CSWE Accreditation Resources & Writing Tips

Polling Question

Polling Question

- What is your experience with accreditation?
  - I am new to accreditation processes.
  - I have been involved with accreditation, but external to CSWE.
  - I previously led CSWE-accreditation work.
  - I have been involved in supporting/writing CSWE-accreditation documents.

2025 Practice Doctorate Accreditation Standards Resources

CSWE
COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

Member Log-in | About | Elections | Events | News | Students

Search site

Accreditation ˅ | Advocacy & Policy ˅ | Centers & Initiatives ˅ | Corporate Partnerships ˅ | Membership ˅ | Publications ˅ | Resources ˅

Accreditation

Home / Accreditation

- About CSWE Accreditation ▾
- Standards, Policies, Processes ▾
- Scope and Services ▾
- Accreditation Volunteer Information ▾
- Post-Master's Social Work Fellowship Accreditation ▾

Current Number of Social Work Programs
(As of February 2025)

Directory of Accredited Programs

Accreditation Guidance for Programs Affected by Recent Wildfires

About CSWE Accreditation

CSWE's vision is "To ensure a well-educated social work profession equipped to promote health, well-being, and justice for all people in a diverse society". Accreditation is a systematic and rigorous process of operationalizing this vision and ensuring consumer protection and the public good through quality social work education programs.

CSWE accreditation is a rigorous peer-review process that balances requirements of

CSWE Board of Accreditation (BOA)

CSWE-BOA Decisions
Decisions posted
July 7, 2025

Next Meeting:
October 8-11, 2025

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CSWE — Council on Social Work Education

Accreditation ⌄ · Advocacy & Policy ⌄ · Centers & Initiatives ⌄ · Corporate Partnerships ⌄ · Membership ⌄ · Publications ⌄ · Resources ⌄

Training

Home / Accreditation / Scope and Services / Training

Overview

Training ▼

Substantive Change Process

International Degree Review ▼

Program Training Opportunities

CSWE Live Practice Doctorate Accreditation Training

We are excited to announce the live accreditation training for practice doctorate social work programs planning to seek CSWE accreditation.

The two-part trainings aim to increase participants confidence and knowledge of:

1. CSWE-BOA accreditation processes; and

2. 2025 Accreditation Standards for Practice Doctorate Social Work Programs

Important Highlights:

- Advance registration required.

- Required attendance: For programs pursing the one-year Temporary Alternative Pathway, attending one of the two-part accreditation training session is required for practice doctorate applicant programs prior to submitting materials (acceptance of materials to begin

Accreditation ⌄ | Advocacy & Policy ⌄ | Centers & Initiatives ⌄ | Corporate Partnerships ⌄ | Membership ⌄ | Publications ⌄ | Resources ⌄

Practice Doctorate Program Accreditation

- Practice Doctorate Accreditation Standards
- Practice Doctorate Accreditation Toolkit
- FAQs
- Accreditation Pilot and Standards Revision

Practice Doctorate Program Accreditation

CSWE and its Board of Accreditation (BOA) piloted the accreditation of practice doctorate programs from 2021-2025. It is anticipated that additional practice doctorate programs will be able to seek accreditation in late-2025. This timeline is subject to change pending Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) review and expansion of the BOA's accreditation scope. CSWE's BOA is currently recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) to accredit baccalaureate and master's social work degree programs in the United States and its territories.

Programs interested in seeking accreditation are encouraged to complete the Practice Doctorate Program Record Audit Form. This will allow CSWE to maintain accurate records to communicate important updates as they become available

Practice Doctorate Accrediation Information:

- Accreditation Standards

Accreditation Policy Handbook
www.cswe.org/accreditationpolicies

Board of Accreditation (BOA)
Department of Social Work Accreditation (DOSWA)
ACCREDITATION POLICY HANDBOOK
for Baccalaureate and Master's Social Work Program Accreditation
version 9.2023

1. **Introduction to Accreditation**
2. **CSWE Department of Social Work Accreditation Services and Resources**
3. **Board of Accreditation**
4. **Accreditation Processes**
5. **Candidacy & Initial Accreditation**
6. **Reaffirmation**

