



Practicum Manual for Supervisors & Practicum Sites

The CREATE Institute

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Practicum Manual for Supervisors and Practicum Sites

I. THE CREATE INSTITUTE

The Create Institute is a non-profit educational institution offering a three-year training program in Expressive Arts Therapy, accredited by the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO). Our program is rooted in the Intermodal Expressive Therapy model, developed in 1974 by Paolo Knill, Shaun McNiff, and colleagues at Lesley University Graduate School (Cambridge, MA) and the European Graduate School (Switzerland). This model weaves together various art modalities — including Visual Art, Music, Dance/Movement, Theatre, Poetry, and Writing — into a dynamic interdisciplinary approach to therapy.

Expressive Arts Therapy has been shown to support a wide range of client populations by promoting emotional expression, reducing anxiety and stress, increasing self-awareness, and fostering resilience and connection. It is particularly effective in settings where traditional talk therapy may not fully engage clients, offering creative and accessible pathways for healing. Whether working with individuals managing chronic illness, trauma, or cognitive decline, or supporting group cohesion in inpatient units, expressive arts therapy provides powerful tools to enhance mental health and well-being.

As a CRPO-recognized education program, we are eager to collaborate with hospitals, healthcare settings, and community organizations that support our students in gaining hands-on experience. We welcome opportunities for our students to offer arts-based psychotherapy and group or individual facilitation, helping them grow into compassionate and skilled mental health professionals.

Purpose of this Manual

This manual is designed to provide practicum sites and supervisors with clear guidelines, expectations, and resources for supporting Create students during their placements. It outlines the roles of students, supervisors, and agencies, and serves as a reference to ensure that practicum experiences are enriching, professional, and aligned with CRPO standards.

Philosophy of Practicum Learning

We believe practicum placements are not only opportunities for students to practice their skills, but also a chance for agencies to contribute to the development of future professionals in the field. Supervision, mentorship, and exposure to real-world therapeutic

environments help students integrate theory into practice, fostering their growth into ethical, reflective, and compassionate practitioners.

The Role of Agencies and Supervisors

Agencies and supervisors are key partners in the practicum process. By opening their doors to students, they provide opportunities for hands-on learning, professional mentorship, and meaningful client engagement. Supervisors ensure that students receive guidance, feedback, and structured oversight that meets both agency needs and the CRPO's standards of safe, ethical practice.

Benefits to Practicum Sites

Hosting Create students offers agencies the benefit of additional programming support, the infusion of new creative perspectives, and the opportunity to contribute to the education of the next generation of psychotherapists. Many agencies find that student projects, group facilitation, and creative approaches enrich the services they provide to their clients.

Support from The Create Institute

The Create Institute provides ongoing support to practicum supervisors and sites through communication, resources, and guidance. The practicum director is available to answer questions, clarify requirements, and support the relationship between students and practicum sites.

II. PRACTICUM GENERAL GUIDELINES

What is a Practicum?

A **practicum** is a hands-on learning experience where students apply what they've learned in their studies to real-world situations under supervision.

For psychotherapy and Expressive Arts Therapy students, it usually means:

- Working with clients or groups in a professional setting
- Practicing therapy or facilitation skills
- Being supervised by a qualified professional who gives feedback and guidance

- Building confidence and competence before working independently

Think of it as a “practice round” in the real world—safe, guided, and structured—so students can grow their skills before fully entering the profession.

Practicum Requirements for Create Students:

In order to graduate, students from The Create Institute are required to complete a minimum of 600 practicum hours.

- Total over the three years - **600 hours**
- **250 hours** are spent in direct client contact (DCC).
- **85 hours** are spent in **Non-clinical Art-based facilitations**
- **80 hours** of Supervision
- **185 hours** are spent on **indirect activities**, such as administration, **staff meetings, record-keeping, planning, debriefing, preparation, cleanup, Q&As, and Research.**

Indirect Hours

In psychotherapy and expressive arts therapy training, *indirect hours* refer to activities that support clinical or facilitation work but do not involve direct contact with clients or participants. These hours may include **administration, documentation, research, program planning, supervision meetings, staff meetings, preparation and cleanup, debriefing, and professional development.**

Although indirect hours are not client-facing, they are an essential part of professional practice, as they help therapists stay organized, reflective, and prepared to provide safe and effective care.

Research Hours

Students may count research activities—such as professional development courses, readings related to specific populations or therapeutic approaches, or time spent researching and securing a practicum site—toward their **indirect practicum hours**. However, a maximum of 100 research hours may be counted. Any additional research hours beyond this limit will not be included in the total practicum hours.

Meetings with the Practicum Director may be counted as **indirect practicum hours**, since they support your training and practicum experience. However, **practicum classes cannot be counted as practicum hours**, as they are part of the academic curriculum and not considered practicum time.

Before starting a practicum, please remember that the practicum director must approve all practicum sites. If the coordinator is not informed of a site, the student cannot count the hours towards their CREATE Diploma.

Practicum Hours Breakdown (Total: 600 hours)

Category	Hours
Direct Client Contact (DCC)	250
Non-clinical Art-based Facilitations	85
Supervision	80
Indirect Activities*	185
Total (over three years)	600

*Indirect activities include administration, staff meetings, record-keeping, planning, debriefing, preparation, cleanup, Q&As, and research.

When Students Can Begin Their Practicum

Students at The Create Institute may begin their practicum **after completing the first term of the program's first year.**

Typically, students begin with **art-based practicums**, where they can apply expressive arts methods in community or educational settings. These experiences provide valuable opportunities to build confidence, practice facilitation, and develop a foundation of therapeutic presence.

Once students have gained sufficient therapeutic skills, they are encouraged to transition into **Direct Client Contact (DCC) practicums**, where they work more directly within a psychotherapy framework.

The Create Institute recommends that students begin their DCC practicums in the **second year of the program**, unless they already hold prior training and professional credentials that qualify them to practice psychotherapy sooner.

This gradual approach helps ensure that students are prepared and supported in their learning, while also protecting the integrity of client care.

Practicum Placement and Student Responsibility

The Create Institute does **not assign practicum placements** to students. While the school prioritizes supporting students by providing resources, guidance, and access to

practicum opportunities, it does not participate in the selection process or make placements on behalf of students.

Students are responsible for **applying to practicum sites, completing any application or interview requirements, and securing their placements.** The **hiring responsibility lies entirely with the practicum site or agency**, which makes the final decision regarding acceptance of a student.

This process is designed to promote independence, professionalism, and alignment between the student's learning goals and the practicum setting. The Create Institute remains dedicated to supporting students throughout this process by providing information, feedback, and resources to help them seek practicum opportunities; however, the ultimate responsibility for securing an internship lies with the student.

Practicum Placement and Agency Responsibility

The Create Institute does **not assign practicum students** to agencies or sites. While the school supports students by providing resources and information about potential practicum opportunities, it does not participate in the application, interview, or selection process.

The **responsibility for reviewing applications, interviewing candidates, and making the final hiring decision rests entirely with the practicum site or agency.** Agencies are encouraged to assess whether a student is a good fit for their setting, considering the population served, the type of practicum offered, and the supervision available.

