

Practicum – FAQs

1. What is practicum?

Practicum is the field work you will complete at a school site. Many of the education courses have a field component. The licensure program refers to this as a **practicum-linked course**. Practicum is field work that leads to student teaching – and then becoming a state licensed teacher.

2. How can I get the most out of my practicum experience?

As a future teacher, you should anticipate opportunities and be a proactive contributor to the learning community. Be sure to find out more about the school and network with other faculty and staff in the school community. Be proactive in building potential connections for your student teaching semester and your job search. As the saying goes, “It’s not who you know, but who knows you.”

3. When does practicum start?

The licensure program wants you to get familiar with the “lecture” portion of the course before you start your field work (*visits to schools*). Practicum visits start the **third week** of the semester. The Director of Field Experiences will guide you as to when you should start visiting schools. You will need to check your [@colorado.edu](mailto:colorado.edu) email account for important details, prior to the start of the semester.

4. When do I go to the school site?

When you registered for the practicum-linked course, you registered for the “lecture” portion of the course, as well as the “practicum” portion of the course (*sections 011, 012, 013, 014*). When it’s the third week of the semester, you will go to the school site during the “practicum” timeslot for which you registered.

5. Where do I go, during my practicum timeslot, during the first two weeks of the semester?

Because you are not visiting school sites during the first two weeks of the semester, you should use your practicum time slot for career development. This is a great time for you to research schools and districts, update your resume, professionalize your social media outlets, join professional teaching organizations, and increase your knowledge about becoming a teacher.

6. How will I get to the school site?

Transportation is the responsibility of the licensure candidates. Most schools are accessible by RTD, eGO Carshare, or you can set up a carpool schedule with classmates. The licensure program cannot move you from a school site due to your transportation challenges. You may utilize the transportation resource guide provided by the Director of Field Experiences.

7. Since I'm enrolled at CU Boulder, aren't all the placements in Boulder schools?

No. The School of Education partners with a variety of schools and districts to maximize learning and future employment opportunities. You cannot expect to have a school placement in Boulder for a practicum-linked course.

8. Can I select the school site for my practicum experience?

No. Licensure candidates cannot set up their own practicum experience. The Director of Field Experiences and course professors/instructors set up partnerships with schools for practicum-linked courses. (*Licensure candidates will be allowed to select their student teaching site.*)

9. What should I do about childcare?

Licensure candidates are responsible for arranging childcare during the time they have a practicum-linked course (*lecture and field work*). The School of Education is not responsible for this. There are resources available on the internet and may be accessed by using a Google search.

10. How many practicum hours do I have to complete?

The numbers of contact hours, during practicum, vary according to the practicum-linked course in which you are enrolled. The course professor/instructor will list the number of practicum/contact hours in the course syllabus.

11. Do I receive a stipend or any paid compensation during practicum?

There is no paid stipend/compensation during practicum. The school partners, specifically the teachers, are volunteering their time and energy to mentor and help you become a successful teacher.

12. How many days/hours of practicum can I miss?

You are not allowed to miss any days/hours of practicum. If you are sick, you will need to contact your course professor/instructor and cooperating teacher to let them know about your illness – and you will need to make arrangements to make up missed time.

13. What should I do if I am ill and cannot get to my practicum site?

You should contact the cooperating teacher and professor/instructor of the practicum-linked course as soon as possible. The cooperating teacher is depending on you and has planned his/her school day around you being available to support k-12 student learning. Any practicum-hours missed, due to illness, must be made up. If a candidate misses more than two practicum visits in a row, a doctor's note must be provided to the professor/instructor and Director of Field Experiences.

14. If school is closed due to inclement weather, do I have to make up any missed practicum hours?

No.

15. Is going to practicum optional?

Practicum is required. Field work (practicum) is linked to the overall grade for your practicum-linked course. If you fail the practicum portion, you fail the entire course.

16. Why do we keep a time log for our practicum-linked courses?

One skill a teacher must develop is organized and accurate record keeping. The time log (*practicum log*) is a permanent record of hours worked in school and accountability for course requirements. The time log is a descriptive log of what you have done in classrooms. This information can be used for resume, future interviews, and graduate school applications. The signature of cooperating teachers provides districts with verified professional development hours.

17. What should I do if my cooperating teacher doesn't let me participate or uses me to do menial tasks?

You will need to use problem-solving skills and professional language when approaching your cooperating teacher if this issue arises. Be sure to reference the syllabus for your practicum-linked course – so you may describe the expectations the professor/instructor has for you during your field work. You may also work with your professor/instructor assigned to your practicum-linked course to work through this issue.