
Toronto Metropolitan University School of Social Work

anti-oppression | social transformation | social justice

MSW Field Education Manual 2025/2026

MSW Field Education Manual 2025/2026

School of Social Work
Faculty of Community Services
Toronto Metropolitan University
350 Victoria Street
Toronto, ON M5B 2K3
416-979-5000, ext. 556471
swfield@torontomu.ca

The School of Social Work is governed by the mission, policies, and requirements of the University as stated in Toronto Metropolitan University's [Graduate Calendar](#).

The timelines listed in this manual are subject to change. For the most current information about important dates, refer to the [School of Social Work's website](#).

Students are advised to be aware of and abide by Toronto Metropolitan University's [Student Code of Non-Academic Conduct](#), and [Experiential Learning Policy](#). Students should also be aware of and abide by the [Code of Ethics, Values and Guiding Principles](#) of the Canadian Association of Social Workers (2024). Violation of this Code may lead to suspension from the program on grounds of professional unsuitability.

Table of Contents

Section 1: Glossary of Terms	6
1.1 Academic Year	6
1.2 Education Coordinator	6
1.3 Faculty Consultant.....	6
1.4 Field Education Coordinator	7
1.5 Field Education Course	7
1.6 Field Education Manager.....	7
1.7 Field Education Program Administrator	7
1.8 Field Instructor.....	8
1.9 Field Practice Seminars.....	8
1.10 Field Practicum.....	8
1.11 Graduate Program Director.....	9
1.12 Placement Setting	9
1.13 School	9
1.14 Student.....	9
Section 2: School of Social Work	10
2.1 About.....	10
2.2 Contact Information	10
2.3 Mission, Vision and Values.....	10
2.4 Accreditation Standards.....	11
2.5 Master of Social Work (MSW).....	12
Section 3: Significant Dates	14
3.1 Significant Dates for Field Placements in 2025/2026	15
3.2 Practice Seminars	15
3.3 Placement Assignments	16
Section 4: Field Education Curriculum	16
4.1 Overview	16
4.2 Field Education Goals and Objectives	17
4.3 Course Description and Field Placement Components.....	18
Section 5: Placement Process and Procedures.....	21
5.1 Regular Placement	21
5.2 Work Study Placement	22
5.3 Volunteer Study Placement	24
5.4 Parties Involved in the Placement Process.....	27
5.5 Matching and Placement Process.....	27
5.6 Being an Active and Engaged Participant in the Placement Process	28

5.7 When a Field Placement is Confirmed	29
5.8 Criteria for Selection of Placement Settings, Field Instructors, and Placing Students	29
5.9 Accommodations for Students with Disabilities	32
5.10 Professional Conduct.....	32
Section 6: Field Consultation Meetings	36
6.1 Purpose	36
6.2 Field Instructor and Student Preparation Prior to Field Consultation Meeting	36
Section 7: Conflict Resolution	37
7.1 Guidelines for Conflict Resolution in Field Placements	37
7.2 Terminating a Field Placement	38
Appendix A: Responsibilities of All Parties Involved	40
Placement Setting	40
Field Instructor.....	41
Faculty Consultant.....	42
Field Education Manager.....	43
Field Education Coordinators	44
Field Education Program Administrator	45
Social Work Student.....	46
Appendix B: Canadian Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics, Values and Guiding Principles	48
Preamble.....	48
Core Social Work Values.....	48
Appendix C: Safety and Security in the Placement	49
Students Travelling to and from Field Placements.....	49
Insurance Coverage in Placement.....	50
Appendix D: Experiential Learning: Senate Policy 169.....	52
Removal of Students from Field Placements on Grounds of Professional Misconduct.....	52
Appendix E: Human Rights Services.....	54
Appendix F: Social Media Policy	56
School of Social Work Social Media Policy	56
Guidelines for the Use of Social Media	57
Appendix G: Labour Disputes	58
Appendix H: MSW Field Practicum Evaluation Forms.....	58
Introduction	58
Evaluation	59

Assignment of Grades	59
Final Grades for Field Practicum	59
Credit for Placement Hours	59
Appendix I: Placement Attendance during Inclement Weather	60
Appendix J: Remote Placements	60
Orientation and Onboarding	60
Planning for Effective Communication	63
Confidentiality and Privacy	64
Professionalism in a Remote Context	66
Establishing Healthy Boundaries	67
Planning for Learning Success	68
Ergonomic Health & Safety	69
Appendix K: Resources & References	70
General & Useful Toronto Metropolitan University Websites	70
Accessibility	71
Working & Providing Supervision Remotely	71
Confidentiality & Privacy in a Remote Environment	71
Well-Being & Self-Care	72
Health & Safety	72
Field Instruction & Teaching	72

Section 1: Glossary of Terms

- [Academic Year](#)
- [Education Coordinator](#)
- [Faculty Consultant](#)
- [Field Education Coordinator](#)
- [Field Education Course](#)
- [Field Education Manager](#)
- [Field Education Program Administrator](#)
- [Field Instructor](#)
- [Field Practice Seminars](#)
- [Field Practicum](#)
- [Graduate Program Director](#)
- [Placement Setting](#)
- [School](#)
- [Student](#)

1.1 Academic Year

The academic year is the period of time when the university holds classes. An academic year begins in September and ends in August. During an academic year, students enrolled in the MSW program at Toronto Metropolitan University undertake a placement from January to June.

1.2 Education Coordinator

The Education Coordinator is an employee of an agency/organization who coordinates student placements within the placement setting. Some Education Coordinators assume the role of Field Instructor as well. Not all organizations have an Education Coordinator to coordinate all student placements; in some organizations, each Field Instructor is responsible for all aspects of coordinating placements.

1.3 Faculty Consultant

The Faculty Consultant is a member of the faculty (full-time or part-time) in the school and provides guidance and support to the student and the Field Instructor regarding the placement design, development, and process. The Faculty Consultant is responsible for the assignment of grades for the placement; however, it is expected that the student, Field Instructor, and Faculty Consultant will involve themselves in a mutual, ongoing evaluative process which will culminate with the assignment of a pass/fail grade at the end of the term. Additional information about roles and responsibilities is available in [Appendix A: Responsibilities of All Parties Involved](#).

1.4 Field Education Coordinator

Field Education Coordinators are Social Workers who are part of the Field Education Team. They are also part of the school's administration and are primarily responsible for all aspects of the placement process as it relates to matching and placing BSW and MSW students. This includes participating in the outreach, recruitment, assessment, and evaluation of placement settings. Field Education Coordinators organize information sessions, and when requested, individual meetings with students to help prepare them for field placement. They provide students with individual problem-solving support and accommodation(s) as required. Field Education Coordinators act as a liaison and facilitate relationships with and amongst students, community partners, faculty members, and Toronto Metropolitan University. Additional information about roles and responsibilities is available in [Appendix A: Responsibilities of All Parties Involved](#).

1.5 Field Education Course

The field education credit is a required two-semester course (SK8105 Field Practicum), which is completed from January to June each academic year. Students must complete a field practicum and attend field practice seminars on-campus in order to successfully complete this course. This course helps students connect the theoretical/conceptual contributions of the academic setting with the practice setting. Its integrative approach enables students to acquire relevant knowledge, skills, and values in preparation for advanced social work practice. Additional information is available in [Section 4: Field Education Curriculum](#).

1.6 Field Education Manager

The Field Education Manager is a Social Worker who is part of the school's administration and is responsible for overseeing the overall operations of the Field Education Office to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.

The Field Education Manager is responsible for oversight and supporting the Field Education Team in all aspects of the placement process for all students in the program, including the process as it pertains to BSW and MSW students. This includes providing students with individual problem-solving support and accommodation(s) as required. Additionally, they provide support to all parties including Faculty, student, and community partners during critical incidents and when placement breakdowns may occur. The Field Education Manager also takes leadership on the outreach and recruitment of new placement settings for the BSW and MSW programs. In doing so, the Manager acts as a liaison and facilitates relationships with and amongst students, community partners, faculty members, and Toronto Metropolitan University. Additional information about roles and responsibilities is available in [Appendix A: Responsibilities of All Parties Involved](#).

1.7 Field Education Program Administrator

The Field Education Program Administrator is part of the school's Field Education Team and administrative team. They are responsible for a number of administrative activities related to the

field education component of the social work program at Toronto Metropolitan University. This includes maintaining a placement system, training, and supporting those who use the system. They also communicate with students and community partners, and facilitate Field Instructor library access. Additional information about roles and responsibilities is available in [Appendix A: Responsibilities of All Parties Involved](#).

1.8 Field Instructor

The Field Instructor is often an external community partner of Toronto Metropolitan University. This is an employee of an agency/organization who has contracted with the school and with the placement setting to provide a learning experience and instruction to a student, for a period set out by the school.

As per the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE), Field Instructors for MSW students usually hold an MSW degree and are interested in social work education. To assume the responsibilities of providing field instruction, they have support from their employer by way of adequate resources. Some Field Instructors do not hold a social work degree but have other relevant qualifications, or have life/work experience in the field.

The Field Instructor guides the daily activities of the student to clarify and meet their learning needs, and provides consultation to the student as required by the school. The Field Instructor engages in a process of evaluation with the student to assess student performance in the context of the school expectations and placement requirements. The Field Instructor makes a recommendation to the Faculty Consultant about the student's final grade in the final evaluation. Additional information about roles and responsibilities is available in [Appendix A: Responsibilities of All Parties Involved](#).

1.9 Field Practice Seminars

The practice seminars are led by a Faculty Consultant and offer an important space for students to come together and discuss their placement experiences, and to integrate theory and practice. Under the guidance of faculty in the School of Social Work, practice seminars help students make the necessary links and connections between field placement experiences and classroom learning. There are seven on-campus practice seminars from January to July. Additional information about the practice seminars is available in [Section 4: Field Education Curriculum](#).

1.10 Field Practicum

The Field Practicum (SK8105) is the placement experience that students undertake as part of the curriculum. Students are required to complete a total of 450 hours of field placement on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of each week in the Winter and Spring/Summer terms of the MSW degree program. Additional information about the field practicum is available in [Section 4: Field Education Curriculum](#).

1.11 Graduate Program Director

The Graduate Program Director is a faculty member and administrator of the school. The Graduate Program Director is responsible for the graduate program, and as such, is the person who must be consulted when students have exceptional circumstances. The Graduate Program Director is consulted in matters that affect either the integrity of a student's overall study or the timeliness of the student's completion of the degree.

1.12 Placement Setting

The placement setting is an agency/organization/program that has contracted with the school to provide a learning environment for a student to undertake a field placement. The setting also provides a Field Instructor who will supervise a student. Placement settings are vetted and reviewed by the Field Education Team to ensure their alignment with program learning objectives and accreditation standards. These settings enable students the opportunity to develop and apply critical practices skills that demonstrate their readiness for the field. The Field Education Office works closely with stakeholders to curate impactful learning experiences that benefit learners in meeting key learning goals while working in solidarity on community led initiatives. The placement setting assures that Field Instructors have the time and resources within their work schedule to plan learning opportunities for students, provide adequate supervision, attend workshops on field instruction provided by the school, and complete learning plans and evaluations.

1.13 School

The School of Social Work is responsible for all decisions regarding the selection of placement settings and the placing of students in accordance with the curriculum, the student's learning needs, and the needs of the placement setting. With the support of the Field Education Team, Administrators serve the diverse needs of all our partners including students, faculty, field instructors, and community partners. We are committed to cultivating a culture of dialogue, respect, and ongoing learning. The School respects different ways of knowing and being by promoting accountability from all stakeholders, including the creation of welcoming and safe spaces and relationships centered on dignity.

1.14 Student

The student is an individual registered in the Master of Social Work (MSW) degree program at Toronto Metropolitan University. All students are accountable to respect and adhere to program policies, institutional policies, and professional standards of conduct. Students, as key stakeholders and members of the community at large, have a responsibility to contribute to the safety, well-being, and inclusion for all members, whether in the community or within the institution.

Additional information about roles and responsibilities is available in [Appendix A: Responsibilities of All Parties Involved](#).

Section 2: School of Social Work

- [About](#)
- [Contact Information](#)
- [Mission, Vision and Values](#)
- [Accreditation Standards](#)
- [Master of Social Work \(MSW\)](#)

2.1 About

The School of Social Work, located within the Faculty of Community Services of Toronto Metropolitan University, is widely known and respected for its leadership in progressive education for social work practice. While the program may outline specific policies and expectations set out or referred to in this document, all parties are subject to the relevant Toronto Metropolitan University institutional policies and procedures as members of the campus community. Students, Faculty, Administrators, Staff, and Community Partners are expected to adhere to the policies and procedures of the institution.

At the graduate level, the school offers an applied one-year program of study leading to the Master of Social Work (MSW) degree. A core component of the curriculum is the field practicum. The program is accredited by the [Canadian Association for Social Work Education \(CASWE\)](#).

2.2 Contact Information

School of Social Work
Faculty of Community Services
Toronto Metropolitan University
350 Victoria Street
Toronto, ON M5B 2K3
416-979-5000, ext. 556471
swfield@torontomu.ca

Information about the school, including the names and coordinates of staff and faculty, is available on the [School of Social Work contact page](#).

2.3 [Mission, Vision and Values](#)

Vision

The School of Social Work's mission is to prepare graduates for critically engaged social work practice with marginalized populations and communities; and to develop leadership and innovation in social work education, at the undergraduate and graduate level, through teaching, scholarship, research and community service. (Under Review)

Core Values

- We support the struggles of Indigenous populations, nationally and globally, for Indigenous sovereignty and their collective rights.
- We affirm human dignity and human rights and value equity among all people.
- We are committed to the implementation of social work values in our curriculum and in the delivery of our programs.
- We are committed to learning about communities that foster respect for social diversity, and critical reflexivity in our students and faculty.
- We educate about the intersectionality and interlocking of oppressions and seek to address their causes.
- Our program reflects ongoing attention to the rigor and relevance of our undergraduate and graduate degree programs which prepares our graduates with the requisite knowledge, skills and values to work with marginalized populations in a constantly evolving global context.
- We foster student-centered learning environments that engage and challenge students, and which are responsive to life circumstances and societal forces that create barriers to the student experience.
- We build relationships with communities, expressed in our collaborative community-based research, community service and in educational relationships with field placement settings.
- We stand with communities and populations that experience oppression and marginalization, including poverty, exploitation and domination, and seek to work with all those committed to the advancement of anti-oppression/anti-racism, anti-Black racism, anti-colonialism/decolonization, Aboriginal reconciliation, feminism, anti-capitalism, queer and trans liberation struggles, issues in disability and Madness, among other social justice struggles.

Our program reflects ongoing attention to the rigor and relevance of our undergraduate and graduate degree programs which prepares our graduates with the requisite knowledge, skills and values to work with marginalized populations in a constantly evolving global context.

2.4 Accreditation Standards

Toronto Metropolitan University's School of Social Work was granted re-accreditation in June 2022 as part of the regular review process. The Canadian Association for Social Work Education-Association canadienne pour la formation en travail social (CASWE-ACFTS), through its Educational Policies and Standards for Accreditation, accredits Baccalaureate and Master level social work programs within Canada. This accreditation assures Toronto Metropolitan University the ability to grant a professional degree to successful students of the program. As an accredited program of the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE), the school operates according to the standards and requirements of the Association.

These standards are foundational to the field education program offered through the school and inform the development of our field education curriculum, the learning objectives of social work students, the types of placement opportunities offered to students, and the teaching expectations of Faculty Consultants and Field Instructors.

