



COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

2025 Accreditation Standards for Practice Doctorate Social Work Program

Program Outcomes | AS D5.0.3

Accreditation Standard (AS) D5.0.3 of the [2025 Accreditation Standards for Practice Doctorate Social Work Program](#) requires social work programs to monitor program outcomes and explain how data are used for continuous program improvement and decision making.

Per the [2025 Practice Doctorate Standards Interpretation Guide glossary](#):

Program outcomes for CSWE-accredited practice doctorate social work programs, this includes retention rates and time to program completion. Data are reported for each program option and in aggregate, including all program options.

The purpose of AS D5.0.3 is to explain the significance of program outcome data and how the program uses this data for continuous program improvement. The accreditation standards require programs to track retention rates and time to program completion that aligns with the specific context of the social work program. Programs then report their most recent 3-years of data within accreditation documents.

CSWE and its Board of Accreditation recognize that social work programs and institutions may encounter external pressure to report program outcomes reflecting data that exceeds benchmarks or consistently trend upward. In some cases, this may prove challenging when program faculty are also expected to monitor progression of practitioner-scholars and may counsel students out of the program if they are unable to meet doctoral requirements. The accreditation standards support programs in selecting benchmarks and presenting data informed by program context. Therefore, the emphasis of AS D5.0.3 is on creating a culture of data-informed decision-making and program improvement throughout social work education.

CSWE-accredited social work programs requiring additional information about this standard may request a letter from CSWE's Department of Social Work Accreditation clarifying accreditation standards and accreditation requirements. Please review policy 4.10 in the [Accreditation Policy Handbook](#) for more information. Programs may also visit the [Practice Doctorate Accreditation Toolkit](#) for additional information on compliance and tips for implementing all 2025 Accreditation Standards for Practice Doctorate Social Work Program.