

The
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UNDERGRADUATE UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS
SCHOOL OF ARTS, HUMANITIES, DEVELOPMENT
STUDIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (SADS)
DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT
STUDIES

SWK 401: SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

DATE: 28TH JULY 2026

DURATION: 2 HOURS

**MAXIMUM
MARKS: 70**

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Write your registration number on the answer booklet.
2. **DO NOT** write on this question paper.
3. This paper contains **SIX (6)** questions.
4. Question **ONE** is compulsory.
5. Answer any other **THREE** questions.
6. Question **ONE** carries **25 MARKS** and the rest carry **15 MARKS** each.

7. Write all your answers in the Examination answer booklet provided.

QUESTION ONE

Read the Case Study below carefully and answer the questions that follow:

CASE STUDY: "THE GREEN VALLEY FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY"

The Green Valley Family Services Agency is a non-profit organization in eastern Kenya, serving about 120,000 people. The agency has operated for 20 years, offering child protection, family counseling, gender-based violence support, financial literacy, and healthcare referrals. It employs 18 social workers and serves about 3,500 clients annually. In the past two years, the region has experienced severe drought, leading to food insecurity. Client demand has risen by 60%, especially for emergency food and domestic violence support. Four experienced social workers have resigned due to burnout. Remaining staff carry caseloads of 85–100 families each—three times the recommended standard.

Amina, a 32-year-old mother of four, fled her rural home after her husband, increasingly violent due to unemployment and alcohol abuse, threatened to kill her. She now lives in a cramped single room in an informal settlement, surviving on casual work. Her social worker, Peter, a recent graduate with no field experience, has tried to help her with legal protection, school fees, and income opportunities. However, the legal aid office is slow; schools require fees Amina cannot pay; and she lacks capital for a business. Amina says: "I left my home to save my life, but now I am struggling just to feed my children. I feel like I have traded one prison for another."

Peter feels overwhelmed and unprepared. He has received no formal supervision since the clinical supervisor resigned eight months ago. He recently withheld emergency food from a family he suspected of reselling it—a decision he regrets. He says: "I don't know what I am doing anymore. I am afraid I will harm someone instead of helping them." The agency relies on a government grant, a foreign donor, and church contributions. The foreign donor has imposed new conditions: the agency must adopt Western counseling models and stop employing staff without

university degrees. This would force dismissal of four veteran community health workers who have deep local knowledge. The board is divided between protecting funding and upholding cultural sensitivity.

The community is diverse, including pastoralist migrants with different languages and healing traditions. The agency has no professional interpreters, relying on children or neighbors for translation. This has led to confidentiality breaches, misdiagnosis of cultural distress as mental illness, and clients dropping out. Elderly pastoralist client's report feeling disrespected.

The county government has announced a "modernization plan" to demolish the informal settlement where 70% of clients live, displacing 25,000 residents with no compensation. Management fears speaking out would jeopardize government funding, but frontline staff argue silence violates social justice commitments.

The agency has no cultural competence policy, no staff training, and no outcome tracking by ethnicity. Pastoralist clients are three times more likely to drop out than clients from the dominant ethnic group.

Required:

- a) Using the concepts of social work values and ethics from the NASW Code of Ethics, identify and analyze three ethical dilemmas facing the Green Valley Family Services Agency. For each dilemma, explain how the agency might resolve it while upholding professional values. **(9 marks)**
- b) Apply the ecological systems perspective to analyze the multiple environmental factors affecting Amina's situation and explain how each system either constrains or enables her ability to achieve well-being. **(8 marks)**
- c) Design an empowerment-based intervention plan for Amina that integrates the strengths perspective and demonstrates cultural responsiveness at the individual, family, and community levels.

(8 marks)

QUESTION TWO

- (a) Explain how the three types of knowledge in social work practice as classified by Trevithick would be used by a social worker supporting a family experiencing domestic violence.

(9 marks)

- (b) Discuss the difference between cultural competence and cultural humility. Why is cultural humility considered a lifelong process rather than a destination?

(6 marks)

QUESTION THREE

- (a) Through the use of examples, explain the three primary methods of social work and where each method would be the most appropriate choice, justifying your answer.

(9 marks)

- (b) You are a social worker assigned to a family where a 14-year-old girl has stopped attending school and her parents are considering marrying her off due to economic hardship. Using the problem-solving process, describe the specific steps you would take to work with this family.

(6 marks)

QUESTION FOUR

- (a) Using the concept of "person-in-environment" (PIE), explain why a social worker must assess both individual factors and environmental conditions when working with a client.

(8 marks)

- (b) Analyze how a social worker's personal values might conflict with professional values when working with a client who holds beliefs or engages in practices that the worker finds morally objectionable.

(7 marks)

QUESTION FIVE

- (a) Using examples differentiate between evidence-based practice (EBP) and practice-informed research.

(6 marks)

- (b) As a social work supervisor, identify four signs that a supervisee may be experiencing burnout or compassion fatigue. For each sign, propose one specific supportive intervention you would provide, addressing both administrative and supportive supervision functions. **(9 marks)**

QUESTION SIX

- (a) Describe three specific strategies a social worker can use to empower a client who feels hopeless, powerless, and trapped in their circumstances. **(8 marks)**

- (b) Discuss the ethical responsibilities of a social worker at the individual, agency, and policy levels when their employing agency adopts a policy that discriminates against a particular client population. **(7 marks)**