

MA CSE Practicum Information for Year 1 Teacher Candidates

Questions and Answers from A to Z

Here are answers to some frequently asked questions in the first year of the program. We also encourage you to bring your questions to Orientation, to our Practicum Chats in Friday seminars, and throughout the year as they arise.

Are there a variety of Practicum Placements?

There are 3 eight-week placements in your first year: one in kindergarten, one in primary (grades 1 – 3), and one in junior (grades 4-6). You are in your placements four mornings a week, Monday – Thursday. Placements are intentionally chosen by the Practicum Team to provide a broad range of experiences in different school settings and communities.

What are the dates for each placement block?

Block 1: September 11 – November 2

Block 2: November 13 – December 7 *and continuing* January 8 – February 1

Block 3: February 12 – April 12. If you are in an independent school, your placement will begin on February 5 and you will have a two-week March break from placement only. Academic classes resume during the second week for all students.

Block 4

What is a Block 4 placement?

*A Block 4 placement is **mandatory** if you require additional support or have failed a placement. It is four full days a week, Monday – Thursday, for four weeks from April 16 – May 10, 2018. It is selected by the Practicum Coordinators. There may be a fee associated with the mandatory Block 4 placement.*

*You may also consider doing an **optional** Block 4 placement if you have successfully passed your three first year practicum placements. This optional experience would be four full days a week, Monday – Thursday for four weeks from April 16 – May 10, 2018.*

*Most people who choose an optional Block 4 placement are looking for experience in a board outside Toronto or in a setting beyond what they were offered in their placements (e.g. special ed, music, phys ed). **Teacher candidates are responsible for finding their own optional Block 4 placement.** Once you have finalized the details (i.e., teacher, grade, principal, school, contact information) please send the*

information to a Practicum Coordinator. There will be no site visit by the practicum team but you will submit a Block 4 Final Review.

Alternatively, in lieu of an optional Block 4 placement, you might consider a volunteer placement which can be done at any time during the year or from April 16 – May 10. **Teacher candidates are responsible for finding their own volunteer opportunities.** If you choose to volunteer, no formal paper work is required.

Catholic

If you are Catholic and want to teach in a Catholic School Board, you need one placement in a Catholic school in Year 1. You also need to take the Religious Education Course (additional fee applies). You can have more than one placement in a Catholic school. For more information about the course, please see: http://conted.oise.utoronto.ca/Religious_Education.html

Changing Placement Schedules

Can I change my placement from morning to afternoon or from 4 mornings to two mornings and one full day?

The placements are scheduled to take place four mornings a week for eight weeks. This is so you become part of the class for four consecutive days each week to experience and support the continuity of the program. In your second year of the program, you will be in your internship almost full time and will have many opportunities to see the whole day. **NOTE:** If your Associate Teacher requests a change to the scheduled times, please speak to a Practicum Coordinator before accepting.

Early Childhood Education

I am an ECE grad. Do I have to do a placement in a kindergarten classroom?

Yes

Email

When can I expect a response to my emails?

Email messages will be responded to in a timely manner. Emails sent to a Practicum Coordinator will be answered within 48 hours. Email messages received on a Friday will be responded to on the following Monday.

Field Trips

What happens when full day field trips are planned in classrooms with 1st year teacher candidates?

Teacher candidates cannot miss their academic classes. If it is logistically possible to accompany the class in the morning and get back to OISE on time for the afternoon class, we encourage you to do that. If you do not have a class in the afternoon, you are free to attend for the whole day.

**If your class goes on an overnight trip, the teaching days can be made up at another time or you can be placed with another teacher for the duration of the trip.*

Formative Review

What is a Formative Review? How many are there? When are they due?

*In Year One, you complete one Formative Review in each placement block. It needs to be submitted by Friday of Week 4, each block, and placed in the mailbox of the Practicum Coordinator (beside the reception desk at JICS). **Two signed paper** copies must be handed in on time.*

***Please note** that if you receive “Meeting expectations with significant support” or “At risk of failure”, you will meet with a Practicum Coordinator to discuss strategies for success. These strategies will be recorded on a Teacher Candidate Support Form.*

French Immersion

I was just wondering if it would be possible to do a French immersion placement. I have a strong background in French, as I went to a French immersion school from grades 1-12 and I continued with it during my undergrad at university.

