



# **Practicum Counselling Guidelines Master of Counselling (Clinical Mental Health)**

**Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris  
(UPSI)**

<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>		<b>PAGE</b>
1.0	Introduction	1
2.0	Purpose of the Practicum Counselling	1
3.0	Objectives of Practicum Counselling	1
4.0	List of Practicum Counselling Courses	1
5.0	Practicum Counselling Regulations	2
	5.1 Eligibility Criteria for Practicum Counselling	2
	5.2 Requirements for Passing Practicum Counselling	2
	5.3 Duration of Practicum Counselling	3
	5.4 Placement for Practicum Counselling	4
	5.5 Reporting to the Institution	5
	5.6 Practicum Counselling Teaching Hours	5
	5.7 Attendance for Practicum Counselling	5
	5.8 Suspension of Practicum Counselling	5
	5.9 Failure Cases in Practicum Counselling	5
	5.10 Leave	6
6.0	Implementation of Practicum Counselling	6
	6.1 Pre-Practicum Counselling Preparation	6
	6.2 Teaching and Learning in Practicum Counselling	6
	6.3 Supervision	7
7.0	Eligibility Criteria for Practicum Counselling	7
	7.1 Practicum/Academic Coordinator	7
	7.2 Field Supervisor/Local preceptor	7
8.0	Responsibilities and Ethics of Practicum Counselling	8
	8.1 Responsibilities of Faculty/Centre	8
	8.2 Responsibilities of Practicum Coordinator	8
	8.3 Responsibilities of Academic Supervisor	8
	8.4 Responsibilities of the Institution	8
	8.5 Responsibilities of Practicum Students	9
	8.6 Ethics of Academic and Field Supervisors	9
9.0	Evaluation of Practicum Counselling	10

## **1.0 Introduction**

A practicum refers to a supervised clinical experience designed to enable students to build and develop fundamental counselling skills while integrating professional knowledge acquired during their studies (Standards and Qualifications for Counsellor Training, LKM, 2016). According to the Council for Accreditation of Counselling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) (Section 3: Professional Practice, 2016), this clinical experience includes handling mental health counselling as well as related activities. The practicum can be conducted either on-campus or off-campus near the university and must be completed prior to the internship.

## **2.0 Purpose of Practicum Counselling**

By the end of this practicum course, students are expected to be able to:

- i. Apply theories, principles, and practices of assessment and diagnosis, intervention, referral, and prevention of mental and emotional disorders in both individual and group counselling sessions.
- ii. Conceptualise diagnoses of mental disorders using the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) based on background information, assessments, clinical interviews, and relevant informant data.
- iii. Promote human development, well-being, and optimal mental health through prevention activities, education, and advocacy for career development in clinical mental health counselling.
- iv. Select appropriate assessment interventions to produce effective diagnoses, treatment plans, and case management.

## **3.0 Objectives of Practicum Counselling**

The primary objective of the practicum is to provide students with practical training experiences through high-quality professional counselling under supervision at field sites. This aligns with the academic preparation, university/program goals, and career objectives of the students. The experience aims to help students acquire skills and competencies by applying theoretical knowledge and integrating clinical skills under the guidance of experienced and qualified professionals.

## **4.0 List of Practicum Counselling Courses**

KKH60503 – Clinical Mental Health Practicum

## 5.0 Practicum Counselling Regulations

### 5.1 Eligibility Criteria for Practicum Counselling

1. Students must have enrolled in the practicum course.
2. Students who enrol in the practicum course must have passed the following courses:
  - a) KKT60103 Advanced Counselling Theories (Counselling Theory Component)
  - b) KKH60103 Advanced Individual Counselling (Counselling Techniques Component)
  - c) KKG60103 Advanced Group Counselling (Group Counselling Component)
  - d) KKC60103 Career Counselling (Career Development Component)
  - e) KPK60104 Developmental Psychology (Human Growth and Development Component)
  - f) Students are encouraged to have passed or be currently taking the course KKP60103 Ethics and Legislation in Counselling (Counselling Ethics/Professional Identity Component)
  - g) Students must be fully supervised (from the initial to the final stage of sessions) by a supervisor, with a minimum of three supervision sessions as follows:
    - i. **One (1)** supervision session at the field site
    - ii. **Two (2)** supervision sessions where the student attends on campus.
3. Students must conduct their practicum at a site that meets the specified requirements. Management, administration, and supervision must comply with the standards and regulations set forth in the Standards and Qualifications for Counsellor Training (Malaysia).