Advance copy of standards available on the CSWE website (March 31, 2025)

2025
Accreditation
Standards

for Practice Doctorate Social Work Programs

CSWE
Board of Accreditation

2025 Practice Doctorate AS Toolkit

Interpretation Guide (IG)

EPAS + IG = Dynamic Duo

Memo to the Social Work Profession

Memo to the Social Work Profession Regarding Practice Doctorate Program Accreditation

March 31, 2025

Dear social work colleagues, clients, constituents, and public interests,

In social work education, the Council on Social Work Education's (CSWE) Board of Accreditation (BOA) is recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) to accredit baccalaureate and master's social work degree programs in the United States and its territories. Since its inception in July 1952 (and its predecessor since 1919), CSWE has accredited master's programs. In 1974, CSWE began accrediting baccalaureate programs.

In recent years, the number of practice doctorate programs has grown from 5 in 2014 to 38 in 2024, and continues to grow according to a recent audit of social work programs conducted by CSWE. In response to questions regarding how practice doctorate degrees align within the social work education continuum, CSWE partnered with social work programs, social work educators and leaders, doctoral students, health accreditors, and other constituents to conduct an environmental scan, gather data and feedback, and create pilot accreditation standards prior to launching the accreditation pilot. prior to launching the accreditation pilot.

- Announces Practice Doctorate Program Accreditation to the Social Work Profession, Public, and Interested Stakeholders

- Pilot & Expansion of Scope Request

- Social Work Education Continuum

- Retroactive Accreditation Status & Career Implications for Graduates
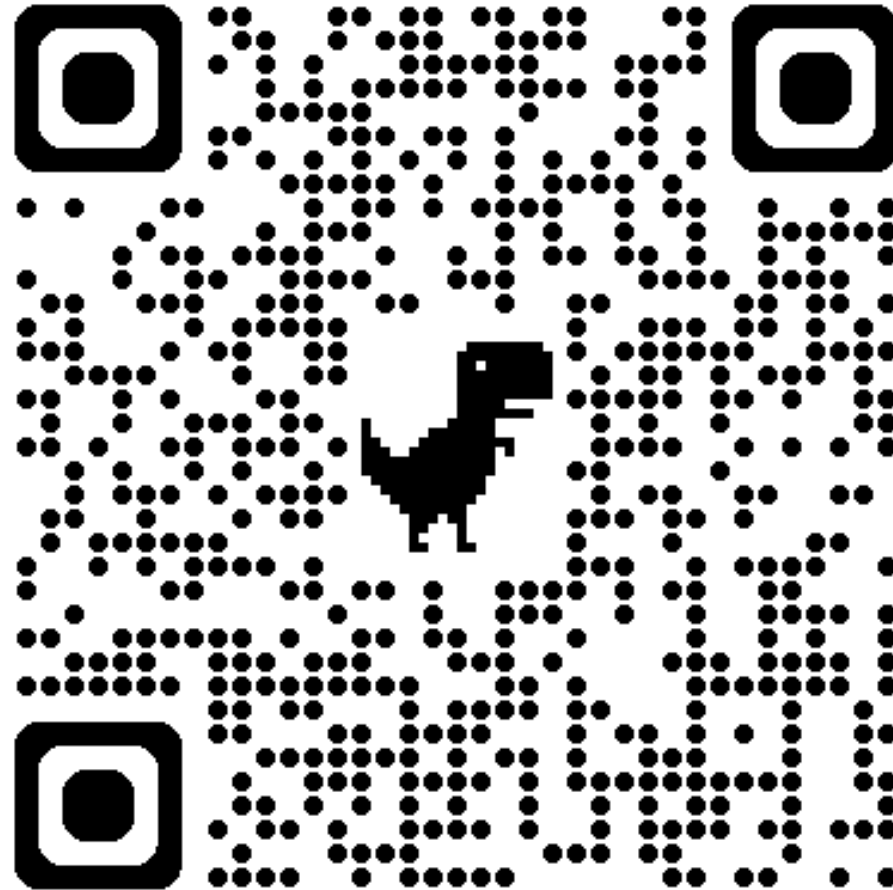
- Call to Action

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ADEI Webpage

CSWE ADEI webpage with centralized information!

