

Faculté des arts et des sciences
École de bibliothéconomie et des sciences de l'information

Practicum Guide

Maîtrise en sciences de l'information

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de Montréal

Electronic version

<http://www.ebsi.umontreal.ca/stages/stagemsiang.pdf>

This document is a slightly condensed version of the French *Guide de stage*. The translation was made by Isabelle Bourgey, practicum coordinator, with the collaboration of Professor Clément Arsenault

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The practicum, integrated in a graduate studies programme, is an excellent complement to the student curriculum. It involves the following intervening parties: the student, the site supervisor (practicum supervisor) and the faculty coordinator (practicum coordinator).

The professional milieu collaboration with the Library School, École de bibliothéconomie et des sciences de l'information (EBSI) is necessary for practica to exist. The practicum supervisor becomes a partner of the Library School in the student training. He not only supervises and evaluates the student, but he also acts as a mentor, coaching the student along the course of his practicum activities.

The practicum is a required activity for all the students enrolled in the professional options of the EBSI Master's degree. It has a duration of 36 days and is worth 6 credits. It takes place at the end of the programme.

This guide is meant to answer as many questions as possible for all the intervening parties of the practicum.

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Description of the École de bibliothéconomie et des sciences de l'information (EBSI)

The École de bibliothéconomie et des sciences de l'information, School of Library and Information Science, is a professional school created in 1937 as École des bibliothécaires (School of Librarians). Completely restructured in 1961, it was integrated with the Université de Montréal. The school received the ALA accreditation for the first time in 1969, and this accreditation has been subsequently renewed in 1975, 1985, 1992 and 2000.

From 1971 to 1984, the school offered a Master's degree in Librarianship (M.Bibl.). In 1984 the school changed its name to École de bibliothéconomie et des sciences de l'information (EBSI) and the name of the degree changed to Master of Library and Information Science (M.B.S.I.). In 1998, further to the revision of the master's program, the new degree became Master of Information Science (M.S.I.).

Since 1983 the school has also offered an undergraduate certificate in records management and archival studies, consisting of 10 courses for a total of 30 credits. For this program, the Université de Montréal grants the diploma of Certificate in archival studies (= Certificat en archivistique).

Since 1997, the School offers a doctoral programme (Ph.D.) in information science.

And finally, since 2001, the School also offers an undergraduate certificate in digital information management, consisting of 10 courses for a total of 30 credits. For this program, the Université de Montréal grants the diploma of Certificate in digital information management (= Certificat en gestion de l'information numérique).

The school's mission, in accordance with, and within the context of, the overall mission of the Université de Montréal, is to:

- educate professionals and researchers in the management of recorded information and knowledge, in order to optimize their transfer and use in society;
- contribute to the advancement of information-management-related knowledge and practices through its research activities at the national and international levels.

Description of the Master's Degree (MSI)

The MSI is a 51-credit programme. It is usually completed in two years (full time).

The overall goal of the MSI programme is to educate information management specialists demonstrating the competencies, attitudes, and sense of responsibilities generally associated with the information management professions.

The MSI programme includes required core courses and offers a professional stream, an international stream and a research stream.

Structure of the Programme

Core courses (required) (18 credits)		
PROFESSIONAL STREAM	INTERNATIONAL STREAM	RESEARCH STREAM
elective courses (27 crédits) OR elective courses (21 credits) + directed research (6 credits)	elective courses (6 credits) + required courses* (21 credits)	elective courses (12 credits) + thesis (21 credits) OR elective courses (6 credits) + thesis (21 credits) + practicum (6 credits)
practicum (6 credits)	practicum** (6 credits)	

* Courses offered at HEG-ID, Geneva (Switzerland).

** In the international stream, the practicum takes place in Switzerland and is coordinated by HEG-ID.

More detailed information on the MSI programme can be found in French at:
<http://www.ebsi.umontreal.ca/prog/index.html>

The Practicum in the MSI programme

Definition

The practicum is a practical learning experience offered to every student enrolled in the professional orientation of the MSI degree at the end of his second year. It takes place in the workplace.

MSI Practicum Policy

Required Activity

The practicum is a required activity (6 credits, SCI 6865) for all the students enrolled in the professional orientation.

Eligibility

Before a student can enroll in the practicum, the following requirements have to be met:

- All the core courses must be successfully completed (6 courses, 18 credits)
- A total of 39 credited (including the 18 credits of the core courses) must be successfully completed.

