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DISCUSSION DOCUMENT ON GLOBAL QUALIFYING STANDARDS FOR SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION AND TRAINING

PREAMBLE

The Global Minimum Qualifying Standards[1] Committee was set up as a joint initiative of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) and the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) at the joint IASSW/IFSW Conference in Montreal, Canada in July 2000. (See Appendix A for a list of the Committee members). This discussion document has been put together with the input of various Committee members, a review of relevant documents and some consultation with colleagues[2]

On the whole there was a favourable response to IASSW and IFSW developing a standards setting document that elucidates what social work represents on a global level. This document that identifies certain universals, may be used as guidelines to develop national standards with regard to social work education and training. Such international standards should reflect some consensus around key issues, roles and purposes of social work. However, given the profession's historically fragmented strands; the contemporary debates around social work's intra-professional identity; its identity *vis-à-vis* other categories of personnel in the welfare sector such as social pedagogues, development workers, child care workers, probation officers, community workers and youth workers (where such categories of personnel are differentiated from social work); and the enormous diversities across nations and regions, there was some scepticism about the possibility of identifying any such "universal". The suggestion was that such a standard setting document must be sufficiently flexible to be applicable to any context. Such flexibility should allow for interpretations of locally specific social work education and practice, and take into account each country's or region's socio-political, cultural, economic and historical contexts while adhering to international norms and standards.

The main reasons for the development of such a standard setting document were to (stated in no particular order of priority):

X   Protect the "consumers" or "clients"[3] of social work services;

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[1] As "minimum standards" appear to be too prescriptive, the suggestion at the IASSW Board meeting in Chile in January 2002, was that we refer to "Global qualifying Standards for Social Work Education and Training". This is a more appealing alternative considering the main paradigm adopted in the document. Also while each component of the standards may represent a minimum, put together, the document reflects quite a sophisticated level of education and training.

[2] Discussions were held with Faculty from Grand Valley State University, Grand Rapids, Michigan; representatives from Michigan State University, Hope College and Calvin College, Michigan; representatives from Social Work and the Social Welfare Training Institute – University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, Jamaica; and with the Joint Universities Committee on Social Work Education, South Africa.

[3] These concepts are problematic as they reflect the traditional bio-medical model, which supports the notion of the service user as a passive recipient of social work services with the social worker as "expert" who knows best, and an implication of a hierarchical worker-client relationship, characterized by a so-called neutrality. It is antithetical to the holistic biopsychosocial health model which views people as active agents in change processes and structures, and to empowerment based practice which calls for active involvement, rather than a detached neutrality, on the part of practitioners. However, in the absence of a more suitable alternative these

> Take account of the impact of globalization on social work curricula and social work practice;
> Facilitate articulation across Universities on a global level;
> Facilitate the movement of social workers from one country to another;
> Draw a distinction between social workers and non-social workers;
> Benchmark national standards against international standards;
> Facilitate partnerships and international student and staff exchange programmes;
> Enable IASSW and IFSW, in developing such standards, to play a facilitative role in helping those faculties, centres, departments or schools of social work[4] that lack resources to meet such standards.
> Give practical expression to the aim of IASSW as some saw the formulation of global qualifying standards to be the core business of IASSW.

Clearly not all of the above expressed purposes are feasible e.g. it is not feasible via such an endeavour to draw a distinction between social workers and non-social workers, neither might we be able to realise the objective of protecting "clients" through standards setting on a universal level. Facilitating the movement of social workers from one country to another is a contentious issue in view of the directed recruitment of social workers from some countries to others e.g. from South Africa and the Caribbean to the United Kingdom to the disadvantage of South Africa and the Caribbean. However, from an ethical point of view the migration of those social workers that wish to practice in another country should be enabled and not blocked. Retention of social work skills within countries are dependent on such factors as service conditions, salaries and validation of the profession which need to be addressed on national levels.