- [Membership login](#) credentials will be required to access the webpage

- Only accessible to program primary contacts and members

  o [Simply Join CSWE/Link to a Program](#)

- Webpage inclusive of accredited, candidate, applicant, and practice doctorate programs

Membership Login Page
https://membership.cswe.org/ADEI-Resources

Members-only View

CSWE|ADEI Statements

- [CSWE Calls on Higher Education to Recommit to Racial Equity and Justice in Face of SCOTUS Decision](), *July 2023*
- [CSWE Calls for Academic Freedom in Higher Education](), *March 2023*
- [Social Work Leadership Roundtable Joint Statement on DEI, Anti-Racism, and Systems Change](), *March 2023*
- [CSWE Opposes Laws that Prohibit Teaching 'Divisive Concepts'](), *June 2021*
- Statement on Diversity and Social Justice in the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS), *February 2021*

2025 Practice Doctorate Accreditation Standards Interpretation Guide (IG)

2025 Practice Doctorate AS IG

- Official companion to 2025 AS

- Purpose is two-fold:

  - Clarify the BOA's expectations

  - Provide guidance for developing compliance content

- Using the IG

2022 EPAS Interpretation Guide

COMPLIANCE STATEMENTS	BOA INTERPRETATIONS, COMPLIANCE RUBRIC, & WRITING CHECKLIST	DEFINITIONS & TIPS
• Compliance statements are criteria used by the BOA to evaluate the program's written narrative for compliance with the accreditation standard.	• Interpretations are bulleted. Interpretations further clarify the BOA's required expectations for programs to meet each accreditation standard. ❑ The writing checklist is identified by checkboxes that provide guidance for developing clear and concise narratives to demonstrate compliance in accreditation documents. ❑ Unless otherwise specified in the accreditation standard, compliance statements, and/or interpretations, accreditation documents must be written in **present tense** and evidence current compliance. Documents must <u>not</u> project future compliance nor describe past compliance. ❑ Candidate programs may write in future tense only in response to developmental standards.	• **Definitions** of uncommon words within each standard are <u>linked to the glossary</u> in this column. • Tips are optional guidance to further strengthen the program's compliance with the accreditation standard and enhance written compliance narratives in accreditation documents.
<u>**For Candidate Programs**</u>	This section identifies whether the standard is in development, reviewed for **approval**, or reviewed for **compliance** at each benchmark during the candidacy benchmarking process. ||

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Clarified Interpretations

- Stay apprised of the 2025 AS.

- Review the post-BOA meeting newsletter to learn of additional interpretations.

- Remember: Programs are solely responsible for implementing, demonstrating, and maintaining compliance with the EPAS at all times.

Forms & Templates

Accreditation Pathways

TRADITIONAL 3-YEAR PATHWAY

TEMPORARY 1-YEAR PATHWAY

Traditional Templates & Forms

Formal Submission:

- Candidacy Eligibility Application (template)
- Benchmark 1 Volume 1 (template)
- Benchmark 1 Volume 2
- Benchmark 1 Volume 3

Additional Resources:

- Timetable for Candidate Programs MONTH YEAR-YEAR
- Benchmark 1 Approval Standards Writing Checklist

Temporary Templates & Forms

Formal Submission:

- Temporary Alternative Pathway Application (template)
- Self-study Volume 1 (template)
- Self-study Volume 2
- Self-study Volume 3

Additional Resources:

- Timetable to Candidacy Status: Fall YEAR Retroactive Accreditation
- Temporary Alternative Pathway Writing Checklist
- Timetable to Initial Accreditation: MONTH YEAR Agenda

2025 AS Practice Doctorate Forms & Templates

Separate options for writing/development:

- Form AS D3.0.1: Curriculum Matrix

- Form AS D4.1.1 - Faculty Summary Form

- Faculty Data Form

- Form AS D4.3.1 - Budget Form

- Form AS D4.3.3 - Library Report Form

2025 AS Practice Doctorate Forms & Templates

Separate options for writing/development:

