

PRACTICUM GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

In the context of this document:

MLIS student is “the student”

MLIS Program Coordinator is “the Coordinator”

MLIS Program is “the Program”

Placement Supervisor is “the Supervisor”

Halifax Regional Municipality is “HRM”

- When can I do my Practicum?
- How do I arrange to do a placement?
- Can I contact potential Practicum sites directly to discuss placement feasibility?
- If I want to do my placement in another city, or country, can I?
- How do I apply for the Practicum?
- Do I need to register for the Practicum?
- Do I have to pay for the Practicum?
- What are my responsibilities as a Practicum student?
- Can Extended Work Placements be counted as a Practicum experience?
- What if I’m interested in a Health Sciences library placement in a hospital setting?
- How do I know when I have secured a placement?
- If we complete an unpaid Practicum is the placement site responsible for workers compensation?
- Why is a Practicum placement such a great opportunity?

When can I do my Practicum?



- The practicum may be undertaken only after completion of the first year of the MLIS program (or for part-time students, after completion of at least 6 core courses). The Practicum may be completed during the April – August period or, concurrently with classes during the fall or winter term of the second year.

How do I arrange a Practicum placement?



1. Make an appointment via practicum@dal.ca to meet with the Coordinator during January to discuss your Practicum ideas. **Deadline is February 1st.**

Note: If you are interested in a Health Sciences library placement in a hospital setting you must meet with the Coordinator during the fall term.

2. Apply for the Practicum.

Can I contact potential Practicum sites directly to discuss placement feasibility?



- [Within HRM](#): No.
- Outside HRM: Yes.

If I want to do my placement in another city, or country, can I?



- Yes. Make an appointment to meet with the Coordinator during January to discuss your Practicum ideas.
- Submit your completed Practicum application by the February 1st deadline.
 - With a placement outside HRM, it is the student's responsibility to:
 - Contact prospective placement sites, after the meeting with the MLIS Program Coordinator, to determine feasibility for a placement
 - Advise the Coordinator immediately when a placement has successfully been negotiated and
 - Provide placement contact information.

How do I apply for the Practicum?



Note: All correspondence should be directed to practicum@dal.ca. Your application must be received **one week prior** to your appointment with the Coordinator.

- Submit a current electronic resume and the completed [Practicum Application Form](#) named as follows:

Surname1st initial_Practicum Application [or Resume]_yyyy-mm-dd (date of submission)

(i.e., WatsonJ_Practicum Application_2011-10-15)

Do I need to register for the Practicum?



- Yes. Students must register for INFO 0590 in the term following placement completion. Without course registration, a final grade cannot be logged.

Do I have to pay for the Practicum?



- INFO 0590.00 carries no credit weight; therefore, there are no associated tuition fees.

What are my responsibilities as a Practicum student?



1. Complete all INFO 0590 course requirements by the deadlines.
2. Correspond in a timely, professional manner with all parties involved with the Practicum
3. Determine feasibility and negotiate Practicum placements with potential host organizations outside HRM.
4. Respond in writing, within 3 business days of receipt, to the Coordinator's Notice of Placement confirming willingness to accept the placement.

Note: Acceptance of a proposed placement constitutes a binding contract on the part of the student to undertake the work involved.

5. Acknowledge and agree that :
 - a. You are subject to the policies, procedures, and regulations of the facility where the Practicum placement is completed.
 - b. The facility where the Practicum placement is completed has the right to require the student to leave the facility because of the performance or conduct of the student.
 - c. You have the responsibility to maintain appropriate behaviour while in the facility where the Practicum placement is completed, particularly concerning privacy and confidentiality of records and all other information related to that facility. All such information is confidential and cannot be communicated except as outlined in the policy of the facility. If confidentiality is breached, the penalty may include termination of the Practicum placement.
6. Immediately inform the Coordinator about any concerns that arise during the course of the Practicum placement.

Can Extended Work Placements be counted as a Practicum experience?



- Students who have accumulated 500 hours of continuous employment in an information setting under the supervision of an approved, experienced information professional may apply to use this Extended Work Placement experience for INFO 0590:
 - Pre-Admission Employment Option
 - Pre-Graduation Employment Option
 - Employment acquired throughout the academic year(s), and/or as a summer job
 - Formal Internship Option

Note: These options must be discussed with, and approved by the Coordinator prior to the February 1st deadline.

What if I'm interested in a Health Sciences library placement in a hospital setting?



Note: Immunization and security requirements for work in a hospital setting impose additional responsibilities on students hoping for a placement in a health sciences setting.

- Interested students are asked to make an appointment with the MLIS Program Coordinator immediately following the fall Practicum Information session.
- It is strongly recommended that students interested in this setting begin to satisfy the immunization and security requirements over the December break in order to have formal approval for an April placement. Failure to complete the specified protocols in time will result in a cancelled placement.

How do I know when I have secured a placement?



- As soon as a placement has been confirmed with a placement site, the MLIS Program Coordinator will send a Notice of Placement to the student via email, arranging the initial contact between the student and the supervisor.

If I complete an unpaid Practicum is the placement site responsible for workers compensation?



- According to Dal Legal Counsel, “university students on unpaid placements in Nova Scotia are not eligible for workers’ compensation coverage (either through the placement facility or through Dal). It is the student’s responsibility to obtain their own health and disability insurance coverage in case of a workplace accident”.

Why is a Practicum placement such a great opportunity?



- The Practicum placement experience enables the student to test and evaluate theories discussed in class, to gain experience in an information setting, to refine specific areas of interest, and to explore areas of particular interest for course specialization and future employment. This is accomplished through:
 - Extending studies beyond the classroom to practical, hands-on work experience in an information setting
 - Evaluating and supplementing studies through the comparison of differing perspectives and methodologies;
 - Testing individual performance, problem-solving skills and ideas in the context of a professional environment;
 - Enhancing communication and report writing skills;
 - Making contact with potential employers and future colleagues in the professional community;
 - Providing feedback, via your report, on the Practicum and its relevance which allows SIM’s Curriculum/Continuing Education Committee to continually evaluate and improve INFO 0590.