Duration and Pace

The practicum has a duration of 36 working days, including one meeting at the Library School.

The student can either do his practicum during the Winter Semester (January to April) at a minimum pace of three days per week, or he can do it during the Spring Semester (May and June), five days per week.

Schedule and Non-attendance

The student must comply with the practicum site work schedule, as long as the effective working day does not exceed 7.5 hours of work (excluding lunch and breaks). If the regular schedule exceeds 7.5 hours of work per day, there should be a special agreement between the site supervisor, the practicum coordinator and the student to lessen the total number of days of the practicum.

Non-working days do not count in the 36 days of the practicum.

The School recommends that the students participate in professional conferences or seminars that could take place during their practicum. But if they do, those days cannot be counted in their practicum schedule.

The student must report all non-attendances from the practicum to the supervisor and the coordinator. Subsequently, the student will have to add days to his practicum calendar or add extra hours at the end of the day, with the agreement of the supervisor.

The supervisor cannot ask the student to do overtime that would not be accounted for in his schedule (extra research or reading, for instance). If this is needed for the practicum project, all the hours spent by the student on the project, whether on site or outside the institution (university library, computer lab, home reading or writing, for instance) will be accounted for in the

practicum calendar. The student needs to obtain his practicum supervisor agreement for those modifications.

Remuneration

The practicum student is not paid by the institution where his practicum takes place. This applies to every student without any exception.

Insurance

The practicum students are covered by the Université de Montréal insurance policy for general civil responsibility. The file number at the Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CSST) of Québec is 239002A8.

Practicum Sites

The practicum takes place in organisations that need information management professionals. The School takes all available measures to ensure confidentiality of information during the practicum.

Supervision

The site supervisor must be a professional in information management and preferably detain a master's degree in information science or an equivalent degree. If the organisation cannot provide such a professional, the School practicum coordinator can act as practicum co-supervisor with a School professor. Someone within the organisation must be available to the student on-site for the duration of the practicum.

Student Assessment

The site supervisor is responsible of assessing the student professional competencies and personal qualities using the *Student assessment form* (see Appendix 1). This evaluation accounts for 40% of the final grade of the student. The School is responsible for the remaining 60% of the evaluation.

Type of Activities

Activities of the practicum student must be of a professional level and related to his option (Records Management and Archives, Library Studies, Electronic Information Management, Strategic Information Management). The student can either participate in the day-to-day activities of the site, work on a special project or a combination of both.

Work Conditions

The practicum site must provide appropriate working conditions and all the professional tools needed by the student in accordance to the practicum project.

Practicum Student Placing and Recruiting

The placing process starts at the beginning of the Fall Semester, for both Winter and Spring practica. Institutions interested in recruiting a practicum student should therefore contact the practicum coordinators during or before the fall semester.

Visa for International Students

In Canada, any practicum, paid or not, is considered a job by Immigration and Citizenship Canada. Students are responsible for taking all appropriate legal, notably applying for a visa.

Exemption from Practicum

A student can ask for an exemption from the required practicum if he already has at least six months of professional experience in a variety of functions, acquired in the past three years. See the practicum coordinator for further details.

Pedagogical Objectives of the Practicum

General Objectives

The practicum should allow each student to:

- link his theoretical knowledge to a practical experience
- develop his professional competencies
- develop his personal qualities
- define his professional preferences
- have an overview of variety of workplaces

Personal Learning Objectives

The site supervisor and the student work out a practicum agreement together. Based on this agreement, the student must draft personal learning objectives related to the activities planned for the practicum and indicated in the agreement. Those objectives must fall within three categories: theoretical knowledge, practical knowledge and skills and personal qualities. Those personal learning objectives are confidential and handed over to the coordinator only.

Practicum Agreement

The practicum agreement (see Appendix 3, *Practicum Agreement form*) is a detailed description of the practicum activities. It is the learning contract between the site supervisor, the student and the practicum coordinator.

An approximate time of execution must be allotted to all listed activities. This information is indicative only. It allows the three parties (site supervisor, student and practicum coordinator) to assess the relative importance of each activity. All three parties must sign the agreement. The original document stays in the student's file in the practicum coordinator's office.

The practicum calendar must include a welcoming phase (introduction to colleagues, site and policies of the organisation) and a training period where the student can familiarised himself with the organisation tools and practices.

The practicum agreement can be modified during the practicum as long as the three parties agree on the changes, especially if the changes include extra activities that are not related to the student option.

