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Recognition of Prior Learning – the example of Professional Social Workers

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Introduction

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 - Specific criteria for the Social Work degree
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Background

- Legislative change – requirement for a BSc degree in social work or equivalent to work in social services child and youth care.
- Supplementary education only for foreign degrees
- Received funding to develop a model for validation and specific validation criteria for the BSc degree in social work.

Our model – the example of Social Work

- Qualitative targets – national level
- Learning outcomes
- Meetings with directors of studies and study councilors in Stockholm, Göteborg, Umeå, Malmö och Lund
- Interviews with 15 professors about the core of social work

Qualitative targets (national level)

Knowledge and understanding

For the social work degree, the student must

- demonstrate such knowledge and ability as is required for independent social work at individual, group and community level.
- demonstrate knowledge of the area's scientific basis and knowledge of current research and development work,
- demonstrate knowledge of and understanding of the interplay between individuals and groups social situation, living conditions, physical and mental health and functional ability in relation to societal and other underlying factors,
- demonstrate knowledge of social work management,
- demonstrate knowledge of and understanding of children's needs and such social and family conditions that affect the living conditions of women and men, and
- show knowledge about men's violence against women and violence in close relationships.

Qualitative targets (national level)

Skills and Abilities

For the social work degree, the student must

- demonstrate the skills and abilities required to develop and carry out social work at different levels of society in cooperation with the people concerned,
- demonstrate the ability to apply relevant statutes, in particular in the social field,
- demonstrate the ability to understand, investigate and analyze social processes and problems, and
- demonstrate the ability to identify, structure, investigate and evaluate efforts at individual, group and societal level.

Qualitative targets (national level)

Evaluation ability and approach

For the social work degree, the student must

- show self-awareness and empathic ability,
- demonstrate the ability to take a holistic view of human action on the basis of relevant scientific, social and ethical aspects, with particular regard to human rights;
- demonstrate the ability for a professional approach and approach, demonstrate insight into the importance of teamwork and collaboration with other professions, and
- show the ability to identify their need for additional knowledge and to continuously develop their skills.
- Independent work (degree project). For the social work degree, the student must, within the framework of the course requirements, have completed an independent project (degree project) of at least 15 higher education credits.
- For the social work degree, the specified requirements shall also apply, which each university itself decides within the framework of the requirements in this degree description.

Specific criteria for the Social Work degree

I Social work as a research area	II Theory of Science	III Scientific method
IV Search for knowledge & literature, reference management	V Men's violence against women & violence in close relationships	VI Work management, organizational conditions in social work & the development of the welfare state from a national & international perspective
VII Children's development and children & families' conditions & living conditions	VIII Social conditions that affect women & men's living conditions	IX Interaction between individual & structures
X Social & economic living conditions & social policy of individuals and groups	XI People's different needs	XII Problems & solutions at individual, group & societal level
XIII Tools for documentation, record keeping, systematic assessment	XIV Social work rooted in scientific, legal & ethical aspects	XV Apply concepts & relevant theories in social work
XVI Perform an independent work in social work	XVII Critically reflect on working methods & your own role	XVIII Strengthen users' resources to achieve good living conditions
XIX Understand, investigate & analyze social problems	XX Identify, structure & investigate efforts at different levels	XXI Good ability to evaluate
XXII Identify their need for additional knowledge to develop their own skills	XXIII Monitor & understand developments in the subject area	XXIV Assessment of measures based on a holistic view rooted in scientific, social and ethical aspects
XXV A professional approach	XXVI Apply legal sources, use legal positions	XXVII Knowledge of current legal provisions
XXVIII Reflect on your own approach & your own professional role	XXIX Reflect on your own empathic ability	XXX The importance of collaborating & interacting with professional groups

Example:

- From the National qualitative target
- - *show self-awareness and empathic ability*
- we found two validation criteria
- - No 28, Reflect on your own approach & your own professional role
- - No 29, Reflect on your own empathic ability

Assessment matrix

How should the assessment be made if the applicant does not have any documentation?

