Evaluation Report (A-10a)* can be a good starting point for setting out these objectives in the pre-placement meeting.

There should be some form of agreement between every fieldwork supervisor and his/her students about learning goals, assignments, and various other practices. It is compulsory to write these agreements down; they may take reference of the "*Guidelines for a written learning contract in fieldwork placemen (A-04)*" in formulating the agreement.

Orientation (see also, Chapter Six "Responsibilities of Agencies")

When the placement starts, the fieldwork supervisor should arrange an Orientation Programme within the agency, where the agency services, functions, policies, organisation and personnel will be introduced to the student. If possible, it is helpful to have agency staff discussing with the students and their work within the agency. Reading materials about the agency (agency reports, manuals and files) and visiting other agencies/units' may also be given to the students in the Orientation Programme.

The fieldwork supervisor should also seek opportunities from the agency to allow students to participate in staff meetings, case conferences and staff development programmes as much as possible. Observational visits to related agencies are also encouraged.

Assignments

Assignments which are directed to the educational goals of the student are given to the student after this initial Orientation Programme. Consideration of the special characteristic of different placements should be made when designing the assignments, with respect to the first and final placements respectively.

For students, the first placement is often an exploratory experience which can be emotionally, intellectually and physically challenging. They are given chances to understand the agency culture, the roles of social workers and the team work among different workers. This is especially true for summer block placement, in which, they are attached at placement units for five days a week, they are encouraged to experience the real life of social workers. Thus, assignments given can be those that are relatively simple and service-oriented, which involve the use of basic skills.

At the final placement, students have normally incorporated fundamental social work principles into their work and are keen to try out the different practice methods they learned in class. More complicated assignments can be given, where they can consolidate learning in areas such as assessment, students should also be given certain freedom of choice in selecting intervention methods, so that they can explore different practice approaches. They should be ready to deal with more challenging situations, (e.g. working with resistant or hostile clients, advocating for clients) and should have a chance to show independence and initiative in planning and implementing projects.

In summary, good assignments are those set appropriately for individual students' learning progress; not only would they challenge the students, but also encourage further learning. Good assignments should be an incentive for students to pursue further learning in an extended range of social work situations or at a more skilful level of functioning.

It is always necessary to observe the quantity of assignments given. The student should be kept fully occupied but at the same time, must have the time to reflect, analyse and appraise his/her work assignments, both from the point of view of his/her own performance, and in relation to the wider context of social work issues in Hong Kong. The Department has made some suggestions in the "*General Requirements on Student Workload in Fieldwork Placements*" (A-03) for the reference of the various parties involved.

Documentation

Recording can be an important tool in learning. It facilitates students to reflect analytically on their work and performance. It can also provide a basis for supervision and is a means of evaluating students' performance. The type of recording required depends very much on the characteristics of the placement. Process recording is strongly recommended to be used selectively for specific purposes, and may probably be used more often in the first placement.

Students are required to record their observations of facts and feelings clearly and accurately.

Comments made need to be substantiated. Students should be encouraged to progress towards more analytical and evaluative records. They must be able to write logs, summaries, project plans and reports, etc. Students must submit their written work at least 24 hours before each supervision session to allow adequate time for the supervisor to give feedback.

When the placement comes to the end, students are required to hand in all documents according to the requirements of the placement agencies or within two weeks after the termination of placement. If the written assignments cannot be completed within two weeks, the student is deemed to receive a failure grade for failing to complete the placement within a reasonable period of time.

The “*General Requirements on Student Workload in Fieldwork Placement*” (A-03) provides a clear specification on written work required of the students.

Confidentiality

The fieldwork supervisor has the responsibility to ensure that the students learn how to keep clients’ data confidential, in line with the ethical practice of the profession and the requirements of the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance, 1995. The attached “*Record-Keeping: Guidelines for Students in Fieldwork Placement*” (A-05) spells out in detail the procedures that the students and the fieldwork supervisors should follow in handling this matter.

Supervision

Before supervisory sessions, fieldwork supervisors need to read the written work (reports, proposals, recordings, etc.) handed in by students, or listen to/watch the audio/video records of students’ intervention process, and to make notes to be shared with students, focusing on specific, mutually agreed learning goals. Use of digital devices for recording students’ interaction with clients is encouraged, as this is an accurate way to record students’ performance. Not only is this record useful for assessment, it also facilitates fieldwork supervisors to give specific feedback and provide useful guidance to the students on how their performance can be improved. However, students’ feelings and readiness to be “recorded” have to be carefully considered. If trust and confidence have not been sufficiently developed, and the recording is done reluctantly, the effect on the teaching and learning process may be counter-productive. It is also of paramount importance that clients’ consent and agency’s approval are obtained. An *Audio and Video Recording Consent Form* (A-06) is available in this manual for clients to sign before the recording takes place. However, should the agency have a standard form for similar purpose, the agency form should be sufficient. Alternatively, fieldwork supervisors can also observe students’ intervention sessions directly through live supervision and provide

on-the-spot guidance if appropriate. Again, this should be preceded by careful preparation and the consent from the concerned parties must be obtained.