The Create Institute remains available to agencies and supervisors for consultation and support regarding practicum requirements and expectations. However, the selection and acceptance of students are entirely at the discretion of the practicum site.

What is Direct Client Contact – (DCC)?

Direct client contact is any activity in which the client and the therapist are directly and formally engaged in the psychotherapeutic process. Ordinarily, this process occurs face-to-face, but other forms of direct contact, such as telephone, Skype, video-link, or even email (with appropriate considerations for privacy and confidentiality) are relevant. The client may be an individual, couple, family, or group.

Also included in direct client contact are:

- **Interviewing for intake**, as long as this activity is clinical in nature, is used to determine the nature and course of the therapy.
- Interviewing, administering a test, or conducting **a formal assessment** as part of a clinical interaction with the client.

- Screening
- **Facilitating or actively co-facilitating therapeutic sessions**, provided the student leads at least 50% of the session and is not simply observing.

The following are not considered direct client contact:

- Observing therapy without actively participating or providing follow-up to the client immediately after the observed session.
- Record-keeping.
- Administrative activities, including report-writing.
- Conducting a psychometric assessment that primarily involves administering, scoring, and report-writing, with little or no clinical interaction with the client; and
- Providing or receiving clinical or other forms of supervision.

Note: A standard 45 or 50-minute session qualifies as one hour of DCC.

What counts as an appropriate practicum setting for DCC practicums?

Students can complete their practicum at any **organization that provides mental health support** in a professional way. This includes:

- **Counselling centers** or therapy clinics
- **Mental health organizations** (public, private, culturally, or spiritually based)
- **Hospitals**, in departments like psychology or social work
- **Places where mental health is a key part of the work**, like:
 - Schools
 - Shelters
 - Transitional housing
 - Elder care homes
 - Minimum-security correctional institutions
- **Student's workplace**, if it matches Create's standards for expressive arts therapy or psychotherapy.
- Students are expected to complete their DCC hours by **implementing and practicing Expressive Arts Therapy as their primary therapeutic approach**. While other therapeutic methods may complement the work, the central focus should remain on the use of expressive arts modalities in clinical practice.

If your practicum site is **not listed** in Create's Practicum Directory, or if you're **not sure** whether it qualifies:

👉 **Please fill out the [Practicum Site Approval Form](#).**

This form gives us the information we need to review your site. Please note that incomplete forms won't be accepted.

The **Practicum Director** will go over your submission and let you know if the site qualifies as an approved practicum.

Can a Workshop be considered DCC?

Yes, a workshop can be considered Direct Client Contact (DCC) under certain circumstances. Whether a workshop qualifies as DCC depends on its purpose and the nature of the interaction between the therapist and the client. If a workshop directly involves the client in a clinical process, such as gathering feedback, facilitating discussions, or providing interactive learning experiences, it can be considered DCC.

Here's a more detailed breakdown:

Factors influencing whether a workshop is DCC:

- **Purpose and Content:**

A workshop that is primarily focused on clinical interventions, such as a group therapy session, would be considered DCC.

- **Client Involvement:**

If the workshop involves active participation and interaction with the client, either individually or in a group setting, it can be considered DCC.

- **Clinical Nature:**

If the workshop is part of a larger clinical process, such as intake or assessment, it can be considered DCC.

Examples of workshops that might be considered DCC:

- **Group therapy sessions:** Where clients actively participate and engage in a therapeutic process.
- **Interactive workshops on specific topics:** Such as developing coping skills, managing stress, or learning about specific mental health conditions.
- **Workshops designed to facilitate communication and collaboration:** Where clients actively participate in discussing their experiences and sharing information.

Examples of workshops that might not be considered DCC:

- **Workshops primarily focused on education or information dissemination:** Where clients passively receive information.

- **Workshops focused on administrative or informational activities:** Such as orientation or policy updates.
- **Workshops where the primary focus is on training or professional development:** Where participants are learning new skills or knowledge.

In summary, the key is whether the workshop directly involves the client in a clinical process, is part of a larger therapeutic intervention, and/or requires active client participation in a clinical setting.

Mandatory DCC Administrative Requirements:

Students must follow clinical protocols, including:

- Intake forms
- Informed consent
- Progress notes and documentation
- Adherence to legal and ethical standards for clinical practice

What is an Arts-Based Practicum?

A supervised, experiential learning placement in which students facilitate therapeutic or creative activities using the arts, without the requirement for formal clinical documentation (such as intake forms, informed consent, or progress notes). The focus is on developing facilitation skills, observing participant responses, and reflecting on the process, allowing students to apply theoretical knowledge in a safe and educational environment.

What counts as an appropriate practicum setting for a non-clinical art-based practicum?

Art-based practicums are designed for students who wish to **develop confidence in expressive arts therapy** but **are not yet ready** or suited for a full clinical setting. Art-based hours are mandatory and are typically completed during the first or second year of the training program.

- Students are expected to complete their (non-clinical) art-based hours by **implementing and practicing Expressive Arts Therapy as their primary therapeutic approach**. While other therapeutic methods may complement the work, the central focus should remain on the use of expressive arts modalities in clinical practice.
- These sites may not offer formal therapy, but they still give students a chance to:

- Practice **facilitation skills**
- Work with **art materials** in a therapeutic or creative way
- **Hold space for a group**
- **Facilitate expressive arts experiences**
- Get involved in **community-based or creative wellness work**

Examples might include:

- Community arts centers
- Youth programs
- Senior centers with arts programming
- Drop-in art groups
- Shelters or support spaces offering creative outlets

These are spaces where students can **practice showing up as a facilitator**, learn through experience, and grow their comfort and presence with expressive arts work.

If your practicum site is **not listed** in Create’s Practicum Directory, or if you’re **not sure** whether it qualifies:

👉 **Please fill out the [Practicum Site Approval Form](#)**. If the button doesn’t work, you can also copy and paste this link into your browser: <https://forms.gle/3qKuaBS8UR1mGBUS8>

This form gives us the information we need to review your site. Please note that incomplete forms won’t be accepted.

The **Practicum Director** will go over your submission and let you know if the site qualifies as an approved practicum.

DCC (clinical work) vs. Non-clinical ARTS-BASED Work

1. DCC or Clinical Work

Setting & Purpose: This setting occurs in a therapeutic or healthcare setting where students work directly with clients, with the goal of providing therapeutic support.

Administrative Requirements:

For a practicum to qualify as Direct Client Contact (DCC) and be considered clinical, students must follow specific administrative protocols in line with the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO) ethical standards. This includes

completing intake forms that gather essential client information and ensuring clients provide informed consent before any therapeutic work begins. Students must also keep thorough progress notes and other documentation for each session and adhere to all legal and ethical guidelines governing clinical practice. These requirements help ensure that the practicum meets CRPO's standards for professional, client-centered care.

Students must follow clinical protocols, including:

- Intake forms
- Informed consent
- Progress notes and documentation
- Adherence to legal and ethical standards for clinical practice

Supervision & Evaluation: Supervised by an RP (CRPO Registered Psychotherapist)

Focus: The primary goal is to promote client well-being and achieve measurable therapeutic outcomes, while also fostering student skill development.

