



## **ASSESSMENT OF MEDIATION PRACTICUMS: CIVIL AND FAMILY**

The B.C. Mediator Roster Society's acceptance of applicants for admission to the Roster is based, in part, on an assessment of the applicant's mediation experience. The experience may include completion of mediations in a fully supervised and accepted practicum as sole mediator or as co-mediator.

The Society's assessment of what constitutes an "accepted" mediation practicum is based on a view of mediation that is pluralistic: interest-based, evaluative, transformative and other dispute resolution values and philosophies are all recognized by the Society. The assessment is criteria-based, and practicums are examined for the degree to which they provide a balance and blend related to the skills, attitudes and other attributes required for competent mediation practice in the context of civil or family disputes. Central to the Society's belief is that the quality of training is integral to the quality of a practicum.

In assessing practicums, the Society will conduct a two-part review:

- 1) All of the criteria in the attached document, "Criteria for Assessment of Practicums: Civil and Family", will be reviewed to ensure that delivery of the practicum adheres to these standards for content, quality, educational/training standards, evaluation, documentation and verifiability of a knowledge/skills balance.
- 2) A review of the site at which the practicum is being offered will be conducted. The site review may include a request for access to non-confidential records and interviews with various clients, instructors or mentors involved in the practicum.

The criteria are used by the Society primarily as guidelines that portray an ideal. The Society's decision as to whether it will admit an applicant will be based, in part, on the overall strength of the practicum completed. The criteria are used to weigh the practicum on all its merits, with no particular criterion necessarily being essential in itself.

The Society's assessment of a practicum will be premised on the assumption that it is consistent over time and the number of offerings. Changes in objectives, content, mentors, and other components may affect the Society's assessment of a practicum and the Society may, as a result, withdraw its acceptance of the practicum.



## CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT OF PRACTICUMS: FAMILY AND CIVIL

### 1. Practicum Description / Overview

- i) The practicum description (*100-150 words*) provides general information about:
  - the organization or sponsor offering the practicum
  - structure, location, duration and content of the practicum, including number and type of mediations to be completed by students (*e.g., family, small claims*)
  - intended target group(s): type of students, client groups, and cases to be mediated
  - overall purpose of the practicum
  - training and supervision methods
- ii) The practicum overview clearly identifies and states:
  - the dispute resolution approach/philosophy
  - practicum objectives
  - methods of training and supervising students
  - methods of training and supervising mentors
  - qualifications and responsibilities of supervisor(s) and mentor(s)
  - materials provided to the students
  - level (*e.g., beginning, intermediate, advanced*) including the method by which it is ensured that students have the necessary entry level skills for the practicum
  - responsibilities of students
  - the number of mediations completed by practicum students as: i) as co-mediator in a non-lead or non-primary role; ii) co-mediator in a lead or primary role; iii) sole mediator
  - the nature of the mediations conducted in the practicum, including: i) typical number of sessions conducted in each mediation case, ii) length of each typical mediation session, and iii) types of cases mediated
  - prerequisites for admission to the practicum
  - duration (*i.e., number of instructional hours and hours of actual mediation work*)
  - logistics, administration and scheduling of mediations
  - methods of student assessment (*e.g., self-assessment or mentor; oral or written feedback*)
  - requirements for completion of the practicum
  - standards of conduct to be adhered to
  - features of facility where practicum is to be held

### 2. Dispute Resolution Approach / Philosophy

- i) The practicum's values and philosophy are:
  - stated (*e.g., interest-based, evaluative, transformative*)
  - defined and adequately explained
  - contrasted with other main approaches to dispute resolution, which are also defined and explained
- ii) Value-oriented goals for dispute resolution are articulated (*e.g., social justice, settlement, social transformation, party self-determination*)