Fieldwork supervisors should write notes before supervision, about what needs to be clarified, shared and discussed during supervision, and should keep a record (supervision log) of what was discussed in the supervision, after the session. This task may seem tedious, but this is essential in providing continuity from session to session. It is also very helpful, when it comes to writing the final *Student Evaluation Report (A-10a)*. Regularly scheduled and uninterrupted supervisory session of at least 1.5 hours for concurrent placement and 2 hours for summer block placement weekly during the placement period must be provided. This may be an individual session, group or a combination of individual and group sessions, depending on the nature of work, the needs of students and students' learning progress. In accordance with the SWRB's requirement, 50% or more of the required supervision hours should be conducted on an individual basis for each student. Supervision is expected to be conducted in the students' placement setting if possible, as to enable the supervisor's understanding of the characteristics and dynamics of the placement agency. In accordance with the SWRB's requirement, 50% or more of the required supervision hours should be conducted on-site.

Evaluation

Evaluation is an on-going process throughout the placement period. Fieldwork supervisors monitor students' work and assess students' performance through various means, such as students' written and verbal reports, observation of students at work, audio/video recordings of students' intervention process and comments from agency staff and clients. Supervisors should also give regular and on-going feedback on the students' progress in supervision.

A mid-placement evaluation is required, to alert both the student and the fieldwork supervisor to whether satisfactory progress is being made towards the agreed goals. A *Mid-Placement Review Report (A-07a, A-07b)* for supervisors and students respectively are provided for this purpose. A new or continuing contract can then be negotiated.

In the final evaluation session at the end of a placement, fieldwork supervisors share with students the evaluation of students' performance based on the items in the *Fieldwork Placement Student Evaluation Report (A-10a)*. This should be a sum-up of earlier discussions rather than criticisms. Reference can also be made of the opinions on the student's performance of the staff of the placement unit. An *Agency Feedback Form on the Student's Performance (A-09)* has been designed to collect such opinions.

Prior to this final evaluation session, students should write up and submit to the fieldwork supervisors the *Student's Review of the Placement Experience Report (A-08)*. Fieldwork supervisors should consider views expressed in students' report when writing up the final evaluation report. Students should also complete the *Student Feedback Form on Fieldwork Placement (online submission) (A-11)* and submit to the Department Office before the final evaluation meeting with their fieldwork supervisors takes place. This is to ensure that the students could channel their feedback directly to the Director of Field Instruction/Deputy Director of Field Instruction and their feedback would not affect their evaluation by the fieldwork supervisor.

Students have the right to read the final evaluation report and to write down any difference of opinion between him/herself and the fieldwork supervisor at the end of the *Student Evaluation Report (A-10a)*. (See also Chapter Three, subsection on "Evaluation")

Contributions and responsibilities towards the University

By acting as a field teacher to the social work student, the fieldwork supervisor is contributing to a great extent to social work education, by linking class teaching to field practice. He/she also contributes by communicating experiences in the field back to the Department that may have implications for curriculum revision.

Fieldwork supervisors are expected to attend and participate in the training programmes organised by the Department, which are designed to meet informational and educational needs of fieldwork supervisors and students. When the fieldwork supervisor cannot resolve student problems him/herself, he/she should discuss with the Director of Field Instruction/Deputy Director of Field Instruction as early as possible to remedy the situation.

Contributions and responsibilities towards the agency

The fieldwork supervisor needs to liaise with the agency in the following areas: planning orientation programme, securing the physical facilities (such as a desk, a place to sit, use of computer, stationeries or clerical assistance), getting assignments, discussing programme or project feasibility, making estimates for projects, defining responsibilities and lines of communication, (e.g. who is responsible for countersigning outgoing letters).

Though the student is primarily responsible for him/herself, the fieldwork supervisor needs to ensure that the student's work meets agency requirements, not only in his/her work with clients,

but also the agency policy, routines and procedures (e.g. form usage, recording, reports, statistics and minutes).

The fieldwork supervisor should evaluate the student's learning experience with agency staff for better co-operation in the future. Mid-placement and final evaluation meetings should be arranged with the participation of students and related agency staff.

CHAPTER FIVE: RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS

Responsibility to agency

The fieldwork supervisors are, generally speaking, accountable to the agency for work done by the students, but the students are expected to act responsibly towards the agency. Students will be working in the community on behalf of the agency and will be perceived by clients as agency staff. It is important that students' action, behaviour and dress reflect acceptable agency practice.