Field education is considered a central component of social work education because the integration of knowledge, values, and skills in the context of field education is a critical and distinctive aspect of social work education. The purpose of field education is to connect the theoretical/conceptual contributions of the academic setting with the practice setting, enabling the student to acquire practice skills that reflect the learning objectives for students identified in the Standards.

(CASWE, Standards for Accreditation, August, 2014)

More information is available on the [CASWE website](#).

2.5 Master of Social Work (MSW)

Program Field

Anti-oppression practice with marginalized communities is the designated Ontario College of Graduate Studies approved field of study for the MSW program. The anti-oppression approach to practice is a burgeoning contemporary intellectual field of study in social work. Anti-oppression has become influential across Canada within academic social work, accreditation requirements, and social work practice. The School of Social Work at Toronto Metropolitan University is a recognized leader in the development of anti-oppression practice, and is well-placed as the first MSW program within Ontario with an explicit and thoroughly developed curriculum focused on anti-oppression practice.

The mission of the graduate program in social work is based on the vision and mission of the School of Social Work. The school's mission, vision and core values inform the objectives, content and educational processes of the undergraduate and graduate curricula. The mission has served as the guiding principles for the recruitment of new faculty, research agendas and curriculum development. The school's mission also serves as guiding principles for the MSW program.

The MSW program advances the school's vision for human dignity, social equality, and social care through the preparation of its graduates to take on leadership roles in practice settings, academia and research settings. The mission is further advanced through innovations in graduate social work education and the creation of new knowledge by students and faculty that is responsive to culturally and socially diverse students and communities.

Program Goals

Building upon the School of Social Work's mission, the MSW program will prepare graduates to exercise leadership and innovation in advancing anti-oppression practice and research with marginalized people. The MSW program provides an opportunity for students to develop critical advanced knowledge and practice competence in contexts and issues addressing marginalization as it affects different groups of people. The program offers a space for critical reflection on students' own practice experience. We will develop leadership in marginalized communities with respect to advanced critical practice, education, and research.

To do so, the following program goals emphasize:

- The use of pedagogical methods grounded in respect, partnership in learning, and inclusiveness that will demonstrate and model anti-oppression approaches to social work.
- The creation of a dynamic and applied research culture focusing on advancing social work knowledge about innovative practices with marginalized people.
- The facilitation of the unique contributions that students' own practice experiences bring to a culture of critical reflexivity and the advancement of knowledge.
- An appreciation for the various social, economic, political and personal contexts that shape social work practice and the complexity these bring to practice with marginalized populations.

Program Objectives

The MSW program provides an advanced and focused professional education for students interested in working with marginalized populations. Through course work and the Major Research Project, the program also prepares students for admission to doctoral studies.

The objectives of the MSW program are:

- To facilitate the advanced critical analysis of processes of oppression and marginalization as they pertain to the field of social work.
- To engage students in the current social work advanced theoretical debates and anti-oppression practice social work issues.
- To actively engage students in self-reflection with respect to anti-oppression practices and discourses, including students' own practice experiences.
- To teach advanced analytical and methodological research skills and debates.
- To teach advanced theoretical understanding of social inclusion and social exclusion.
- To conceptualize, research, develop and evaluate transformative practice in working with marginalized populations.

Program Regulations and Curriculum

The requirement for the MSW program is successful completion of seven courses (5 are required, which includes a Field Placement Seminar, two electives, a Major Research Paper and 450 hours of Field Practicum. Courses are scheduled during three semesters of the academic year (September to August). Students typically complete the program in 12 months.

The curriculum is designed to correspond to the field of study for the program. Core courses within the curriculum address complementary theories related to anti-oppression practice and social processes of marginalization as they pertain to social work. The curriculum is constructed so that an integrated approach to practice is developed, a practice that is concerned with both micro and macro issues. The curriculum is designed so that students can exercise analytic ability, professional judgment, research ability, and an advanced level of social work intervention.

Fall Term: September to December

- SK8103 Research for Social Change
- SK8106 Social Work practice with Black Canadians
- SK8209 Indigenous Resurgence in Social Work
- SK8104 Practice Research Seminar
- Elective: SK8214 Special Topics in Social Work – Grief and Social Justice
- Start Major Research Paper

Winter Term: January to April

- SK8105 Field Practicum and Field Practice Seminars
- SK8104 Practice Research Seminar
- Elective(s):
 - SK8214 Special Topics in Social Work – Creative Communications
 - SK8212 Critical Perspectives on Mental Health
- Continue Major Research Paper

Spring/Summer Term: May to August

- Field Practicum (May to June or until 450 hours are completed)
- Major Research Paper

Section 3: Significant Dates

- [Significant Dates for Field Placements in 2025/2025](#)
- [Practice Seminars](#)
- [Placement Assignments](#)

3.1 Significant Dates for Field Placements in 2025/2026

Dates	Events/Activities
Prior to attending first day of placement	Students completing a placement during the 2025/2026 academic year complete a mandatory Student Declaration of Understanding (Google Form). Students are not permitted to attend their placement or engage in placement activities until they have completed the Declaration of Understanding.
Wednesday, January 14, 2026	Students begin placement.
Tuesday, February 17, 2026 to Friday, February 20, 2026	Toronto Metropolitan University's Winter study week . Students are not required to be in placement during this time.
Friday, April 3, 2026	Good Friday (Statutory Holiday). Students are not required to be in placement this day.
End of June 2026	Students complete placement hours.

3.2 Practice Seminars

Dates	Events/Activities
Monday, January 12, 2026	Students attend the first practice seminar.
Monday, January 26, 2026	Students attend the second practice seminar.
Monday, February 2, 2026	Students attend the third practice seminar.
Monday, March 2, 2026	Students attend the fourth practice seminar.
Monday, April 6, 2026	Students attend the fifth practice seminar.
Monday, May 25, 2026	Students attend the sixth practice seminar.
Monday, June 8, 2026	Students attend the seventh practice seminar.

3.3 Placement Assignments

Dates	Events/Activities
Early February 2026 (refer to Course Syllabus for exact date)	Students submit a learning plan to their Field Instructor and Faculty Consultant.
Early April 2026 (refer to Course Syllabus for exact date)	Students submit a mid-term field practicum evaluation to their Field Instructor and Faculty Consultant.
Late June 2026 (refer to Course Syllabus for exact date)	Students complete the online field placement experience feedback form.
Late June 2026 (refer to Course Syllabus for exact date)	Students submit the final field practicum evaluation to their Field Instructor and Faculty Consultant.

Section 4: Field Education Curriculum

- [Overview](#)
- [Field Education Goals and Objectives](#)
- [Course Description and Field Placement Components](#)

In field placement, MSW students focus on the synthesis and application of advanced anti-oppression social work practice knowledge. The student is expected to apply knowledge gained from practice, theory, and research in their advanced practice role within placement. Students are placed in field placement settings to experience and learn about advanced anti-oppression practice under the guidance of experienced and qualified Field Instructors. Students will have the opportunity to complete their field placements in a wide variety of social work settings, which reflects the relevance of anti-oppressive practices to all aspects of social work.

4.1 Overview

The values, goals, and objectives of the field placement evolve from the School of Social Work's mission and core values from Toronto Metropolitan University, and the curriculum standards approved by the Board of Accreditation of the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE).

Field Placement Values

In the field placement, the student will be required to demonstrate the following advanced practice values within an anti-oppression framework:

- A commitment to the dignity and worth of people, particularly those socially marginalized
- A commitment to social change that promotes equity and social justice for all people
- The inclusion and participation of those most directly affected by social marginalization in social change strategies
- Advocacy for and with people who experience marginalization and/or exclusion in accessing resources
- A commitment to people and communities as the primary concern
- Confidentiality in the use of information gained through social work practice
- Respect for mutuality in working relationships with people
- Critical self-reflection and personal learning as an attribute of social work practice

4.2 Field Education Goals and Objectives

As graduate students come to the MSW program with a wide range of experiences, knowledge, skills, and competencies acquired through varied social work practice activities and settings, including from the Bachelor of Social Work degree field practice, the focus of the MSW field placement will be on students acquiring advanced practice competencies and experiences in social work practice.

Field Placement Objectives

Graduating MSW students will:

- Be prepared to work with diverse populations according to race, class, gender, sexuality and ability and have the ability to assess barriers, needs, access, and opportunities for the populations
- Have advanced skills to translate varying social work theories into practice
- Be highly skilled in advanced practice of social work
- Be educated in the multi-faceted nature of social work practice including clinical work, community practice, policy development, and advocacy for marginalized communities
- Be intellectuals who are aware of the multi-faceted nature of social work practice that is influenced and constructed by the interrelationship of social relations at the interpersonal, community, national, and global level
- Be knowledgeable with respect to research methodology in preparation for leadership in the field of social work and/or ongoing graduate studies

Specific objectives for the field placement component of the curriculum include the following:

- To build on existing knowledge and skills for practice and acquire knowledge and skills necessary for advanced anti-oppressive practice
- To apply anti-oppressive principles in practice situations
- To critique practice from an anti-oppressive framework
- To understand, uphold and critique the Social Work [Code of Ethics, Values and Guiding Principles](#)
- To develop the ability to engage in an advanced level of critical self-reflection and reflection on practice
- To develop and demonstrate leadership qualities
- To develop the ability to make a significant contribution to a placement setting
- To understand the complexities and contradictions of practice (especially in relation to working from an anti-oppressive perspective within the current context of practice)
- To develop excellent communication skills
- To develop advanced knowledge and skills for working within a context of diversity
- To develop an appreciation for the connection between social work and social justice and an understanding of how this applies in practice

4.3 Course Description and Field Placement Components

Required Placement Hours

MSW students complete their placements in the second and third terms of the program. Students must complete a total of 450 hours, normally working 7 hours a day, 3 days per week for a total of 21 hours per week. If an early start date is required for orientation purposes, this will need to be negotiated prior with the Field Education Office and the placement setting.

Break time does not count towards placement hours. This means that students may be at placement for 7.5 or 8 hours, with 30-60 minutes for break time built into their day, and 7 hours counted as placement time. Students are encouraged to take a break no later than after 5 hours of placement time. Students are not allowed to work through break times to end placement early each day, to count break times (30-60 minutes per day) as part of their placement hours, or to use break times to accumulate placement hours to accelerate placement completion, as this does not fit with the schedule of the placement agreement of 21 hours per week. Assignment due dates, on-campus seminars, and the field visit are all set within the schedule of 21 hours of placement per week. Any deviation from the schedule of 21 hours per week of placement on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday must be negotiated between the Student, Field Instructor, and Faculty Consultant.

Students cannot end the placement more than one week early without the permission of their Faculty Consultant, regardless of hours accrued. Placement time cannot be extended without prior permission of the Faculty Consultant.

Students and Field Instructors are expected to come up with a mutually agreed upon process to keep track of placement hours. A [timesheet](#) is available on the School of Social Work's website should it be found helpful.

Students are not required to be in placement during the Study Week in February.

Sick Days, Inclement Weather, and Personal Days

The MSW program currently includes a total of 450 field placement hours. This is a minimum requirement set by our governing body, the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE). In accordance with CASWE, the hours requirement does not include sick days, inclement weather days, or personal days. Due to this accreditation requirement, students who need time away for illness, weather issues, bereavement, or self-care are required to make up missed hours at a later time. It is each student's responsibility to ensure they communicate all absences to their Field Instructor. Students and Field Instructors will discuss any schedule adjustments and create a mutually agreed upon plan to make up missed hours.

As above, all missed placement hours must be made up. However, if a student misses **more than three consecutive field placement days**, the student and/or the Field Instructor must contact the Faculty Consultant. In this circumstance, absences will need to be made up during non-class days, following discussion with and approval of the Field Instructor and Faculty Consultant.

Students are always encouraged to honour their health, personal needs, and well-being, understanding that they may need to add on additional days to accommodate unexpected circumstances. We encourage students to keep this requirement in mind and plan accordingly.

Learning Plan

The learning plan represents a formal agreement between the student, Field Instructor, Faculty Consultant, and the School of Social Work. The learning plan should address a range of student learning objectives, which are followed by specific tasks and evaluation methods which when tied together, will help the student meet all of their learning objectives. It is important that timelines and expectations are clear, realistic, and achievable as these are part of the review and evaluation at mid-term and final stages of the placement.

The learning plan should be finalized and submitted to the Faculty Consultant at the School of Social Work. Refer to [Section 3: Significant Dates](#) for the deadline date.

Each learning plan should be signed by the student, Field Instructor, and Faculty Consultant, and each person should keep one copy for their own records.

Please check the School of Social Work website to download the [learning plan](#).

Field Placement Assignments

At this time, the only required course assignment for all students is the Student Feedback Form. Field Instructors and students have the option of including placement-based assignments as

part of each student's learning plan if deemed relevant to the development and application of advanced social work practice skills and experiences.

Faculty Consultant / Field Instructor / Student Meetings

The Faculty Consultant is available on an ongoing basis for consultation. The Faculty Consultant is able to meet with Field Instructors and students on an as-needed basis for discussion and problem solving. Field Instructors are encouraged to contact the Faculty Consultant for consultation on concerns or issues that arise during the student's field placement. The Faculty Consultant will arrange at least one meeting to discuss the student's learning and progress with the Student and Field Instructor.

Field Practice Seminars

On-campus practice seminars offer an important space and time for students to integrate and make the necessary links and connections between field placement experiences and classroom learning from their faculty in School of Social Work. The practice seminars also offer a space for students to raise concerns, ask questions, share, and gain new learning about how their field placement experiences are informing the development of advanced anti-oppression social work practice. Students are expected to attend these seminars and actively participate in class discussions.

Refer to [Section 3: Significant Dates](#) for dates of field practice seminars.

These seminars are separate from the Practice Research Seminar and are focused specifically on the field practicum experience.

Evaluations

While it is presumed that evaluation and feedback are ongoing throughout the field placement, one way to ensure that students receive a comprehensive review of how their skills and practices are advancing within their field placement is to engage in formal evaluations. Offering both a mid-point and final evaluation ensures that the learning goals and objectives outlined in the student's learning plan remain primary for both the student and the Field Instructor within each setting.

The formal mid-term and final field practicum evaluations offer both students and Field Instructors the opportunity to provide feedback to each other with regard to the field placement experience. The mid-term field practicum evaluation provides an opportunity for the student and the Field Instructor to reflect on their work together to date and to confirm future plans. Through the field practicum evaluation, the Field Instructor is able to provide formal feedback to the student about their learning and work performance in the placement, and to make recommendations for additional learning where required.

MSW field practicum [evaluation forms](#) can be downloaded from the School of Social Work's website. Please also refer to [Appendix H: MSW Field Practicum Evaluation Forms](#).

The field practicum is graded as a pass or fail credit course.

Section 5: Placement Process and Procedures

- [Regular Placement](#)
- [Work Study Placement](#)
- [Volunteer Study Placement](#)
- [Parties Involved in the Placement Process](#)
- [Matching and Placement Process](#)
- [Being an Active and Engaged Participant in the Placement Process](#)
- [When a Field Placement is Confirmed](#)
- [Criteria for Selection of Placement Settings, Field Instructors and Placing Students](#)
- [Accommodations for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Professional Conduct](#)

5.1 Regular Placement

Application Process

Students begin the process of applying to complete a regular placement during the summer prior to the academic year when they would like to undertake this field education credit option.