A few participants expressed the view that the document should go further to include more practical guidelines. These practical guidelines should include: - a multi-tiered classification for the basic qualification e.g. with a range from the number of years of basic schooling + at least one year of full time social work training to a degree with 3 or 4 years of social work training (the minimum period of practical training should be specified in such a classification); the acknowledgement and recognition of prior learning experiences; and the identification of core competencies, knowledge and skills as applied to context specific realities. Some others expressed concern that such a multi-tiered system may appear to be far too elitist, with perhaps social workers from the Two-Thirds World[5] being more likely to be categorised into the lower ranks. Prescribing lengths of training or number of course credits are problematic, given the variations of the academic year across countries and regions, and the diversities in crediting courses in different contexts. Also, for example, a six to twelve month intensive residential social work programme, with careful selection of mature students with appropriate prior learning experiences and/or related qualifications, might prove to be as valuable as a first degree social work programme with school leaving students. It is the *quality* of the educational programme that must not be compromised. From available information, it would appear that the academization of social work is becoming the norm, with many countries opting for either a 3 or 4 year Bachelors degree in Social Work, with a few countries like Chile being an exception with a 5 year Bachelors degree.

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[4] For the purpose of convenience, the document shall refer to "the school" or "schools" even where the context of study is a faculty, centre or department.

[5] Given the limitations of dichotomies, and the linear modernist implications of the use of words "under-developed", "developing" or "developed" there is preference for the use of the concept "Two Thirds World". The concept reflects, numerically, the majority of the world's population who live in poverty and deprivation,

A minority view was that IFSW and IASSW begin with no document; that a grassroots approach be used in encouraging national bodies to formulate their own norms and standards. These national norms and standards, formulated for example via a five-year action plan, could then be processed into a global qualifying standards document. One does not have to adopt an either/or approach to the development of standards. If we accept the premise that such standards do not represent a finite or static product, but a dynamic process through which we continue building a framework that we aspire towards then we accept that standards setting would involve a global-regional-national-local dialectical interaction. This must involve cross national and cross regional dialogue.

In view of the concern, expressed by participants, that the notion of "minimum qualifying standards" sounds too prescriptive, implying a fixed product, the alternative "Global qualifying standards" has been accepted. Care needs to be taken that in developing global standards we do not further fragment and de-professionalize social work, as so clearly elucidated by Dominelli (1996) in her discussion on the impact of the competencies based approach to social work education and practice. This view was supported by Lorenz (2001:19), who while not invalidating the need for quality control[6] by having some benchmark criteria, warned that it might "trivialise social work skills even further". To circumvent this possibility the Committee has made concerted efforts to transcend the kind of reductionist language, used within many national/regional contexts in their development of unit standards, designed to meet criteria for the competencies-based approach, that fragments social work skills and roles into minute, constituent parts. The Committee acknowledges that there might be merits to the competencies-based approach on national/regional levels. However, this is seen to be far too specific to be applied to the global level.

Questions were raised regarding "minimum" by whose or what standards? Is it possible that "minimum standards" could decrease rather than enhance the profession's standards? An alternative argument was that as "standards" represent an ideal, they could, in effect, come to be "maximum standards" that all Schools of Social Work in all countries and regions are put under pressure to attain. The experience of South Africa in the early 1990s is a case in point. The then Council for Social Work, which was actually a State apparatus designed to uphold the ideology of apartheid, proposed what it called "minimum standards". However, the document actually reflected superior standards and proposed control mechanisms, which, if accepted, would have jeopardised the position and, perhaps, the very existence of Schools of Social Work at the historically disadvantaged black institutions, which were poorly resourced compared with the white universities. Fortunately there was sufficient solidarity among social work educators who rejected the document so it did not become part of the statutory requirement. These concerns provided further ground for omitting the "minimum" from this document. The document does not purport to reflect minimum standards, but standards that Schools of Social Work should consistently aspire towards.

Some colleagues who engaged in the consultation process also expressed concern

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[6] It is envisaged that such quality control will not be instituted at the international level, but on local, national

about the possibility of a western domination. Given the western hegemony in social work education and practice, and that "Western European countries and the USA perhaps have *fairly settled* views of what social work is and what it means to provide *good* social work education" (Payne, 2001:41 – our emphasis), such fears are not unfounded. Australia and Canada also seem to have made tremendous progress in the development of national standards.   Possible ways of preventing a western domination would be to ensure that:

*   There is representation from different regions of the world on the Committee;
*   Social work education and practice takes into account a country's unique historical, political, cultural, social and economic contexts;
*   The unique developmental needs of countries are considered in the formulation of such standards;
*   The profession's developmental status and needs in any given country are considered;
*   Open dialogue across national and regional boundaries is facilitated.