### 3. Practicum Objectives

- i) The practicum objectives are:
  - clear, focused, coherent and stated in objective terms
  - articulated in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes or other attributes of conflict resolvers
  - related to the practicum's philosophy
- ii) The means by which the objectives were identified and selected is stated (*e.g., conflict resolution literature review, client or other needs assessment, statutory requirement, new research in the field*)
- iii) Objectives for behavioral outcomes are informed by the knowledge, skills, attitudes or other attributes of persons required to perform the tasks of a conflict resolver or mediator

### 4. Standards of Conduct

- i) The standards of conduct are:
  - clearly articulated and reflect standards currently accepted in the field of conflict resolution
  - relevant and appropriate for the practicum

### 5. Content: Theoretical and Mediation Practice Components

#### Theoretical Component (Body of knowledge, concepts):

- i) The practicum integrates conflict resolution theory with the practicum philosophy, objectives and skills practice component
- ii) The policy regarding screening for violence and abuse in family cases is clearly articulated and presented to students

#### Mediation Skills Practice Component:

- i) The mediation skills practice component relates to the practicum philosophy, theoretical content, and objectives
- ii) The skills to be acquired, and the means by which they are taught are specified and appropriate (*e.g., demonstration, role play<sup>2</sup>*)
- iii) The mentor(s)' and student's roles and responsibilities in the practice component is appropriate and clearly articulated
- iv) The sequencing of skill-building is appropriate
- v) Sufficient time is allowed for:
  - self-reflection about the skills being taught
  - feedback
  - assessment of skill acquisition
  - skill-building (*e.g., progressing from co-mediator in non-lead role to co-mediator in lead role*)

- vi) Mediation skills practice in all phases of the mediation process is offered
- vii) The practice component includes practice in screening for violence and abuse in family cases

## 6. Practicum Materials

- i) Students are provided with written materials that include information about:
  - how practicum materials are to be used
  - additional information resources (*e.g., relevant reference books, websites*)
  - origin of the materials
  - when the students receive the materials (*e.g., in advance, the first day or during the practicum*)
- ii) Materials are:
  - clear, focused, coherent, complete and current
  - comprehensible as stand-alone materials (i.e., materials are understandable by a reader without the presence of a trainer)
  - adequate to meet practicum objectives
  - referenced to practicum content
  - logical in sequence
- iii) The agenda/outline for training or orientation sessions for the student includes a written outline which relates to the objectives of the practicum
- iv) The agenda/outline allows for sufficient time to cover the practicum objectives

## 7. Qualifications: Students, Practicum Supervisors and Mentors

### Students:

- i) The students' entry-level qualifications are relevant and current
- ii) The method by which it is ensured that students have the necessary entry level skills is articulated (*e.g., student self-selection according to published criteria, pre-registration questionnaire, pre-registration interview*)
- iii) Students have adequate and appropriate professional liability insurance

### Supervisor Qualifications:

- i) The supervisors' qualifications are relevant, current<sup>3</sup> and documented
- ii) The supervisor(s) meet(s) all of the criteria established for mentors (outlined below) and, in addition, meets the following minimum criteria:
  - the supervisor has received extensive training in conflict resolution and possesses a solid knowledge base of current conflict resolution philosophy and skill relevant to the course content
  - the supervisor has received extensive training in mediation and possesses a solid knowledge base of mediation philosophy and skill, specifically in the practice area which is the focus for the practicum (*e.g., family, small claims*)

- the supervisor has substantial experience in adult education
- the supervisor has demonstrated skill in:
  - using the principles of adult education, and
  - delivering the content of the practicum in question (including theoretical, philosophical, experiential and practical components)
- the supervisor has demonstrated an instructional style which is facilitative, interactive, non-defensive, assertive, empathic and otherwise supportive of a positive learning environment.
- the supervisor is able to demonstrate the skills relevant to the practicum
- the supervisor has significant recent practice experience<sup>4</sup> as a mediator and is able to demonstrate the skills of mediation, specifically in the practice area which is the focus for the practicum
- the supervisor has demonstrated a commitment to ongoing professional development<sup>5</sup> and is familiar with current research and theory