Step	Description	Timelines for the 2025/2026 Academic Year
1	The application process begins when a student completes their intake in PlacePro as an indication of their intention to complete their field education credit.	Thursday, August 14, 2025 to Thursday, August 28, 2025
2	The Field Education Office reviews information entered by students in PlacePro.	September 2025
3a	The matching and placing process takes place at any point during this time and begins when the Field Education Team reviews information entered by the student in PlacePro, looks into available opportunities, and offers matches to students for review.	September 2025 to January 2026
3b	The student reviews offered matches within three business days and lets the Field Education	

Step	Description	Timelines for the 2025/2026 Academic Year
	<p>Coordinator know if they would like the opportunity to interview.</p> <p>If the student is interested, the process moves to step 3c.</p> <p>If the student is not interested, the process starts over again with step 3a.</p>	
3c	The Field Education Coordinator provides the student with information to contact the placement setting.	
3d	The student contacts the placement setting, sends their cover letter and resume, and arranges an interview.	
3e	The student interviews for the placement.	
3f	<p>The student informs the Field Education Coordinator of the outcome of the interview.</p> <p>If successful, the process moves to step 3g.</p> <p>If unsuccessful, the process starts over again with step 3a.</p>	
3g	The Field Education Coordinator confirms the placement.	
4	Students begin their placement.	Wednesday, January 14, 2026

5.2 Work Study Placement

A work study placement offers students the opportunity to complete a placement at the organization where they are currently employed. Given the Accreditation Standards of the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE) and the school's aim to promote quality social work education, the work study placement will only be approved when it clearly meets the stated Accreditation Standards and enhances the previous practice experience of the student.

Proposed work study placements must clearly specify new and challenging learning opportunities within the context of the school's mission and the curriculum objectives of the SK8105 Field Practicum. Given the educational focus of the placement, students may not

extend their assigned work activities for purposes of the work study placement. Students will complete their required hours in an area significantly different from their employment.

Given the potential impact on the employment of the learner, Work Study Applications require considerable review and contracting before they can be approved. Issues in Work Study placements can have serious long term personal consequences should breakdown occur, with effects beyond the successful completion of the program. While the Field Education Team works to ensure safeguards for the learner, students undertake these placements fully appreciating any risk posed to their employment status.

Eligibility Criteria

1. A work study placement is restricted to students currently employed within the social service sector. Students need to have been with their current employer for a minimum of 6 months.
2. Students shall, in conjunction with the school and their employer, design a placement experience that meets the academic objectives of the placement for the student's year of study.
3. The school will determine the appropriateness of the work study in the context of curriculum objectives and the mission of the school.
4. The placement must be carried out in an area of work that is clearly different and distinct from the usual tasks required of the student by the workplace. There cannot be overlap in the duties performed.
5. The hours of placement are not part of the regular work hours, but hours which the employer has agreed to release for field placement purposes.
6. Field instruction must be carried out by someone who is not responsible for the day-to-day administrative or clinical supervision of the student in the workplace. Field instruction cannot be carried out by a current peer or colleague who regards the student as a co-worker rather than a student learner.
7. Only one placement may be completed by means of a work study during the course of the degree program.
8. The usual requirements of a field placement apply to the work study placement.

IMPORTANT:

- Students who are found doing usual tasks that are part of their paid job duties will be removed from the work study placement and risk postponing placement until the next academic year.

Application Process

Students begin the process of applying to complete a work study placement during the summer prior to the academic year when they would like to undertake this field education credit option.

The following timelines and steps apply to students who would like to apply to complete a work study placement during the 2025/2026 academic year.

Step	Description	Timelines for the 2025/2026 Academic Year
1	The application process begins when a student completes their intake in PlacePro as an indication of their intention to complete their field education credit. PlacePro has a mechanism for students to indicate their interest in a work study placement.	Thursday, August 14, 2025 to Thursday, August 28, 2025
2	Field Education Coordinator emails information about next steps to students who indicated in PlacePro their interest in a work study placement.	September 2025
3	Students submit the completed Work Study Placement Application in consultation with their employer and their Field Education Coordinator. The application must meet the requirements as defined in the policies and curriculum for the appropriate year. IMPORTANT: Late applications will not be accepted, reviewed, or considered.	Monday, October 20, 2025
4	Work Study Placement Applications are reviewed by the Field Team. Students are expected to be available for required revisions during the review/approval process. The Field Team communicates all work study decisions to students. The decisions are final and binding, and not subject to appeal.	Tuesday, October 21, 2025 to Friday, November 7, 2025
5	Students who are approved to complete a work study placement begin their placement.	Wednesday, January 14, 2026

5.3 Volunteer Study Placement

A volunteer study placement offers students the opportunity to do a placement at an organization where they are already volunteering. Given the Accreditation Standards of the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE) and the school's aim to promote quality social work education, the volunteer study placement will only be approved when it

clearly meets the stated Accreditation Standards and enhances the previous practice experience of the student.

Proposed volunteer study placements must clearly specify new and challenging learning opportunities within the context of the school's mission and curriculum objectives of the SK 8105 Field Practicum course. Given the educational focus of the placement, students may not extend their assigned volunteer activities for purposes of the volunteer study placement. Students must complete the required hours as established by the curriculum in an area significantly different from their previous or current volunteer work.

Eligibility Criteria

1. Students shall, in conjunction with the school and their volunteer site, design a placement experience that meets the academic objectives of the placement for the student's year of study.
2. The school will determine the appropriateness of the volunteer study in the context of curriculum objectives and the mission of the school.
3. The placement must be carried out in an area that is clearly different and distinct from the usual volunteer tasks required of the student by the organization.
4. The hours of placement are not part of other volunteering at the site, but hours which the site has designated for specific field placement purposes.

Application Process

Students begin the process of applying to complete a volunteer study placement during the summer prior to the academic year when they would like to undertake this field education credit option.

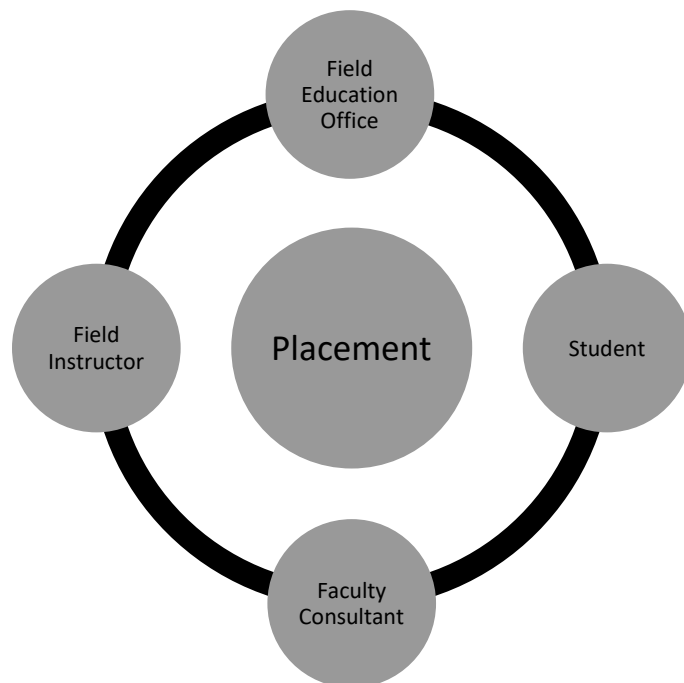
The following timelines and steps apply to students who would like to apply to complete a work study placement during the 2025/2026 academic year.

Step	Description	Timelines for the 2025/2026 Academic Year
1	The application process begins when a student completes their intake in PlacePro as an indication of their intention to complete their field education credit. PlacePro has a mechanism for students to indicate their interest in a volunteer study placement.	Thursday, August 14, 2025 to Thursday, August 28, 2025
2	Field Education Coordinator emails information about next steps to students who indicated in PlacePro their interest in a volunteer study placement.	September 2025
3	Students contacted by the Field Team complete a Volunteer Study Placement Application in	On an ongoing basis throughout 2025/2026 placement process

Step	Description	Timelines for the 2025/2026 Academic Year
	<p>consultation with their employer and their Field Education Coordinator.</p> <p>The application must meet the requirements as defined in the policies and the curriculum for the appropriate year.</p> <p>Once completed, the student submits the application by the deadline.</p>	
4	<p>Volunteer Study Placement Applications are reviewed by the Field Team.</p> <p>Students are expected to be available for any required revisions during the review/approval process.</p> <p>The Field Team communicates all volunteer study decisions to students. The decisions are final and binding, and not subject to appeal.</p>	On an ongoing basis throughout 2025/2026 placement process
5	Students approved to complete a volunteer study placement begin their placement.	Wednesday, January 14, 2026

5.4 Parties Involved in the Placement Process

The Field Education Team engages with students and Field Instructors/Education Coordinators in coordinating all required activities prior to the commencement of placement. The Faculty Consultant engages with students and their Field Instructors throughout the academic year and for the duration of the placement experience. Field Education Coordinators are not typically involved in placement related matters once placements start and do not work with students and Field Instructors until it is time to make arrangements for the following year's placement. Only in certain circumstances, such as when a placement is terminated early, is the Field Education Team re-engaged in placement-related matters.



5.5 Matching and Placement Process

The general placement process for regular placements is outlined below.

Steps

1. Student enters information in PlacePro.
2. Field Education Coordinator reviews information entered by student in PlacePro, looks into available opportunities, and sends student information about match.
3. Student reviews match within three business days and lets the Field Education Coordinator know if would like opportunity to interview. If student is interested, process moves to Step 4. If student is not interested, process starts over again with Step 2.
4. Field Education Coordinator provides student information to contact the placement setting.
5. Student contacts placement setting, sends cover letter and resume, and arranges interview.
6. Student interviews for placement.
7. Student informs Field Education Coordinator of outcome interview. If successful, process moves to Step 8. If unsuccessful, process starts over again with Step 2.
8. Field Education Coordinator confirms placement.

NOTE: Due to the amount of prior education and professional experience that MSW students bring to their placement experience, the Field Education Office encourages students to explore a variety of placement options simultaneously, so that a thorough assessment on “fit” can occur. As such, the placement process may also involve:

- Students being offered a variety of specific placement matches via email, based on the detailed information they provide during their PlacePro intake.
- Students making requests for particular agencies and the Field Education Coordinator working to secure opportunities in the requested sites.
- Email “blasts” to the whole MSW class when new placements come in, so that any student interested/appropriately qualified has the opportunity to apply.
- Any combination of the above.

5.6 Being an Active and Engaged Participant in the Placement Process

The process of arranging field placements is an important collaboration between the student and the Field Education Team. Students are regarded as active participants in the placement process. Students are encouraged to research sectors and organizations of interest to become more familiar with the field and trends. Similarly, the school recognizes that professional networking is an important skill. Therefore, if a student learns of a potential placement opportunity through networks, volunteering, employment, or other means, they may make a request with their Field Education Coordinator. Students who are interested in a particular

agency/organization are also given the opportunity to note their interest when completing their placement intake in PlacePro.

The Field Team also has a significant and crucial role in developing and assessing placement opportunities to ensure they meet CASWE accreditation standards and the University's experiential learning requirements. Because of this, **students must consult with their Field Coordinator and receive permission before reaching out to agencies.** Field Education Coordinators are the single point of access for our field partners when securing and developing agreements with the respective agencies, and a student's interactions with an agency must not interfere with the processes and procedures of the Field Education Team.

5.7 When a Field Placement is Confirmed

Except for rare circumstances, students are not permitted to decline a placement match or offer after they have accepted it. Much work goes into facilitating the placement process for each student, both on the part of the Field Team and on the part of the organization offering the learning opportunity. To decline a placement match or offer after accepting it has implications that may at first not be apparent. In agreeing to take on a particular placement, students make a professional commitment that may have negative implications for their professional reputation post-graduation.

5.8 Criteria for Selection of Placement Settings, Field Instructors, and Placing Students

Criteria for Selection of Placement Settings

Field placement settings are selected by the School of Social Work according to the following principles:

- A demonstrated commitment to the education of social work students.
- A demonstrated commitment to provide an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment.
- Social work practice within the placement setting is based on professional standards and is a respected component of the activities of the setting.
- The placement setting is willing and able to provide learning experiences and assignments appropriate to the educational needs of the student and in accordance with the curriculum of the school.
- A qualified Field Instructor is available in accordance with the school's requirements and is given adequate time during the work day to provide field instruction to the student as required by the school, as well as time to attend the necessary orientation meetings and workshops held by the school for Field Instructors.
- Adequate space and a milieu conducive to student learning and participation are provided.

- The placement setting allows and encourages full participation of the student in staff meetings, staff development activities, and other activities as deemed appropriate by the Field Instructor and Faculty Consultant.
- The placement setting demonstrates the ability and willingness to carry out the responsibilities of a placement setting as outlined by the School of Social Work at Toronto Metropolitan University.
- The School of Social Work reserves the right to determine the suitability of a setting for student placement, taking into consideration such factors as the length of time the placement setting has been in operation, staff turnover, organizational context, etc.
- All types of social work settings will be utilized for field placement purposes. Settings will be diverse in terms of types of practice, including clinical, community, policy, research, coalitions and networks, and advocacy groups.
- Selection of settings can be based either on the setting itself (for example because the setting is focused on marginalized populations and anti-oppression practices and so is congruent with the MSW field of study and the school's mission) or on the Field Instructor (for example, because of demonstrated capacity for providing effective field instruction for students especially as it relates to the capacity for critical analysis and learning about anti-oppressive practices).
- The placement is a setting where the Field Instructor can help the student understand, analyze, reflect upon, and critique practice.
- The placement setting and/or the Field Instructor values critical reflection and critical questioning and is open to an ongoing learning process.

Criteria for Selection of Field Instructors

Field Instructors are selected by the School of Social Work according to the following principles:

- Field Instructors have an MSW or related qualifications, as deemed appropriate by the school. Where it is not possible for the Field Instructor to have an MSW or social work degree, the Faculty Consultant will play a greater role in the monitoring and supervision of the field experience to ensure that a social work focus is sustained.
- Field Instructors support the ethics of social work and the basic principles of social work practice.
- Field Instructors are committed to the education of social work students.
- Field Instructors demonstrate the ability and willingness to carry out the responsibilities of a Field Instructor as indicated by the School of Social Work at Toronto Metropolitan University.
- Field Instructors are able to accept the responsibility for the duration of the placement period and to the best of their knowledge will not be leaving their position, transfer jobs, etc. before the student's placement ends.
- Field Instructors are able to facilitate mentoring and guidance in terms of advanced practice skills, preparing for leadership, and critical reflection on practices.

- Field Instructors are able to help prepare students to work effectively in the context of diversity.