2. Non-clinical Arts-based Work

Setting & Purpose: May occur in therapeutic, educational, or community environments. The experience is still reflective of therapeutic practice, but it is more exploratory and educational in nature.

Administrative Requirements: Clinical documentation is not mandatory; therefore, no intake forms, formal informed consent, or progress notes are required.

Assessment: Students are encouraged to keep reflective records, tracking:

- Activities they implement
- How participants engage or respond
- Observations about group dynamics and learning outcomes

Supervision & Evaluation: The supervisor may be a member in good standing with the CRPO or a regulatory college whose members are authorized to practice psychotherapy.

Accepted colleges for this purpose are:

- College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario
- College of Nurses of Ontario
- College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario
- College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario

- College of Psychologists of Ontario
- Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers

Focus: The goal is student learning, skill-building, and experiential understanding of therapeutic processes using arts, rather than formal therapy outcomes.

DCC vs. Arts-Based Practicum		
	DCC Practicum	Arts-Based Practicum
Setting & Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Therapeutic or healthcare setting • Students work directly with clients • Provide therapeutic support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Therapeutic, educational, or community environment • Reflective of therapeutic practice • Exploratory & educational experience
Administrative Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intake forms • Informed consent • Progress notes & documentation • Adherence to legal & ethical standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No mandatory clinical documentation • No formal intake, consent, or progress notes
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment is tracked in the intake form and progress notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflective records of activities • Note participant engagement • Observe group dynamics & learning outcomes
Supervision & Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervised by a Registered Psychotherapist (CRPO) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor may belong to CRPO or an approved college • Approved colleges: Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Physicians & Surgeons, Psychology, Social Work
Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client well-being & measurable outcomes • Student skill development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student learning, skill-building & experiential understanding • Emphasis on arts process rather than formal therapy outcomes

Additional Documents students Might Need for their Practicum

In addition to the standard practicum paperwork—such as contract and attestation forms—some practicum sites may require further documentation before students can begin their placement. These requirements vary widely depending on the site’s policies, population served, and governing regulations. For example, community agencies working with vulnerable populations may request a recent Criminal Record Check, which may also include a Vulnerable Sector Check. Healthcare settings might require proof of immunizations, a TB skin test, or a mask-fitting certificate to ensure you meet public health and safety standards. Other sites may require proof of specific training, such as first aid or CPR certification, or insurance coverage. Not every site requires these documents, but it is essential for students to inquire in advance so they have time to gather any additional paperwork and avoid delays.

The site contact must inform the student of any additional document requirements in advance so the student has time to gather them. The Create Institute also advises students to proactively check with their practicum site to confirm whether any extra documents will be needed.

Common Extra Documents:

- Criminal Record Check (CRC) — sometimes with a Vulnerable Sector Check
- Mask fitting
- Proof of immunizations and/or TB skin test results
- CPR Certification
- TB Skin Test

III. INDEPENDENT PRACTICUMS

Students at The Create Institute are allowed to design and carry out their practicum placements independently or outside a traditional agency. However, this flexibility requires specific approval steps and practice standards. Before starting an independent placement, students must submit a detailed proposal to their practicum director for review and approval. Once approved, they must follow the requirements specific to their practicum type. For a **DCC (Direct Client Contact) practicum**, students need to meet all clinical standards, such as obtaining informed consent, maintaining progress notes, and following ethical and legal guidelines. For an **arts-based practicum**, the emphasis is on educational and community engagement rather than clinical documentation; however, students still need to keep reflective records of their activities and participant responses. By following these guidelines and obtaining prior approval, students can successfully complete independent practicums that meet The Create Institute’s standards.

***In both cases, liability insurance is mandatory.**

How to get approval for an independent art-based practicum?

 **Please fill out the [Independent Practicum Approval Form](#)**

If the button doesn’t work, you can also copy and paste this link into your browser:

<https://forms.gle/kEMmTzSnDN47h2uM8>

This form provides us with the necessary information to review their proposal. The **Practicum Director** will review their submission and inform them if the project qualifies as an approved practicum.

Mandatory Requirements for an Art-Based Independent Practicum:

- Students must present themselves as student therapists.

- The supervisor, the student, and the practicum director must sign the [Independent Practicum contract](#).
- Flyers used for outreach must state that CREATE students are working under supervision with an RP and that this group is a practicum. (examples below)
- Have shown proof of **Liability insurance**.
- Must have a qualified supervisor.
- Agree to a maximum of 8 clients.
- Agree to co-facilitation with one or two CREATE students.
- Agree to a maximum fee of **\$ 50.00** per participant, per session.
- Approval from the practicum director to perform this practicum independently.

How to get approval for an independent DCC practicum?

👉 Please fill out the [Independent Practicum Approval Form](#)

If the button doesn't work, you can also copy and paste this link into your browser:

<https://forms.gle/kEMmTzSnDN47h2uM8>

This form provides us with the necessary information to review their proposal. The **Practicum Director** will review their submission and inform them if the project qualifies as an approved practicum.

Mandatory Requirements for DCC independent practicum:

- Students must present themselves as student therapists.
- Students must have Liability insurance when working independently.
- Have an intake form and an Intake process with the client.
- Informed consent reviewed and signed by the client.
- Keep professional notes
- The supervisor, the student, and the practicum director must sign the [Independent Practicum contract](#).
- Flyers used for outreach must state that CREATE students are working under supervision with an RP and that this group is a practicum. (examples below)
- Have submitted the intake template to the practicum director.
- Have submitted the note-taking template to the practicum director.

- Have submitted the informed consent template to the practicum director.
- Have shown proof of Liability insurance.
- Must have a qualified supervisor.
- Agree to a maximum of 8 clients.
- Agree to co-facilitation with one or two CREATE students.
- Agree to a maximum fee of **\$ 50.00** per participant, per session.
- Approval from the practicum director to perform this practicum independently.

IV. SUPERVISOR ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS

What is supervision?

Clinical supervision for an expressive arts therapist is a structured, ongoing process in which a more experienced practitioner (the supervisor) provides guidance, feedback, and oversight to a therapist-in-training or a practicing therapist seeking professional development. Through regular meetings, the supervisor helps the therapist reflect on their therapeutic work, develop clinical skills, and maintain ethical and professional standards. For expressive arts therapists, supervision often includes reviewing case notes, discussing artistic interventions, examining therapeutic outcomes, and exploring how personal values and biases may affect their practice. The goal is to ensure the therapist's professional growth while ensuring the well-being of clients.

CRPO defines clinical supervision as a contractual relationship in which a clinical supervisor engages with a supervisee to discuss the direction of therapy and the therapeutic relationship, **promote the professional growth of the supervisee, enhance the supervisee's safe and effective use of self in the therapeutic relationship, and safeguard the well-being of the client.**

Clinical supervision can be conducted individually, in pairs, or in groups. Dyadic supervision, where two supervisees share sessions with one supervisor, is considered equivalent to individual supervision for documentation and requirements. In both cases, each supervisee receives focused attention, case review, and feedback tailored to their specific work. Practicum guidelines and hour requirements usually do not differentiate between dyadic and one-on-one arrangements, as both meet the same supervisory standards.