Amongst those who participated during consultations, there was overwhelming concern that context specific realities, and the resources available to individual institutions to meet global standards, are taken into consideration.   In the development of global standards we should not create unintended consequences by disadvantaging some training institutions. As much as global standards may be used to benchmark national norms and standards, as far as possible, national and regional experiences and practices (even where formal standards do not exist) must be incorporated into the formulation of global standards. Where national or regional standards do not exist, IASSW and IFSW should collaborate to facilitate the development of such standards. The circular, interactive and discursive processes of standard formulation and setting can, in these ways, become and remain continuous and dynamic. The process-product dialectic, in the formulation of standards, is vital. While we have necessary pre-determined timeframes, we should not, as far as possible, compromise consultation processes.

Two participants during consultations recommended a two-phased process; the first which would involve consultations to "get everyone on board" that might span a two to six year period. The second phase would consist of submissions by each region/ national body to IASSW to ensure compliance. The recommendations ranged from bi-annual submissions to submissions once in five years. The majority believed that beyond the formulation of a standards document, IASSW/IFSW could play no role, thus these bodies could not really effect any mechanisms to "ensure compliance". Monitoring, conforming to global standards and the possibility of downgrading or up grading of training institutions were not seen as the tasks of IASSW/IFSW.   The roles of IASSW and IFSW would be facilitative and supportive. Payne (2001) pointed out that by virtue of membership with IASSW, training institutions had to uphold at least the following minimum criteria:

*   That social work education takes place after a school leaving certificate has been obtained; and that
*   Social work education takes place at the tertiary level.

These two criteria are accepted as valid for the purpose of this document.

Notwithstanding the concerns expressed regarding the need to take into account context specific realities, and the ambiguities surrounding social work education and practice, this document goes on to detail standards in respect of: the school's core purpose or mission statement, programme objectives and outcomes; programme curricula including fieldwork; professional staff; student social workers; structure, administration, governance and resources; cultural diversity; and social work values and ethics. As a point of departure, the international definition of social work is accepted, and the core purposes of social work are summarised.

INTERNATIONAL DEFINITION OF SOCIAL WORK

In July 2001, both the IASSW and the IFSW reached agreement on adopting the following international definition of social work:

The social work profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Utilising theories of human behaviour and social systems, social work intervenes at the points where people interact with their environments. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work.

Both the definition and the commentaries that follow are set within the parameters of broad ethical principles that cannot be refuted on an ideological level. However, the fact that social work is operationalized differently both within nation states and regional boundaries, and across the world, with its control and status-quo maintaining functions being dominant in some contexts, cannot be disputed. Lorenz (2001) considered the ambiguities, tensions and contradictions of the profession, which have to be constantly negotiated and re-negotiated, rather than resolved, to constitute its success and challenge. It is, perhaps, these very tensions that lends to the richness of the local-global dialectic, and provides legitimacy for the development of global qualifying standards. According to Lorenz (2001:12) "It is its paradigmatic openness that gives this profession the chance to engage with very specific (and constantly changing) historical and political contexts while at the same time striving for a degree of universality, scientific reliability, professional autonomy and moral accountability".

CORE PURPOSES OF SOCIAL WORK

Drawing on available literature, the feedback from colleagues during consultations and the commentary on the international definition of social work the following core purposes of social work have been identified:

• Facilitate the inclusion of marginalized, socially excluded, dispossessed, vulnerable and at-risk groups of people.[7]
• Address and challenge barriers, inequalities and injustices that exist in society
• Assist and mobilize individuals, families, groups and communities to enhance

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[7] Such concepts lack clear definition. Persons who fall into the categories of being "marginalized", "socially excluded", "dispossessed", "vulnerable" and/or "at risk" may be so defined by individual countries and/or

their well-being and their problem-solving capacities.

• Encourage people to engage in advocacy with regard to pertinent local, national, regional and/or international concerns.

• Advocate for, and/or with people, the formulation and targeted implementation of policies that are consistent with the ethical principles of the profession.

• Advocate for, and/or with people, changes in those structural conditions that maintain people in marginalized, dispossessed and vulnerable positions.