Evaluation

During his curriculum, the student is evaluated on his theoretical knowledge (exams, research projects) and on his practical knowledge (case studies, labs, etc.). During his practicum, apart from his professional competencies, the student is also evaluated on his personal qualities.

Evaluation by the Site Supervisor

As the person in charge of the student in the organisation, the role of the site supervisor is very important in the practicum. He helps the student acquire field experience and build confidence in his professional competencies. The practicum may be the first professional experience of the student. It is important to remember that the practicum is still a learning experience for the student. Best effort and growth are expected more than proficiency. Frequent discussions on the “how tos” but especially the “whys” of professional practice and decisions are extremely valuable for the student. Regular meetings with the student to discuss his worries and accomplishments will help him improve and reach his learning objectives.

Mid-course Evaluation

The supervisor proceeds with a formative evaluation of the student at mid-course of the practicum. This evaluation is informative and will not be accounted for in the final grade of the student. The purpose is to detect problems and make necessary adjustments in due time. This gives the student a chance to improve before the final evaluation. The supervisor and the student can discuss all the items on the final evaluation form (see Appendix 1).

Final On-site Evaluation

The final evaluation by the site supervisor is formal and accounts for 40% of the final grade of the student. The supervisor uses the *School Student assessment form* (see Appendix 1). This form includes criteria for assessing professional competencies and personal qualities. While filling it, the supervisor should take into account the progress made since the mid-course evaluation. The student is responsible for acknowledging the evaluation and handing the form over to the practicum coordinator. This assessment accounts for 40% of the final grade of the student.

Evaluation by the Library School

The School evaluation accounts for the remaining 60% of the final grade of the student. The assessment tools are the journal, the practicum report and the practicum meeting.

Journal

The student journal contains the description of the activities and reflections on the students learning objectives. It indicates the progress made by the student as he goes along his practicum.

The journal is handed over to the practicum coordinator.

Practicum Report

The practicum report is composed of a summary of the main activities and a synthesis of the level of learning attained by the student.

The practicum report is handed over to the practicum coordinator and the site supervisor.

Practicum Meeting

Meetings of six to eight practicum students are called by the practicum coordinator in the middle of the practicum. Each student gives an oral presentation of his practicum site and his project.

The students whose practicum does not take place in the greater Montréal area are exempted from attending the practicum meeting. In lieu of the meeting, they have to hand over a brief mi-course report describing their practicum site and their project.

Grading

Below is the grading scale used at EBSI, as voted by the departmental assembly, in conformity with the Université de Montréal by-laws for graduate studies.

LETTER	DESCRIPTION	POINTS
A+	Excellent	4.3
A		4.0
A-		3.7
B+	Good	3.3
B		3.0
B-		2.7
C+	Fair	2.3
C		2.0 ¹
C-	Failure	1.7
D+		1.3
D	Failure	1.0
E		0.5
F	0.0	

Grade A+	excellent, above expectations
Grade A	excellent, exactly as expected
Grade B	as expected with minor corrections
Grade C	globally acceptable with errors
Grade D	half what is expected, with major errors
Grade E	Not meeting minimal expectations
Grade F	Not handed over or plagiarism

Due dates

The practicum coordinators decide of the due date for practicum documents (journal and report) and assessment form and inform the students, in writing at the beginning of the semester. The students are responsible of meeting that deadline.

In case of delay, the following penalties are applied:

- First week of delay: 5% for each day of delay for each document, to a maximum of 35%
- On the eighth calendar day: grade F (failure) or zero

¹ Minimal passing grade for graduate students.

To obtain a delay, a student must ask the coordinator for a written permission before the due date. If the coordinator grants the permission, she must advise the student and the School administration. The delay cannot exceed three months after the end of the semester.

Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

STEPS	PRACTICUM COORDINATORS	PRACTICUM STUDENTS	SITE SUPERVISORS
PRACTICUM PLANNING	Call meeting #1 and distribute the practicum policy	Attend meeting #1 (general information on practicum)	Read the <i>Practicum Guide</i>
	Look for practicum sites and projects	Read the <i>Practicum Guide</i>	Obtain authorisation to recruit a practicum student and make sure their organisation can provide appropriate working conditions
	Check for the quality of the supervision offered	Think about their expectations for their practicum	Plan time for the supervision
	Meet the students individually	Meet the coordinator with their résumé	Contact the coordinator with a description of their project
	Look for specific projects according to the students interests		
	Pair students to a supervisor and inform them	Contact their supervisor	
	Answer questions and concerns from students and supervisors	Discuss the supervisor's expectations and their own	Present the project to the student (activities, calendar, expectations), describe the level of supervision available
		Sign the practicum agreement and hand it over to the coordinator	Fill in the Practicum Agreement Form, including the description of activities
	Sign the practicum agreement		Sign the agreement and hand it to the student
	Meet the students and explain the unfolding of the practicum and the assessment methods	Attend the meeting #2 (unfolding of the practicum and assessment methods)	
	Find out information about their practicum site		