Criteria for Placing Students with Placement Settings

The School of Social Work makes the final decision regarding the suitability of placements. The student placement process is based on the following criteria:

- The placement fits the curriculum for the year in which the student is studying.
- The placement is compatible with the student's learning needs defined by the student and the Field Education Coordinator. Previous experience in work, volunteer work, and placements are taken into consideration.
- Reasonable effort will be made to accommodate the student's preferences, where those preferences are compatible with the above criteria.
- It is understood that the placement setting must be able to continue to meet its mandate and therefore the student's needs must not interfere with the needs of the setting. Requests for students with specific experience or skills will be met when possible. All students will be interviewed by prospective placement settings to determine suitability and compatibility.
- Securing a placement is a competitive process. Multiple students may express interest and be offered the chance to apply for the same placement opportunity. Students who are not accepted for a placement after their interview will have the opportunity to view other available opportunities in other settings.
- Students are normally placed within Toronto, unless they specifically request otherwise. If other requests are made, the Field Education Coordinator will attempt to find the student a field placement in the requested geographic location; however, this may not be possible. Students should expect to commute anywhere in the greater Toronto area for a field placement. A reasonable travelling time is up to 1.5 hours to and from the placement setting. Students should anticipate the cost of commuting as part of their academic expenses.
- Students may not arrange their own field placements without the involvement of the Field Education Team. Specific requests for possible placement settings may be made to the Field Education Team, however, students are not permitted to communicate with potential settings before receiving approval from the Field Education Coordinator.
- Placements in child welfare may require a driver's licence and/or availability of a car. Specific prerequisites such as addictions, crisis intervention, family counselling courses, or work experience may be required in some practice settings. Students are advised to be aware of these requirements and prepare themselves accordingly. Some field placements are only available to students with particular life/work/volunteer experiences or specific language skills.
- The school supports the requirement of many agencies/organizations for a police record check and/or various health tests, x-rays, or inoculations. Students who are unwilling to meet these requirements may not be able to complete field placements in these settings. Students assume financial responsibility for meeting these requirements.

- In the event of disputes regarding placing processes or procedures, the student is advised to speak with the Field Education Manager.

5.9 Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students registered with the [Academic Accommodation Support at Toronto Metropolitan University](#) are encouraged to inform their Field Education Coordinator as early as possible (i.e., when they first submit their request to do a placement) if they require any placement accommodations. Students who require accommodations are encouraged to discuss them with their Field Education Coordinator early in the process and are welcome to bring their academic accommodation support staff to attend the discussion, although this is not required.

5.10 Professional Conduct

Courtesy and Respectful Communication

Students understand that throughout the duration of the placement process, they are demonstrating their professional readiness for the field. When interacting with the Field Team, it is expected that students reflect on how they will communicate and engage with their future colleagues in the field. From communicating placement preferences to the Field Team, to practicing their skills in a field placement setting, students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional, open-minded, and respectful manner with all stakeholders. This means that all communications with the Field Education Team and community partners (email, phone, face-to-face) are mindful of the audience in terms of tone, grammar, and attitude. In interactions with placement settings, students should be aware that they are making an impression as a professional in what they say and do. An approach of respectful formality, flexibility, and enthusiasm goes a long way in making a favourable impression with all those who support your learning experience. Similarly, students are expected to approach interactions with members of the Field Team in a manner that reflects values of civility and collegiality.

Absence and Illness

There may be a variety of reasons why a student is unable to attend field placement. It is each student's responsibility to ensure that they communicate all absences from field placement to their Field Instructor. If a student misses **more than three consecutive field placement days**, the student and/or the Field Instructor must contact the Faculty Consultant. Students are required to meet the minimum standard of 450 placement hours, and absences from field placement will need to be made up during non-class days, following discussion with and approval of the Field Instructor and Faculty Consultant.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a foundational ethic of social work practice. It is imperative that confidentiality be strongly upheld at all times. Students will follow the placement setting's policies and procedures regarding confidentiality and will ensure that confidentiality is upheld within and outside the field setting, including transmission via computers, social media, electronic mail,

facsimile machines, answering machines, and other electronic technology. Please review the Canadian Association of Social Workers [Manual on Social Media Use and Social Work Practice](#).

If relevant, the School of Social Work and each field placement will clearly outline how process recordings, audio, and videotapes will be used by students, and identify clearly who owns this material.

Specific guidelines for confidentiality which are upheld by the School of Social Work are:

- All identifying information (names, addresses, telephone numbers, emails, photographs, etc.) regarding clients or staff at the setting are not to be revealed outside of the agency/organization, unless it is for the explicit purpose of providing services, and with clients' or staff consent.
- Signed letters of consent are required for the use of any case material where there is any chance of a client being identified (i.e., in assignments, process recordings, etc.).
- Reflexive journals and field notes must not include any identifying information.
- Signed consent forms must be used for any audio and/or video recordings.

Students are encouraged to speak to their Field Instructor or Faculty Consultant on any issues or concerns around confidentiality.

Conflict of Interest

The Social Work Code of Ethics is very clear about disclosing conflict of interest in the practice of social work. Students will not be placed with agencies/organization or Field Instructors where the school believes there could be a conflict of interest. Some examples of conflict of interest are:

- A student has a personal relationship with their Field Instructor or other placement setting staff. A personal relationship could be a relative, friend, family friend, etc.
- A student has been a client of the Field Instructor or other placement setting staff.
- A student is presently or will be volunteering or employed by the placement setting prior to or concurrent with the placement, (except in the case of a Work Study placement).

Students are encouraged and given opportunities to disclose potential conflicts of interest. This is a demonstration of ethical practice. Students who fail to disclose such relationships will, in most cases, be removed from their placement and may face disciplinary action for failing to adhere to the Social Work Code of Ethics.

Confronting Microaggression

The School of Social Work's mission advances anti-oppression/anti-racism, anti-Black racism, anti-colonialism/decolonizing, anti-Asian racism, Aboriginal reconciliation, feminism, anti-capitalism, queer and trans liberation struggles, issues in disability and madness, among other social justice struggles. As part of the program, Students, Faculty, Staff and other stakeholders are encouraged to actively take part in critically reflecting, disrupting, and acting in more socially just ways within all spaces and environments.

We recognize that microaggression will be addressed in the classroom, in the school, in field

placements, and in other settings connected to the work of our school. Microaggression refers to the subtle, covert, and often unconscious acts of racism, classism, sexism, ableism, sanism, and/or heterosexism etc. and includes verbal insults but also non-verbal behaviour such as body language (e.g., avoidant behaviour, glances, rolling of eyes, who speaks, who does not speak). Although individuals will express and experience microaggression on an individual level, these acts are not viewed as isolated instances that are subjectively named. Rather, microaggression will be taken up as an articulation of power that simultaneously operates at the structural, institutional, and individual levels. As a community of people connected to the School of Social Work, we agree that we will address microaggression as it occurs and discuss how we might be implicated in these acts, as well as how we can work together to interrupt and resist them.

It is important to remember you, the student, are an active and responsible member of this community, which means relationships should not be regarded as transactional. As a member of this community (both in the University and in the practicum community), remember that you are engaging and interacting in a place of work for staff and others. You play a part in ensuring the safety, well-being, and inclusion of others. Part of collegial and respectful engagement is being mindful that your behaviours and actions have a direct impact on others in these spaces.

Ethical and Transparent Use of AI Tools in Field Placement

As you enter into field placement, it's important to approach Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT responsibly, thoughtfully, and ethically. The field of AI is rapidly advancing and expanding, which indicates the need for caution.

Some sites may embrace AI and others may have strict prohibitions due to privacy concerns and regulatory requirements. Before considering incorporating AI tools into any aspect of your practicum workflow, consult your Field Instructor about the agency's policies and practices regarding AI usage. Also observe the following:

1. Never put client names or other identifying information into AI platforms.
2. Never put sensitive agency or organization information into AI platforms.
3. If AI usage is permitted at your placement, document and discuss with your Field Instructor how and when you will use AI.
4. If your placement site supports using AI-generated information, ensure you are thoroughly reviewing it for accuracy.
5. AI models can perpetuate biases and dominant narratives, therefore always consider equity and bias implications in AI responses.
6. Remember that any use of AI should complement, not replace, your developing professional skills and expertise.
7. Review [*The Use of Artificial Intelligence in Practice*](#) from the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers.

The professional growth inherent in practicum cannot be outsourced to AI. Social work expertise must be developed through engagement with communities, hands-on learning, research, critical

analysis of power structures, and the growth of independent reasoning through direct experience.

Communicating with the Field Education Team

The processes and protocols outlined in this manual and those communicated by other means (i.e., university email, Desire2Learn (D2L), School of Social Work's website, etc.) are established to manage the Field Education Team's efforts to place all students expeditiously.

[Toronto Metropolitan University's Email Accounts Policy 157](#) requires that all students activate and maintain a University central email account. This email account is the official means by which students receive university communications. The Field Team will only utilize this institutional account to correspond with students.

Students are expected to monitor and retrieve messages and information issued to them by the university via Toronto Metropolitan University online systems (e.g., email and D2L) on a frequent and consistent basis. Students also have the responsibility to recognize that certain communications may be time-sensitive.

All communications between on-campus BSW students and the Field Education Team will be through each student's university email account. Students are expected to respond to emails within particular time periods (i.e., within three business days of receiving a potential placement match). It is important that students check their university email daily for important updates and information.

Students will not be contacted by telephone or other means if attempts to reach them through their university email account fail (e.g., because mailbox is over capacity). **Students are expected to follow-up with the Field Education Team if they have not received any correspondence by email for an extended period of time.**

Other kinds of communications from the Field Team also go through students' university email account (e.g., information about placement start date and other important placement issues). Students are therefore required to check their university email frequently during the summer months, even after securing a placement, as there may be important program updates or changes that can impact student placements, field courses, and scheduling.

Students have the right to forward their university email account to another electronic mail address, but remain responsible for ensuring that all university electronic messages sent to their official university email account are received and read. To maintain privacy and confidentiality, the Field Education Team does not typically communicate with anyone other than the student adult learner and only as needed with Faculty, the respective community partner, Program and Campus Administrators and Staff when addressing issues specifically related to placement.

All official electronic communications from students must be sent through their official university email account, therefore students should only contact Field Instructors and/or other organizational staff through this email. Students are responsible for contacting Toronto Metropolitan University's [Computing and Communication Services](#) (CCS) if they experience problems with their university email account.

Section 6: Field Consultation Meetings

- [Purpose](#)
- [Field Instructor and Student Preparation Prior to Field Consultation Meeting](#)

Throughout the field placement experience Faculty Consultants are available to provide support to the student and Field Instructor. If issues arise once placements have commenced, they are the first point of contact for students and Field Instructors. Faculty Consultants will arrange at least one visit with the placement setting to meet with Field Instructors and students, either virtually or in-person. Field Instructors and students may request additional consultation at any time during the placement. Students may be asked to assist in arranging a time for the field consultation.

6.1 Purpose

The field consultation meeting serves some or all of the following purposes:

- To evaluate student progress and readiness for the field.
- To review the student learning that has taken place and set goals for future learning.
- To share concerns and resolve issues and questions on the part of the Faculty Consultant, Field Instructor, and student.
- To facilitate and support the instruction process and demonstrate methods of effective teaching, identify opportunities for further learning, problem solving, goal setting, etc.
- To review the placement and its relevance to social work education and the school's curriculum.

Consultation meetings usually take 1 to 2 hours to complete. At times, field consultation may occur in a group with other Field Instructors and students.

6.2 Field Instructor and Student Preparation Prior to Field Consultation Meeting

Prior to the meeting occurring, the student and Field Instructor should discuss areas of concern or interest that need to be shared with the Faculty Consultant.

The following areas may be explored during the consultation:

- knowledge of the placement setting mandate and activities;
- student strengths and areas of future learning;

- knowledge of their role and responsibilities in the placement setting;
- ability to identify the learning that has taken place;
- knowledge specific to the placement and practice class;
- understanding of linkages between the placement setting, the community, and the population served;
- integration of theory with practice;
- effective use of self;
- appreciation of ethical issues related to placement;
- effective use of field instruction methods;
- review of their learning plan and future learning needs;
- career goals and future learning needs.

Also, this is an opportunity to discuss the structure and activities of the placement setting to assess:

- appropriateness of learning opportunities for the year of study;
- appropriateness to student learning needs;
- necessary changes to structure and activities;
- Field Instructor/student relationship;
- field instruction format and techniques;
- consultation.

Section 7: Conflict Resolution

- [Guidelines for Conflict Resolution in Field Placements](#)
- [Terminating a Field Placement](#)

7.1 Guidelines for Conflict Resolution in Field Placements

During a field placement, difficulties or concerns may arise regarding the learning experience or the field instruction process.

At the earliest possible time, the Field Instructor, student, and Faculty Consultant have a responsibility to identify and address problems, concerns, or potential problems.

- The first stage in the process is the student or Field Instructor sharing the concern with each other. When mutual resolution is difficult or either party needs assistance or guidance addressing an issue, the Faculty Consultant should be contacted. Any party may request a meeting of two or three of the involved individuals. For example, a student may request a meeting with the Field Instructor, Faculty Consultant, or both.
- The goal of the meeting is to resolve the concern, if at all possible, through a mutually agreed upon plan of action. The plan may include amendments to the learning plan, specific agreement concerning time lines to be met, and/or criteria for evaluation of agreed upon actions.
- If a problem or concern cannot be mutually resolved by the student, Field Instructor, and Faculty Consultant, the Field Education Manager and/or Associate Director, Undergraduate Program and/or school Director are available for consultation.
- The Field Education Manager and/or Associate Director, Undergraduate Program and/or Director may convene a meeting, or a series of meetings with the individuals involved. The final outcome of the meeting(s), particularly those matters of academic and non-academic misconduct, may be recorded in a letter which may be sent to the student, the Field Instructor, and the Faculty Consultant. It will include the outcome of the meeting(s) and proposed action.
- If the problem/concern cannot be resolved by the involved individuals, the placement setting and the school have the right to terminate the placement.

7.2 Terminating a Field Placement

- Except in rare and exceptional circumstances, a field placement cannot be terminated in the first month.
- After the first month, a placements can only be terminated following an intervention by the Faculty Consultant and/or the Field Education Manager and/or Associate Director, Undergraduate Program and/or Director, who will work with the student and the Field Instructor in an attempt to establish the conditions for a successful field placement.
- A student cannot terminate their field placement. Concerns should be brought to the attention of their Faculty Consultant and the Field Education Manager. Communication about the termination should come from the Faculty Consultant to the Field Instructor and/or agency, unless otherwise determined.
- The Faculty Consultant can determine, in consultation with the Field Education Manager as needed, that the placement should be terminated and whether any subsequent closure meetings should be held.
- The Faculty Consultant will ascertain from the Field Instructor if there are completed hours that will be credited to the student. Depending on the circumstance, the Faculty Consultant may also request the Field Instructor complete any pending evaluations.
- An essential part of the experiential learning process is to engage in reflective/reflexive practice. Faculty Consultants should lead and engage the student in a process of critical self-reflection, examining ethical and professional practices related to issues and concerns raised, impacts and responsibilities, modeling conflict resolution and collaborative problem solving where possible. The Field Education Manager is available

for consultation and support as needed. The process of reflection may include assignments, discussions etc. as determined by the Faculty Consultant.

- When the Faculty Consultant has determined the student has satisfactorily demonstrated an appreciation for the circumstances and issues resulting in the placement breakdown, they will share the Termination Form with the Field Education Manager, along with any special considerations to enable the reinstatement of the student into the replacement process.
- The Field Education Manager will provide direction to the Field Education Coordinator to begin the replacement process and outline any requirements and/or available options.
- The Field Education Coordinator will reach out to the student once they have received the Termination Form and instructions to support the replacement process.
- Timely replacement opportunities are dependent on the availability of community partners, therefore terminations may result in delays in the placement process.