What to expect from a supervisor:

- Work with students initially to set up a contract and establish learning goals.

- Help orient students to the site, (online policies and procedures, clientele, facilities, and staff expectations).
- Maintain regular (weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly) contact with students.
- Discuss clinical issues (not necessarily Expressive Arts Therapy supervision, although this would be desirable).
- Monitor students in terms of organizational requirements.
- Be available to help sort out difficulties/conflicts.
- Formally communicate by email and by telephone with The CREATE Institute Practicum Director (if necessary). Online meetings are arranged upon request. Supervisors should be aware that students will also present their issues and concerns regarding practicum sites in class, as part of their training at The CREATE Institute.
- The supervisor must complete and sign the [CREATE attestation form](#) at the end of each school year, along with an [evaluation form](#) and the student's logs.

Suggested supervision topics:

- Effective evaluation of supervisees' learning needs.
- Supporting the growth and development of the supervisee.
- Defining/managing responsibilities of the supervisee and supervisor.
- Supervisor's role in preventing harm to clients.
- Disclosure of client personal health information in supervisory relationships.
- Record-keeping.
- Conflict of interest.
- Ethical issues in clinical supervision.

What is the appropriate ratio of supervision and practicum hours, and how should this information be reflected in the practicum contract?

The CRPO or The Create Institute does not specify how often students must have clinical supervision hours or the ideal ratio. Students should discuss with their clinical supervisors, based on their individual needs, how much and how often they need supervision. However, we recommend our students keep a ratio of one hour of supervision for every eight practicum hours to meet graduation requirements, totaling 80 hours of supervision. Reaching the 80-hour supervision goal is flexible as long as students complete the required hours and receive supervision for each practicum.

What is the ratio between individual or dyadic supervision and group supervision?

According to CRPO, **no more than 50% of your total supervision hours can be in group format**—that means at least half of your hours must be **individual or dyadic supervision** ([CRPO Supervision Requirements](#)).

👉 *Example:* If you have **100 total supervision hours**, at least **50 must be individual or dyadic**, and **no more than 50 can be group supervision**.

The Create Institute is responsible for accurately reporting supervision hours to CRPO, clearly distinguishing between individual, dyadic, and group formats on the student’s transcript. The CRPO accepts the Institute’s transcripts and our graduation requirement of 80 hours of supervision. However, please note that additional supervision hours will be needed after graduation to fulfill the CRPO’s full requirements before exam eligibility. To transfer from the Qualifying (RP-Q) category to full RP registration, CRPO requires a minimum of 100 clinical supervision hours and 450 Direct Client Contact (DCC) hours.

Eligibility of the Supervisor

Before securing a practicum placement, students must inform themselves about the credential requirements of the relevant regulatory bodies or professional associations for practicum supervisors. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that they secure a practicum supervisor who meets the credentials required by The Create Institute and the regulatory body or professional association with which the student wishes to be affiliated after graduation.

Who can supervise DCC practicum sessions?

1. The supervisor must be a member in good standing with the CRPO. Only RPs are authorized to supervise DCC practicums.
2. The supervisor must have five years of extensive clinical experience.
3. The supervisor must meet CRPO’s “independent practice” requirement (completion of 1000 direct client contact hours and 150 hours of clinical supervision).
4. The supervisor must have completed 30 hours of directed learning in providing clinical supervision. Directed learning can include coursework, supervised practice as a clinical supervisor, individual/peer/group learning, and independent study that includes structured readings.
5. CRPO staff may request evidence of 30 hours of directed learning in providing clinical supervision and may also request a letter of verification and a statement describing the supervisor’s approach to providing supervision.

Upon request, a clinical supervisor should be able to provide their supervisee with an attestation form or letter attesting to their competency, as set out in items 1 through 4 above.

Submitting this to the CRPO is unnecessary unless their staff specifically requests it.

Who can supervise art-based practicum sessions?

1. Supervisors for arts-based practicums do not have to be strictly Registered Psychotherapists. Unlike DCC practicums, these placements can be supervised by either an RP or another professional who is a member in good standing with the CRPO or another regulatory college whose members are authorized to practice psychotherapy.

Accepted colleges for this purpose are:

- College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario
- College of Nurses of Ontario
- College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario
- College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
- College of Psychologists of Ontario
- Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers

2. The supervisor must have five years of extensive clinical experience.

3. The supervisor must meet CRPO's "independent practice" requirement (completion of 1000 direct client contact hours and 150 hours of clinical supervision).

4. The supervisor must have completed 30 hours of directed learning in providing clinical supervision. Directed learning can include coursework, supervised practice as a clinical supervisor, individual/peer/group learning, and independent study that includes structured readings.

5. If not an RP, the supervisor must provide a signed declaration upon request that they understand CRPO's definitions of clinical supervision, clinical supervisor, and the scope of practice of psychotherapy. Create [attestation forms](#), include a section for this purpose.


CRPO staff may request evidence of 30 hours of directed learning in providing clinical supervision and may also request a letter of verification and a statement describing the supervisor's approach to providing supervision.

Upon request, a clinical supervisor should be able to provide their supervisee with an attestation form attesting to their competency, as set out in items 1 through 4 above.

Submitting this to the CRPO is unnecessary unless their staff specifically requests it.

External or Secondary Supervisor: There may be times when a site does not offer on-site supervision and requests an external or additional supervisor. The Create Institute allows its students to receive off-site or external supervision.

Students should be aware that if the practicum they choose does not provide supervision that meets our requirements, they may need to arrange supervision on their own, at their own expense. To help with costs, students may choose to do this collectively. [A supervisor's referral list](#) will be available on Create's student portal.

 **Reminder:** All supervisors are required to be registered professionals (RPs) to conduct **clinical supervision for DCC practicums**.

Supervision Agreement

Create Institute uses the [student/Agency practicum contract](#) as proof that the student is receiving supervision.

However, supervisors must sign a written supervision agreement with their practicum student supervisees. This agreement should clearly outline how supervision will be conducted, specify any applicable fees or costs, and include other relevant details regarding the practicum placement. This document is for the student's use. The Create Institute does not require the student to submit this document.

Supervisor Fees

The student is responsible for paying any fees related to supervision or professional development that the supervisor or practicum site may require. However, we ask practicum sites and supervisors to ensure that any requested fees are clearly outlined and agreed upon in writing as part of the supervision agreement to promote clarity. While we expect fee changes not to affect current students, we recognize that fees may occasionally need to be revised. Therefore, the Supervision Agreement should specify the process for reviewing and updating these fees, as outlined below.

Agreements related to fees are expected to meet the following standards:

- **Reasonable and Aligned with Current Fee Structures:** Supervision fees must be reasonable and in line with prevailing fee structures for similar programs and institutions.
- **Transparency and No Hidden Fees:** All fees, including any additional charges or costs related to supervision, must be transparently disclosed in the agreement.
- **Review and Update Mechanism:** The agreement should specify the process used for regularly reviewing and potentially adjusting supervision fees to ensure they stay aligned with current fee structures and are fair for both parties.