You may have a French placement. There are two things you must do first:

1. *You need to take the French proficiency test at OISE. Go to this site for information and dates: http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/aq/French_Testing.html. Information about the format of the test can be found here:*

<https://cpl.oise.utoronto.ca/search/publicCourseSearchDetails.do?method=load&courseId=43907>

*Some students **may** be granted an exemption from the proficiency test if their undergraduate degree is in French. Requests for exemption should be sent to: aq@oise.utoronto.ca for review. If an exemption is granted, the OISE office will provide a written notification. A bilingual certificate or having French as your first language does not qualify you for exemption.*

2. *Once you have successfully completed the test, you may enrol in a French AQ (Additional Qualification), FSL Part 1 course. At that point, you may notify the Practicum Coordinator and request a placement in a classroom where you have the opportunity to teach in French.*

Insurance

Insurance information will be communicated through the Program Liaison. It is the responsibility of students to fill out and return the appropriate insurance forms to the MA CSE Program Liaison.

Interested in a Specialty Placement

I would be interested in a placement with a visual arts program if that is possible. As a hobby, I have always been involved in art related activities. This past year I ran an arts and crafts program.

All three first year placements are in regular grade classrooms (K- 6). You may find an optional Block 4 specialty placement or volunteer with a specialty teacher (e.g., Music, Phys Ed, Library, Art) if you wish.

Internships in Year Two

I was wondering how much choice we have in where we are placed for our internships (as far as schools, grade and semester go).

All internship placements are located in Toronto with the TDSB, TCDSB, JICS, or independent schools. You will be asked to fill out a form in Block 3 to determine your priorities regarding division (early years, primary, junior), term (fall or winter), and type of setting (public, independent, etc.) The Practicum Coordinators make the arrangements and final decisions regarding the placements.

Intersession Courses

How many courses can you take in intersession? And summer?

*You are **required to complete two courses** in the spring/summer after your Year 1 academic year ends. The courses in the spring and/or summer sessions are from May to June and from July to August.*

Lab School Experience

Will I have a placement at the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study?

There are about eight placements available at the Lab School each block in the first year and another sixteen available in the internship year. When space is available, we try to offer Teacher Candidates the opportunity of a placement at the JICS Lab School. An introduction to the Lab School and its

philosophy are incorporated into the first year Friday seminar classes, including visits and discussions led by the Lab School faculty.

Lesson Plans

Do I need to write lesson plans?

Yes, you need to write a lesson plan for every lesson you teach. The link to the Lesson Plan Template, 2017-18, can be found on Pepper. When the practicum team comes to observe you in your teaching placements, please submit the lesson plan by 7 p.m. the previous evening to the team member who will be visiting.

Mail folders

When are student mail folders used and where are they located?

Practicum Coordinators and some faculty return student assignments by leaving them in student mail folders. They are located on the 2nd floor of JICS, outside Rooms 229 and 230.

Missing Placement

I can't attend my placement. What should I do?

*You need to let your Associate Teacher know **by 7:30 a.m.** (discuss with your Associate Teacher how he/she would like to be notified) and also **e-mail the Practicum Coordinator**. Teacher candidates need to make up any time missed. This can be done by spending additional time in placement in the afternoons. You need to submit your lesson plan(s) to your teacher for any lesson(s) you are responsible for that day.*

Teacher candidates who are absent for three or more consecutive days due to illness may be asked to provide a medical certificate.

If the absence is for a religious reason, e.g., to observe a holy day, the time does not need to be made up. However, please notify your Associate Teacher and Practicum Coordinator at the beginning of the placement of any planned absences.

<http://www.viceprovoststudents.utoronto.ca/publicationsandpolicies/guidelines/religiousobservances.htm>

Professionalism

How can I demonstrate professionalism in my placement?

You demonstrate professionalism in a variety of ways. For example:

- *Arrive at your school at least 30 minutes before the start time to get organized for the day.*
- *Check in with your Associate Teacher before you leave each day to make sure you know exactly what needs to be done.*
- *Hand in all lesson plans to your Associate Teacher by the agreed upon time.*
- *Refrain from emailing late at night or on the weekend (unless requested by your Associate Teacher).*
- *Report your absences before 7:30 a.m. to your Associate Teacher and Practicum Coordinator.*
- *Ensure that you give your Associate Teacher at least one week to complete and discuss the Practicum Reviews.*
- *Submit Practicum Reviews to the Practicum Coordinator by the due dates.*
- *Always put the needs of students and their learning first.*

Special Education

Can I do a Block 1, 2, or 3 placement in a special education setting?