Students are expected to comply with agency policies and procedures and to carry out requirements as agency staff, in relation to work assignments. For instance, they must meet agency requirements of record-keeping, report writing, submission of budgets for projects and completion of statistical data. If a student is working in a team or in a multi-disciplinary setting, he/she is expected to co-operate as a team-member and be responsible for keeping others informed of his/her work.

Students work normal agency hours on fieldwork days, though this can be modified at the discretion of the fieldwork supervisor and the agency. Students must be prepared to be flexible about working hours and to do evening and weekend work when necessary. However, students must be given compensatory leave for overtime work, and this should be taken as soon as possible and should not be accumulated.

Students follow the normal practice of submitting a medical certificate if they are sick for more than two consecutive placement days. Time off, for special reasons, is given at the discretion of the fieldwork supervisor. However, a student who misses in total more than two days of fieldwork practice, for any reason, will be asked to make up for the days of fieldwork placement missed.

For details about the placement hour's calculation, please refer to *The Guidelines on Placement Hours Calculation*. (A-15)

Responsibility to clients

Students should introduce themselves as "Student-social-workers" (實習社工) to the clients unless this practice contravenes the agency's advice. In this case, fieldwork supervisor has the responsibility to ensure that the agency's advice is clearly understood and followed.

The student him/herself is responsible for what he/she does with client systems and target groups, though the fieldwork supervisor is responsible for seeing that the work assigned is within his/her capacity.

Besides his/her direct work with client groups, the student him/herself should be making necessary contacts with other agencies and organisations relating to his/her assignments, including contacts with authority figures. Similarly, he/she should be responsible for any written communications to outside bodies, though his/her letters may have to be countersigned by the fieldwork supervisor, or by a member of staff, according to agency practice.

Responsibility to fieldwork supervisor and self-responsibility in learning

The student must keep a contract or arrangement made with the fieldwork supervisor regarding supervision and work procedures. For instance, he/she must be properly prepared for supervision and submits required records and reports 24 hours before each supervision session.

The student is expected to co-operate with the fieldwork supervisor in the on-going process of evaluating his/her own performance and to participate in the mid-placement and final evaluation sessions. (See also Chapter Four, subsection on “Evaluation”)

Students are expected to show initiative in seeking learning opportunities themselves. They are expected to look out for resource materials and to read up areas relating to their work that have not yet been covered in class.

They should be learning from every possible source, not only from the fieldwork supervisor, and, so far as agency size and structure permits, should be making the most of opportunities to meet with agency personnel and to attend agency activities such as conferences, staff development programmes and social occasions, whenever they have the chance. They can also initiate visits to other agencies and organisations connected with their work, thus learning from other agencies, besides their own placement agency.

If a student finds particular problems in the content of the contract (e.g. the workload is too heavy or too unrelated to classwork), which cannot be resolved in discussion with the fieldwork supervisor, he/she should consult the Director of Field Instruction/Deputy Director of Field Instruction for help.

At the completion of a fieldwork placement, each student will be invited to give his/her feedback on the placement experience by on-line submission of “*Student Feedback Form on*

Fieldwork Placement” (A-11).

All students are required to complete written assignments and submit them for fieldwork supervisors’ review **within two weeks** after the end of placement. A student is deemed to **receive a failure grade** for the placement if he/she fails to complete the placement written assignments properly accordingly to the requirement.

CHAPTER SIX: RESPONSIBILITIES OF AGENCIES

The agency is expected to provide adequate channels of communication among itself, the fieldwork supervisor, and the Director of Field Instruction/Deputy Director of Field Instruction so that smooth liaison and two-way feedback are achieved. To facilitate student learning, the agency has to meet the following requirements.

Working space, equipment, expenses

The agency is expected to provide adequate physical space for the students' use, besides essential equipment. "Adequate" can be widely interpreted and limited working space is often seen in most agencies; flexibility and communications between the agency and the student(s) are often necessary in order to compromise smoothly with each other. However, student(s) should minimally be given somewhere to keep their belongings, somewhere to sit and write, somewhere suitable to conduct interviews, groups and meetings, according to their work assignments. The fieldwork supervisor also needs a place to have supervision sessions with the student(s).

If records have to be typed up, a computer with word-processing software must be available to the student; agency should also provide support for using different office equipment (e.g. computer, photocopier, fax machine, projectors, etc.) if such assistance is also available to other staff.

Agencies are expected to reimburse students for expenses incurred in carrying out approved agency programmes and assignments (e.g. travel expenses, materials). The Department of Social Work and Social Administration will not provide any financial support for programmes/activities for students' placements.

Orientation

Agencies have to co-operate with the fieldwork supervisor in arranging an orientation programme for students at the beginning of placements. The exact nature of the programme and the division of responsibility between the agency and the fieldwork supervisor will vary from setting to setting. The guiding factor should be "keep to the essentials". Students need sufficient knowledge and information about agency framework, function and practice to enable them to start working on their assignments. They need to be introduced to key personnel with whom they will be working and to know to whom they can turn for help, in the absence of the fieldwork supervisor.