Mentor Qualifications:

- i) Mentors' qualifications are relevant, current<sup>3</sup> and documented
- ii) Mentor(s) meet(s) the following minimum criteria:
  - the mentor is an experienced<sup>4</sup> dispute resolution practitioner, with knowledge, skills and current practical experience in mediation, specifically in the practice area which is the focus of the practicum.
  - the mentor is familiar with the practicum, including the objectives, philosophy, overview and agenda.
  - the mentor's activities conform to the definition of "mentoring"<sup>1</sup>
- iii) Mentors have adequate and appropriate professional liability insurance

## 8. Methods of Training and Supervising Practicum Students

- i) The training methods for various components of the practicum are identified (*e.g., demonstration, discussion, pre-readings*)
- ii) The stated training methods are clear, focused, coherent and related to the practicum's philosophy and objectives
- iii) The training methods accommodate the variety of adult learning styles
- iv) The training methods allow for interaction and reflection
- v) The pacing and sequencing are suited to the students and the context within which they will be utilizing the theoretical content and skills
- vi) Sufficient time is allowed for reviewing, summarizing and integrating the theoretical content and skills

## 9. Evaluation Methods

Practicum Evaluation:

- i) The practicum is evaluated

- ii) The evaluation of the practicum is based on its objectives
- iii) The methods of evaluation are specified (*e.g., supervisor, student, mentor, external evaluator*)
- iv) Practicum evaluation includes evaluation by students and clients
- v) Evaluations are reviewed by the supervisor and sponsoring organization and are used for ongoing practicum improvement or development

Student Evaluation:

- i) Student learning is assessed and progress is documented
- ii) The methods of learning assessment are specified (*e.g., by self, mentor, peer, client*)
- iii) Methods of feedback to students are specified (*e.g., written*)
- iv) Methods of student self-assessment are specified (*e.g., checklist, documentation of progress, written reflection*)

Supervisor and Mentor Evaluation:

- i) Supervisor and mentor performance are evaluated and documented
- ii) Methods of evaluating supervisors and mentors are specified (*e.g., by students, mentors, peers, external evaluator, self*)
- iii) Evaluations are reviewed by the practicum sponsor, and are used for maintaining and improving the content and quality of training

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## **10. Practicum Facility**

- i) The facility at which the practicum is being offered is clearly described
- ii) The facility is insured adequately and appropriately (*i.e., public liability insurance*)

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## **11. Practicum History**

- i) The organization or sponsor offering the practicum is an established, credible entity with a documented history
- ii) Specific dates, locations and supervisors/mentors are documented
- iii) In the event of one-time practicum offerings, the dates, locations, supervisors/mentors and sponsors of similar practicums (if any) are documented
- iv) The practicum's acceptability has been demonstrated by student evaluations; in particular, the evaluations document that practicum objectives and content match the agenda/outline

- v) The mentor(s)' acceptability has been demonstrated by student evaluations. In the event of one-time offerings or new mentors, mentor acceptability is otherwise documented.
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<sup>1</sup> "Mentoring", as defined by the Society, involves more than supervision. It is informed and structured feedback, with the feedback being related to the stated learning objectives. The feedback is learner-centered, and facilitative and educative, rather than directive and critically analytical. The mentor engages in the mediation with the student and acts as mediator, co-mediator and/or observer. The mentor is focused on behaviors: incidents are observed objectively, skills focused on, and students asked "why".

<sup>2</sup> "Role play" means any mock mediation practice session in which participants are coached or otherwise directly supervised.

<sup>3</sup> "Current" means received training or has been an active trainer in conflict resolution and mediation knowledge and skills in the past five years, attends annual professional development courses and, in the case of mediation training, has practised mediation for at least 30 hours per year over the past five years.

<sup>4</sup> "Experienced" means has practiced mediation for at least 30 hours per year in the last five years.

<sup>5</sup> Has attended or taught professional development courses for at least 20 hours each year.