If you would like the opportunity to work in a specialized setting, you may do this by volunteering in a classroom, either during the optional block 4 placement dates, or throughout the year.

Student Success Centre at OISE

Where can I get support?

Here is an overview of some of the services offered at the Student Success Centre:

http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/ss/Counselling_Services/index.html

Supporting Students for Personal and Academic Success

“Many students encounter personal, health, or situational circumstances that interfere with their ability to focus on their studies. The earlier students seek assistance, the more successfully the Office of the Registrar and Student Services (ORSS) can collaborate with students to manage challenges and minimize disruptions to academic success.

A Student Success Specialist, [Jeananne Robertson](#), provides first-level personal and confidential advising to students. Students can meet with Jeananne confidentially and one-on-one to explore their

concerns, assess obstacles to their academic success, and collaborate to develop support plans and strategies for academic success and personal well-being.

The University of Toronto has a broad range of programs and services to support the diverse and unique needs of each student. Please arrange a conversation to explore support options that may be available for your particular circumstances, or to seek guidance about which University resources might best fit, and how to access them."

The Student Success Centre also provides the following academic supports:

http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/ss/OISE_Student_Success_Centre_%28OSSC%29/index.html

1. Academic writing
2. Presentation skills
3. Resume and cover letter support
4. Math support
5. English language development
6. French language support
7. Teacher skill development support
8. Graduate student writing groups

Visits to Schools

How many visits to my practicum placements will be made? What can I expect?

*You will be visited at least once in every block by a member of the Practicum Team who will observe you leading a learning activity. Please submit your lesson plan to your visiting practicum team member by **7:00 p.m. the night before the visit.***

Wbsites and Resources developed at JICS

Websites that have been developed at the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study to support learning in the classroom include:

Natural Curiosity: www.naturalcuriosity.ca

"Environmental Inquiry is an overarching approach to Environmental Education that combines Inquiry-based Learning, Experiential Learning, Integrated Learning, and Stewardship in a dynamic and cohesive four-branch pedagogical framework. It is based on a transformative vision of education, one that seeks to develop not only skilled and knowledgeable students, but also, environmentally and socially-conscious world citizens with a love of learning. "

The Balanced Literacy Diet: www.litdiet.org

This site has virtual tours of different classrooms and a "recipe sampler" which presents one "literacy recipe" (lesson plan) for each of the key "food groups" required for elementary students to grow and flourish in literacy. Browse the [Recipe Finder](#) tab (search) to explore the hundreds of literacy recipes available on this website.

The Robertson Program: <https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/robertson/>

"The purpose of the Robertson Program is to create, demonstrate, and disseminate inquiry-based teaching models for mathematics and science by focusing on both teacher and student inquiry. The Robertson Program has two primary goals. The first is to help teachers become more reflective practitioners who strive to deepen their own content knowledge of mathematics and science and place student ideas and understanding at the centre of their teaching practice. The second is to help students cultivate the critical thinking skills necessary for their future success in mathematics and science in inquiry-based contexts."

Literacy Teaching and Teacher Education: <http://www.literacyteaching.net>

This website/blog addresses current issues related to literacy. It includes information about new books, teaching strategies, issues, and much more. It is for teachers and teacher educators who are interested in literacy-related topics so it is very user friendly.

Early Learning Lab: www.earlylearninglab.ca

On this website, you will find a continuum of play-based learning, including the different types of play that are implemented in kindergarten classrooms, the role of teachers in this play, and examples of play-based contexts from excellent kindergarten classrooms. In addition, you can read more about the current research projects in this lab, including how children can develop literacy skills through play, assessment in play-based kindergarten education, and teachers' perspectives on the purpose of play in kindergarten classrooms. The Early Learning Lab is run by Dr. Angela Pyle at the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

The Learning, Engagement and Attention Lab:

<http://learningengagementattention.weebly.com/>

This lab focuses on the intersection between ADHD symptoms, particularly inattentiveness, and academic achievement. They recently have started to study engagement and motivational variables in relationship to inattention and executive functions.

Life Span Adaption Projects: <https://wordpress.oise.utoronto.ca/richardvolpe/>

This is a link to Life Span Adaption Projects (Laidlaw Research Centre, JICS) a presentation of the research and resources of Richard Volpe and his lab group.