- [Form AS D5.0.1(a): Student Achievement Assessment Plan](#)

- [Form AS D5.0.1(b): Student Achievement of Assessment Outcomes](#)

- [Form AS D5.0.1(d): Public Reporting of Assessment Outcomes](#)

- [Form AS D5.0.3 - Program Outcomes Assessment](#)

Writing Methods, Strategies, & Tips

Framework

Framework:

- *Accreditation documents tell your program's story as guided by accreditation standards*

Writing Style & Formatting

- Write succinctly and clearly

- Ensure accurate and complete at time of submission

- BOA cannot make any assumptions

- Ease the process for the reader

- Review and use *policy 4.7, Document Formatting & Submission Requirements* in the Accreditation Policy Handbook

Writing Style & Formatting

- Use subheadings!
  - Subheadings Are Fun
    - Our Team Agrees
      - Consider **Bolding** and *Italicizing*
- For each benchmark and self-study:
  - Volume 1 (required template)
  - Volume 2
  - Volume 3
  - No appendices

Writing Style & Formatting

- Do not embedded documents

- Not visit websites

Writing to an Accreditation Standard

- Stay grounded in the purpose of the standard

- Write to each element/component of the standard

- Many citations result from missing or unclear content

- Explicitly address each program option in response to each standard

- Program-specific (e.g., practice doctorate program) rather than institution- or department-specific

Template & Form Use

- Do <u>not</u> alter the forms

- Fill in program information, including within footer

- Delete the gray highlighted and that text which instructions identify

- When site another volume, include page number reference

Reaffirmation/Initial Accreditation Self-Study | Volume 1

for Practice Doctorate Social Work Programs
version 6.2025
[Delete this help text before submission: Delete the directions before submission.]

Directions

Purpose

- This is a required template.
- **Candidate Programs:**
  - Submit Benchmark 3/Initial Accreditation Self-study for review by CSWE's Board of Accreditation (BOA) for issuance of an Initial Accreditation decision.
  - Refer to policy *5.14 BOA Benchmark 3/Initial Accreditation Decisions* in the Accreditation Policy Handbook for Initial Accreditation decisions.
- **Accredited Programs:**
  - Submit Reaffirmation Self-study documents for review by CSWE's Board of Accreditation (BOA) for issuance of a Letter of instructions (LOI) to the site visitor.
  - Refer to policy *6.9 BOA Reaffirmation Decisions* in the Accreditation Policy Handbook for Reaffirmation decisions.
- **A completed Self-Study includes:**
  - Volume 1: Responses to all standards
  - Volume 2: Course Syllabi for Required Courses Identified on Curriculum Matrix(ices)
  - Volume 3: Student Handbook

Standards: Approval & Compliance

- 2025 Practice Doctorate AS Interpretation Guide

- 2025 Practice Doctorate AS Benchmark Grid

- Volume 1 template formatting

2025 Accreditation Standards for Practice Doctorate Social Work Programs	Candidacy Visit 1 for Benchmark 1		Candidacy Visit 2 for Benchmark 2		Candidacy Visit 3 for Benchmark 3/Initial Accreditation
	Approved to Proceed to Benchmark 2	**Developmental**	**Approved to Proceed to Benchmark 3**	**Developmental**	**All Standards Evaluated for Compliance**
1 – Program Mission	AS D1.0.1 AS D1.0.2		AS D1.0.1 AS D1.0.2		AS D1.0.1 AS D1.0.2
2 – Anti-racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI)		AS D2.0.1 AS D2.0.2	AS D2.0.1 AS D2.0.2		AS D2.0.1 AS D2.0.2
3 – Explicit Curriculum	AS D3.0.1 (compliance statements a-f and i) AS D3.0.2 AS D3.0.3	AS D3.0.1 (complete) Syllabi	AS D3.0.1 (complete) AS D3.0.2 AS D3.0.3 Syllabi		AS D3.0.1 (complete) AS D3.0.2 AS D3.0.3 Syllabi

Cascades

- Cascade of BOA standards

Questions & Discussion