- **Agreement Dispute Resolution:** If there is a disagreement between the practicum student and the institution or supervisor regarding fees, the agreement should include a clear dispute resolution process. This process should offer a fair and unbiased way to resolve disputes.
- **Protection of Student Interests:** The agreement should prioritize the best interests of the student, making sure excessive or unreasonable fees do not unfairly burden them.
- **Compliance with Legal and Ethical Standards:** The supervision and fee agreement should adhere to all relevant legal and ethical standards governing practicum and internship programs.
- **Documentation and Record-Keeping:** All agreements related to practicum supervision fees should be documented and kept for future reference. These records serve as proof of the agreed terms in case of disputes. **Students must maintain a log of their supervision sessions, which will be signed by the supervisor upon submission of their hours.**
- **Accessibility and Clarity:** The agreement should be written in clear and understandable language, ensuring that students can easily comprehend the terms and conditions.

V. PRACTICUM APPLICATION PROCESS

Finding and Securing a Practicum

At Create, **students are responsible for finding and securing their own practicum placements.**

To support students in this process, we have created a **Practicum Directory** that includes a list of approved practicum sites with which Create has an affiliation agreement. In this directory, you will find:

- The **name** of each practicum site
- The **population** they work with
- The **location** of the site
- **Application instructions** and important details

Become an Approved Practicum Site with The Create Institute

Student Steps

Students can follow these steps to have an agency approved as a practicum site with The Create Institute:

1. 🖱️ Please fill out the [Practicum Site Approval Form](https://forms.gle/3qKuaBS8UR1mGBUS8). If the button doesn't work, you can also copy and paste this link into your browser:

<https://forms.gle/3qKuaBS8UR1mGBUS8>

Students must fill out the form in full. Incomplete forms will not be accepted. Once submitted, the Practicum Director will review the application and inform the student whether the proposed site qualifies as an approved practicum location.

2. Provide the Site with Create's Practicum Requirements

Students should share *Create's Practicum Manual for Sites and Supervisors* with the prospective site, so they are fully informed of the program's requirements and expectations.

3. Follow the Site's Application Process

Students must follow all application instructions given by the practicum site.

4. Await Final Approval

Once approved, the practicum site will be officially added to Create's Practicum Directory. This step can take several days to complete.

5. Submit the Practicum Contract

After securing a practicum position, students must complete, sign, and submit the [student/agency practicum contract](#) to practicumrecords@thecreateinstitute.org.

Each practicum requires its own contract, which must be submitted before the start date. The contract ensures the practicum is officially recorded and confirms the supervising party.

Agency Steps

The Create Institute welcomes agencies to become approved practicum sites and partner in the training of future expressive arts therapists. Agencies can follow these steps to join our Practicum Directory and host Create Institute students:

1. **Receive, Review, and complete the [Practicum Site Approval Form](https://forms.gle/3qKuaBS8UR1mGBUS8)**. If the button doesn't work, you can also copy and paste this link into your browser:

<https://forms.gle/3qKuaBS8UR1mGBUS8>

The student applicant will provide your agency with the Practicum Site Approval Form. Please ensure all requested information is completed so we can properly review your site for approval.

2. Review Create's Practicum Requirements

The student will share *Create's Practicum Manual for Sites and Supervisors*. This

document outlines program requirements, supervision standards, and expectations for practicum placements.

3. Guide the Student Through Your Application Process

Provide the student with your agency's application instructions and timelines so they can complete all required steps.

4. Await Confirmation

Once approved, your agency will be added to Create's Practicum Directory. This process can take several days from the time we receive your completed information.

5. Sign the Practicum Contract

Once the student has been accepted, the agency's designated site contact and supervisor will sign the [student/agency practicum contract](#) along with the student. This ensures the practicum is recorded and supervision responsibilities are clearly defined.

By becoming an approved practicum site, your agency plays a vital role in the development of emerging therapists and strengthens the field of expressive arts therapy.


Required Documents before starting a practicum


The following documentation is required from students and must be submitted before the practicum starts:

- Evidence of having purchased **Professional Liability Insurance** for independent practicums.
- **Proof of Professional Liability Insurance**, if the practicum site requires it.
- **Practicum Contract** fully signed.

Types of Contracts

The Create Institute offers two types of practicum contracts, and it's important for students to select the one that matches their placement. Students working within an organization must use the **Student/Agency Contract**, which needs signatures from the site contact person, the clinical supervisor, and the student. If the practicum is done independently—whether it's arts-based or a DCC placement—students must use the **Independent Practicum Contract**. This contract requires signatures from the practicum director, the clinical supervisor, and the student. Choosing the correct contract ensures proper documentation and approval of the practicum.

 **Independent Practicum Contracts** require the signature of the practicum director, the clinical supervisor, and the student.

 **Student/Agency Contracts** require the signature of the contact site, the clinical supervisor, and the student.

Please ensure that the contracts are properly signed; otherwise, they will not be accepted.

VI. PRACTICUM HOURS SUBMISSION

Submitting practicum hours is a formal process at The Create Institute, designed to ensure that each student's training is properly documented and approved. At the end of every school year, students must compile the hours they have completed and have their clinical supervisor verify them using the institute's official attestation form. This process involves following a strict deadline, accurately recording hours, and ensuring that signatures are in place so that all work can be appropriately credited and counted toward graduation requirements.

Approval of Practicum Hours

- **Annual submission:** At the end of each school year, every student must submit all practicum hours completed during that year using Create's Attestation Form. The form must be filled out and signed by the clinical supervisor (not the site contact, unless they are the same person).
- **Deadline and cut-off date:** The deadline for submission is **May 11** every year. Hours submitted should include everything accrued up to, or as close as possible to, that date. Record the date your hours are counted through; any hours earned after the cut-off will apply to the next academic year.
- **Ongoing placements:** Even if the practicum hasn't finished, students still need to submit the hours earned so far. The contract can remain open while the placement continues, but hours must be reported annually.

Attestation Form Guidelines

- The attestation form should reflect the total hours completed for the year. Once submitted, it cannot be altered. If a mistake is discovered, students must complete and submit a new form.
- A second form may be submitted later to add hours or information not included in the original submission.
- Students with multiple supervisors should assign each set of practicum hours to one supervisor only to avoid duplication.

Supervisor Requirements

- For **DCC practicums**, the supervisor must be a **Registered Psychotherapist (RP)**—no exceptions.

- For **arts-based practicums**, the supervisor may be another psychotherapy-practising professional, provided they meet the CRPO's definition of a clinical supervisor. (See the supervision section for details.)

Required Documentation for Approving and Recording Student Practicum Hours:

1. **Attestation Form** signed by your clinical supervisor
2. **Signed logs** by your clinical supervisor
3. **Clinical Supervision Evaluation Form** completed by your supervisor

Avoiding Duplicate Practicum Hours When Working with Multiple Supervisors

It is common for students to work with more than one supervisor, and they may discuss the same practicum situations with each. While this collaboration is encouraged, please ensure that practicum hours are not duplicated when verifying and submitting them to the school.

What to Do When a Student Has Two Supervisors at the Same Time

If a student is working with more than one supervisor, each supervisor must complete a separate attestation form confirming only the hours they personally supervised. For every block of practicum hours recorded, the student must assign those hours to only one supervisor—generally the one named in the practicum contract.