Appendix A: Responsibilities of All Parties Involved

Placement Setting

The placement setting is responsible for providing an environment that will be conducive to a student's growth and development as a professional social worker. Responsibilities include the following:

- To provide Field Instructors who have a BAA (Social Work); BSW; MSW; or qualifications and/or experiences considered to be the equivalent by the School of Social Work at Toronto Metropolitan University.
- To provide the necessary time for the Field Instructor to carry out instructional duties.
- To provide the necessary time for Field Instructors to attend orientation meetings, workshops, and seminars held for them by the school.
- To provide a learning atmosphere for the student including accepting them as a member of the placement setting and as a learning professional.
- To provide an environment that is safe and free from harassment or discrimination.
- To provide the necessary facilities so that the student may fulfill duties.
- To inform the student of the placement setting's policies concerning police reference checks and other pre-placement requirements. Unless informed otherwise, students are informed that they are responsible for covering the cost for obtaining a police reference check.
- To provide the student with reimbursement for certain pre-determined and agreed upon expenses incurred during field practice for placement related activities (e.g., travel, stamps, etc.). Students are responsible for their commute to and from placement.
- To provide orientation materials and opportunities, including safety materials or training.
- To notify the Field Education Office at the earliest possible indication that they will be unable to complete the responsibility of the placement for any reason (e.g., transfer, promotion, termination, or illness of Field Instructor, lack of learning opportunities, etc.).
- To notify the Faculty Consultant immediately of any change in Field Instructor for any reason.
- To ensure that the social work [Code of Ethics, Values and Guiding Principles](#) (CASW, 2024) are upheld by the student at all times.
- To uphold all school policies and procedures outlined in this manual as they relate to field education.
- To enter into an affiliation agreement with Toronto Metropolitan University, highlighting roles and responsibilities, liabilities, etc.

Field Instructor

The role of the Field Instructor is the most important aspect of the student's placement learning experience. Responsibilities include:

- To provide an adequate orientation to the placement setting, sufficient for the student to begin practice as soon as possible. This should include orientation to the mandate of the setting, its general policy and procedures (manuals where available), safety policies and procedures, its administrative structure, orientation to staff and to the client group and community served.
- To define and clarify for the student, the role of the Field Instructor in relation to the student, the placement setting, and to Toronto Metropolitan University.
- To provide face-to-face field instruction, at least 1.5 hours weekly for students. This time is to be set aside at regular intervals and is in addition to orientation to the placement setting.
- To provide additional time for conferences with the student as required for the student to adequately carry out the assigned tasks.
- To provide guidance and direction in assisting the student to perform the tasks required by the placement setting and to facilitate the integration, by the student, of the learning that is taking place in the placement through feedback, discussion, and a variety of field instruction techniques.
- To select appropriate cases, groups, or situations for assignment to the student in keeping with the curriculum expectations. It is required that students have direct contact with clients or communities within the first 3-4 weeks of commencement of the placement.
- To expose the student to diverse learning experiences (e.g., staff meetings, conferences, seminars, observations, placement setting visits, setting recordings, etc.).
- To provide a learning environment that is safe and free from harassment and discrimination.
- To notify the Faculty Consultant immediately if there is any indication that the placement setting will not be able to provide the appropriate learning opportunities for the student, or if the Field Instructor will be unable to complete the responsibility of the placement for any reason (e.g., transfer, promotion, termination, or illness).
- To notify the Faculty Consultant immediately of any change in Field Instructor for any reason.
- To meet with the Faculty Consultant as required to review the student's progress.
- To recognize and respect the teaching/learning relationship between the student and their Faculty Consultant.
- To attend or arrange any meetings or conferences, in addition to the above routine visits, as may be necessary to resolve problems. These meetings should be arranged at the earliest sign of difficulty.

- To utilize the student evaluation as a measure of growth, both personal and professional, in ongoing field instruction with the student.
- To submit evaluations of the student's progress and potential at the end of each term; this evaluation is to be shared with the student, and a copy given to her/him; the school will notify the Field Instructors each term, advising them of the due date for the evaluations.
- To attend the orientation meetings and appropriate seminars provided by the school (times and dates will be announced well in advance).
- To ensure that the social work [Code of Ethics, Values and Guiding Principles](#) (CASW, 2024) are upheld by the student at all times.
- To uphold all school policies and procedures outlined in this manual as they relate to field education.

Faculty Consultant

Faculty Consultants are members of faculty who carry teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities within the School of Social Work at Toronto Metropolitan University, along with their responsibilities as Faculty Consultant. In their capacity as Faculty Consultant, their responsibilities are:

- To be available for consultation with Field Instructors regarding the curriculum and placement expectations.
- To work with the Field Instructor to develop a placement compatible with the curriculum of the school, the needs of the student, and the mandate of the placement setting.
- To provide safety training for students entering the placement and to discuss safety concerns throughout the placement.
- To schedule and attend a field consultation visit with the Field Instructor and the student at the placement setting at least once, to discuss the student's progress.
- To provide the necessary support to the Field Instructor and the student to facilitate the provision of learning experience as defined by the school curriculum.
- To ensure that social work students are being provided with a sufficient amount and adequate quality of field instruction.
- To maintain close liaison with Field Instructors supervising social work students from Toronto Metropolitan University and to be available for field consultation with the student and Field Instructor for the purpose of evaluating the student's progress, difficulties, and learning needs and goals as well as other goals outlined in the field consultation visit.
- To ensure that students are fully informed of their responsibility to uphold the social work [Code of Ethics, Values and Guiding Principles](#) (CASW, 2024) at all times and to respond at the first indication that this is not happening.
- To take reasonable steps to ensure that student placements are safe and free from harassment and discrimination.

- To take reasonable steps to ensure that all school policies and procedures outlined in this manual are upheld by the placement setting, Field Instructor, and student at all times.
- To attend or arrange any meetings or conferences that may be necessary to resolve problems (these meetings should be held at the earliest sign of difficulty).
- To ensure that written notification is given to a student when it appears that they may be asked to withdraw because of inadequate performance (this process should take place in consultation with the Field Education Manager).
- To complete an early termination of placement form when applicable and submit to the Field Education Office.
- To assign the grade to the student at the end of the placement on receipt of the Field Instructor's evaluation and all requirements from the student.

Field Education Manager

The Field Education Manager is responsible for overseeing the overall operations of the Field Education Office to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.

- To manage the day-to-day operation of the Field Education Office, including supervision of all Field Education Office staff, including Field Education Coordinators, Field Education Program Administrator, and short-term contract workers such as Career Boost students.
- To engage in yearly strategic planning and set the yearly work plan for the Field Education Office, in conjunction with the Field Education Team.
- To coordinate or supervise the matching and placing of students in their practice settings, with particular focus on students in the Toronto Metropolitan University-FNTI collaborative BSW program and MSW students.
- To facilitate the development of accommodations for students in field placement in relation to access and equity.
- To facilitate legal contracts and other agreements as needed. To provide consultation on issues related to safety and liability in field placement.
- To support Field Instructors to take on the responsibilities of field instruction, including participation in workshops and consultations as needed.
- To develop, oversee, and evaluate, in conjunction with the Field Education Office staff, outreach strategies for the recruitment of new placement settings, including development of promotional materials.
- To support field education activities provided by the school for Faculty Consultants and students.
- To support the School in most aspects of planning and development of policies and procedures, including evaluation and research related to field practicum and other appropriate areas.

- To represent the school in interactions with the public, private, not-for-profit, and voluntary sectors.
- To oversee all of the Field Education Office's committees.

Field Education Coordinators

Field Education Coordinators take responsibility for arranging and coordinating the field practicum component of the field education program within the school. Responsibilities include:

- To be responsible for coordination and administration of field placement opportunities including consistency and quality of field placements and range of placement settings, in consultation with the Field Education Manager.
- To develop new field placements for the school based on the curriculum design, student needs, and trends within the profession of social work and the community.
- To provide students with individual problem-solving support and accommodation(s) as required.
- To take reasonable steps to ensure that agencies/organizations provide student placements that are safe and free from harassment and discrimination.
- To take reasonable steps to ensure that field placement settings and Field Instructors uphold the social work [Code of Ethics, Values and Guiding Principles](#) (CASW, 2024) as it relates to field practicum.
- To support field education activities provided by the school for all Field Instructors, Field Education Coordinators, Faculty Consultants and students.
- To prepare students for the process of being matched with field placements, including the development of their resume and placement interviews.
- To design, coordinate, and implement the process for the matching and placing of students in placement settings in consultation with the Field Education Manager.
- To facilitate the development of accommodations for students in field placement in relation to access and equity.
- To facilitate communication between placement settings and the school with respect to the development and maintenance of placements.
- To maintain an information system pertaining to field education in the school.
- To maintain, in conjunction with Faculty Consultants and the Field Education Manager, evaluation systems to ensure high quality field placement.
- To act as a liaison and facilitate relationships with and amongst students, community partners, faculty members, and Toronto Metropolitan University.

Field Education Program Administrator

The Field Education Program Administrator is a part of the school's administration and is responsible for ensuring that students, staff, faculty, and field partners have access to timely and accurate information and resources related to the field education component of the social work program at Toronto Metropolitan University. The Program Administrator supports the overall smooth and effective functioning of the Field Education Office through developing and implementing a number of administrative activities. Responsibilities include:

- Provides technical support and training resources to students, staff, and faculty in the use of a web-based application used by the Field Education Office to manage student and placement data.
- Liaises with field agencies and instructors to: obtain and provide information regarding placement opportunities available for students; share general information about the school's field education program; and facilitate field partners' access to Toronto Metropolitan University's library services.
- Coordinates the logistical elements of field education workshops and appreciation events, including informing field partners of upcoming events and registering interested Field Instructors/Education Coordinators.
- Ensures that field partner mailing lists are kept current for use by the Field Education Office and Faculty Consultants.
- Updates and disseminates a variety of placement related forms to Faculty Consultants and assists in annual revisions to the school's Field Education Manuals.
- Maintains currency with the Ministry of Colleges and Universities insurance program for students in unpaid placement and provides updated information to students, staff, and faculty on related protocols and procedures.
- Circulates, gathers, and files documentation related to student placement applications, placement opportunities, and Field Education Office protocols and processes.
- Prepares a variety of reports and correspondence, including gathering statistical data, for use by the Field Education Office, School of Social Work, and other internal departments.
- Maintains and monitors a database system for the Field Education Office, ensuring that current and accurate placement data is securely kept.
- Updates the field portion of the school's website, ensuring students, field partners, and faculty have access to field education forms and manuals, important dates, and contact information.
- Implements and maintains a multitude of internal office practices and procedures for the efficient recording and retrieval of information relative to the school's field education program.

Social Work Student

Social work education makes a variety of demands on the student to develop both professionally and personally. Increased knowledge and skill must be accompanied by increased self and social awareness. The student carries the greatest responsibility for their learning and growth process. Students should approach the placement as a professional learning commitment and opportunity. The following are specific responsibilities relating to placement learning.

Pre-placement Responsibilities

- To complete the process to request a placement via PlacePro by the deadline. This includes submitting a request to do any type of placement, a regular Winter placement, a work study placement, or a volunteer study placement. Students have access to PlacePro for a limited time only. Refer to [Section 5: Placement Process and Procedures](#) for deadlines.

Students are required to check their TMU email regularly for information. Failure to enter all the required information into PlacePro by the deadline may disqualify a student from completing a placement.

- To be available for placement interviews between August and the commencement of the placement in the Winter term, and maintain communication with the Field Education Office during this time.
- To ensure that the Field Education Office has current contact information, including any summer changes, to facilitate the placing and interviewing process.
- To make every effort to actively participate and facilitate the placement process.
- To assume financial responsibility and provide the required documentation or health requisites set out by a placement setting (i.e., resume, references, medical reports, police record check, etc.).
- To disclose to the Field Education Coordinator any conflict of interest that may exist within the placement process. Refer to section [5.10 Professional Conduct](#) for information about conflicts of interest.
- To maintain communication with the school and Field Education Office by checking their university email daily.

Beginning and Ongoing Placement Responsibilities

- To accept and operate within the policies and procedures of the placement setting and the mandate of social work.
- To ensure that dress code requirements are discussed with the Field Instructor or agency/organization's representative and are upheld by the student.
- To demonstrate the willingness and enthusiasm of a learning team member and a beginning professional while in attendance at the placement setting.
- To attend orientation and/or training sessions as may be held by the placement setting.

- To meet the course requirements regarding minimum number of hours in field practice. Any time missed, regardless of cause, must be made up at the placement setting.
- To uphold the Social Work [Code of Ethics, Values and Guiding Principles](#) (CASW, 2024) at all times.
- If unable to attend the placement setting due to illness, to notify the Field Instructor with as much advance notice as possible. If absent for more than two consecutive field practice days, the student may be required to supply a medical certificate.
- To attend staff meetings, conferences, or seminars as requested by the Field Instructor. If these conflict with classes, prior permission from the Toronto Metropolitan University class instructor must be obtained by the student. It is expected that the placement setting will exercise discretion in placing these demands on a student.
- To provide the placement setting with their current address, telephone number, and email address.
- To complete and submit all reports and other assignments on time, as required by Toronto Metropolitan University, the placement setting and the Field Instructor.
- To uphold the policies and procedures of the school outlined in this manual as they relate to field education.
- Students may not accept gifts from service users/communities of more than a nominal value. Students must seek advice from their Faculty Consultant when they are unsure of how to proceed.

Learning Responsibilities

- To undertake all mutually agreed upon tasks and responsibilities as assigned by the Field Instructor.
- To perform the above tasks and responsibilities at a degree of competence that is consistent with their educational level, within Toronto Metropolitan University guidelines and placement setting requirements, as determined by the setting in consultation with the school.
- To view the teaching relationship with the Field Instructor as a learning experience, to come adequately prepared for all field instruction sessions, and to contribute as an active participant in this process.
- To be familiar with the ethics of social work and to incorporate these into their work in the field placement, including the Social Work [Code of Ethics, Values and Guiding Principles](#) (CASW, 2024).
- To seek assistance from the Faculty Consultant at the onset of any problem/concern that cannot be mutually resolved with the Field Instructor.
- To inform the Field Education Manager of any problems or concerns that cannot be resolved between the Field Instructor, Faculty Consultant, and student.

Appendix B: Canadian Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics, Values and Guiding Principles

The complete [Code of Ethics, Values and Guiding Principles](#) (2024) is available from the [Canadian Association of Social Workers website](#).

Preamble

The social work profession is dedicated to the welfare and self-realization of all people; the development and disciplined use of scientific and professional knowledge; the development of resources and skills to meet individual, group, national, and international changing needs and aspirations; and the achievement of social justice for all. The profession has a particular interest in the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and/or living in poverty. Social workers are committed to human rights as enshrined in Canadian law, as well as in international conventions on human rights created or supported by the United Nations.

As professionals in a country that upholds respect for diversity and in keeping with democratic rights and freedoms, social workers respect the distinct systems of beliefs and lifestyles of individuals, families, groups, communities and nations without prejudice (United Nations Centre for Human Rights. 1992). Specifically, social workers do not tolerate discrimination based on age, abilities, ethnic background, gender, language, marital status, national ancestry, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation or socio-economic status.

Core Social Work Values

Social workers uphold the following core social work values:

- Value 1: Respect for Inherent Dignity and Worth of Persons
- Value 2: Pursuit of Social Justice
- Value 3: Service to Humanity
- Value 4: Integrity of Professional Practice
- Value 5: Confidentiality in Professional Practice
- Value 6: Competence in Professional Practice

Appendix C: Safety and Security in the Placement

The School of Social Work at Toronto Metropolitan University is concerned with student safety and security in the placement. Because the activities of social work can involve a certain level of vulnerability, placement settings are responsible for ensuring that students receive an orientation of safety protocols, including fire procedures. In addition, students should be made aware of how to handle emergency situations in the absence of their Field Instructor, and during after-hours work. Students are not expected to enter into high risk situations in a placement setting. Moreover, placement settings which require high risk work have an increased responsibility for ensuring student safety.