• Work towards the protection of people who are not in a position to do so themselves, for example children in need of care and persons experiencing mental illness or mental retardation within the parameters of accepted and ethically sound legislation.

1. STANDARDS REGARDING THE SCHOOL'S CORE PURPOSE OR MISSION STATEMENT

All schools should aspire toward the development of a core purpose statement or a mission statement which:

1.1 Is (where applicable) consistent with the core purpose or mission statement of the training institution, and where applicable, with the core purpose or mission statement of the key social work national and/or regional body with which it is affiliated.

1.2 Is clearly articulated so those major stakeholders who have an investment in such a core purpose or mission understand it.

1.3 Reflects the values and the ethical principles of social work.

1.4 Reflects aspiration towards equity with regard to the demographic profile of the institution's locality. The core purpose or mission statement should thus incorporate such issues as ethnic and gender representation on the faculty, as well as in recruitment and admission procedures for students.

2. STANDARDS REGARDING PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

In respect of programme objectives and expected outcomes, schools should endeavour to reach the following standards, deemed to be acceptable at the global level:

2.1 A specification of its programme objectives and expected educational outcomes.

2.2 A reflection of the values and ethical principles of the profession in its programme design and implementation.

2.3 Identification of the programme's instructional methods and how these cohere

with achieving both the cognitive and affective development of student social workers.

2.4   An indication of how the programme reflects the core knowledge, processes, values and skills of the social work profession, as applied in context specific realities.

2.5   An indication of how an initial level of proficiency with regard to self-reflective and accountable use of knowledge and skills is to be attained by student social workers.

2.6   An indication of how the programme coheres with nationally and/or regionally defined professional goals, and how the programme addresses local, national and regional developmental needs and priorities.

2.7   Notwithstanding 2.6 above, as social work does not operate in a vacuum, the programme should reflect consideration of the impact of interacting cultural, economic, communication, social, political and psychological global features.

2.8   Provision of quality educational preparation that is relevant to beginning social work practice with individuals, families, groups and communities.

2.9   Self-study to assess the extent to which its programme objectives and expected outcomes are being achieved.

2.10   External peer evaluation as far as is reasonable and financially viable. This may be in the form of external peer moderation of assignments and/or written examinations and dissertations, and external peer review and assessment of curricula.

2.11   The conferring of a distinctive social work qualification at the certificate, diploma, first degree or post-graduate level as approved by national and/or regional qualification authorities, where such authorities exist.

3.   *STANDARDS WITH REGARD TO PROGRAMME CURRICULA INCLUDING FIELDWORK*

With regard to standards regarding programme curricula, schools should consistently aspire towards the following:

3.1   The curricula and methods of instruction being consistent with the school's programme objectives and its expected outcomes.

3.2   Clear plans for the organization, implementation and evaluation of the theory and field education components of the programme.

3.3   Specific attention to the constant review and development of the curricula.

3.4   Ensuring that the curricula helps student social workers to develop skills of

critical thinking and scholarly attitudes of reasoning, openness to new experiences and paradigms, and commitment to life-long learning.

3.5 Field educational contexts that provide for clearly designed and purposeful learning experiences that contribute to the holistic development of student social workers.

3.6 Planned co-ordination and cooperation between the school and agencies that are selected for fieldwork education.

3.7 The planning and implementation of orientation sessions for fieldwork supervisors or instructors.

3.8 Focussed attention to educating non-social work fieldwork instructors or supervisors of the programme objectives and expected outcomes, and the ethical principles of the profession.[8]

3.9 Provision for the inclusion and participation of field instructors in curriculum development, especially with regard to field education.

3.10 A partnership between the educational institution and the agency in decision-making regarding field education and the evaluation of student's fieldwork performance.

3.11 Making available, to fieldwork instructors or supervisors, a field instruction manual that details its fieldwork standards, procedures and expectations.

3.12 Ensuring that adequate and appropriate resources, to meet the needs of the fieldwork component of the programme, are made available.

4. STANDARDS WITH REGARD TO CORE CURRICULA

In respect core curricula, schools should aspire toward the following standards deemed to be acceptable at the global level:

4.1 An identification of, and selection for inclusion in the programme, curricula as determined by local, national and/or regional needs and priorities.