- The time aspect
- Assessment on site or remotely / internet based
- Which area of questions
- Requirement level
- Clarify the validator's scope for interpretation

The applicant

- Must be enrolled at a university
- Complete a form where they describe their prior learning
- Attach all documentation and /or a personal letter

Validation criteria	Description	The applicant describe his/her prior learning
XXVIII Reflect on your own approach & your own professional role	Demonstrate the ability to reflect on one's own approach by raising awareness of one's own starting points as well as the profession's own assumptions that affect professional practice as a BSc in Social Work on several levels. Demonstrate the ability to reflect on one's own professional role in relation to users' own needs for support.	
XXIX Reflect on your own empathic ability	Demonstrate the ability to reflect on oneself, become aware of one's own role and the communicative interaction. In addition, show the ability to empathize by reflecting on others' experiences and being able to change perspectives and interpretations as well as distinguish between one's own and the user's experiences and feelings.	

Who carries out the validation?

- Administrators
- The department's assessment group
- Decision by the Board of the Department

Problems

- Time
- Money
- Know-how?
- Certificate or a degree?

Future work

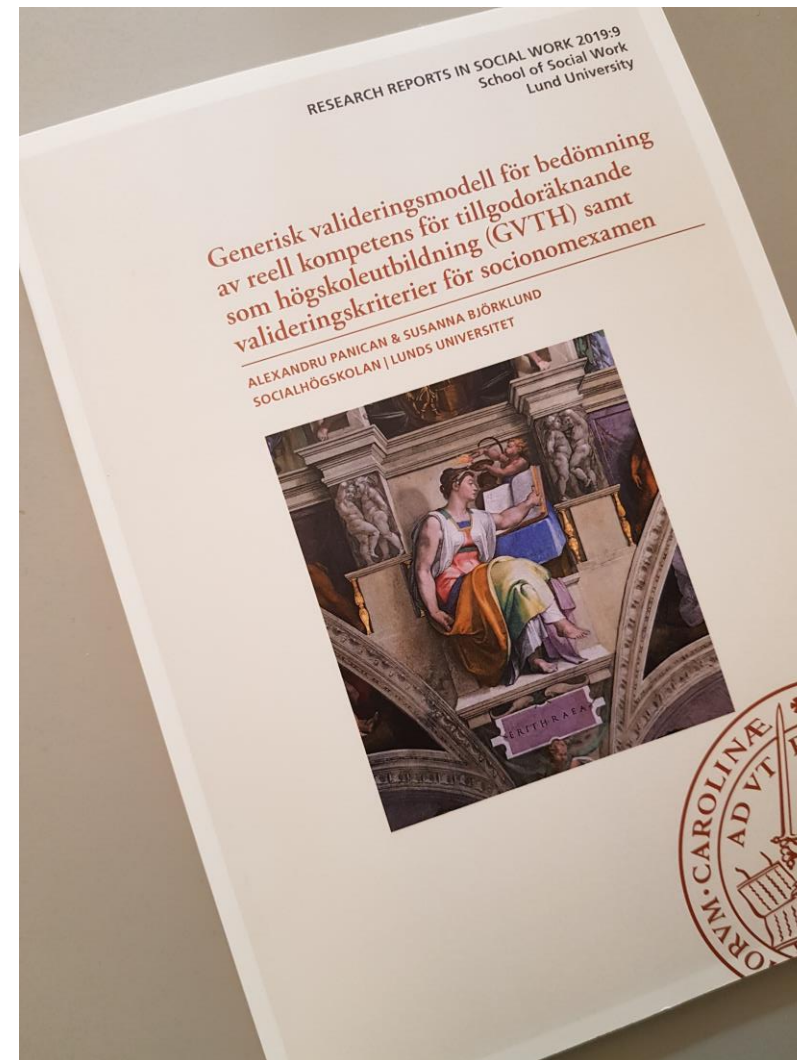
- Individually-based supplementary education
- Establish routines for handling cases
- Inform colleagues

Panican & Björklund (2019): *Generisk valideringsmodell för bedömning av reell kompetens för tillgodoräknande som högskoleutbildning (GVTH samt valideringskriterier för socionomexamen.* *
Research Reports in Social Work 2019 (9)

* *Generic validation model for assessment of prior learning and validation criteria for the Social Work degree*

download at

https://portal.research.lu.se/portal/files/66634541/Validering_Panican_Bj_rklund.pdf





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