

Practicum Guide

Maîtrise en sciences de l'information

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Electronic version

http://www.ebsi.umontreal.ca/ressources-services/stages/SCI6865_Practicum_Guide.pdf

This document is a slightly condensed version of the French *Guide de stage*.

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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 collaboration of the professional milieu 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 (except for coop practicum) 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, 2000 and 2014.

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 Maîtrise en sciences de l'information (MSI) has been offered in its current version since September 2020. The MSI offers two streams: professional and research. The professional stream is comprised of 51 credits, while the research stream is comprised of 45 credits.

The objective of the professional stream is to train professionals who can identify, acquire, preserve, organize, manage, and disseminate all types of information for the benefit of users in any type of work environment. The values and competencies that guide students throughout their academic journey are available on the School's website

Students can pursue the degree on a full- or part-time basis. Full-time students are normally able to complete the program in two years. As the practicum is only offered in the professional stream, the rest of this document will refer only to the professional stream of our master's degree.

Structure of the Programme

Core courses (required) (21 credits)	
SCI6001 Information Science: Archival Science	SCI6005 Digital info. and computing for Info. Science
SCI6002 Information Science: Library Science	SCI6006 Information services management
SCI6003 Interactions with users of information services	SCI6007 Research methods in information science
SCI6004 Information seeking and retrieval	
Elective courses (24 credits)	
Practicum (6 credits)	

More detailed information on the MSI programme can be found in French at:

<https://ebsi.umontreal.ca/programmes-cours/cycles-superieurs/maitrise-en-sciences-information/>

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 stream.

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 credits (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 practicum can be done 3, 4 or 5 days a week depending on the student availability (course load or part-time job). It cannot be done at a rhythm of less than 3 days per week. The practicum must be completed within an academic session, either, fall, winter or summer.

The practicum can also take the form of a 4-month coop paid placement in a governmental organization. Prerequisites for students and supervising requirements (see below) remain the same whether the practicum is paid or not

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 (except coop student) can be paid or not, depending on the policy of institution where his practicum takes place. Remuneration is mandatory for coop students.

Insurance

Unpaid practicum students are covered by the Université de Montréal insurance policy for general civil responsibility. The file number at the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST) 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. The site supervisor must be able to evaluate not only the quality of the work done by the student but also his working methods. The student cannot act as a consultant for an organization lacking intern professional information management expertise.

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 academic profile (Records Management and Archives, Library Studies, Information Architecture, Strategic Information Management, etc.). 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.

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 four 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
- have an overview of variety of workplaces
- define his professional preferences

Practicum Agreement

The practicum agreement (see Appendix 2, *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 note 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	1.0	
E	Failure	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%

¹ Minimal passing grade for graduate students.

- On the eighth calendar day: grade F (failure) or zero

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> Think about their expectations for their practicum	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	Meet the coordinator with their résumé	Plan time for the supervision
	Meet the students individually		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
			Fill in the Practicum Agreement Form, including the description of activities
	Sign the practicum agreement	Sign the practicum agreement and hand it over to the coordinator	Sign the agreement and hand it to the student
	Meet the students and explain the unfolding of the practicum and the assessment methods (meeting #2)	Attend the meeting #2 (unfolding of the practicum and assessment methods) Find out information about their practicum site	

Summary of Roles and responsibilities (cont'd)

STEPS	PRACTICUM COORDINATORS	PRACTICUM STUDENTS	SITE SUPERVISORS
PRACTICUM	<p>Act as first-respondents</p> <p>Intervene in case of difficulties</p> <p>Visit the students and supervisors</p> <p>Call, lead and grade meetings #3 (site and project descriptions)</p>	<p>Start the practicum</p> <p>Write their journal</p> <p>Get acquainted with their practicum organisation</p> <p>Integrate in their workplace</p> <p>Execute the practicum activities and validate their methodologies</p> <p>Interact with the supervisor</p> <p>Observe the environment</p> <p>Get approval for their presentation (meeting #3)</p> <p>Attend meeting #3</p> <p>Discuss mid-course evaluation with supervisor</p> <p>Make adjustments if necessary</p> <p>Finish their practicum</p> <p>Receive their final evaluation and discuss it</p> <p>Complete their journal, write their report and hand them over to the coordinator with the completed evaluation form</p> <p>Hand over a copy of their report to the supervisor</p>	<p>Introduce the student to the site, policies, practices and employees of the organisation</p> <p>Describe the unfolding of the activities and the professional tools available</p> <p>Regularly check the quality of the student work</p> <p>Act as first respondent on-site</p> <p>Discuss practices, decisions and particularities of their organisation with the student</p> <p>Approve the student presentation outline (meeting # 3)</p> <p>Discuss mi-course evaluation</p> <p>Discuss and readjust activities and supervision if necessary</p> <p>Complete the evaluation form and hand it over to the student</p> <p>Receive the practicum report and check exactitude. Contact the coordinator if necessary</p>
EVALUATION	<p>Evaluate the practicum documents (journal and report) and compile the final grade of the student</p> <p>Report to the School Studies Committee</p>		

Appendices

1. Student Assessment Form
2. Practicum Agreement Form

Personal qualities

The practicum student demonstrates...	Grade
creativity	
initiative	
autonomy	
capacity to make a decision	
motivation (intellectual curiosity, enthusiasm, willingness to learn and improve)	
maturity (self control, discernment, persistence, diligence)	
flexibility	
punctuality	
communication skills (written)	
communication skills (oral)	
team spirit	
a service oriented attitude	

Overall evaluation

Justify your assessment by mentioning strengths and suggested improvements.

