What is a practicum?
A practicum is a minimum 75-100 hour on-site project-based professional experience that offers students the opportunity to apply their classroom studies and theory to an industry setting. Students are required to continue their academic responsibilities throughout their practicum, which include reflective cohort discussions, communication with faculty advisor, and submission of assignments and projects.

One of the purposes of a practicum is to provide opportunities for students to apply their skills and knowledge in authentic situations under the leadership of experienced professionals. While there are a multitude of anticipated outcomes, first and foremost it is our hope that all participants partner in a mutually-beneficial experience that exposes students to the realities of the workplace while employers gain fresh perspectives and high quality work outcomes.

What are the Benefits of a Practicum?
Practicums provide students with the opportunity to:
- Apply classroom learning and theory to industry;
- Explore career paths and develop professional goals;
- Enhance the student’s resume and employability potential;
- Develop self-confidence and positive work experiences;
- Observe industry professionals and benefit from their expertise;
- Widen the student’s range of industry contacts and professional networks;
- Contribute ideas and receive feedback from industry leaders;
- Gain a unique cultural and corporate learning experience.

Expectations of Royal Roads University
RRU acts as a liaison between the employer and the student. It is our role to work closely with students and hosts to ensure that both parties’ objectives are met. It is the role of the university to:
- Support students in finding a suitable practicum;
- Post career and experiential learning opportunities to RRU’s database, Symplicity;
- Assist hosts through all aspects of the practicum process;
- Provide an opportunity for a site visit by phone, Skype or, in-person;
- Help the student develop reasonable and effective learning objectives and goals;
- Assess and evaluate academic assignments produced by the student; and
- Conduct post-employment evaluations with the student and the employer.

Expectations of the Host
Practicum duties are flexible and dependent on both the students’ goals and the employers’ needs, but it is expected that hosts:
- Offer a minimum 75-100 hour experience over the duration of the course (approximately 12-14 weeks);
- Complete the Practicum Contract
- Provide an opportunity that encourages integration of academic studies and work experience;
- Liaise with the University for site visits or other communication needs;
- Provide hands-on, productive work rather than observational or exclusively entry-level tasks; and
- Integrate the student into the company’s team and assign a supervisor.
Expectations of the Student

Finding an Practicum
The Work Integrated Learning Office, Program Office and faculty will support students in finding a practicum, but ultimately it is the student’s responsibility to find a suitable opportunity.

To be successful in finding a practicum, students are required to:
• Participate in the practicum preparation course;
• Research industry, organizations and positions to target approach and set goals;
• Make appointments with the Experiential Learning Advisor to receive support with:
  o Career decision making, goal setting and action planning;
  o Resume and cover letter development;
  o Interview preparation and practice; and
  o Contract negotiation and general application support
• Regularly check RRU’s online career database, Symplicity, for practicum leads and hosts;
• Attend networking events and actively work at developing industry contacts;
• Apply for posted practicums and actively meet with industry contacts to develop opportunities;
• Provide a job description/role profile, signed RRU Practicum Contract and other pertinent documents to the Work Integrated Learning office.

During the Practicum
The student plays a key role in the success of both the practicum and professional aspects of the practicum. As in any adult learning environment, the main responsibility for learning falls on the student. Effort and interest on the part of the student will largely determine the value of their practicum experience.

Students are expected to:
• Submit the completed and signed Practicum Contract;
• Incur costs associated with practicum travel, visas, accommodation, food, clothing etc., unless otherwise negotiated with host;
• Conform to all conditions, rules and confidentiality that apply to employees in the host organization as well as RRU conduct policies;
• Work with their on-site supervisor to set learning goals and objectives;
• Enhance their academic, professional and personal skills;
• Complete all academic assignments as required for practicum course completion;
• Advise the employer and the university supervisor of any concerns or problems with their work assignment or environment as soon as an issue arises; and
• Keep in regular contact with the faculty member supervising the practicum course.

Insurance/WCB
All Students who are on an academically-recognized practicum within British Columbia have coverage through the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, under WCB Firm Number 4002. The filing, processing, and management of any WCB claim associated with this work placement is administered by the University’s Payroll Office.

Outside of BC, WCB is the responsibility of the host and student.

For support from the Work Integrated Learning Office please contact:
internships@royalroads.ca