This means:

- **Both supervisors submit attestation forms** documenting the time they spent supervising the student.
- **Only one supervisor signs off on each set of practicum hours**, ensuring that no practicum hours are counted twice.

This ensures clarity, avoids duplication of hours, and accurately reflects each supervisor's role in the practicum.

What is an Attestation Form?


An **attestation form** for psychotherapy students is an official document that serves as **formal confirmation**—typically completed and signed by the student's practicum supervisor—to verify the student's **clinical hours, activities, and supervision** during their practicum or internship.

The Create Institute requires students to use the official attestation form provided by the school to document their practicum hours. Attestation forms from other institutions or

generic templates are not accepted. Using the institute’s form ensures that all necessary information—such as the breakdown of direct client hours, arts-based hours, indirect hours, supervision hours, and the supervisor’s credentials—is documented consistently and in compliance with program requirements. Students must download the current version of the **attestation form** from the Create Institute’s website or practicum materials and ensure their clinical supervisor completes and signs it for each submission.

What it usually includes:

- **Student’s name**
- **Name of practicum site**
- **Supervisor’s name and credentials**
- **Start and end dates** of the practicum
- **Total number of direct client hours** (e.g., therapy sessions)
- **Total number of Art-based hours** (e.g., therapy sessions in a non-clinical environment, art-based facilitations)
- **Total number of indirect hours** (e.g., notes, planning & debriefing, setting up, training)
- **Total number of supervision hours**
- A declaration that the student has **met the requirements** and that the hours reported are accurate
- **Supervisor’s signature and date**


 **The Create Institute has its attestation forms, and these are the only ones that will be accepted as authorized documents. All forms can be downloaded from Create's website.**

How to fill out and submit the attestation form:

The process works as follows:

1. **Students must review their practicum hours with their supervisor**, using their logs as a reference during supervision.
2. **Based on that review, the supervisor will sign the attestation form** that the student has previously filled out. Please note that each supervisor may have their own preferred method for completing this step—they may prefer to fill out the form themselves or review one completed by the student. Students should consult with their supervisor to confirm their preference.

3. **Supervisors must also sign the student's logs** to confirm that all hours have been reviewed and approved.
4. **Once the student has collected the signed attestation form**, along with the signed logs and clinical supervision evaluation, they are responsible for submitting all documents via email to practicumrecords@thecreateinstitute.org
5. **Supervisors must also complete a Clinical Supervision Evaluation form.** This is the **third and final requirement** for the attestation process to be considered complete.
6. **The [practicum file manager](#) will then add the attestation form to the student's file.**

 **SUMMARY** To make things easier: Remember the three parts are —

1. **Signed logs**
2. **Signed attestation form**
3. **Completed supervision evaluation**

How to fill out and submit the signed logs:

Practicum Logs

Students are required to keep accurate and organized records of their practicum hours. These logs ensure that the hours can be properly attested by supervisors and later submitted to The Create Institute for review.

Format Recommendation

The Create Institute recommends keeping practicum logs in an **Excel spreadsheet** (or similar software, such as Google Sheets). Create provides a log template for student use. However, students may also create their own version, provided it follows the required format and includes all necessary details.

Instructions for Practicum Logs

1. **One Spreadsheet per Practicum**
Each practicum placement must have its own separate log. This helps avoid confusion and ensures hours are attributed to the correct site and supervisor.
2. **Tracking Hours in Columns**
Practicum activities must be accurately recorded in separate columns. At minimum, logs should include:

- **Indirect Hours** (planning, debriefing, setup, cleaning, admin tasks, note-taking, etc.)
 - **DCC** (Direct Client Contact)
 - **Arts-Based Hours**
 - **Research**
 - **Supervision**
3. **Dates and Times**
 Each entry must include:
- **Date** (the day the activity was completed)
 - **Time** (the length of time spent on the activity, expressed in hours/minutes)
4. **Totals**
 Each column must be totaled at the bottom of the spreadsheet to provide a clear summary of hours completed.

Required Columns

The spreadsheet must include the following headings across the top row:

DATE TIME INDIRECT HOURS DCC ARTS-BASED RESEARCH SUPERVISION

Supervisor Sign-Off

Logs must be signed by the practicum supervisor at the end of the placement (or at designated intervals, as agreed upon). These signed logs are submitted together with the Attestation Form and Supervision Evaluation.

Submitting Signed Logs

Signed logs must always be submitted in **PDF format**. This ensures that the documents are easy to review, archive, and securely signed by supervisors. The correct process is:

1. Students complete their logs in Excel (or a similar spreadsheet program).
2. Before submission, students must **export the Excel log into a PDF file**.
3. The supervisor then adds their signature directly to the PDF version of the log.

This process avoids confusion, makes the documents easier to handle, and ensures proper documentation for practicum records.

Sample Practicum Log

Sample Practicum Log

DATE	TIME (start–end)	INDIRECT HOURS	DCC (Direct Client Contact)	ARTS-BASED	RESEARCH	SUPERVISION	NOTES (optional)
2025-01-15	2:00 pm – 4:00 pm	1.0	1.0	–	–	–	Group facilitation with youth program
2025-01-18	1:00 pm – 2:30 pm	–	–	1.0	0.5	–	Arts-based workshop at community center
2025-01-20	10:00 am – 12:00 pm	0.5	1.0	–	–	0.5	Supervision meeting with site supervisor
2025-01-25	9:00 am – 12:00 pm	1.0	–	2.0	–	–	Preparing and facilitating collage workshop

How it works:

- **TIME** → shows the session’s actual start–end.
- **Columns (Indirect, DCC, Arts-based, etc.)** → just list the total **hours** from that time block.
- **Totaling** → At the bottom of the log, each column should be summed up to calculate total hours for each activity type.

How to Export Logs from Excel into PDF and Get Supervisor Sign-Off

To make it easy for supervisors to review and sign practicum logs, students must export their Excel logs into a **PDF file** before requesting signatures. Here’s how:

1. Complete your Excel Log

- Fill in all required practicum hours (DCC, Arts-Based, Indirect, Research, Supervision).
- Make sure the totals are calculated at the end of each column.
- Double-check that the **DATE** and **TIME** columns are clear and accurate.

2. Export Excel to PDF

1. Open your completed Excel log.
2. Click **File** → **Export (or Save As)**.
3. Choose **PDF** as the file format.
4. Select **Entire Workbook** or **Active Sheet** (depending on your log).
5. Save the file to your computer with a clear name (e.g., *Practicum Log_Hospice Toronto_May2025.pdf*).

3. Send the PDF for Supervisor Sign-Off

- Email or share the PDF file with your supervisor.
- Supervisors can add their signature by:
 - Printing, signing, and scanning the PDF back, OR
 - Using a digital signature tool (e.g., Adobe Acrobat, Preview on Mac, or DocuSign).

4. Submit the Final Signed Logs

- Once signed, the PDF must be submitted together with:
 - The **Attestation Form**
 - The **Supervision Evaluation**

⚠ Important: Excel spreadsheets or photos of logs will not be accepted. Only signed **PDF logs** are valid for practicum records.

