

**MSW APPLICATION CHECKLIST**

**Immediately**

\_\_\_\_\_ **1. Carefully review the program information in MSW Application Booklet**. Do you have any questions? If so, don’t hesitate to contact us! Email: mswadmissions@wku.edu (Bowling Green campus), and/or phone (270) 745-2088.

\_\_\_\_\_ **2. Map out a workable application timeline for yourself, using the information included in this checklist**. You should count on the process taking anywhere *between 3 and 6 months*, so give yourself plenty of time to put together a high quality application.

Note: Admissions are “rolling” in the WKU MSW Program. This means that applications for admission are accepted and reviewed as long as there are program openings available. Applications submitted early – by the priority admissions deadlines - have a better chance of admission. When all program openings are filled, new applicants who meet requirements must be placed on the program waiting list and admission is not guaranteed.

A planned application process and subsequent timely admission also generally mean less stress for the applicant.

**\*\*Note that application materials are submitted to two separate offices. Details below\*\***

**Right Away: The Graduate School Application Materials**

\_\_\_\_\_ **3. Apply to The Graduate School at WKU**

**\_\_\_\_\_4. If necessary, arrange to take the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) General Test.** This test is given every day except for Sunday. Please call 1-800-967-1100 for test locations near you. Please be aware that reporting GRE scores can take 4-6 weeks. You should plan to take the GRE no later in January for the Traditional Program Alternate Admission. Registration materials for the GRE are available by logging on to [www.gre.org](http://www.gre.org).

Note: If you take the GRE, have your scores sent to WKU, school code 1901.

\_\_\_\_\_ **5. Arrange to have official transcripts from all colleges and universities you have attended sent to The Graduate School at:**

The Graduate School

1906 College Heights Blvd. #11010

Bowling Green, KY 42101-1010

**The Graduate School Checklist:**

* Application completed and fee paid
* GRE taken and scores sent to WKU (if necessary)
* Official transcripts of ALL institutions attended sent to WKU

Please feel free to contact The Graduate School via email or phone. graduate.school@wku.edu or 270-745-2446

# **Two Months before Application Deadline: MSW Application Materials**

\_\_\_\_\_ **6.** Complete the MSW Application.

\_\_\_\_\_ **7. Arrange for recommendations:**   Three recommendations including at least one academic and one professional. (If you have not been employed, provide additional academic recommendation.)

* Any MSW program applicant with a BSW earned within the last 7 years MUST include at least 1 letter of recommendation from their previous Field Instructor or Field Liaison, one academic reference, and one reference that is either professional or academic. IF, due to faculty relocation and/or retirement, no such faculty member is available, a letter to this effect from the current BSW program director must accompany the application.
* Any MSW Traditional Program applicant will include one academic reference and two additional references that are either professional or academic.
* Any program applicant, with or without a BSW, who is currently or previously employed in a social or human services capacity/agency MUST include at least 1 letter of recommendation from a current or previous supervisor, preferably one with an MSW.
* For applicants that have been out of school for 7 years or more it is acceptable to replace an academic recommendation with a work recommendation. At least one academic recommendation is preferred in this scenario.

Three recommendations are required including at least one academic and one professional. Do NOT include relatives. The references will become part of your admissions file. They will be used only for admissions consideration and will not be disclosed to any unauthorized individual without your consent. You have the right to review references in your file unless you voluntarily waive your right of access by signing in the space below.

Recommendation forms should be sent directly to the program from the recommender. Recommenders may submit this form by mail or email:

**Western Kentucky University**

**Master of Social Work Program**

**1906 College Height Blvd., #11039**

**Bowling Green, KY 42101-1039**

mswadmissions@wku.edu. If the recommendation is emailed, the email must originate from the recommenders email address only.

\_\_\_\_\_ **8. Write your personal statement.** This is a very important piece of your application and you should take time to respond clearly and thoughtfully to each topic included in the personal statement outline. Write a draft statement, edit carefully for grammar, spelling and content, then consider having a respected colleague, family member or friend read it for clarity and evidence of critical thinking. Admissions readers look to your personal statement to get a sense of a “fit” between your vocational and life goals and the goals of the social work profession and WKU’s MSW program. They also carefully note writing and critical thinking skills used in this piece of your total application. See personal statement outline on page 25 of the application.

**\_\_\_\_\_ 9. Writing sample**. Write a two to three page (double-spaced) essay about the possible difficulties advanced level social workers might encounter when working with a particular population. This population (identified by the applicant) would challenge personal beliefs, values or ideals in a social work setting. Discuss strategies for maintaining professionalism in working with this client group. This writing sample should demonstrate proper use of two scholarly sources and appropriate referencing, citations, and formatting per APA 6th edition

\_\_\_\_\_ **10. Write (or update) your resume.** See MSW application for a resume outline. Important: include inclusive dates for each work or volunteer experience (e.g. Jan. 1, 1999 - June 1, 2000). Highlight all experiences, skills, and abilities that have helped prepare you for professional social work practice.

\_\_\_\_\_ **11. If you anticipate needing alternate admission (your GPA does not meet admission standards), write a letter requesting this, giving strong evidence of your capacity for success in the MSW program**. This letter should be included in the application packet you send to the MSW program.

**Two – Three Weeks before Application Deadline: Compiling and Sending in Your MSW Application**

\_\_\_\_\_ **12. Compile all application materials to be sent to the MSW program**: application, resume, personal statement, letter requesting alternate admission (if applicable). Have you completed, signed, and dated all documents? Have you made copies for your own files?

\_\_\_\_\_ **13. Follow up on your letters/forms of recommendation.** Have your recommenders completed the forms and sent them to the MSW program?

\_\_\_\_\_ **14. All applications must be submitted electronically:** early enough so that it will reach the MSW program office by the standard admission deadlines. Send to: mswadmissions@wku.edu.

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