



Bachelor of Applied Ecotourism and Outdoor Leadership Bachelor of Applied Business and Entrepreneurship Sport and Recreation

Frequently Asked Questions

Why a Practicum?

Industry Placements or Practicum, as they are commonly known, are designed to be part of the process through which students apply the knowledge they acquire in course work to real world scenarios. They give practical experience in the workplace that supports the academic program. It provides invaluable experience, knowledge and contacts and can help identify career directions. For students who don't have work experience, it offers a chance to develop a work ethic and to find out what it is like to be in the workplace. It is also a compulsory component of both applied degrees for students in both the second and third years of their programs.

When does a Practicum start and how long do they continue for?

Winter Placements will generally start any time from beginning January till end of April. Spring/Summer Placements will generally start any time from late April through to the end of August. But starting times are flexible based on the needs of the agency and the schedule of the student. The first placement requires the student to complete 175 hours of work experience and the second placement requires the completion of 450 hours of work experience. Generally, the placement should be finished by the start of the next academic semester (September), but this too is negotiable if the Agency requires a different time scale.

How do we choose where students will be placed?

We do our best to match student interests with Agencies. All Placements have to be approved by the relevant Program Coordinator, prior to commencement of the placement. An Agency is not obligated to have a nominated student and is encouraged to meet and interview the student prior to the commencement of the placement.

What is a Student Learning Contract?

A contract is drawn up between Mount Royal University, the Practicum Agency and the student outlining dates, learning objectives, vision and mission statements of the Agency and duties involved with the placement. The contract **MUST** be signed by ALL parties **before** placement begins. The contract ensures the student is covered by Mount Royal University Insurance whilst undertaking their Practicum Placement, as it is a designated component of their curriculum. The purpose of the contract is to protect the interest of all parties – the student, Practicum Agency and Mount Royal University.

Why do students do a practicum?

The Practicum complements the students' main academic programs, and provides them with a practical opportunity to put their studies into context. It prepares students for the future by enabling them (as appropriate) to:

- apply skills and knowledge already acquired in their course;
- acquire new theoretical and practical skills;
- appreciate the responsibilities, roles, attitudes, values, priorities, judgement and work methods of practitioners in industry;
- participate as a member of a team, and understand the roles and contributions of all members of that team;
- further develop their own professional attitudes, and reconcile the obligations, responsibilities and actions of practitioners with their own value;
- develop an empathy with, understanding of and relevant experience in the day to day issues found in the Ecotourism, Outdoor, Sport and Rec Industries;
- foster an appropriate work ethic during the course of the Practicum.

What do Industry Partners get out of a placement?

The program can benefit the Practicum or Placement Agency by:

- valuable contributions made by the students to a variety of projects;
- recognition by enterprises of their role in the education and development of the next generation of key staff members
- access to students who possess skills not present within the company;
- an opportunity to reflect on their own work practices;
- the opportunity to preview prospective employees;
- the opportunity to initiate and undertake collaborative research and development projects with students

What makes a placement work well?

From an Agency's perspective a placement works well when a student feels comfortable and safe in their workplace and is able to contribute to the organization.

Expectations should be made clear at the initial interview including dress standards; work attendance; and clear project outlines (if a project is to be completed). A student should be provided a thorough orientation to the workplace. It is also helpful that other staff is aware of the student and the role they are to play.

Inclusion of students in all aspects of the work environment including meetings is highly valued.

We ask students to act in a professional manner, to show initiative, be willing to do a variety of jobs from the mundane to the exciting. We have been very rarely disappointed.

All work (or the majority thereof) must be completed at the providers worksite or designated location, if this is not to be the case please contact Lori Gray or Gisele Marcoux as soon as possible

What about costs?

Students have the option of doing an unpaid or a paid practicum therefore postings with no remuneration may not successfully be filled. Creative ways to make a placement more affordable such as assistance with accommodation (e.g. billeting, reduced rates, and subsidies) are encouraged.

Who to ask about what?

Lori Gray and Gisele Marcoux are the Practicum Coordinators who manage the Industry Practicum process. They should also be contacted if there are any problems or issues with the student and/or placement. If you have questions about opportunities or arrangements for a placing, timing and so on, please contact either person via email physedinfo@mtroyal.ca or by phone at 403.440.6500.

Practicum Coordinator

The Practicum Coordinator is the academic person responsible for assisting students to obtain an appropriate placement and ensuring compliance with all administrative policies and procedures. The Practicum Coordinator will support both the student and the agency for the duration of the placement. The contact information can be found in the previous paragraph.

Practicum Agency

The Practicum Agency is the company, enterprise, employer or organization providing the industry placement and practicum experience. The Practicum Agency will support the students in a supervisory and mentorship capacity.

Practicum Instructor

The Practicum Instructor is the Faculty member responsible for assigning students and evaluating their experience for the duration of the placement. The Practicum Instructor will support the students in an academic and leadership capacity. Sarah Brown can be reached via email sebrown@mtroyal.ca or by phone at 587.333.7150 (Calgary number).