VII. ADVERTISING, RECRUITING, OR MARKETING FOR CLIENTS

Students are permitted to advertise counselling services using third-party websites (e.g., Psychology Today) only under the supervision and guidance of the practicum Clinic where they are doing their practicums.

Students and practicum sites must adhere to the policies and guidelines of The Create Institute about third-party advertising.

Additional Guidelines for Third-Party Advertising

- When creating a student profile on a third-party advertising portal, students must identify themselves as student therapists or Pre-Licensed Professionals.

Instructions for Students

In the Bio/About section, students must identify themselves as Expressive Arts Therapist students or trainees who are qualified to practice at the practicum site under the clinical supervision of an approved practicum supervisor.

Any flyers or other outreach advertising materials must clearly state that the student is a CREATE student working under the supervision of a Registered Psychotherapist (RP) and that the facilitation is part of a practicum.

Quick Note for Supervisors

Ensure that all student bios, outreach flyers, and advertising materials:

- Clearly identify the individual as a CREATE student in practicum.
- State that the student is under the supervision of a Registered Psychotherapist (RP).
- Indicate that the facilitation is part of a practicum.

Examples of disclaimers:

Example 1

[Student name] is an Expressive Arts student therapist at The Create Institute, practicing under the supervision of a Registered Psychotherapist. This (group therapy/workshop) is part of their practicum training.

Example 2

[Student Name] is a pre-licensed Expressive Arts student therapist at The Create Institute, practicing under the supervision of a Registered Psychotherapist. This group therapy/workshop is part of their practicum training.

Example 3

[Student name] is an Expressive Arts student therapist at The Create Institute. They are completing this group therapy/workshop as part of their practicum, under the supervision of a Registered Psychotherapist.

Example 4

This group therapy/workshop is led by (*Your name*), an Expressive Arts student therapist at The Create Institute. They are in practicum, working under the guidance and supervision of a Registered Psychotherapist.

Example 5 (for students practicing 1:1 at a clinic or agency)

[Student Name] is a pre-licensed Expressive Arts student therapist at The Create Institute, providing one-on-one therapy at this clinic under the supervision of a Registered Psychotherapist. These sessions are part of their practicum training.

VIII. LIABILITY INSURANCE

What is Liability insurance?

Liability insurance provides protection if a claim is made that professional actions — or mistakes — caused harm. For psychotherapists, it is an essential safeguard. Even with best practices in place, misunderstandings, complaints, or errors may occur. Liability insurance helps cover legal costs, settlements, or damages if a client alleges harm as a result of professional services.

Liability insurance generally includes two components:

1. **Professional Liability (Malpractice Insurance):** Protects against claims that therapeutic services directly caused harm to a client.
2. **General Liability:** Protects against claims of physical injury or property damage that may occur in a workplace or practicum setting.

When is Liability Insurance required?

- **Direct Client Contact (DCC) Practicums:** Proof of liability insurance is required only if the practicum site mandates it and does not provide coverage for the student.
- **Independent Practicums (Art-Based or DCC):** Liability insurance is **mandatory**, as students are not covered under an agency's umbrella and must secure their own protection.

Agency-Based Practicums vs. Independent Practicums

- **Agency-Based Practicums:** Many agencies carry their own liability insurance that extends coverage to student interns. However, students are still strongly encouraged — and sometimes required — to hold their own individual liability insurance as an additional safeguard. Agencies and supervisors should clarify coverage with students at the outset.
- **Independent Practicums (Art-Based or DCC):** Students must obtain their own liability insurance, since no agency is providing umbrella coverage. Proof of insurance must be submitted to CREATE before any practicum hours can be counted.

Liability insurance is a non-negotiable requirement for any practicum involving client contact. Supervisors and agencies are responsible for ensuring this standard is upheld before practicum hours begin.

HOW TO OBTAIN LIABILITY INSURANCE



Affiliate to OEATA as a student. Fee is \$25.00 - You will be requested to submit a referral letter. Your practicum coordinator can provide you with this requirement.



Go to the membership button and click **Insurance**.



Click **Apply for insurance here**. You will be redirected to McFarlan Rowlands Home Page



The whole process is done online.

WSIB Coverage for Practicum Students

In Ontario, the **Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB)** provides workplace insurance for employees and certain trainees, including practicum students in psychotherapy placements. This ensures that students have protection in case of a work-related accident or illness.

Why Students Are Covered

- Practicum placements, while unpaid, involve real workplace responsibilities and potential risks (e.g., slips, falls, workplace incidents, or client-related risks).
- Through the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, students in unpaid placements are provided with WSIB coverage, giving them the same protections as employees.

What WSIB Covers

If a student is injured or becomes ill due to practicum activities, WSIB may:

- Pay for medical treatment (e.g., doctor visits, physiotherapy, or counseling)
- Cover rehabilitation services to help the student return to their practicum
- Provide wage replacement if the injury prevents the student from completing required placement hours (where applicable)
- Cover prescription medications related to the injury

Please refer to the [WSIB website](#) for detailed information on coverage and limitations.

How It Works

- The Create Institute is responsible for tracking and reporting practicum hours to WSIB on a quarterly basis.
- If an incident occurs at a placement site:
 1. The student must report it to the school immediately.
 2. The school will guide the student in completing a WSIB incident/injury report.
 3. WSIB reviews the claim and provides coverage if approved.

Supervisor and Agency Responsibilities

- **Ensure a safe learning environment** by following workplace safety standards.
- **Encourage students to report incidents immediately.**
- **Provide site-specific safety orientation** so students understand potential risks.
- **Support the reporting process** if a student is injured, including documenting what occurred at the site.

WSIB Reporting Deadlines

To maintain coverage, The Create Institute must submit students' practicum hours each quarter:

- Jan 1 – Mar 31 → due April 10
- Apr 1 – Jun 30 → due July 10
- Jul 1 – Sep 30 → due October 10
- Oct 1 – Dec 31 → due January 10

⚠ Important: If practicum hours are not logged and reported, students may lose WSIB coverage. Supervisors should remind students to maintain accurate logs of days and hours worked.

Where do students submit their WSIB quarterly reports?

1. Quarterly reports must be submitted via email to practicumrecords@thecreateinstitute.org

IX. SAFETY DURING PRACTICUMS

Orientation of Site Safety Procedures and Protocols

- Before assigning any clients to the practicum student, the site must fully inform the student of the practicum agency's safety plan, including all safety procedures and protocols at all locations where the student will perform practicum activities. All sites must ensure that professional or support staff employees of the agency are present and available when a practicum student is providing services to clients on-site and in person.
- When the student is participating in tele-mental health or online synchronous counseling at any location approved by the practicum site, the approved supervisor should be accessible to the student by phone.

On-Site Safety for Students and Clients

Sometimes emergencies or serious situations can happen during a session, even though they are rare. A student might not know how to handle these alone. That's why students must always have supervision and support available when working with clients.

They must be easily accessible during the session—either in person or by phone. This rule applies to both on-site and external supervisors. If the main supervisor is unavailable, they must arrange for another qualified professional to be reachable for support.

Why can students not perform one-on-one psychotherapy independently?