Students with concerns about safety are advised to discuss these with their Field Instructor and Faculty Consultant. Students should not be alone in the placement setting either during working hours or after hours unless this has been discussed with the Faculty Consultant and appropriate training and backup is available.

Students who perceive themselves at risk, at any time, in any placement setting, are obliged to contact their Faculty Consultant immediately.

There are four areas of risk to which students might be exposed in the field placement. These are:

- risk of physical injury related to travel to and from the field placement;
- risk of physical injury or illness, which may occur in the performance of assigned and prescribed duties during the course of the field placement;
- risk of a lawsuit for negligence in which students may be named by a community patron, a client with whom they are, or have been, engaged in their role as students;
- risk of a lawsuit for physical injury or property damage if students were to have passengers (such as other students or clients) in a personally owned auto involved in an accident resulting in bodily injury and/or property damage, while engaged in their field practice responsibility.

Toronto Metropolitan University's policy with respect to these areas of risk is as follows.

Students Travelling to and from Field Placements

Students are responsible for their own safety when travelling to and from placement through either public or private transportation.

Insurance Coverage in Placement

Coverage for Illness and Injury

The Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU) provides Worker Safety & Insurance Board (WSIB) coverage for most students on unpaid placements who are placed with placement settings that are registered with the WSIB.

Private insurance coverage through Chubb Insurance is provided by MCU for most students on unpaid training placements who are placed with placement settings that are not registered with the WSIB.

WSIB coverage for students that do not meet MCU conditions is provided through the Toronto Metropolitan University WSIB plan. This means that in the event of a placement-related injury or illness, students are eligible for benefits from WSIB or equivalent benefits through the private insurance carrier. Some of these benefits might include: health care costs, rehabilitation costs, and in some cases, compensation for future lost earnings. The total cost of the WSIB/private insurance coverage is paid by MCU or Toronto Metropolitan University.

If, during the course of completing a placement related activity or task, a student incurs an injury or illness that meets one or more of the below listed criteria, the student and Field Instructor must notify their Faculty Consultant immediately to be apprised of the required procedure regardless of whether the student intends to make a claim or not. Appropriate documentation of any occurrence must be provided.

- Requires health care by a health care professional for which there is a fee for service (this could include a physician, dentist, chiropractor, hospital, etc.);
- Results in lost time from work beyond the date of the work-related injury / disease;
- Requires modified work for more than seven calendar days; and/or,
- Results in exposure to communicable disease.

Faculty Consultants who require support completing the necessary documentation should reach out to the Field Education Manager for assistance.

An important note around insurance coverage for students as it relates to COVID-19 related illness: WSIB coverage for COVID-19 related illness **may** be extended to students who are placed with organizations that are registered with WSIB. Students who are placed with organizations that are not registered with WSIB, and require coverage through the Ministry of Colleges and Universities' limited private insurance and/or Toronto Metropolitan University's Accidental Injury Death and Dismemberment policy are not covered for any COVID-19 related claims. Students who are placed with various departments and/or programs at Toronto Metropolitan University are not covered for any COVID-19 related claims. Students and Field Instructors should take into consideration the challenges associated with proving that a student became ill with COVID-19, as a result of completing placement related tasks and activities, as it will likely be difficult to trace the origins of when and where a student came into contact with the virus.

Student Declaration of Understanding Form

Students entering into a placement will be required to electronically sign a Student Declaration of Understanding Form prior to starting their placement. This form needs to be signed regardless of whether or not it was signed in a previous academic year and/or for a previous placement. Students will receive instructions on how to electronically complete this form from their Faculty Consultant in the first practice seminar course.

Letter to Placement Employers Form

Organizations who provide field placement opportunities to students in the School of Social Work are responsible for having this form signed by an authorized representative within the organization. Of important note, for most of our field partners, this form has already been completed as an appendix to our affiliation agreement. A copy of this [declaration form](#) is available on the School of Social Work's website. If you are unsure about whether or not your organization has already submitted a signed version of this form, please email swfield@torontomu.ca.

Coverage for Negligence

Toronto Metropolitan University has Third Party Insurance which would respond to a lawsuit against the University, its faculty, staff and students in the event of a claim against any of the above parties resulting from normal legal performance of duties and responsibilities associated with the academic activities of Toronto Metropolitan University.

Coverage for the Placement Setting/Patron Insurance

As is covered in the affiliation agreement between Toronto Metropolitan University and the organization, the placement setting should have Third Party Liability Insurance to protect themselves.

Students Transporting Other Students or Clients in a Personally Owned Vehicle

In the event of an accident, the student could be considered responsible and their own insurance policy would be required to respond. If Toronto Metropolitan University was named in a lawsuit, its Non-Owned Auto Insurance would respond to protect Toronto Metropolitan University's interest - not that of the student. Students should bear this in mind when deciding to use their own cars for placement purposes. Specifically, students must ensure that they have an appropriate level of insurance should they be responsible for transporting other individuals in the course of their placements.

Appendix D: Experiential Learning: Senate Policy 169

In June 2020, Toronto Metropolitan University approved and implemented [Senate Policy 169: Experiential Learning](#). This policy governs authority and responsibility for experiential learning activities related to currently enrolled Toronto Metropolitan University students recognizing that Toronto Metropolitan University desires students to have meaningful, relevant, and safe experiences that provide a nexus to their career and academic goals. Questions about this policy can be sent to the Field Education Manager at swfield@torontomu.ca.

Removal of Students from Field Placements on Grounds of Professional Misconduct

With specific regard to the removal of students from a field placement, Senate Policy 169 highlights that *“Toronto Metropolitan reserves the right, at any point, to remove a student from and/or terminate an EL opportunity where there is reasonable basis that the student presents a risk to themselves or others and/or engages in persistent or significant unprofessional behaviour in accordance with the Procedures under this policy.”*

Each faculty and functional area has the authority and responsibility to outline a process applicable to them for identifying and managing experiential learning opportunities. In line with the authority granted to the School of Social Work through Senate Policy 169, the following outline presents the policy and procedures that will be applied in a situation where a student is removed from their field placement on grounds of professional misconduct.

Preamble

The school has an obligation to protect the safety and well-being of the students, staff and faculty as well as the clients and staff of those agencies in which students carry out their field placements. The school has a responsibility to take appropriate action with respect to students in the program who have acted in an unethical or unprofessional manner.

This policy is subject to Toronto Metropolitan University's [Academic Integrity Policy](#) and [Student Code of Non-Academic Conduct](#) as specified in the Toronto Metropolitan University Calendar and on Toronto Metropolitan University's website.

Policy

The Director of the school may remove a student from field placement when there is reason to suspect that the student:

- a. has behaved/performed in a manner which endangers students, clients, placement setting staff, faculty or others; or
- b. has harassed/abused a student, client, placement setting staff, faculty, or others; or

- c. is in violation of the Canadian Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics; or
- d. has been convicted of, or has been charged with, a criminal offense involving violent or abusive behaviour.

Procedures

1. A faculty member, acting on their own judgment or on the advice of the placement setting/Field Instructor, may recommend, in writing, to the Director of the School of Social Work (with a copy to the student), the removal of a student from field placement under the circumstances outlined in the above policy. If the Director concurs, the student's removal will occur immediately, subject to the procedures set out below.
2. Within three working days of the faculty's recommendation, the Director will meet with the student to review the situation and to allow the student an opportunity to explain their conduct. The Director will then make a decision regarding the student's continuation in the field placement. The Director may decide that the student will:
 - a. continue in the field placement with no restrictions; or
 - b. continue in the field placement with appropriate restrictions; or
 - c. be permanently removed from the field placement and that suspension from the program be recommended.
3. Written notification of the decision will be forwarded to the student, to the faculty member and, if necessary, to the Field Instructor, in the most expedient manner.
4. With reference to criminal offences, if charges are dropped, or the student acquitted of the offence, the student would be reinstated within the field placement.
5. Any student who has been restricted or permanently removed from the field placement has the right to request an Internal Review by a panel of three. The Internal Review Panel (the "Review Panel") will consist of:
 - a. the Designate of the Director, who will chair the Review Panel;
 - b. two members appointed by the Director.

The student has the right to express any conflict of interest with any member of the Review Panel to the Director of the School of Social Work.

A student may not remain in their field placement during the Internal Review. Students may continue with their class course work.

6. Any student requesting an Internal Review must notify the Director of this, in writing, within five working days of receipt of the Notice of Restriction or Removal from the field placement.
7. The Review Panel will meet and complete the review within 5 (five) working days immediately following the request being made by the student. This time may be extended by mutual consent of the student and the Chair of the Review Panel.
8. All members of the Review Panel are required to observe confidentiality regarding the discussions and recommendations.

9. The student has the right to meet with the Review Panel, to present relevant information, and to present submissions on their own behalf. The student may also be accompanied by one person of their choice who may act as agent.
10. Since this is an internal review, and since it is intended to keep matters as informal as possible, and since the right of appeal to a more formal tribunal is undisturbed, the use of legal counsel by either party is not permitted.
11. Within two working days of the conclusion of the review, the Review Panel will present a written decision, approved by all members of the panel, to the student and the Director. The written decision will be mailed (or emailed if agreed to by all parties).
12. A student who disagrees with the decision of the Review Panel, including the decision to recommend Disciplinary Suspension or Disciplinary Withdrawal, is entitled to appeal the decision under the Student Code of Academic Conduct.
13. Should the student be successful in the Internal Review and/or Appeal, they will be required to complete all field placement hours and/or course requirements. The Director, in consultation with the student, will determine when and how placement hours/assignments will be completed.

Appendix E: Human Rights Services

Human Rights Services at Toronto Metropolitan University are available to all members of the Toronto Metropolitan University community including students, staff, faculty and visitors. This office administers human rights questions and complaints as well as Toronto Metropolitan University's Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy. The policy applies to all Toronto Metropolitan University employees and students, as well as to visitors and contractors. Human Rights Services does not advocate for any individual or group. It advocates for fairness and for a community where the dignity and human rights of all its members are respected and upheld.

Toronto Metropolitan University's Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy and Procedures is informed and guided by the Ontario Human Rights Code. This anti-discrimination policy is based on the Ontario Human Rights Code which provides that every person has the right to equal treatment without discrimination on the basis of: race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, age, record of offences, marital status, same-sex partnership status, family status, or disability.

An excerpt from the policy states: "Discriminatory and harassing behaviours are offensive, degrading and illegal. Every member of the Toronto Metropolitan University Community is responsible for creating an environment which is free of discrimination and harassment. Individuals acting on their own and/or on behalf of the University and the University itself can be held responsible under this Policy and in law for discriminatory and harassing acts. Those found to have engaged in such conduct on the basis of a prohibited ground will be subject to discipline. Those found to have been harassed or discriminated against on the basis of a prohibited ground will be entitled to a remedy."

All students are expected to have read the Toronto Metropolitan University [Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy](#) in its entirety.

Jurisdiction of the University: Any incident involving members of the Toronto Metropolitan University Community and having study or workplace repercussions may be considered within the University's jurisdiction, whether or not it occurs on campus or during normally defined working hours.

Students engaged in field education have the same rights and responsibilities as any member of the Toronto Metropolitan University community.

Any student who feels they may be a victim of harassment or discrimination is encouraged to talk about their experience with someone who they trust and who can provide sound advice on what actions are available to the student so that the harassment and discrimination can be stopped. The Faculty Consultant, the Director and the Associate Directors of the school, and the Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Officer are all available to students who have harassment and discrimination concerns or questions. Faculty and/or staff will assess the situation and discuss the range of actions available to the student.

Students need to be aware that if they disclose information about possible discrimination or harassment of any kind to a faculty member or to an administrative staff person in the school, it is incumbent upon that person to take action. The specific action to be taken will be determined based on the nature of the complaint.

Toronto Metropolitan University's Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy notes:

"It is the responsibility of the University to exercise its authority to prevent discrimination and harassment, to penalize the repetition of discrimination and harassment, and to respond promptly to known or apparent incidents of discrimination and harassment, whether or not a complaint has been filed.

By law, the University and its senior administrators such as chair, deans, Directors, vice-presidents, the president, and others with supervisory responsibility have a legal responsibility to respond promptly to known or apparent incidents of discrimination and harassment, whether or not a complaint has been filed and to exercise authority to prevent and/or penalize the repetition of such behaviour.

Where it is found that a senior administrator or others with supervisory responsibility knew of an incident of discrimination or harassment and did not take any action to stop the behaviour, that senior administrator may be subject to penalties and remedies under this Policy and under the law."

Faculty members and/or administrative staff in the School of Social Work will consult with the Toronto Metropolitan University Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Officer in the event of any disclosure of possible discrimination and harassment, to seek advice on how to proceed.

Appendix F: Social Media Policy

The School of Social Work at Toronto Metropolitan University is committed to affirming human rights, equity and dignity among all people. As such, the School of Social Work values and respects the freedom of expression and academic freedom. The use of social media and technology has become a means of advancing social justice and social work education. The use of social media and technology can, however, present distinctive challenges, especially as it relates to the privacy and confidentiality of social service users. We believe it is imperative to provide guidelines and a framework to make informed decisions to the Toronto Metropolitan University Social Work community, including students, staff, and faculty, regarding the use of technology, social media, and other forms of electronic communication. The purpose of these guidelines is to maintain a respectful learning environment. This policy should be read in accordance with the [related institutional policies](#).

Inappropriate activities or misuse that pose a reputational risk to the institution may be subject to investigation as per the policy.

The Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE) Accreditation Standards (2012) state: “The academic unit has a policy regarding ethical use of all forms of social media to ensure the privacy, confidentiality, and interests of the academic unit and its field practicum community and demonstrates how the policy and procedures are consistent with the relevant human rights legislation, with the mission of CASWE-ACFTS, and with the mission of the academic unit concerned.”

The CASW [Code of Ethics, Values and Guiding Principles](#) (2024) outlines the core social work values as:

- Respect for the inherent dignity and worth of persons
- Pursuit of social justice
- Service to humanity
- Integrity of professional practice
- Confidentiality of professional practice
- Competence of professional practice

School of Social Work Social Media Policy

The School of Social Work values both academic freedom and freedom of expression and encourages these as fundamental aspects of a university education whether expressed in oral communication, print, or electronically. We recognize the importance of technology and social media and support the use of these communication tools among social workers.

Examples of common social media outlets include; Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat, TikTok, Twitter, online blogs, YouTube videos, and so on. Members of the Toronto Metropolitan University Social Work community, including Faculty, Staff and Students, are responsible and accountable for their actions and statements on all social media platforms.