4.2 A description of the objectives of each of the core curricula components, an explanation of their sequencing and, if the course or module is not taught in the school, an identification of the department responsible for teaching it.

4.3 Notwithstanding the provision of 4.1 there are certain core curricula that may be seen to be universally applicable. Thus the school should ensure that student social workers, by the end of their exit level Social Work qualification, have exposure to the following core curricula which are organised into four conceptual components:

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[8] In some countries legislation requires that field supervisors be qualified social workers while some go further

4.3.1 Domain of Social Work

• A critical understanding of how socio-structural inadequacies, discrimination, oppression, and social, political and economic injustices impact human functioning and development at all levels, including the global.
* Knowledge of human behaviour and the social environment, with particular emphasis on the person-in-environment transaction, life-span development and the interaction among biological, psychological, socio-structural and cultural factors in shaping human development and behaviour.
* Knowledge of the social welfare policies and services of the locality, country and/or region.
• A critical understanding of social work's origins and purposes.
• Understanding of country specific social work origins and development.
• Sufficient knowledge of related occupations and professions to facilitate inter-professional collaboration and teamwork.

4.3.2 Domain of the Social Worker:

• The development of the critically self-reflective practitioner, who is able to practice within the value perspective of the social work profession.
• The recognition of the relationship between personal life experiences and personal value systems and social work practice.
• The appraisal of national, regional and/or international social work codes of ethics and their applicability to context specific realities.
* Preparation of social workers within a holistic biopsychosocial spiritual framework, with generalist skills to enable practice in a range of contexts with diverse ethnic, cultural and racial groups, and with both men and women.

4.3.3 Methods of Practice:

* Practice skills in, and knowledge of, assessment and intervention at micro, mezzo and macro levels for the purposes of developmental, protective, preventive and/or therapeutic intervention.
• The application of social work values, ethical principles, knowledge and skills to confront inequality, and social, political and economic injustices.
* Knowledge of, and skills in, social work research, including ethical use of relevant research paradigms, and critical appreciation of the use of research in social work practice.
* Supervised fieldwork education, with due consideration to the provisions of Item 3 above.

4.3.4 Paradigm of the Profession:

Of particular salience to social work education, training and practice, are the following theoretical/epistemological frameworks[9] that should inform the core curricula:

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[9] These frameworks are numerous; illustratively, they include

* An acknowledgement and recognition of the dignity, worth and the uniqueness of all human beings (***Person-centred approach).***

* Knowledge and understanding of the inter-connectedness that exists within and across all systems at micro, mezzo and macro levels (***Ecological systems perspective***).

* Development of knowledge and skills in working in a wide range of contexts, with different sized "client" populations across all system levels (***Holistic, generalist or integrated approach***).

* An emphasis on the importance of advocacy and changes in socio-structural conditions that disempower, marginalize and exclude people (***Social justice/human rights approach***).

* The capacity-building and empowerment of individuals, families, groups, organisations and communities through a human-centred developmental approach ***(Social development perspective***).

* Problem-solving and anticipatory socialisation though an understanding of the normative developmental life cycle, and expected life tasks and crises in relation to age related influences (***Developmental life-span perspective***).

* The assumption, identification and recognition of strengths and potential of all human beings (***Strengths perspective***).

* An appreciation and respect for diversity in relation to race, culture, religion, ethnicity, linguistic origin, gender, sexual orientation and differential abilities (***Respect for Diversity).***

5   STANDARDS WITH REGARD TO PROFESSIONAL STAFF

With regard to professional staff, schools should aspire towards:

5.1 The provision of full-time professional staff, adequate in number and range of expertise, who have applicable qualifications as determined by the development status of the social work profession in any given country. As far as possible a Masters level qualification in social work, or a related discipline (in countries where social work is an emerging discipline), should be a requisite.

5.2 Ensuring that, where a school offers post-graduate qualifications at the doctoral level, at least one member of staff has a qualification at that level.   Where the development status of social work in a school does not render this feasible, the school may consider interim twinning arrangements with more established schools of social work in offering a doctoral qualification.

5.3 The provision of opportunities for staff participation in the development of its core purpose or mission, in the formulation of the objectives and expected outcomes of the programme, and in any other initiative that the school might be involved in.