### 5.2 Requirements for Passing the Practicum Counselling

There are conditions that students must meet before being confirmed as having passed the practicum by the Coordinator/Academic Supervisor:

- i. Students must attend at least 80% of the practicum lectures.
- ii. Students must attend 100% of the practicum supervision sessions.
- iii. Completion of All Practicum Components and Hours:
  - a) Students must complete at least 96 hours of face-to-face counsellor-client interactions.

- b) Must complete a minimum of 252 hours of practicum.
  - c) Completing the hours of activities related to the professional duties of a counsellor, including the implementation of programs and psychoeducational activities, administering psychological tests, referrals and consultations, management and administration, documentation and report writing, as well as professional development activities.
- iv. Submitting the final practicum report by the specified date.
  - v. Attending the required supervision sessions, at least **three (3)** times during the practicum period.
  - vi. Achieving at least grade B for practicum counselling.

#### **PRACTICUM ASSESSMENT GRADE**

<b>MARKS</b>	<b>GRADE</b>	<b>POINTER</b>
80 - 100	A	4.00
75 - 79	A-	3.75
70 - 74	B+	3.45
65 - 69	B	3.00
64 and below	F	0.00

### **5.3 Duration of the Practicum Counselling**

1. The calculation of the practicum duration is based on Section 1.6 of the Practicum Duration, page 12, Guidelines for Practicum and Internship Implementation, Malaysian Board of Counsellors

#### **i. Guidelines for Calculating Duration Based on Credit Hours (Full-Time Students)**

The value of internship credit hours is calculated according to the following formula:

#### **1 Credit Hour**

1 credit hour x 6 hours per day x 14 weeks (minimum) at the training site  
= 84 hours

### **3 Credit Hours**

3 credit hours x 6 hours per day x 14 weeks (minimum) at the training site  
= 252 hours

**KKH60503 Mental Health Practicum sets the estimated duration for the full-time practicum mode as 16-18 weeks.**

#### **ii. Guidelines for Calculating Duration Based on Credit Hours (Part-Time Students)**

The value of internship credit hours is calculated according to the following formula:

#### **1 Credit Hour**

1 credit hour x 6 hours per day x 14 weeks (minimum) at the training site  
= 84 hours

#### **3 Credit Hours**

3 credit hours x 3 hours per day x 28 weeks (minimum) at the training site =  
252 hours

**KKH60503 Mental Health Practicum sets the estimated duration for the part-time practicum mode as 24-28 weeks** (depending on the suitability of the Academic Calendar).

### **5.4 Placement for Practicum Counselling**

1. Practicum counsellings are typically conducted on-campus where the programme is offered. However, students are allowed to conduct counselling sessions in external settings with full supervision by the Academic Supervisor. The practicum site must have appropriate facilities and equipment to provide clinical training and must adhere to established procedures to ensure confidentiality and protect clients' rights according to legal and ethical standards.
2. Additionally, the practicum site should offer broad opportunities for students to familiarise themselves with various professional activities, including record-keeping, supervision, information services, guidance activities, and attending staff meetings. This ensures a comprehensive training experience that aligns with professional counselling practices.

## **5.5 Reporting to the Institution**

1. Students report to the institution based on the reporting date specified in the placement letter provided by PULAMI. Students must meet the requirements set by the faculty and the institution.

## **5.6 Practicum Counselling Teaching Hours**

1. Students must be present at the practicum site for the designated duration to complete all assigned activities/components:
  - a) **Full-Time Mode:** A minimum period of 16-18 weeks.
  - b) **Part-Time Mode:** A minimum period of 24-28 weeks (depending on the suitability of the academic calendar).
2. Students must attend lectures every week and supervision sessions throughout the semester. Students should bring all practicum reports/documents for review by the Academic Supervisor.
3. Students must attend practicum supervision sessions at least three times with the Academic Supervisor (outside of lecture hours).

## **5.7 Attendance for Practicum Counselling**

Students must conduct the counselling practicum according to the duration specified by the Practicum Coordinator. Attendance must be recorded on the Attendance Form and signed by the host institution.