Students often benefit more from programmes that are spread over the initial weeks rather than concentrated in the first few days, as they can relate the new information to their own experience and retain it more satisfactorily. Introductory talks, films, discussions on agency policy and practice, given by agency personnel, are helpful. Reading materials such as manuals, agency reports and recordings, should be made available to students for information and to stimulate discussion.

Visits to other agencies, government offices and relevant organisations are normally arranged by the fieldwork supervisor and/or setting coordinator.

Learning opportunities

Agencies have to co-operate with the fieldwork supervisor in planning assignments for students. Choice of assignments must depend partly on current agency programmes and planning but it is helpful if the agency can offer different alternatives. Assignments have to be selected according to the individual student's learning needs at his/her particular stage of learning. Students must have assignments that provide the necessary opportunities for them to acquire knowledge, to develop skills and to perform a service at the level required by the University, although a certain amount of flexibility is required in balancing the students' needs and the agency's needs.

The agency has to give as many opportunities as possible for students to learn about agency administration, policies and practice throughout the placement. Students should be encouraged to meet with agency workers, formally and informally, though chances for this vary according to the size and structure of the agency. They should also be given the opportunity to participate in any project planning or conferences relating directly to his/her own work whenever possible, and should have chances to join in other agency meetings and social functions whenever this is practicable.

Evaluation

The unit-in-charge or a relevant person from the agency should be present at the mid-placement review meeting and the final evaluation meeting, as well as to fill out the *Agency Feedback Form on the Student's Performance (A-09)* at the ending phase of the placement, which will be provided to the agency by the supervisor in due course.

CHAPTER SEVEN: RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT

The Department discharges its responsibilities to students, fieldwork supervisors and agencies for the planning, implementation and evaluation of the fieldwork programme, as well as other relevant duties, through the Director of Field Instruction/Deputy Director of Field Instruction.

Responsibilities to students

The Director of Field Instruction/Deputy Director of Field Instruction meets with the students formally and informally to obtain feedback from them about the fieldwork placements. Before students are actually sent out to the field, the Director of Field Instruction/Deputy Director of Field Instruction will hold a briefing session with the students to give them a general orientation on the roles they have to play as student workers in an agency, as well as the particular characteristics and expectations of certain types of placement.

All students are given the right to state their preferences for the setting that they would like to go to for fieldwork. The student's preferences will be taken into consideration and discussed among the teachers and fieldwork supervisors. Director of Field Instruction/Deputy Director of Field Instruction will take teachers' opinion as reference and then work out the final allocation of placement places. The final decision regarding where the individual student will have his placement rests on the Department.

The Director of Field Instruction/Deputy Director of Field Instruction keeps in touch with the fieldwork supervisors and the students to chart the progress of the students who are encouraged to bring to his/her notice any problems or difficulties they might face should they fail to resolve them with their own fieldwork supervisors. Sometimes, students may prefer to channel their "grievances" to their personal tutors who are teaching staff assigned by the Department, who in turn direct such information to the Director of Field Instruction/Deputy Director of Field Instruction. In situations where it is thought necessary for all parties concerned to come together, the Director of Field Instruction/Deputy Director of Field Instruction will then convene a meeting in which the student will sit together with the fieldwork supervisor to sort things out.

Responsibilities to fieldwork supervisors

The Department has responsibilities to provide the necessary support, information, and staff development programmes to fieldwork supervisors to help them carry out their job smoothly and effectively.

For new fieldwork supervisors, both university-employed and agency supervisors alike, the Director of Field Instruction/Deputy Director of Field Instruction will arrange a short induction programme, on the major aspects of fieldwork placement, like the role of the fieldwork supervisor, how to assign work to students, and student evaluation. Meetings will be conducted to free-lance and agency-based fieldwork supervisors from time to time to discuss various aspects pertaining to the students' progress, work in the agency and any problems in fieldwork placement.

The Director of Field Instruction/Deputy Director of Field Instruction and teaching staffs of the Department will organise staff development seminars on social work education and social welfare for fieldwork supervisors. Whenever the occasion arises, visiting lecturers and professors will be invited to conduct these seminars.

Responsibilities to agencies

The Director of Field Instruction/Deputy Director of Field Instruction tailors the fieldwork programme to changing needs and current developments in the field. Therefore, the Directors regularly consult agencies and other related organisations, in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the fieldwork placements.

The Department has always been well aware and appreciative of the commitment of agencies which offer facilities and staff time for the fieldwork placement of students. And, in responding to such goodwill, the Department tries, as far as possible, to participate actively in agency activities such as providing professional consultation and helping to conduct staff development seminars, carrying out research projects, engaging in committee work.