

UPDATED

EFPY 805: Practicum in Educational Psychology
Department of Educational Foundations
Faculty of Education
University of Jos
Practicum Placement Guidelines

****If you have already studied the previous guidelines, pay attention to the guidelines in yellow, which are additions to the previous version. Also note the revised guidelines for writing the report.**

Practicum Overview

The purpose of the Practicum Placement is to enable MEd students to conduct an Action Research Study to create a solution to a particular educational problem. This process consists of identifying a problem within the practicum placement, collecting data about that problem, developing an action plan to create a realistic solution to the problem, implementing the action plan, collecting data to evaluate the effectiveness of the problem, and then evaluating whether the solution was effective in addressing the problem.

Ideally, the practicum placement should last for six weeks. The MEd student will be in the practicum placement for six hours each day for four days of the week. This results in a total of 144 hours in the practicum placement (6 hours per day x 4 days per week x 6 weeks). The fifth day is then be dedicated for the time, thought, planning, and research necessary to conduct the action research study.

If, due to the constraints of other coursework, studies, or practical considerations, the practicum must be extended, the student must still complete a total of 144 hours within the practicum placement. However, all hours should be completed within one (1) academic term. If the practicum placement stretches beyond six weeks, then the student should consider that each week would ordinarily be 24 hours of time. Therefore, each “week” for the action research cycle as noted below should last approximately 24 hours.

Each student must complete the attached log of hours for the practicum placement.

Note that Action Research is different from Traditional Research. If you submit a traditional research study, you will fail the class. The Action Research study first identifies a **problem**. That problem should be one specific thing (variable) that is a problem in your practicum classroom. For example, one problem might be latecoming to school. Another problem might be poor engagement. Another problem might be low achievement in Chemistry. Whatever problem you choose, be sure that it is something that you can measure and something that you could change in a short period of time (e.g., about 2 weeks).

Then, through the Action Research process, you will develop a **solution** to a problem and evaluates the solution. The solution must be something that **you** can do given your abilities, time, gifts, and talents.

Finally, in Action Research, you will **evaluate** whether the solution was effective.

General Guidelines for the Action Research Cycle

Week	Activity	Goal
1	Look: Participant Observation	Identify a relevant problem in the placement

2	Think: Gather Information	Collect baseline data on the problem and potential solutions to the problem
3	Think: Create Action Plan	Create a well-designed Action Plan to address the identified problem
4-5	Act: Implement Action Plan	
6	Look: Gather Information	Collect post-intervention data to determine the effectiveness of the problem
	Look: Evaluate Action Plan	Evaluate the effectiveness of the Action Plan via written report

The Final Report will consist of four headers: Look #1, Think, Act, Look #2. Then there is a section at the end for References and an Appendix. When you are writing a report, do **NOT** add a section if it is not given below. For example, your project will NOT need an Introduction.

Each header will have the following sub-headers. Note their criteria and possible points in the final evaluation.

Look #1

Sub-Header	Approximate Length	Criteria	Possible Points
Statement of Problem	2 paragraphs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem is clear • Problem is specific to the practicum placement 	10
Brief Literature Review	1 page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One or two studies related to the problem are reviewed • Theory/concepts related to the problem are explained 	7

Think

Baseline Data	Less than 3 pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific data is presented on the extent of the problem <i>before</i> intervention • Data is clearly explained 	10
Goal of the Intervention	1 sentence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The goal should be measurable. • The goal is directly related to the problem 	5
Factors Contributing to Problem	1 page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results from interviews/focus groups and/or literature review identifies factors that contribute the problem. • Factors are clearly explained. 	10
Action Plan	Less than 3 pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly explains the intervention/solution. • The reader could replicate the intervention/solution based on the information presented in the Action Plan 	15

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Action Plan provides a reasonable way to address the problem based on the identified factors contributing to the problem 	
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Act

Procedure for Intervention	1 page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes who participated in the intervention • States the dates in which the intervention took place • States where the intervention took place • States how long the intervention lasted • Describes the resources (if any) that were needed for the intervention. 	5
Procedure for Evaluation	2 pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes how data was collected to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention. • Instruments for data collection are described. • Participants involved in the data collection are clear. • Procedure for data collection is well described. 	7

Look #2

Evaluation	5 pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents data about the problem after the intervention • An assessment of the effectiveness of the evaluation is clearly stated. Was the intervention successful? Did it meet the goal that was set in the Think stage? • The evaluation was supported by the data collected. • If the intervention was NOT effective, an explanation is given of what might have made the intervention not effective. Suggestions for how the intervention could be improved to make it effective in the future are offered. 	20
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References	1 page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow APA Format 	3
Appendices		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruments for Data Collection are designed to collect relevant data • Lesson plans (if necessary for the Action Plan) are thorough 	8

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any other documentation necessary to understand the Action Plan are complete and thorough 	
		Total	100

Note that the *process* of Action Research is more important than the *product* of an effective intervention. If your intervention is not effective in meeting your goal to improve the problem, that is fine and will not affect your grade in any way. If your intervention is not effective, you simply need to explain why you think it was not effective and what could be done in the future to improve it.

If you have any questions, please email me at katrina.korb@gmail.com

