



Information for ECE Mentors that are Supervising Practicum Students

Students should give this document to the ECE Mentor where they are taking their practicum

- *The **ECE Mentor (EM)** is the certified early childhood educator that directly supervises the student for the entire duration of the practicum. All documents and evaluations must be completed by the in-class ECE Mentor rather than a centre owner or director.*

Pacific Rim Early Childhood Institute (PRECI) is designated by the Private Training Institutions Branch and has been offering individual courses and certificate programs in early childhood development since 1989. PRECI offers three Certificate Programs and a Diploma Program in Early Childhood Education that are offered via distance education. The training is recognized by certification authorities in British Columbia and across Canada.

The staff at PRECI would like to express our appreciation for accepting one of our students into your program for practical experience. As our early childhood education programs are distance education programs, your input to the students on the practical component of their work in this field is valued.

Once students register for a practicum, they are sent a comprehensive package outlining assignments, hours, guidelines to follow when in the centre, guidelines for you as their ECE Mentor (these are attached and should be signed by you and returned to the student), and guidelines for the instructor. They also receive a Practicum Plan. The Practicum Plan must be completed by them, signed off by you, and sent to their instructor in advance of their first day at the centre. Students are also expected to abide by the [Early Childhood Educators of BC Code of Ethics](#).

The Basic Early Childhood Educator Certificate program has three practicums. The emphasis of Practicum One is to develop observation skills and communication skills in working with young children. Practicums Two and Practicum Three build on the skills developed in Practicum One and allow students to become more involved in planning and executing developmentally appropriate activities. The Post-Basic Infant/Toddler and Inclusion in Early Childhood Settings programs each have one practicum. In all of the practicums, students are expected to be involved with the children and the daily routines of the centre, to the extent that ECE Mentors are comfortable with their participation.

Practicum One is five weeks. In the first observation week, students will observe several different high-quality programs and complete observation and reflection assignments. The fifth and last day of the observation week will be spent completing a 3-hour in-centre observation and reflection in the block practicum placement they have selected and had approved. After the first observation week, the remaining 4-weeks of the block practicum will be completed full-time, at the approved practicum. This must be a licensed group (3-5) centre.

For **Practicum Two** and **Practicum Three**, students will spend three weeks (for each practicum) in a licensed group (3-5) centre. For the **Infants and Toddlers Practicum**, students will spend five weeks in an Infant Toddler Centre, and for the **Inclusion in Early Childhood Settings Practicum**, students will spend five weeks in a centre that includes children who require additional support.

Each of the practicums has a set number of hours that must be completed. These hours include time spent in the centre as well as time spent on their assignments. Students should be in attendance at the centre for 8 hours a day including breaks, or 7 hours a day if they do not get breaks. Students should keep track of their hours, and have you “sign them off” at the completion of the practicum. If a student is ill, or has an appointment, they should arrange to make up the hours missed.

Students are advised to complete their practicum in a centre outside of the one that they are currently working in (for maximum objectivity). Under appropriate conditions, PRECI may permit students to take two out of the three practicums in their own centre as long as the student’s supervisor recognizes that the student will not be able to carry their normal workload during the time that they are completing their practicum, that objectivity is maintained, and that there are no conflicts that may interfere with the integrity of the practicum.

For most practicums, we ask that our students video record some of their activities with the children so that our instructors have the opportunity to view the students interacting with the children. We are looking for certain competencies in developmentally appropriate activities, communication skills and guidance techniques. This also gives students the opportunity to review and reflect on their practice. The student is responsible for both providing the recording device and creating the video clips. The videos will be sent to their PRECI instructor for review. No video clips are required for Practicum One. There are three videos to be completed for Practicum Two, seven for Practicum Three, and six for each of the Infants and Toddlers and Inclusion in Early Childhood Settings Practicums. Videos are sent to the instructor electronically through our secure online portal. After the videos are reviewed and evaluated, the digital copies are permanently deleted.

Students are responsible for setting up conference calls between themselves, their ECE Mentor, and their PRECI instructor. Usually two calls are made – one during the first week of the practicum, and one in the last few days. These calls take approximately 10-15 minutes. For the first call, the instructor will answer any questions that the student or ECE Mentor has, and go over the assignments. The last call is made to have a quick “chat” about how things have gone for the student. It is also possible to set up additional calls if the student or ECE Mentor requires additional support.

If you have any further questions regarding the practicum or our program, please call our main office at (250) 597-4547 or e-mail studentservices@earlychildhoodeducator.com. An overview of our program can also be browsed at www.earlychildhoodeducator.com. A member of the student’s instruction team will contact you by email as soon as the placement has been reviewed and approved.