



Acadia TESOL Certificate Program
Practicum Handbook

Overview

The purpose of the Acadia TESOL Certificate Program Practicum is to provide participants with the opportunity to put theory presented in the courses into practice in an English language classroom. It may be completed on-site at Acadia University or in a partner institution abroad. The practicum consists of 10 hours of directed observation and 10 hours of supervised teaching in an adult EAP/ESL classroom. The practicum must be completed in order to achieve TESL Canada Standard One certification.

In order for a student to enrol in the Acadia TESOL Certificate Program Practicum, they must also have taken EDUC 4673, 4683 and 4863 as pre- or co-requisites.

Objectives

By the end of the Acadia TESOL Certificate Practicum, students will demonstrate the ability to

- Plan learning activities at the appropriate level
- Relate well to students and create a positive learning environment
- Use a variety of class configurations effectively
- Present lessons that are organized and student-centred
- Provide clear, concise instructions
- Effectively monitor student progress and revise the lesson when necessary
- Use a range of question asking strategies
- Correct in a positive and supportive way
- Use teaching aids effectively
- Reflect critically on observed and taught lessons

Observations

During the practicum, Student Teachers will observe at least 10 hours of lessons taught by instructors or other Student Teachers. All Practicum Supervisors in the on-site and off-site practica hold a minimum of TESL Canada Standard One [Permanent] Certification.

Observation Tasks

Student Teachers will be given observation tasks to complete during the observation sessions. These observation tasks can be found on the Practicum ACORN page:

<http://courses.acadiau.ca>

There are many observation tasks that students can choose from. Student Teachers should complete 10 of these: one for each hour of observation. After the observation has been completed, Student Teachers will be asked to discuss their findings in an on-line forum where they can share their observations with other Student Teachers. Ten discussion forums must be completed in order to get an overall grade for the practicum.

Practice Teaching

On-Site Practicum

For the on-site practicum, Student Teachers will be teaching in the Acadia University English for Academic Purposes Program. Classes will consist of 5 to 15 students from primarily Asian and Arabic language backgrounds. Classes will be conducted from 8:30 to 4:30 in the Fountain Commons on the Acadia University campus. During the practicum, Student Teachers will be required to teach at least 2 hours in at least two different levels of the program: beginner, low-intermediate, high-intermediate, and advanced. Student Teachers will also be required to teach classes covering a variety of skills including reading, writing, listening, speaking, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Student Teachers will be required to submit lesson plans to the Practicum Supervisor for their practice teaching sessions the morning of their teaching. Student Teachers will also be required to submit completed lesson plans with lesson reflections within three days of teaching a lesson.

Off-Site Practicum

Off-site practica will be held within the schedule set up by the sponsoring school, and will be conducted in classes of at least 5 students (80% of whom are over the age of 18). During the practicum, Student Teachers will be required to teach classes covering a variety of skills including reading, writing, listening, speaking, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary for students of different levels of proficiency. Student Teachers will be required to submit lesson plans for their practice teaching sessions prior to the start of the lesson. Student Teachers will also be required to submit completed lesson plans with lesson reflections within three days of teaching a lesson. Practicum Supervisors will meet the same qualification criteria as for the on-site practicum. Qualifications of Practicum Supervisors will be verified using the Staff Credentials Verification (Appendix 7).

Assessment of Practice Teaching

Practicum Supervisor Observations

All ten hours of a student's practice teaching on-site will be observed by the Practicum Supervisor (TESL Canada Standard One [Permanent]). The Practicum Supervisor will complete an observation report for the observed lesson(s) and have an oral feedback session with the student to following the lesson. A grade will be given for each observed lesson.

Overall Rating (Practicum Supervisor)				
Excellent 46-50	Above Average 36-45	Good 26-35	Needs Improvement 16-25	Failure 0-15

- **Excellent:** All aspects of the lesson were exemplary. The lesson was well-planned

and delivered to maximize student participation and learning. The Student Teacher demonstrated a thorough knowledge of effective teaching strategies and practices.

- **Good:** Most aspects of the lesson were exemplary. The lesson was well-planned and delivered to encourage student participation and learning.
- **Satisfactory:** Many aspects of the lesson were well-planned and delivered. Most areas of the lesson met the expectations of this practicum.
- **Needs Improvement:** The Student Teacher demonstrated a developing knowledge of effective teaching practices. Some areas of the lesson did not meet the expectations of this practicum.
- **Failure:** The lesson did not meet the standards expected in this practicum.

Overall Evaluation of Practicum Components

Overall Practicum Grade		
Pass with Distinction	Standard Pass	Fail
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pass with Distinction: All observation tasks demonstrate an exemplary understanding of relevant concepts and draw on personal insights. Most lessons taught are rated in observation reports as Excellent. • Standard Pass: Most observation tasks are completed with sufficient detail and include some personal insights. Most lessons taught are rated in observation reports as Good or Above average. • Fail: Some observation tasks are not complete. Tasks lack detail and personal insight. Most lessons taught are rated in observation reports as Needs Improvement or Fail. 		

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Appendix 5 - Observation Tasks

Student Teachers must complete one observation task for each hour of classroom observation. Student Teachers may select 10 of the following observation tasks. Students should summarize their findings for each observation report on a Discussion Forum in ACORN.

Observation Task	Description	Curriculum Expectation Addressed	Completed
1	Lesson Planning	1	
2	What helps people learn?	2	
3	Classroom Management	3	
4	Purposes of Activities	4	
5	Giving Instructions	5	
6	Options and Decisions	6	
7	Checking Learning	6	
8	The language of Questions	7	
9	Types of Corrective Feedback	8, EDUC 4863	
10	Language Echoes	8	
11	Teaching Aids	9	
12	Acquisition Sequences	EDUC 4863	
13a*	Analyzing Learner Language (Interview)	EDUC 4683	
13b*	Analyzing Learner Language (Observation)	EDUC 4683	

*Note that tasks 13a and 13b must be done together; however, they count for two observation tasks.

Observation Tasks are adapted from

Wajnryb, R. (1992). *Classroom Observation Tasks*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Scrivener, J. (1998). *Learning Teaching*. Oxford: MacMillan Heinemann.

Sample Observation Task (Observation Task 1 – Lesson Planning)

The objective of this task is to determine what decisions a teacher made in planning a lesson. Planning refers to both the preparation before the lesson and decisions taken in the classroom during the lesson. In this task, you will interview a teacher after observing one of his/her lessons. Several questions are provided below as guidelines. You will need to add more of your own questions.

1. Why did you choose these specific activities for your lesson today?
2. What were your goals for the lesson today?
3. Did you achieve these goals, and how do you know?
4. How did you decide how much time to spend on each activity today?
5. What changes did you make to your lesson as you were teaching it?
6. How will this lesson link to the next one?
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Post-Observation Discussion Questions:

On the on-line forum, please summarize your findings from the interview. How can you use your findings from this interview to help you refine the way you plan lessons?