5.4 Provision for the continuing professional development of its staff, particularly in areas of emerging knowledge.[10]

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[10] Given current global concerns this should include: HIV/AIDS; the effects of the increasingly rapid pace of globalization; information technology development; contemporary political, cultural, ethnic and religious

5.5 A clear statement, where possible, of its equity based policies or preferences, with regard to considerations of gender, ethnicity, race or any other form of diversity in its recruitment and appointment of staff.

5.6 Ensuring that professional staff, in any given context, develop skills in analyzing and understanding the powerful intersection of race, class, gender, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation and differential abilities and how these factors interact with issues regarding power, privilege, oppression, exploitation, status and access to resources. The same should be skillfully imparted to student social workers.

5.7 In its allocation of teaching, fieldwork instruction, supervision and administrative workloads, making provision for research and publications. Such research must be consistent with general standards of research practice and with accepted ethical research principles.

5.8 Making provision for professional staff, as far as is reasonable and possible and contingent upon its and/or the institution's core purpose or mission, to be involved in the formulation, analysis and the evaluation of the impact of social policies, and in community outreach initiatives.

6 STANDARDS WITH REGARD TO STUDENT SOCIAL WORKERS

In respect of student social workers schools should endeavor to reach the following standards:

6.1 Clear articulation of its admission criteria and procedures, which should be compatible with those of the training institution.

6.2 Student recruitment, admission and retention policies that reflect the demographic profile of the locality that the institution is based in. Due recognition should be given to minority groups[11] that are under-represented and/or under-served.

6.3 Facilitation of articulation across institutions by specifying the recognition of credits obtained at other training institutions.

6.2 Provision for student advising that is directed toward student orientation, assessment of the student's aptitude and motivation for a career in social work, regular evaluation of the student's performance and guidance in the selection of courses/modules.

6.3 Making provision for and encouraging the participation of all students, including

and mortality rates, migration, and gender and age profiles and how these impact social policies and social service delivery.

[11] "Minority groups" may be defined in terms of numerical representation and/or "minority" in terms of socio-economic and/or political status. It remains an ambiguous and contested concept and needs to be defined and

those in distance, mixed-mode, decentralised and/or internet based programmes in relation to the development of its core purpose or mission and the programme objectives, and in the formulation and modification of policies that affect academic and student affairs. Such participation should be consistent with the policies of the training institution.

6.4 Ensuring that, in offering distance, mixed-mode, decentralised and/or internet based teaching, the quality of the educational programme is not compromised. Mechanisms for locally-based instruction and supervision should be put in place, especially with regard to the fieldwork component of the programme.

6.5 Explicit criteria for the evaluation of student's academic and fieldwork performance.

6.6 An indication of how students evaluate their own values, attitudes and behaviours in relation to its accepted and relevant code of ethics.

6.7 Making available, to all students, the school's grievance and appeal procedures. Such procedures should be compatible with those of the training institution.

6.8 A specification of the school's policy and procedure with regard to the termination of a student's enrolment in the programme. Poor performance and/or the failure to uphold the values and ethical principles of social work may render the student unsuitable for the profession.

6.9 Non-discrimination against any student on the basis of race, colour, culture, ethnicity, linguistic origin, religion, political orientation, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, physical status and socio-economic status.

7 STANDARDS WITH REGARD TO STRUCTURE, ADMINISTRATION, GOVERNANCE AND RESOURCES

In its aspiration towards global standards with regard to structure, administration, governance and resources, schools and/or the training institutions should ensure that:

7.1 Social work programmes are implemented through a distinct unit known as a Faculty, School, Department, Centre or Division, which has a clear identity within the training institution.

7.2 The school has a designated full-time Head or Director who has demonstrated administrative, scholarly and professional competence, preferably in the discipline of social work.

7.3 The Head or Director has primary responsibility for the coordination and professional leadership of the school, with sufficient time and resources to fulfil these responsibilities.

7.4 The school's budgetary allocation is sufficient to achieve its core purpose or

mission and the programme objectives.

7.5 The budgetary allocation is stable enough to ensure programme planning and sustainability.

7.6 There are adequate physical facilities, including classroom space, offices for professional and administrative staff and space for student, faculty and field-liaison meetings, and the equipment necessary for the achievement of the school's core purpose or mission and the programme objectives.

