EVALUATIONS
Suggestions and Resources for Clinical Educators and Student Clinicians

The Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology requires that a formal evaluation be completed at the end of the placement. The evaluation tool currently used is the department’s Clinical Appraisal Form. We also suggest that a midterm evaluation be completed. This guide offers some suggestions for evaluation procedures.

Mid-Term Evaluation
It is very helpful for both students and clinical educators to examine the status of the placement at mid-term. This could involve reflection on the clinical and interpersonal skills of the student clinician, the amount and nature of feedback from the clinical educator and the types of clients/disorders the student has been exposed to.

Student Clinician Evaluation
The mid-term evaluation can be done via the Clinical Appraisal Form, or a less formal method. It is recommended that the Clinical Appraisal Form be used as a general guide so both the student and clinical educator become more familiar with the items and procedures that will be used for the final evaluation. I often have the student complete the Clinical Appraisal Form and bring it to the mid-term evaluation meeting. Impressions of the student and clinical educator can be compared. It is not essential that the same numbers be circled. It is more important that the same general profile of relative areas of strength and need be identified. Since one of the purposes of clinical placements is to establish self-evaluation abilities, it is important to encourage the student to begin self-reflection and independent problem-solving. In cases where the clinical educator and student differ in how they see a particular skill, it is helpful for them to discuss the discrepancy.

It is also recommended that the student establish some specific goals for their own clinical development. This may result as a natural outcome of the mid-term evaluation process. I encourage students to keep this list reasonable and ensure that they identify areas of strength as well as need.

When completing the midterm Clinical Appraisal Form, I recommend that you reflect on what has transpired from the beginning up to the mid-term point. The final Clinical Appraisal Form must be scored on just the last 20% of the placement. The mid-term evaluation measures the process of supervision, while the final measures the outcome of supervision. It is helpful to remind the student to expect some ratings of “specific guidance” and “general guidance” at the mid-term. This indicates that the student and clinical educator are sharing information regularly and the student is using the clinical educator as a resource.

Clinical Educator Evaluation
I recommend that clinical educators directly solicit feedback from the student throughout the placement and particularly at mid-term. Specific areas could include 1) amount of observation, 2) amount of meeting/conference time, 3) amount and nature of verbal and written feedback, 4) recommended changes in order to better meet student needs, and 5) clinical educator strengths. Discussion of this type encourages active participation from the student and may lead to more effective and efficient supervisory interaction. The Clinical Educator Appraisal Form (Appendix E in the Externship Handbook) may be used as a guide for obtaining feedback.
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Hours and Clinical Experience
As part of the mid-term evaluation, it is important to examine number and type of clinical hours. Ensure that the recommended number of hours for the placement is attainable during the remainder of the placement. If substantially fewer hours are expected, please discuss this with the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education. If the hours are expected to be substantially above the recommended total, it is important to consider if sufficient time for reflection and evaluation is available. It is essential that students have time for reflection in order to maximize their learning. The mid-term is also an ideal time to examine the type of hours the student has obtained and consider addition of other types where possible.

I hope this guide has provided you with some useful information. Please contact me at any time if you have questions or comments.

Lu-Anne McFarlane
Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education
Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology
University of Alberta
3-57 Corbett Hall
Edmonton, AB T6G 2G4
Phone: (780) 492-5907
Fax: (780) 492-9333
Email: Luanne.mcfarlane@ualberta.ca