_____	_____
Supervisor's signature	Date
_____	_____
Signature of the student certifying that he/she has read and understood his/her evaluation	Date

N.B. Please hand this completed and signed form to the student who will forward it to the practicum coordinator.

Thank you for your collaboration!

2025-11-20

Student

Name:		Phone:	
Email:			
Program of study:	Certificat en archivistique ARV1057		
	Maîtrise en sciences de l'information SCI6865		

Practicum Site

Organisation:					
Department:					
Civic Address:			Postal Address (if different):		
City:			City:		
Province :		Postal Code:	Province :		Postal Code:
Site Supervisor					
Name:					
Title:					
Phone:					
Email:					

Practicum Coordinator

<i>Isabelle Dion (Records Management)</i>	<i>Isabelle Bourgey (Library Science)</i>
Phone: 514 343-2244	Phone: 514 343-2243
Email: isabelle.dion@umontreal.ca	Email: isabelle.bourgey@umontreal.ca

Practicum schedule

Year:	Semester:	Fall	Winter	Spring/Summer	
Duration:		ARV1057 : 25 working days including ½ day at EBSI (exact day to be confirmed)			
		SCI6865 : 36 working days including 1 day at EBSI (exact day to be confirmed)			
		SCI6865 coop : maximum 4 months (mandatory remuneration)			
First day of practicum:				Expected end date:	
Presence:	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Hours per day* :				Note(s):	
* min 6:30, max 7:30 excluding lunch and breaks					
Is the practicum paid?	yes	no			

Activities

Planned projects/activities (including a period for induction and training).
The time allocated for each activity must be indicated (in hours, days, or %)

Ethics and confidentiality

Applicable code of ethics: AAQ CBPQ SCIP other:
Will a confidentiality agreement be signed by the student? yes no

Signatures

Student: _____ Date: _____

Site Supervisor: _____ Date: _____

By signing this agreement, the supervisor declares that he/she has read and agree to comply with the terms of Appendix 1

Coordinator (EBSI) : _____ Date: _____

Confirmation

The coordinator's signature serves as confirmation of the practicum. To obtain all documents related to the practicum, please visit the EBSI website at one of the following addresses:

<http://cours.ebsi.umontreal.ca/arv1057>

<http://cours.ebsi.umontreal.ca/sci6865>

2025-10-08

Appendix 1 – Law to ensure the protection of interns in the workplace

Clause to comply with section 5 of the Act (obligation to inform the intern of their rights under the Act)

During their internship, Interns are entitled to the rights provided for in the [Act to ensure the protection of interns in the workplace](#), RLRQ, c. 22 (the “Act”). Thus, the Intern may be absent from their internship on the holidays indicated in sections 9 and 10 of the Act, or due to illness or for family or parental reasons as indicated in sections 11 to 17 of the Act, all in accordance with the terms and conditions set out therein.

The Intern is also entitled to an internship environment free from psychological harassment, as defined in section 18 of the Act.

Clause regarding the duration of the internship (extension or resumption)

The duration of the internship is indicated on page 1 of the agreement, in the section entitled “Internship Schedule.” Any absence, even if justified, may compromise the acquisition of the knowledge required to achieve the internship objectives. Depending on the circumstances and after evaluating the specific elements of each situation, the University may require the internship to be extended in order to allow the Intern to meet the academic objectives of the internship, or the internship may be postponed or resumed if an extension is not appropriate or possible.

Clause relating to policies on sexual harassment and violence (SHV) and policies on respect for the individual

The University's policies on respect for the individual, namely the [Policy to Prevent and Combat Sexual Misconduct and Violence](#) and the [Anti-Harassment Policy](#), apply during the internship. By signing this internship agreement, the Internship Site declares that it has read these two policies and agrees to comply with them.

The Internship Site agrees to collaborate with University representatives to resolve any situation covered by either of these policies. The Intern is also invited to familiarize themselves with these policies and is informed that any report they wish to make regarding a situation covered by either of these policies may be submitted to the University's Office of Human Rights at the following address: respect@umontreal.ca, and will be treated in complete confidentiality. In addition, the Internship Site must make available to the Intern its policy on the prevention of psychological harassment and the handling of complaints adopted in accordance with section 81.19 of the Labor Standards Act, which policy applies to the Intern, with the necessary adaptations.