7.7 Library and internet resources, necessary to achieve the programme objectives, are made available.

7.8 The necessary clerical and administrative staff is made available for the achievement of the programme objectives.

7.9 Where the school offers distance, mixed-mode, decentralized and/or internet based education there is provision of adequate infrastructure, including classroom space, computers, texts, audio-visual equipment, community resources for fieldwork education, and on-site instruction and supervision to facilitate the achievement of its core purpose or mission, programme objectives and expected outcomes.

7.10 Within the policies, procedures and standards of the training institution, the school plays a key role with regard to the recruitment, appointment and promotion of staff.

7.11 The school strives toward gender equity in its recruitment, appointment, promotion and tenure policies and practices.

7.12 In its recruitment, appointment, promotion and tenure principles and procedures, the school reflects the diversities of the population that it interacts with and serves.

7.13 The decision-making processes of the school reflect participatory democratic principles and procedures.

7.14 The school promotes the development of a cooperative, supportive and productive working environment to facilitate the achievement of programme objectives.

7.15 The school develops and maintains linkages within the institution and with external organizations relevant to its core purpose or mission and its objectives.

8   STANDARDS WITH REGARD TO CULTURAL AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY AND GENDER INCLUSIVENESS

With regard to cultural and ethnic diversity schools should aspire towards the

following:

8.1 Making concerted and continuous efforts to ensure the enrichment of the educational experience by reflecting cultural and ethnic diversity, and gender analysis in its programme.

8.2 Ensuring that the programme, either through mainstreaming into all courses/modules and/or through a separate course/module, has clearly articulated objectives in respect of cultural and ethnic diversity, and gender analysis.

8.3 Indicating that issues regarding cultural and ethnic diversity, and gender analysis are represented in the fieldwork component of the programme.

8.4 Ensuring that student social workers are provided with opportunities to develop self-awareness regarding their personal and cultural values, beliefs, traditions and biases and how these might influence the ability to develop relationships with people, and to work with diverse population groups.

8.5 Promoting sensitivity to, and increasing knowledge about, cultural and ethnic diversity, and gender analysis.

8.6 Minimizing group stereotypes and prejudices.[12]

8.7 Ensuring that student social workers are able to form relationships with, and treat all persons with respect and dignity irrespective of such persons' cultural and ethnic beliefs and orientations.

8.8 Ensuring that student social workers are schooled in a basic human rights approach, as reflected in international instruments such as the International Declaration on Human Rights and the U.N. Vienna Declaration (1993).[13]

9 STANDARDS WITH REGARD TO SOCIAL WORK VALUES AND ETHICAL CODES OF CONDUCT

In view of the recognition that social work values, ethics and principles are the core components of the profession, schools should consistently aspire towards:

9.1 Focussed and meticulous attention to this aspect of the programme in curricula design and implementation.

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[12] While cultural sensitivity may contribute to culturally competent practice, the school must be mindful of the possibility of reinforcing group stereotypes. The school should, therefore, try to ensure that student social workers do not use knowledge of a particular group of people to generalize to every person in that group. The school should pay particular attention to both in-group and inter-group variations and similarities.

[13] Such an approach might facilitate constructive confrontation and change where certain cultural beliefs, values and traditions violate peoples' basic human rights. As culture is socially constructed and dynamic, it is subject to deconstruction and change. Such constructive confrontation, deconstruction and change may be facilitated through a tuning into, and an understanding of particular cultural values, beliefs and traditions and via critical

9.2 Clearly articulated objectives with regard to social work values, principles and ethical conduct.

9.3 Registration of professional staff and student social workers (insofar as student social workers develop working relationships with people via fieldwork placements) with national and/or regional regulatory (whether statutory or non-statutory) bodies, with defined codes of ethics.[14] Members of such bodies are generally bound to the provisions of those codes.

9.4 In the absence of the existence of binding national and/or regional codes of ethics, the formulation of a code of ethics that is consistent with the values and principles of the profession, and with international norms regarding human rights and social justice.

9.5 Ensuring that every student social worker involved in fieldwork education, and every professional staff member, are aware the of boundaries of professional practice and what might constitute unprofessional conduct in terms of the code of ethics.