Guidelines for the Use of Social Media

- Any information posted on social media platforms should be considered public documents and the parameters of privacy and confidentiality should be carefully maintained.
- Members of the School of Social Work community should refrain from disclosing any confidential or identifying information about the School of Social Work, staff and students, or any affiliated placement organizations unless permission is obtained.
- Members of the Toronto Metropolitan University Social Work community must identify that the views expressed on social media platforms are those of the author/writer and not those of the School of Social Work or placement settings, unless authorized to do so.
- Unless given permission by the School of Social Work or a Field Instructor, students are not authorized to speak on behalf of the School or their practicum agency.
- Uploading photographs of clients, classmates, peers, members of the Social Work community, without consent is a breach of privacy and confidentiality.
- Any discussions or conversations held in the classroom should be considered confidential and should not be disclosed via social media. This includes any discussions within peers, students and instructors, and any other personal information disclosed within the classroom setting, unless authorized to do so.
- Any discussions that take place outside of the classroom between students and instructors should also be considered confidential and should not be shared via social media without prior authorization.
- Notes, electronic documents, lectures, and other course related content should not be posted on social media platforms unless authorized by the instructor to do so, to avoid breaking copyright rules and regulations.
- Students must make themselves aware of and follow practicum agency policies regarding the use of electronic technologies and social media platforms.
- Students should discuss the use of electronic devices technologies for personal and placement reasons with their field instructor at the start of each field placement.
- Any discussions, activities or conversations with service users, communities, or field placement agencies should be considered confidential and should not be posted to social media platforms without prior authorization.
- In addition to following the confidentiality guidelines outlined by the School of Social Work and the CASW (2024) [Code of Ethics, Values and Guiding Principles](#), students are required to follow confidentiality and disclosure guidelines outlined by their respective field placement settings.

For further information regarding Toronto Metropolitan University's perspective on the use of Social Media, please refer to [the University Relations website](#).

Appendix G: Labour Disputes

The School of Social Work at Toronto Metropolitan University has a long history of being positively involved in the labour movement. We support student learning regarding labour relations in social service agencies.

The Toronto Metropolitan University Affiliation Agreement stipulates that a practicum centre has the right to terminate the placement of any student due to circumstances beyond their control, such as a labour disruption. Once the labour disruption has ended, it is expected they will permit the student to return as soon as possible to complete the placement.

In the event of a legal strike within a placement setting, where it has been determined that students may remain in the placement during the disruption, the student is then given the following choices by the school:

- a. Terminate the placement and be placed in a new placement setting.
- b. Stay home from placement until the strike action is over and make up their hours after the strike.
- c. Participate with their Field Instructor on the picket line for a limited period of time. In this case, the student would be given credit for a few of the hours they have spent on the picket line as picket duty is a valid learning experience for a social work student.
- d. Cross the picket line to complete non-direct practice activities such as case notes. Students cannot see clients without their Field Instructor's supervision and, if the Field Instructor is on strike, that supervision is not available. For obvious reasons, students almost never choose to cross the picket line if their Field Instructor is on strike.

Appendix H: MSW Field Practicum Evaluation Forms

Introduction

Evaluation is an ongoing process that starts at the commencement of the field practicum. The formal evaluation process consists of two components: 1) a meeting between the student and the Field Instructor; and 2) an evaluation submitted by the Field Instructor to the Faculty Consultant. Evaluations are to be done in the context of a reflection on the student's learning plan and the school's curriculum for field education. There are two field practicum evaluations to be completed, one at mid-term and one at the completion of the field placement. At the mid-term field practicum evaluation, goals for the next term will be highlighted and may be incorporated

into an amended learning plan. The final field practicum evaluation is an extensive review of the student's learning and should highlight the student's strengths and areas for future learning.

Evaluation

The field practicum evaluation is the responsibility of the Field Instructor in consultation with the student. The Faculty Consultant is available to facilitate this activity if necessary. The evaluation should follow the guidelines set out in each year of the Program.

For grading purposes, the field practicum evaluation forms must be submitted to the Faculty Consultant after they have been shared with the student and at the completion of each academic term.

Refer to [Section 3: Significant Dates](#) for the dates when evaluations are due.

[Field practicum evaluation forms](#) are available on the Field Placement section of the School of Social Work website.

Toronto Metropolitan University Faculty Consultants are not able to submit a grade for placement until the evaluations have been received. Failure to have both evaluations submitted on time may result in an "Incomplete Grade," which will postpone graduation.

Assignment of Grades

A pass or fail grade for Field Practicum (SK8105) will be assigned to the student by the Faculty Consultant, in consultation with the Field Instructor. All field assignments, including learning plan, mid-term and final evaluations, and any other required assignments must be submitted before a pass or fail grade will be given.

Failure to meet the minimum requirements of the Field Practicum as set out in this manual may result in a withdrawal of the student from the field placement in any given term. If a student is asked to withdraw from a placement setting, the school may require that the student postpone their placement until the following academic year. Two consecutive failures in Field Practicum will result in suspension from the social work program.

Final Grades for Field Practicum

Pass: The student has achieved acceptable performance in the placement for that year.

Fail: The student has not achieved acceptable performance in the placement.

Please note that the final field practicum evaluation contains a third option entitled "Repeat term/extended hours", which the Field Instructor may recommend in the case of a student requiring further practicum experience, either in the present setting or in another setting, in order to be able to be assigned a final grade.

Credit for Placement Hours

Students who fail the Field Practicum (SK8105) receive no credit for placement hours completed. Students who leave a placement may receive credit for a portion of the placement

hours as determined by their Faculty Consultant, in consultation with the Field Instructor and Field Education Manager, only if it can be determined that the minimal placement requirements have been completed.

Appendix I: Placement Attendance during Inclement Weather

On days when Toronto Metropolitan University is closed due to inclement weather, students are not expected to attend their placement and should communicate their impending absence to their Field Instructor as early as possible. Should a student choose to attend placement on a day when the University is closed, they should first check that the placement site is open and follow any specific protocols from the site. Students should exercise increased caution when travelling to and from placement and during the course of the day while carrying out placement activities.

Note that students are responsible for meeting the course requirements regarding minimum number of hours in field practice. Any time missed, regardless of cause, must be made up at the placement setting.

If students have questions or concerns about attending placement during a day Toronto Metropolitan University is closed, they should first consult their Faculty Consultant. Should they have any further questions or inquiries, they should contact the Field Education Manager.

Appendix J: Remote Placements

Orientation and Onboarding

Providing students with a thoughtful and well-planned placement orientation and onboarding process is key to setting the stage for a successful learning experience. We emphasize that this will be even more critical in the context of preparing students to complete a placement in a completely remote format. Students and Field Instructors are encouraged to refer to the following areas when planning their orientation to the organization.

Policies & Procedures

While not always the most exciting part of an onboarding process, sharing core organizational policies and procedures with students is an important first step to helping them orient and integrate themselves into the virtual environment they will be placed within. Consider sharing the following documents with students electronically and creating a space (i.e. credited placement time) for them to thoroughly read, review, and ask questions about the following:

- ✓ Organizational Volunteer and/or Student Placement Policies
- ✓ Organizational Human Resources Policies
- ✓ Organizational Confidentiality Policies
- ✓ Organizational Privacy Policies (especially as they relate to remote work)
- ✓ Organizational Access, Equity, and/or Inclusion Policies
- ✓ Pandemic-Specific Organizational Protocols & Policies
- ✓ Relevant codes of conduct, including but not limited to the CASW [Code of Ethics, Values and Guiding Principles](#)
- ✓ Important legislative acts specific to your sector of practice (i.e. Child, Youth and Family Services Act, AODA, Mental Health Act, Personal Health Information Act, etc.)
- ✓ Organizational Statements (i.e. positional statements, Core Values, Land Acknowledgements, etc.)

Information Technology (IT) Needs

In a time of remote work, clarifying parameters around IT needs, requirements, and assets is a critical conversation to have at the start of the placement. Field Instructors are reminded that not all students will have the same level or type of access to such tools, and familiarity and comfort using different online platforms will vary.

- ✓ Review what technical equipment the student will require to complete their placement activities and if they do not currently have access to this, explore options for meeting this need. Students needing access to a borrowed laptop and/or mobile internet hotspots are encouraged to visit the [Borrowing Technology](#) page on the TMU Library Services website.
- ✓ Review what platforms (i.e. Google Suite, shared drives, etc.) the organization has set up to share and store files remotely. If necessary, arrange for students to have access to these platforms and/or create a shared space for them to store their work.
- ✓ Review what meeting platforms (i.e. Google meet, Zoom, Skype, Microsoft Teams, etc.) the organization uses to host meetings with other staff, clients and community members. If necessary, arrange for students to have access and training on using these platforms.
- ✓ If necessary, review what type of phone requirements the placement has (i.e. any long-distance coverage, private voicemail service, data needs, blocking phone numbers, etc.) and if the student has access to these.
- ✓ If needed or used by a student, discuss any assistive technologies (i.e. screen readers or software) and how these will be resourced and used in the placement.
- ✓ Review how to [conduct accessible virtual meetings](#) by checking out the tips and accessibility features shared by Access TMU.

Organizational Culture

Developing a sense of the culture in an organization traditionally takes place through meeting and getting to informally know other staff in the workplace; having sensory experiences of being in physical spaces; participating in team meetings with other supervisors and leaders; witnessing how clients/service-users access and utilize programs and services and engage with staff; and through a variety of other means. Grasping an organization's culture and feeling a part of the team are important ingredients in the recipe of a successful student placement experience. As students will not have these in-person experiences and may feel isolated from others as a result, Field Instructors are encouraged to think of creative and intentional ways they can help students build a sense of the organization's culture. Some ideas for consideration include:

- ✓ Allowing students the opportunity to participate in scheduled team / organizational-wide meetings as well as informal gatherings, such as virtual lunch-breaks or other wellness activities.
- ✓ Encouraging the student to take the time to virtually meet other staff in the organization through a one-on-one conversation.
- ✓ Having honest conversations about how the pandemic has impacted overall staff morale and sharing any challenges the pandemic has now posed on meeting service delivery / funder targets, etc.
- ✓ Sharing what remote-working behaviours and norms have been encouraged and discouraged in the organization (i.e. don't hold meetings before or after a certain time, keep web-cameras on or off, use the mute feature at all times, what email etiquette looks like, how others like to be acknowledged, etc.).
- ✓ Sending an email across the organization to virtually introduce the student and share a brief bio about themselves.
- ✓ Conducting a "virtual" tour of the organization through a video call.

Accessibility and Inclusivity in Remote Placements and Placement-related Accommodations

The Field Education Team is committed to principles of equity, accessibility and inclusion, and works closely with community partners to reinforce these values in the field of social work. It is our goal to reduce structural barriers in the field so that field placements, whether remote or in-person, are accessible to all students.

As part of the placement matching process, we encourage students with disabilities who require accommodations to share this information with the Field Education Office, Field Instructors, and Faculty Consultants. In doing so, our hope is that we can support the student to have a successful placement. Students requiring academic accommodation and related support are encouraged to connect with Toronto Metropolitan University's [Academic Accommodation Support \(AAS\)](#) office.

For more information about preparing for an accessible remote placement experience, please refer to Toronto Metropolitan University's [Accessibility Guides & Resources](#).

Other General Areas

- ✓ Review the preferred reporting protocol (i.e. voicemail, email, text message, etc.) for students to inform their Field Instructor that they will be late, and/or unable to attend placement.
- ✓ Review if the organization will provide reimbursement for any costs that are associated with the completion of placement activities. Examples of this could include at-home internet costs, phone-related costs, printer toner and/or paper, etc. Students and Field Instructors are encouraged to discuss placement activities that do have associated costs with them *prior* to completion of such tasks.
- ✓ Review what methods of remote field instruction the Field Instructor will implement to assist students in their learning. In addition to utilizing the learning plan, possible techniques could include: assigning process recordings and/or other forms of critical reflection; audio or video recordings and written analysis of interviews; daily logs or personal journals; role plays; critical incident presentations; observation of groups; group field instruction; case studies, etc.
- ✓ Determine an agreed upon method for tracking student hours (more on this below).

Planning for Effective Communication

The most important factor in creating and maintaining a positive field education experience between a student, Field Instructor and Faculty Consultant is ongoing and effective communication. In a face-to-face/in-person field placement, we often don't realize just how much verbal and non-verbal communication is constantly taking place between students, staff, clients/service-users, community members, etc. Capturing others' emotions and conveying feelings is not as easy without face-to-face exchanges.

Completing a placement in a remote context will understandably limit (and in some cases eliminate) a student's organic experiences of entering into a workspace and being greeted by others; engaging in formal and informal dialogue with colleagues; having challenging and/or difficult conversations with clients/service-users and/or supervisors; witnessing non-verbal cues and signs from others; having quick office chats with Field Instructors to clarify ideas and expectations; and so much more. While communication techniques will surely need to look different in a remote placement, effective communication does not need to be compromised. Students and Field Instructors are encouraged to incorporate the following tips for establishing and maintaining healthy communication in a remote placement:

- ✓ Try not to get stuck to one medium (i.e. email) to communicate all the time. If a conversation can happen through a brief phone call or video chat, try using different methods that might be more effective or suitable for particular conversations.
- ✓ Be mindful of the emotional tones that could be implied in email communication and consider holding off pressing send right away if a message might be misinterpreted.

- ✓ When in doubt or unsure about something, ask first (and clarify as needed, even repeatedly) before making assumptions or jumping to conclusions.
- ✓ When planning for meetings, allow some time for virtual casual (water-cooler) conversation in addition to the time needed to cover the meeting agenda.
- ✓ Where and when possible, establish set days and times for virtual check-ins and supervision so that students know when and how to plan for these conversations.
- ✓ Provide ongoing and honest feedback throughout the placement so that there are not any surprises at formal evaluation check-points.
- ✓ At the earliest sign of any difficulty, reach out to the Faculty Consultant assigned to the placement to support resolving problems, clarifying expectations, conflict resolution, etc. Try not to “save” such conversations only for the virtual field visit.
- ✓ There really is no over communication in a remote placement. Sharing schedules, priorities for the day or the week, advising of completed items and upcoming meetings are ways you can be accountable and keep your FI informed of your activities when working remotely.

Confidentiality and Privacy

Regardless of whether a placement is conducted in-person or remotely, students are expected to familiarize themselves and follow the confidentiality guidelines outlined by the School of Social Work, the CASW [Code of Ethics, Values and Guiding Principles](#), and their respective field placement settings. Field Instructors are asked to carefully review their organization’s policies and procedures with their student, along with any specific legislation that the organization has to additionally adhere to as is related to the collection, retention and destruction of personal information.

As a regulated profession, it is important to understand legislation, policies and standards that guide social workers within their respective context; these can differ depending on setting and sector. Ethical practice requires that we understand and work diligently within the bounds of those parameters set out; these are intended to protect clients, staff and organizations. Concerns or questions regarding those policies or standards should be discussed with the FI and should not be disregarded whether you believe there is cause as you create risk and liability that could have long term serious impacts on yourself, clients, staff and organizations.

Do no harm is a motto that should be adhered to as we work with people and communities who may have taken years to establish processes, practices and relationships. We are very often only temporary visitors and invited guests privileged to learn in the environments and alongside clients and colleagues. Our conduct should never jeopardize relationships and connections nor break down trust as clients, staff, organizations and communities remain long after we have left. Students have the Field Instructor and Faculty Consultant for support should such questioning arise to determine appropriate ways to take action or channels to bring forward issues. Students who blatantly disregard organizational rules, processes or direction, act recklessly in ways that may put themselves or others at risk, do not seek the appropriate approvals and/or breach the code of conduct set out by either the institution or organization risk being subject to academic or non-academic misconduct proceedings.

General Privacy Considerations

The Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario and the Access and Privacy Office of the Ontario government offer advice for safeguarding personal information. Here are some general steps students can take to ensure compliance with the [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#) (MFIPPA).

