



Roles and Responsibilities within a Practicum

The agency, program, project or individual that ultimately agrees to accept a student for a practicum experience also assumes an educational role. One person, a *Practicum Supervisor*, must agree to help arrange the student's experience and define activities that will help meet the objectives of both the student and of the agency/project. The practicum, however, is not meant to burden the supervisor with extensive supervisory demands. The roles and responsibilities for students and supervisors to each other are outlined below:

Practicum Supervisor

- Define scope of the practicum with student;
- Assist the student in developing a Planning Framework for the practicum that will seek to meet Practicum objectives, the student's objectives and the organizational objectives. The Planning Framework will include specifics for the placement as well, including start/ end dates, work station availability and financial compensation. The Planning Framework should be completed before the practicum begins, and no later than within 2 weeks of starting the placement. The Planning Framework is a contract between the student and the practicum supervisor.
- Discuss and develop a schedule or work plan with the student;
- Provide an orientation to the organization for the student;
- Enable the student to participate, as much as possible, in day-to-day operations;
- Include student in meetings or seminars related to the practicum area;
- Provide on-going supervision, resources and guidance necessary for the student to complete assigned projects and tasks;
- Clarify to whom student should report if supervisor is not available;
- Meet bi-weekly (at a minimum) to provide guidance and mentorship, and to chart development and progress;
- Submit a mid-term evaluation halfway through the placement to the Practicum Placement Officer by email or fax;
- Complete a final evaluation form at the end of the practicum and discuss it with the student;
- Be aware that the student's journal and reflection piece will be viewed by the academic program at the end of the placement for evaluation, but will not be kept on file. Students are aware that identifying or sensitive information should be redacted from their work prior to submitting it.

Student

- Discuss the scope of the practicum with the practicum supervisor;
- Develop a Planning Framework in consultation with the supervisor and submit it prior to the practicum start date, and no later than within 2 weeks of the practicum start date;
- Ask for specific background reading or other information as required;
- Clarify with supervisor whether work will be independent or in collaboration with others;
- Clarify to whom she/he should report if supervisor is not available;



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

DALLA LANA SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

- Discuss with supervisor how time should be allocated and hours recorded, and comply with time commitments whether or not supervisor is on site;
- Discuss her/his work schedule and progress with supervisor on a regular basis;
- Document her/his involvement in the project(s) (e.g. project activities, report writing, etc.) through reflective weekly journal entries;
- Perform in a manner appropriate to the expectations of the supervisor, adhering to policies and regulations of the organization (including dress code) and to ethical and professional standards;
- Ensure supervisor has a copy of the supervisor mid-term and final evaluations to complete at the appropriate times.

Once a student begins his/her practicum, the supervisor coordinates and supervises the student's work and takes responsibility for seeing that the specific objectives and activities agreed upon in the Planning Framework are being carried out according to schedule. The supervisor agrees to orient the student to the agency and project and to meet with the student on a biweekly basis to monitor progress. During the practicum, the student is responsible for performing according to the finalized, approved Planning Framework and for fulfilling the usual responsibilities of punctuality, accountability, and appropriate deportment and initiative expected of all public health professionals.

The first couple of weeks of the student's practicum should be considered a probationary period. During this time, the Practicum Placement Officer will e-mail the supervisor to thank them for providing the placement and inquire about how things are progressing. Halfway through the placement, the supervisor and the student are required to complete a mid-term evaluation separately and return each to the Practicum Placement Officer. If there are any problems or concerns the Practicum Placement Officer is available to meet with the student and/or the student's Supervisor at any time during the practicum. If for any reason the student or the Supervisor is unable to fulfill his or her responsibilities according to the Planning Framework, plans and activities for the practicum may be changed or modified with the approval of the supervisor and the MPH Health Promotion Program Lead.

Contact:

Julie Foisy, MPH
Practicum Placement and External Relations Officer
Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto
155 College Street, 6th floor, Toronto, ON M5T 3M7
Phone: 416-978-8844 Fax: 416-978-1883
Email: practicum.dlsph@utoronto.ca