9.6 Taking appropriate action in relation to those student social workers and professional staff, who fail to comply with the code of ethics either through an established regulatory social work body, established procedures of the training institution, and/or through legal mechanisms.

9.7 Ensuring that regulatory social work bodies are broadly representative of the social work discipline, including where applicable social workers from both the public and private sector, and of the community that it serves including, wherever possible, the direct participation of service users.

9.8 Upholding, as far as is reasonable and possible, the principles of restorative rather than retributive justice[15] in disciplining either student social workers or professional staff who violate the code of ethics.

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[14] In many countries voluntary national professional associations play major roles in enhancing the status of social work, and in the development of Codes of Ethics. In some countries voluntary professional associations assume regulatory functions, for example disciplinary procedures in the event of professional malpractice, while in other countries statutory bodies assume such functions.

[15] Restorative justice reflects the following: a belief that crime violates people and relationships; making the wrong right; seeking justice between victims, offenders and communities; people are seen to be the victims; emphasis on participation, dialogue and mutual agreement; is oriented to the future and the development of responsibility. This is opposed to retributive justice which reflects: a belief that crime violates the State and its laws; a focus on punishment and guilt; justice sought between the State and the offender; the State as victim; authoritarian, technical and impersonal approaches; and orientation to the past and guilt.

CONCLUSION

Standards, by their very nature, generally tend to fall within the prescriptive, reductionist, logical-positivist paradigm. Efforts have been made to adopt an alternative and a more empowering, non-prescriptive language in this document. The main aim is to enhance social work education and training on a global level, by facilitating dialogue within and across nations and regions. The document reflects global standards that schools of social work should consistently aspire towards, which (collectively and if met) would actually provide for quite sophisticated levels of social work education and training. This is as it ought to be – the provision of the best possible education and training for student social workers who, after qualifying, bear enormous responsibilities in their communities. The extent to which schools of social work meet global qualifying standards will depend on the developmental needs of any given country/region and the developmental status of the profession in any given context, as determined by unique historical, socio-political, economic and cultural contexts. These are given due consideration throughout the document.

In formulating the global standards care has also been taken to ensure that we do not take on the language of managerialism and marketization, which is seen to be antithetical with the core values and purposes of social work. By locating the standards against the international definition of social work and the core purposes of social work, the document ensures an approach to education and training that supports human rights, social justice, and an essential commitment to caring for, and the empowerment of individuals, groups and communities. It also reflects a commitment to the personal and professional development of student social workers, with particular emphases on the development of the critically self-reflective practitioner and the place of values and ethics in social work education and training. In the formulation of the global qualifying standards the challenge has been for them to be specific enough to have salience, yet broad enough to be relevant to any given context.

The Committee reiterates that in formulating global standards for social work education and training, neither the IASSW nor the IFSW will play any monitoring, control or accreditation function. The roles of these international bodies are intended to be supportive and facilitative. There must be clear mechanisms of communication between national and/or regional social work educators' associations and IASSW. One of the objectives is that, through the assistance of the Census Commission, IASSW will develop a data bank containing the details and programmes of member schools and of national and/or regional standards and systems of quality control and accreditation. Such information may be shared on an international level on request and/or via the websites of IASSW and IFSW. It is hoped that such sharing would provide the impetus for schools of social work to aspire towards the global qualifying standards for social work education and training elucidated in this document, and for continued dialogue within the profession on local, national, regional and global levels.

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N.B. This is a second review of a discussion document. Please send comments and recommendations to Vishanthie Sewpaul.

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APPENDIX A

The Committee consists of the following members

IASSW Representatives

Vishanthie Sewpaul from South Africa (Chair of the Committee since January 2001)
Sven Hessle from Sweden
Karen Lyons from the United Kingdom

Denyse Cote from Quebec
David Cox from Australia
Nelia Tello from Mexico
Barbara White from the United States
Hoi Wa Mak from Hong Kong
Lena Dominelli as ex-officio member in her capacity of President of IASSW.

IFSW Representatives

David Jones (Vice Chair of the Committee from the United Kingdom)
Ngoh-tiong Tan from Singapore
Dick Ramsay from Canada
Juan M.L. Carvajal from Columbia
Charles Mbugua from Kenya
Sung-Jae Choi from Korea
Imelda Dodds as ex-officio member in her capacity of President of IFSW