

**QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY  
CLINICAL PRACTICUM GUIDELINES**

**Introduction to Practicum Placements**



dents' level in the program, diversity of students' placements, students' training goals, students' career plans and long term goals.

4. Efforts will be made to consider students' first choice over the three years of practicum experiences. That is, for at least one of the practicum experiences students will receive their first choice.
6. Every student will have a placement in the Psychology Clinic during their first practicum year (typically M.Sc.2).

## **Supervision**

### **Responsibilities of the Supervisor**

As outlined in the College of Psychologists of Ontario Standards of Professional Conduct (Sept 2017), Clinical Supervisors assume responsibility and accountability for the actions and services of all supervised providers of psychological services.

Since the primary goal for the practicum placement is to provide clinical training, high quality clinical supervision is a primary responsibility for the supervisor. Supervision typically includes providing the student with comprehensive and ongoing feedback about clinical skills development, mentoring with regard to professional development, and helping the student to identify specific training goals and methods of attaining those goals within the practicum setting. It is also important to give students the opportunity to observe the supervisor providing clinical service.

Students are expected to complete 120 total practicum hours per term. In accordance with CPA Accreditation Standards (2011), students are expected to spend about 40% of their practicum time in direct clinical service and 20% in supervision

Contact the Director of the Psychology Clinic with concerns about the student's progress/competency and needs for remediation

### **Responsibilities of the Student**

Students are expected to act in a professional and ethical manner in practicum settings in accordance with the CPA Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists and College of Psychologists of Ontario Standards of Professional Conduct (Sept 2017). While Clinical Supervisors assume responsibility and accountability for the actions and services of all supervised providers of psychological services, this is shared responsibility – the student is independently responsible and accountable for his or her actions. It is very important, therefore, that students be familiar with these documents and clarify any concerns they have with their supervisor. While the student is not a member of the College of Psychologists, he or she will be held to College standards, allowing for the fact of being a learning practitioner. Since practicum are required graduate courses in the Clinical Program, grossly unprofessional and unethical behaviour will lead to failure of the practicum course and can be grounds for dismissal from the program.

Students are expected to follow the guidelines and regulations of the practicum site and should keep the supervisor well informed about all aspects of a clinical case. Students are expected to be prepared for supervision, which includes having the materials needed to present or discuss a case, and identifying topics and questions to be discussed in supervision. Documentation, including client session notes and formal psychology assessment, intake and discharge notes should be completed promptly, with a draft provided to the supervisor within the expected time frames.

Students are expected to dress professionally in business casual attire while at practicum, and particularly when client contact is anticipated. This means no running shoes, no hoodies, and no transparent clothing.

#### Expectations for Student

- Participate in goal-setting
- Active learning (readings, literature review, test practice)
- Learn & abide by site policies
- Adopt professional demeanour (punctual, reliable, prompt, appropriate dress)
- Be responsive to constructive criticism
- Establish appropriate relationships with clients and staff
- Provide supervisor with ongoing feedback

### **Professional Development**

#### ***Goal-setting and determining areas for professional development***

The student and supervisor should identify specific goals for the practicum placement at the beginning of the placement. To aid in goal-setting, the student is encouraged to share with the supervisor feedback from previous clinical supervisors with regard to areas for professional development. Once goals have been agreed upon, they should be set out in writing in the first section of the Practicum Evaluation form (Appendix A2). However, goal-setting should be considered as an interactive, fluid process that evolves with the practicum. Ongoing discussion of goals and training needs is encouraged throughout the placement.

#### ***Self-care***

Developing clinical skills and working within a helping profession is psychologically taxing. Students will confront stressful situations and must rethink their understandings of themselves and of the world. This is often quite distressing. Learning how to take care of one's own needs is an important component

ate resources for personal therapy. Many programs have a tradition of requiring personal therapy for all candidates. While this is not a requirement at Queen's it is encouraged. Seeking therapy or counselling for personal issues is sign of professional maturity rather than a sign of clinical weakness. It is recommended that students do not seek therapy or counselling at Queen's Health, Counselling and Disability Services, given the potential for dual relationships in doing so. Rather, the Employee Assistance Program



Currently most psychologists in Canada have their professional liability insurance through BMS Group, which offers a discount for those who are members of CPA and/or OPA. Information is available here <http://www.psychology.bmsgroup.com/index.html> There is a discounted student rate (currently \$125/yr).