- ✓ Store personal information securely. Keep hard copies under lock and key, such as in a locked filing cabinet; keep electronic documents on a password-protected computer. A clean desk will help prevent sensitive information being misplaced or inadvertently breached.
- ✓ Collect only as much personal information as you need to do your placement task.
- ✓ Explain why you need to collect the information and exactly how it will be used.
- ✓ Get consent from the individual to whom it is about (young people under 18, from parents), for the collection, storage and use of their personal information.
- ✓ When in doubt, ask for advice from your Field Instructor to ensure you are following the organization's policy and procedures regarding privacy.

Placement-Related Assignments

All materials produced by the student for educational purposes (e.g., audio or video recordings, process recordings, assessments or other written reports) remain the property of the placement setting and can only be shared with individuals outside of the placement with the permission of the Field Instructor. Material that students share with their Faculty Consultant or in their virtual seminar class should protect the confidentiality of any clients/service-users.

Placement-Related Activities & Technology

In response to the pandemic, many placement organizations made a shift to providing services to clients/service-users in alternative formats, such as by phone, email, video conferencing, social media platforms, and other electronic formats. Students and Field Instructors are encouraged to discuss the implications of using these technologies as they relate to maintaining client confidentiality and privacy, as well as professional boundaries. Examples of areas for discussion could include:

- ✓ The security of a student's home Wi-Fi network. If the field placement organization uses virtual private networks (VPN), explore if the student can have access to this and receive training on how to use the network. Furthermore, if the organization uses two-factor authentication, advise the student on how to set up this security tool.
- ✓ The security of a student's personal/home based laptop or desktop. Will students be required to have antivirus software installed? Note that Toronto Metropolitan University's Computing and Communications Services (CCS) offers [free security software](#) to students.
- ✓ If students will be responsible for accessing, sharing and/or storing confidential or private documents (i.e. such as client/service-user case notes), discuss what protocols will be

put in place to ensure that individuals in the same residence, who have access to the same IT equipment, will not be able to access such materials.

- ✓ If students will be conducting direct service work with clients/service-users remotely from their homes while other residents/dependents are home, how will they ensure that client/service-user confidentiality and privacy is maintained during those sessions?
- ✓ If a student experiences, or believes they have potentially experienced, a data or privacy breach as a result of unauthorized access or sharing of personal information, discuss what procedures and/or processes the field placement organization requires the student to follow.
- ✓ At the end of the field placement, discuss how confidential and private materials will be “returned” electronically to the field placement organization and/or how to securely erase electronic records.

Students and Field Instructors may find it useful to review some of the [Virtual Counselling Resources](#) shared by the CASW, as well as a series of practice notes that address concerns around confidentiality and privacy as it relates to [communication technology practices and policies](#).

Professionalism in a Remote Context

One of the dominant objectives and goals in a student’s field placement experience is that of developing a professional identity and approach to practice. From learning to dress according to organizational norms, to demonstrating preparedness for undertaking placement tasks, to learning how to integrate one’s use of self in a professional practice role, many students rely on their placement experience(s) to establish their sense of professionalism. While a remote context likely will require new thinking around how this objective might be further developed, there will still exist an abundance of ways in which students can demonstrate this objective in action. Students and Field Instructors are encouraged to discuss how achieving this goal might look in their specific remote field placement. Ideas students can incorporate into their practices might include:

- ✓ Preparing for a remote placement day with similar routines as would be applied to an in-person context, such as establishing set “office” hours and being intentional about taking restroom and eating breaks.
- ✓ Preparing for meetings with colleagues, clients/service-users, and their Field Instructor with the same level of detail that they would if meeting in person. For example, coming prepared with their questions and/or ideas, sign into their video chat a few minutes early to allow time for IT “hiccups,” being a willing and active team player in virtual conversations, etc.
- ✓ While staying comfy in pajamas is undoubtedly more relaxing and tempting if one doesn’t have plans to leave their house, students are encouraged to get dressed in a manner that reflects that of other agency staff and is appropriate for the placement tasks of that day (i.e. providing a presentation vs. conducting online research).

- ✓ Create a personal workspace that minimizes distractions and offers the greatest amount of quiet and privacy as is possible. Where and when possible, turn down/off/away background distractions such as TVs, personal social media accounts, etc.

Establishing Healthy Boundaries

Closely related to developing a professional identity and approach to practice, is the need for students to establish and reinforce healthy boundaries in their remote placements. For many students, learning remotely has meant a complete blurring of one's placement setting, the classroom, and possibly their paid employment, all into their personal space. This makes the need to set intentional boundaries around placement tasks and activities more pertinent than ever before. Field Instructors are encouraged to support students in establishing these from the start of their placements, so that students can ultimately develop a better work-life balance, increase productivity inside and outside of the placement, and avoid burnout.

Personal Boundary Setting

Some possible areas for students to explore around creating healthy boundaries with a personal focus include:

- ✓ Setting electronic boundaries around when you will and will not be “plugged in” to placement by stopping particular tasks and activities and logging off. Shut down tabs/websites, platforms and/or programs that are placement-specific at the end of your placement day.
- ✓ Along with your Field Instructor and other students, discuss the benefits to establishing healthy boundaries and how to manage the anxieties that can arise from feeling the pressure to constantly have a presence online, be checking and responding to emails, be demonstrating that you're doing work, etc.
- ✓ If and when possible, create time-based boundaries at home with those who share your space so that they know what your placement schedule is, when you will not be available to them or when it's okay to be interrupted.

Boundaries with Clients/Service-Users

It's also very important that Field Instructors and students discuss boundaries as they relate to working with clients/services-users in a remote context. Having such conversations can help prevent inappropriate client/service-user engagements and/or violations felt in one's personal space. Some possible areas to explore around creating healthy boundaries with clients/service-users include:

- ✓ Discussing what protocols and/or methods staff use in the organization to reinforce healthy boundaries with clients/service-users, whether completing work tasks in-person or remotely.

- ✓ Setting technical boundaries around phone devices, limiting student availability and accessibility after placement hours. For instance, using blocking features on phone numbers and /or letting unknown calls go to private voicemails.
- ✓ Reviewing different ideas for how a student can make their virtual office feel less invasive into their personal home space (i.e. using green screen features in video chats).
- ✓ Reviewing what steps a student should take if they feel that a client/service-user has crossed one or more boundaries in their work together.

Planning for Learning Success

Completing placement activities in a completely remote format could organically give rise to one or more of the following consequences: an increase in independent tasks; a greater likelihood that the nature of assignments will require extended periods of time sitting in front of a computer; students completing work in what might be a monotonous environment; an increase in sensory demands (i.e. observing, listening, concentrating, etc.); and, an exacerbation and/or reduction of a student's need for academic and /or placement accommodations. It's important to acknowledge that a student's successful completion of their placement activities may be negatively or positively impacted by any of these factors. With these considerations in mind, students and field instructors will have to be more intentional than ever before about how to plan for a successful and rewarding placement experience. Field Instructors are encouraged to incorporate the following ideas when designing the placement experience:

- ✓ Plan for the student to be involved in a blend of both individual work and group-based activities with colleagues, other students and/or networks connected to your organization.
- ✓ While some placement days might require the student to perform homogeneous tasks (i.e. conducting literature reviews, completing data entry, transcribing notes, etc.), where and when possible, allow and encourage that students take on a variety of different tasks during their placement day, so as to "break up" the physical, mental and sensory demands placed on them.
- ✓ Encourage students to set daily and weekly goals (and share these with you at the start of the day/week) so that they can refer to something to stay on track and so that they can feel a sense of accomplishment when the day/week is over. These goals can be reviewed and/or shared during supervision times and/or when completing the mid-term and final evaluations.
- ✓ In assigning any particular placement activity, discuss the importance of process and outcomes as it relates to the student being able to demonstrate they successfully completed the task. For instance, if helping to conduct a focus group, discuss whether the meaningful engagement of the participants in the group or the collection of concrete data is the most important outcome of their involvement in the task.
- ✓ Demonstrate and encourage students to take physical breaks away from their workspace and recommend that they don't "work through" their eating breaks in an effort to finish placement earlier in the day or in the semester.

- ✓ If not already covered in an interview or prior to the placement starting, ask the student if there are any accommodations they require from you or the organization so that they can be set up for success and/or bring their best selves to their placement each day. Examples of accommodations students might ask for include: a later start time in the day; daily limits around repetitive tasks that cause physical strain; support accessing and using assistive technologies such as software or screen readers; flexibility to attend personal appointments that may have to be scheduled during the work day; and many more.

The [Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching](#) at Toronto Metropolitan University is dedicated to developing inclusive teaching practices that enrich the student learning experience. The Centre has developed a series of [learning and teaching resources](#) designed to support faculty and instructors teaching remotely which may have some useful insights for Field Instructors to consider. Field Instructors are encouraged to reach out the Faculty Consultant assigned to the placement for additional support around developing an experience that is compatible with the School's curriculum; to strategize around what methods of providing field instruction might best work in these times and with their specific student; and, to discuss how to create the most inclusive learning environment possible.

Ergonomic Health & Safety

For students completing their placement in a remote format, it is inevitable they will be sitting for prolonged periods of time in front of a computer screen as they complete placement activities virtually. For this reason, it is imperative that ergonomic factors are taken into consideration so as to avoid the possibility of serious injury resulting from not moving around and engaging in repetitive tasks.

For these students, “going” to their placement site may be a short trip from the bedroom to their couch; however, working from the couch and/or coffee table is not doing their backs or bodies any favours! Not every student will have access to a home office with appropriate equipment such as a desk and proper chair. There are, however, some simple things that can be kept in mind when setting up an ergonomically friendly workstation that will help with reducing the fatigue and discomfort to the body. To prevent new conditions of ill health and to avoid inflaming pre-existing conditions, students are encouraged to take time to set up a workspace that is considerate to the muscles, joints and nerves in their bodies. According to [ErgoPlus](#), some specific areas to consider:

- ✓ Arms - The weight of your arms should be supported at all times this prevents muscles and neck strain.
- ✓ Neck - The best position for your neck is when the weight of the head is over the base of the neck for support. Notice if your neck is craned and adjust this position to ensure proper support of your neck and head.
- ✓ Back and Lumbar support - When you slouch you put pressure on the discs and vertebrae. Your chair should be pulled close to your workstation to avoid overreaching and excessive leaning. The chair you use should distribute your body weight and pressure evenly across your hips and back. A rolled towel can be placed behind your back to provide lumbar support.

- ✓ Eyes - Your monitor should be placed an arm's length away to prevent eye strain. Adjust this so that it is not too far or too close to you.
- ✓ Monitor - The top of the monitor should be no higher than eye level and placed directly in front of you. The placement of your monitor can prevent neck pains, lessening frequent turning of the neck to view the screen.
- ✓ Phone calls - Avoid taking calls with a phone sandwiched between your neck and ear. This will surely result in strains, aches and pains. Using a headset or speakerphone can assist in avoiding this position.
- ✓ Keyboard - Your keyboard should be placed close enough so that you can comfortably reach it without overextending your arms and shoulders.
- ✓ Lighting - Do not place your monitor in front of a window nor use a bright background. Adjusting the glare and brightness on your monitor using the settings and placement of your monitor to assist your eyes from getting strained and weary.

Toronto Metropolitan University's [Environmental Health and Safety](#) unit has developed the following resources which can help students set up their workspaces so as to prevent injury.

- ✓ [How to setup an ergonomic workstation](#)
- ✓ [Setting up your desktop or laptop ergonomically](#)
- ✓ [Stretching exercises you can do at your desk](#)
- ✓ [Musculoskeletal prevention strategies](#)
- ✓ [Working ergonomically with handheld devices](#)

Appendix K: Resources & References

Throughout this document, numerous resources have been referenced and/or hyperlinked. Below is an outline of these resources, along with many others, which students, Field Instructors and Faculty Consultants may find relevant and useful for the upcoming term.

General & Useful Toronto Metropolitan University Websites

[Seven Grandparent Teachings](#) is an article by Toronto Metropolitan University's Indigenous Elder Joanne Dallaire on how these teachings can guide us through difficult times.

[School of Social Work Field Education Forms](#), includes all the required field education forms that students and Field Instructors shall complete, including learning plans, evaluations and timesheets.

Toronto Metropolitan University Library Resources and Services has [borrowing and lending services](#) for students needing access to laptops and mobile internet hotspots.

[Toronto Metropolitan University's COVID-19 Information and Updates](#) provides students, faculty, staff and community members with the latest information on how the University is responding to the pandemic.

Accessibility

[Academic Accommodation and Support](#) (AAS) supports students with disabilities at Toronto Metropolitan University. Students requiring accommodation and support as it relates to their field placement, are encouraged to review the range of programs and services which are offered through the AAS Office.

Toronto Metropolitan University's [Accessibility Guides & Resources](#) provides practical information which can be applied to preparing for an accessible remote placement experience.

[Accessibility Best Practices for Remote Instruction/Work](#), by New York University, offers a series of tips and considerations for using technology in accessible formats.

Working & Providing Supervision Remotely

[Supporting co-op students remotely](#) offers a video and series of resources produced by the University of Waterloo.

[Best Practices for Creating a Successful Virtual Internship](#), from the Harvard Business School, offers tips and suggestions for organizations and students to consider

[Tips for Working at Home](#) from Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning (CEWIL) Canada.

Confidentiality & Privacy in a Remote Environment

[Protecting Privacy in a Pandemic: Interpreting PHIPA in light of COVID-19](#), produced by BMS Canada Risk Services Ltd.

[Computing and Communications Services \(CCS\)](#) at Toronto Metropolitan University provides TMU students with free and reliable security software.

[CASW Code of Ethics, Values and Guiding Principles](#) provides confidentiality guidelines for students and social work practitioners to apply to their practice.

[CASW Virtual Counselling Resources](#) lists an assortment of resources, listed by Provincial colleges, for conducting social work practice in an electronic environment.

Well-Being & Self-Care

[ThriveTMU](#), is an initiative of the Student Affairs department at Toronto Metropolitan University and provides members of the Toronto Metropolitan University community with training and resources associated with resilience, well-being and thriving in both an academic and personal context.

[Student Wellbeing](#) at Toronto Metropolitan University provides links to a variety of health, wellbeing and academic services and resources for students.

[Good2Talk](#) provides free and confidential support services for post-secondary students.

Health & Safety

[Ergonomics](#) by Toronto Metropolitan University's Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) department offers a series of videos and tip sheets for students to set up their workspaces to prevent injury.

[10 Office Ergonomics Tips to Help You Avoid Fatigue](#), by ErgoPlus, provides practical tips for setting up your workstation as well as a self-assessment tool.

[Online health and safety training](#) for Toronto Metropolitan University students is available through my.torontomu.ca and requires that students sign up to gain access to a D2L shell for access to video modules.

[Slips, Trips and Falls](#) is resource produced by Toronto Metropolitan University's EHS department that students can review and apply to their remote working environment.

Field Instruction & Teaching

[Field Education Strategies for Remote Competency Development](#), from the University of Denver, provides examples of tasks and activities that students and Field Instructors can incorporate into their learning plans.

[Toronto Metropolitan University Library](#) access is available to all Field Instructors who will be supervising a BSW or MSW student from Toronto Metropolitan University. Library access lasts for one academic year, from September 2025 to August 2026. If you would like to arrange for library privileges, please complete the [Request for Library Privileges form](#) or email swfield@torontomu.ca.

[The Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching](#) at Toronto Metropolitan University has developed a series of [remote teaching resources](#), which although are targeted for Toronto Metropolitan University faculty and instructors, may be useful to Field Instructors as they continue to provide field instruction in a remote format.