

ABA Program
University of Memphis
FAQ -- STARTING YOUR SUPERVISED EXPERIENCE!

- 1 **Will the university arrange a practicum placement for me, or do I need to find my own placement?** You can find your own placement, or we can give you several placement options.
- 2 **Who can be my supervisor?** Your supervisor needs to be a BCBA who works at your placement site and needs to have done the 8-hour supervision training required by the BACB. Your supervisor cannot be a relative, a friend, or your employee.
- 3 **Do I have to pay for my supervised experience?** No. Your supervisor cannot charge you, as you are getting supervision hours as part of a practicum.
- 4 **Will I get paid for the hours I work at my practicum placement?** Some placements offer full time or part time positions. In this case you will be working in the field while also accruing supervised experience hours. However, you can also volunteer some hours and have a more flexible schedule.
- 5 **Do I need to have an RBT credential to start my supervised experience?** You don't need to be an RBT to start your supervised experience. However, some placements will require the credential to hire you. If this is the case, site supervisors usually help you through the process of obtaining the RBT credential.
- 6 **How many hours of supervised experience will I need to complete?** You are going to need around 25 experience hours per week. *This does not mean that you must be at your practicum placement 25 hours per week.* Hours of supervised experience may include implementation of behavior analytic programs (also called restricted activities), and other behavior analytic activities such as designing and planning programs, analyzing data, researching relevant literature, supervision meetings, and others (also called unrestricted activities). There is no limit in the number of hours spent in unrestricted activities. However, restricted activities cannot exceed 50% of your total experience hours. Your supervised experience hours will be logged in the required forms each month.
- 7 **What is a supervisory period?** This is the time frame in which you will be required to log your supervised experience hours, including supervision meetings. Each supervisory period is one month.
- 8 **What activities count as supervised experience?** Activities related to your behavior analytic training that facilitate the delivery of high-quality services, including:
 - a. Delivery of therapeutic or instructional procedures to clients (restricted: cannot be more than 50% of your total experience hours): one-on-one implementation of ABA procedures.
 - b. Observation and data collection (unrestricted)
 - c. Training staff and caregivers (unrestricted)
 - d. Conducting assessments related to behavior analytic intervention (unrestricted)
 - e. Meeting with clients about behavior analytic programs or services (unrestricted)
 - f. Data graphing and data analysis (unrestricted)
 - g. Researching the literature relevant to a client's programming (unrestricted)

- h. Writing and revising behavior analytic programs (unrestricted)
- 9 **What is the role of my supervisor?** Your site supervisor and your practicum instructor will guide your practicum experience. They will provide opportunities that will allow you to practice and strengthen the skills you will need as a BCBA and provide you with feedback about your performance.
- 10 **How often do I need to meet with my supervisor?** You will need to meet with your site supervisor at least 4 times per month. In addition, your supervisor will need to observe your implementation of behavior analytic activities, and give you feedback on your performance at least 4 times per month. These meetings and observation/feedback sessions are included in your total monthly experience hours. The amount of time that you and your supervisor spend in meetings and observations will be decided between you and your supervisor. However, you and your supervisor will need to meet for 7.5% of your experience hours per month. This 7.5% can include both observations and meetings. It is the total amount of time that you are with your supervisor receiving guidance and supervision. You can also count your practicum class as group supervision. Keep in mind that group supervision cannot be more than half of the supervision hours per month.
- 11 **How will my practicum class be related to my supervised experience?** In your practicum class, you will be working on assignments related to the application of behavior analytic procedures at your practicum placement as well as contacting the recent behavior analytic literature regarding specific evidence-based interventions. This is also an opportunity to share your concerns, difficulties, and overall learning experiences with the group. Your practicum instructor will be in contact with your on-site supervisor to follow up on your progress. As stated in # 9 above, your practicum class counts as group supervision.
- 12 **Do I need to stay in the same practicum site during my whole supervised experience?** No. You can change practicum sites at the end of the semester. The BACB recommends that you experience different areas of application, and that you work with different populations.
- 13 **Can I have two practicum placements in one semester?** Yes. You can have two practicum sites and two supervisors. You would be splitting your hours between the two, so you would have to be very organized with your documentation forms. You will have two different sets of forms to be signed by each supervisor. If supervision hours are split among supervisors, when combined, they will need to meet the requirements for each supervisory period (one month).
- 14 **What is the maximum number of hours I can accrue per supervisory period?** You cannot accrue more than 130 hours per month.

Summary of Requirements for your Practicum Supervised Experience

Total number of experience hours required	1000
Experience hours per supervisory period (month)	Min: 90h – Max: 130h
Experience hours per week	Avg 25 h
Minimum number of supervisor-trainee contacts per month	4
Minimum number of observations of trainee with client per month	4
Number of supervision and/or observation hours per month	7.5% of the hours logged in a supervisory period (per month)

SOME EXAMPLES

1. Consider a student who is volunteering at their practicum site. The student plans to attend between 4 and 5 hours per week. Some of those hours may be spent in direct implementation of programs (see restricted hours), and the rest, whether at the site or outside, can be spent in other behavior analytic activities (unrestricted hours).

Weeks	Time at the site	Restricted hours	Unrestricted hours (on or off site)	Total hours
1	4 hours	4	20	24
2	4 hours	3	18	21
3	4 hours	0	18	18
4	4 hours	2	18	20
Experience hours per month		9	74	83
Hours of supervision (group & individual)				7
TOTAL HOURS PER MONTH				90

Hours of supervision: In this case, 6.75 of the 90 hours accrued in one month (7.5%) should be spent in supervision and guidance. These hours will be split between group supervision (practicum class) and individual supervision (meetings and observations with the on-site supervisor).

Group supervision (practicum class): 4 hours per month

Individual supervision: 2.75 hours per month (4 meetings and 4 observation sessions). For example:

Individual supervision

Weeks	Meetings	Observations	Total hours
1	25 min	20 min	45 min
2	25 min	20 min	45 min
3	25 min	20 min	45 min
4	25 min	20 min	45 min
Total per month	1h 40 min	1h 20 min	3 hours per month

Total supervision hours = Group supervision (practicum class) 4 hours per month + Individual supervision, 3 hours per month = 7 hours.

*Managing your hours will be easier if you commit to a fixed number of hours each month. Based on this, you and your supervisor can agree on regular meetings and observations sessions per month.

2. Now, let's consider the case of a student who is employed at their practicum site. In this case, the student may spend around 30 hours per week at the site (6 hours per day). The student may spend 3 hours each day implementing behavioral programs (15 hours per week), and the other 3 hours in other (unrestricted) activities.

Weeks	Time at the site	Restricted hours	Unrestricted hours (on or off site)	Total hours
1	30 hours	13	15	28
2	30 hours	13	15	28
3	30 hours	13	15	28
4	30 hours	12	15	27
Experience hours per month				111
Hours of supervision (group and individual)				9
Total per month		51	60	120

Supervised hours: In this case, 9 of the 120 hours (7.5%) should be spent in supervision and guidance. These hours will be split between group supervision (practicum class) and individual supervision (meetings and observations with the on-site supervisor).

Group supervision (practicum class): 4 hours per month

Individual supervision: 5 hours per month (4 meetings and 4 observation sessions). For example:

Individual supervision

Weeks	Meetings	Observations	Total hours
1	1 h	15 min	1h 15 min
2	1 h	15 min	1 h 15 min
3	1 h	15 min	1 h 15 min
4	1 h	15 min	1 h 15 min
Total per month	4 h	1h	5 hours per month

Total supervision hours = Group supervision (practicum class) 4 hours per month + Individual supervision, 5 hours per month = 9 hours per month.