The policy that students cannot engage in 1:1 DCC (Direct Client Contact) practicums independently — without the structure of an agency, organization, or clinic — is rooted in both ethical and safety considerations.

The central concern is the level of risk involved in providing 1:1 mental health support.

When working one-on-one with a client, the student takes on a significant responsibility for that person's emotional and psychological well-being. Without the proper organizational framework in place, there are insufficient safeguards to ensure client safety and appropriate support for the student practitioner.

Agencies, clinics, and organizations provide critical infrastructure, including:

- **Screening and intake procedures** to assess a client's appropriateness for student-level therapy
- **Access to clinical supervision and consultation** in real time for crisis situations
- **Protocols for managing risk** (e.g., self-harm, abuse disclosure, trauma responses)
- **Administrative and ethical oversight**, including documentation standards, confidentiality, and informed consent

When a student works outside of this structure, even with off-site supervision, they may lack the resources, crisis management systems, or legal protections necessary to respond appropriately if something goes wrong.

Additionally, many of our students are still developing their therapeutic judgment, boundaries, and emotional regulation — all of which are essential in navigating 1:1 dynamics responsibly and effectively. Having the support of an experienced organization helps ensure that the student is not left alone in situations that could exceed their level of training.

In contrast, group work done independently is permitted because it typically involves less clinical depth per individual, and students are required to have a co-facilitator, which adds another layer of support and accountability. Still, even this work must be approved and structured in a way that prioritizes safety and ethical standards.

Ultimately, this policy is in place to protect **clients, students,** and the **integrity of the school.** It's not about limiting opportunities, but about ensuring that all therapeutic engagements meet ethical, legal, and clinical standards appropriate to the student's level of training.

Avoiding Dual/Multiple Relationships and Conflicts of Interest

Practicum Student and Supervisor

A dual relationship or conflict of interest between a supervisor and a practicum student must be avoided. Maintaining professional boundaries ensures a healthy practicum experience.

Students should not be supervised by individuals with whom they share a prior or family relationship that might risk dual/multiple roles or conflicts of interest. **Supervisors and students must not engage in a therapeutic relationship.**

If a student discloses significant personal issues related to their work with clients, it's important that the supervisor refers the student to another independent counseling resource. Since supervision involves authority, any imbalance of power could lead to exploitation or harm, risking a healthy practicum.

Practicum Student and Clients

In counseling, a dual or multiple relationship occurs when multiple roles exist between a trainee and a client, which may lead to conflicts of interest or perceptions of bias, potentially causing harm.

Examples include cases where the client is also a student, friend, family member, co-worker, employee, business partner, or spouse, parent, or sibling of an existing client.

Practicum students must avoid dual relationships that could impair their judgment or harm clients. Sexual, romantic, or intimate relationships with clients, past or present, are strictly prohibited.

X. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

At The Create Institute, the practicum is first and foremost a learning experience. We encourage students, supervisors, site contacts, and faculty to address any concerns proactively so that minor issues do not become major obstacles. Consultation is available for students and practicum sites across Canada and internationally. The institute is committed to safeguarding students' physical and emotional well-being.

Student Leaving Practicum Site

When a student needs to leave their practicum site before the end of the contract, they must obtain the necessary approval and handle the situation in a professional and collegial manner. Students should discuss plans to leave early with their practicum director, contact site, and supervisor(s) so the approval can be secured and proper

transitions can be managed, such as transferring clients to other counselors, completing all practicum paperwork, and returning any site equipment.

When ending a practicum early, students must also consider their ethical responsibilities toward clients. In psychotherapy, sudden termination of services can leave clients feeling abandoned, confused, or unsupported—especially if they are in the midst of processing difficult emotions or life changes. Professional codes of ethics emphasize the importance of continuity of care, meaning therapists must ensure clients have a clear transition plan and access to appropriate support before ending a therapeutic relationship. By arranging handovers to another qualified clinician, completing all documentation, and communicating changes thoughtfully, students help protect clients from unnecessary distress and uphold the standards of their profession.

What kinds of concerns might arise?

- A student may fall behind in required practicum work or miss mandatory sessions.
- The working relationship between a student and their supervisor may become strained.
- A supervisor or site contact may determine that a student is not yet meeting one or more core competencies.

What should students or supervisors do if concerns arise?

- As soon as a concern is identified, the student, supervisor, site contact, or site contact must reach out to the practicum director. Early communication helps to prevent minor issues from escalating.
- Students are expected to accept verbal or written feedback about skill deficits or conduct issues as part of their professional development.
- If a student feels the relationship with a supervisor, instructor, or site contact has become problematic—or if a supervisor or site contact has concerns about a student—the concerned party should notify the practicum director and any relevant faculty advisors immediately. When both a site supervisor and an external supervisor are involved, both should be informed.

The practicum director will schedule an online meeting—at the earliest convenient time—for all relevant parties (student, supervisor(s), and site contact) to address the concerns and work toward a resolution. If further support is necessary, the practicum director will involve the school's director.

Conflict and its resolution are natural parts of professional life. By working through disagreements in a collegial manner, students build self-awareness and gain valuable experience in conflict resolution—an essential skill for future therapists.

Site Discontinuations, Resignations, and Breaks

Mutual resignation

A practicum placement may end by mutual agreement when both the student and the site determine that the placement is not a good fit. Mutual resignations are not related to ethical, professional, or conduct concerns. Reasons might include mismatched learning styles, a site's inability to provide adequate supervision or hours, or a client population that is too complex for the student's current level of training.

Whenever a mutual resignation is being considered, the student must consult their practicum director and copy them on any communication with the site. The practicum director will review each case to determine whether there are underlying competency issues that need to be addressed.

Student resignation

Students considering ending a placement on their own must contact their practicum director before taking any action. They should not terminate a relationship with a site or supervisor—or start at a new site—until they have discussed their reasons with the director and received approval.

Taking a break

Students who need to take a temporary break from a practicum must first discuss the situation with their site to seek agreement. They should then contact their practicum director to explain the circumstances. With the practicum director's support and approval, a plan can be developed to pause and later resume the placement.

Note: students may not withdraw from a practicum simply to avoid a site-initiated termination; the Department of Practicums reviews all withdrawal requests.

Site discontinuation (termination)

If a site decides to terminate a student's placement—or if a student requests to end a placement unilaterally or by mutual agreement—the student must inform the practicum director within 48 hours and explain the circumstances. Should the site or supervisor report an ethical breach to a third party, they are expected to notify the practicum director as well.

The practicum director will collect written statements from the student, site contact, supervisor, and any other relevant parties. The site will be asked to provide a formal discontinuation letter on agency letterhead, dated and signed, outlining the reasons for the termination. This letter will be shared with the student at the time of notification and will guide any necessary learning plan or additional support.

Leaving a site early

Whether the departure is mutual or unilateral, students who leave a practicum before the agreed-upon end date must:

- Consult with the practicum director.
- Provide written notice to the site and supervisor(s) with reasonable lead time—typically two weeks.
- Work with their supervisor and site to develop a transition plan for clients, complete outstanding paperwork, return equipment or files, and wrap up any remaining responsibilities.

Following these steps ensures that client care is not disrupted and that the student's records remain in good standing with The Create Institute.