Appendices

1. Student Assessment Form
2. Practicum Agreement Form
3. Approval of the Presentation Outline Form

STUDENT ASSESSMENT FORM
BY THE SITE SUPERVISOR
EBSI – SCI 6865

Name of the student: _____		Option: _____	
Practicum Semester: 20__	FALL <input type="checkbox"/>	WINTER <input type="checkbox"/>	SPRING <input type="checkbox"/>
Name of the site supervisor: _____			
Practicum Site: _____			
Title: _____			
Phone: _____		Email: _____	

This evaluation counts for 40% of the final grade of the practicum. Please, indicate your assessment for each item on the list by checking the appropriate box. Do not hesitate to weight your grading using plus (+) or minus (-) signs.

A+ to A-	B+ to B-	C+ to C	C- to F	N/A
Excellent	Good	Fair	Failure	Not relevant

Professional competencies:

The practicum student:	A	B	C	Failure	N/A
• masters the basic knowledge and skills of information science (tools, methods, techniques, operations)					
• masters information technologies					
• is aware of the special characteristics of the milieu					
• understands the organisational culture of the site					
• has an appropriate cultural background for the practicum project					
• easily applies his knowledge to his practicum activities					
• is capable of thinking out a problem (ability to size up a situation and take appropriate action)					
• is able to present a clear argumentation of his opinion					
• plans his work and organises his time effectively					
• produces useful work in accordance to the organisation goals					
• validates his work methods					
• produces quality work					
• shows professionalism in his work					



PRACTICUM AGREEMENT FORM EBSI - SCI 6865

Address of the student during the practicum

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Phone: _____ Email: _____

Option:

Library Studies	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategic Information Management	<input type="checkbox"/>
Records Management and Archives	<input type="checkbox"/>	Electronic Information Management	<input type="checkbox"/>

Practicum Organisation

Name: _____
 Department: _____

Civic Address: _____
 City: _____ Province: _____ Postal code: _____

Postal address (if different): _____
 City: _____ Province: _____ Postal code: _____

Practicum Supervisor:

Name: _____
 Title: _____
 Phone: _____ Fax: _____
 Email: _____

Practicum Planning

Semester 20__ FALL WINTER SPRING

The practicum is 36 days long including two half-day at EBSI. It is not a paid practicum.

Starting date _____ Ending date _____

Practicum days _____ Particularities:

M Tu W Th F

Number of hours per day: _____

* excluding lunch and breaks, min 6h30, max 7h30

PRACTICUM AGREEMENT FORM (cont'd)
SCI 6865

Summary of the practicum project

Indicate all activities and time allotted for each (either in hours, days or percentage of the practicum total activities)

ACTIVITIES

- WELCOMING PERIOD

- TRAINING PERIOD

Ethics code applicable: AAQ CBPQ SCIP Other : _____
Will the student sign a confidentiality agreement? yes no

Signatures

Student _____ *Date* _____
Practicum supervisor _____ *Date* _____
Practicum coordinator _____ *Date* _____



**APPROVAL OF THE PRESENTATION OUTLINE FORM
FOR THE MID-COURSE MEETING
EBSI – SCI 6865**

Date of the presentation _____

Name of the student: _____ Option: _____	
Practicum Period: Year 20____ Semester FALL <input type="checkbox"/> WINTER <input type="checkbox"/> SPRING <input type="checkbox"/>	
Name of the site supervisor: _____	
Title: _____	
Practicum Site: _____	
Phone: _____	Email: _____

The student must get his supervisor's approval for the outline of his mid-course meeting oral presentation. The supervisor must check that the presentation contains no confidential information and that its content is accurate.

The **supervisor must sign (initials only) each page of the outline** of the oral presentation. This outline must be attached to the present form. Those two documents are required for the student to make his presentation.

I agree that the student named above disclose the information indicated in the included outline during his mid-course meeting presentation.

Signature of the supervisor

Date

I commit myself to follow the included outline for my mid-course meeting presentation.

Signature of the student

Date