## **5.8 Suspension for Practicum Counselling**

1. Students may defer their practicum if they have a reasonable reason, as stated in the Academic Regulations of Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, specifically for the Master's by coursework programme.
2. Students can continue their practicum counselling for up to **two (2)** semesters if they are unable to complete the required practicum hours within the designated period. In such cases, they will be given a "Sedang Maju" (Progressing) status.

## **5.9 Failure Cases in Practicum Counselling**

1. Student is likely to fail if they do not meet one of the following:
  - i. Failing to meet the 80 percent attendance requirement for

- practicum counselling lectures.
- ii. Failing to meet the components of the practicum as outlined:
  - iii. Failing to meet the required face-to-face counsellor-client contact hours, which is at least 96 hours.
  - iv. Failing to meet the total practicum hours, which is at least 252 hours.
  - v. Failing to submit the final practicum report by the specified date.
  - vi. Failing to attend at least three (3) supervision sessions as required.
  - vii. Failing to achieve at least a grade B in the final practicum evaluation.
  - viii. Being found guilty under the University and University College Act (AUKU) or committing an ethical violation in the counselling profession.

### **5.10 Leave**

1. A student is allowed to take leave from the practicum if:
  - i. There is a public holiday as per the state where the student is undertaking the practicum.
  - ii. The student obtains a sick leave certificate from a government hospital (not exceeding 3 days). If it exceeds 3 days, it must be made up.
  - iii. The student is on official duty as directed by the faculty/employer.
  - iv. There is a reasonable excuse (e.g. court cases, legal summons, etc.).
2. All leave must be notified to the practicum coordinator, academic supervisor, and the institution along with supporting documents.

## **6.0 Implementation of Practicum Counselling**

### **6.1 Pre-Practicum Counselling Preparation**

1. The student has attended the practicum briefing in person, conducted by the Practicum Coordinator.
2. The student has prepared all the practicum requirements as outlined in the briefing.

### **6.2 Teaching and Learning in Practicum Counselling**



1. The Practicum Coordinator needs to hold weekly meetings with students throughout the 14-week lecture period for the purpose of coordination and review regarding practicum tasks, such as:
2. Method of Writing Session Reports
3. Case Presentations
  - i. Document Management (Log Books, Summary Forms, etc.)
  - ii. Application of Theories and Techniques in Practice Sessions
  - iii. Conducting Individual and Group Sessions
4. Practicum supervision is conducted by the Academic Supervisor.

### **6.3 Supervision**

1. Academic Supervisor must conduct supervision with their assigned students covering the following aspects:
2. Direct supervision (live supervision) for individual counselling sessions and group counselling sessions; or
3. Group supervision for individual counselling sessions or group counselling sessions.
4. Practicum supervision involves the following:
  - i. Student supervision must be conducted at least **three (3)** times.
  - ii. Individual supervision should be conducted face-to-face with a ratio of 5 students to 1 supervisor (1:5).
  - iii. Group supervision should be conducted with a ratio of 10 students to 1 supervisor.

## **7.0 Eligibility Criteria for Practicum Counselling**

### **7.1 Practicum/Academic Coordinator**

1. The practicum coordinator is an individual appointed by Sultan Idris University of Education who holds at least a master's degree in counselling. They must be a registered counsellor with a valid Certificate of Practice.

### **7.2 Field Supervisor/Local Preceptor**

1. The academic supervisor is an individual appointed by Sultan Idris University of Education who holds at least a master's degree in counselling. They must be a registered counsellor with a valid Certificate of Practice. The Academic Supervisor may be assisted by a registered counsellor (Field Supervisor) who holds a valid Certificate of Practice.

## **8.0 Responsibilities and Ethics of Practicum Counselling**

### **8.1 Responsibilities of Faculty/Centre**

To appoint the Practicum Coordinator and Academic Supervisor to ensure that all tasks related to the practicum are carried out.

### **8.2 Responsibilities of Practicum Coordinator**

1. The role and responsibilities of the Practicum Coordinator include the following:
  - i. Assisting students in selecting appropriate practicum placements.
  - ii. Sending the list of practicum placements to PULAMI for placement letter preparation.
  - iii. Sending the placement letter, prepared by PULAMI (via email), to the practicum site.
  - iv. Providing a briefing on the practicum requirements to students.
  - v. Determining the eligibility of students to register for the practicum course.
  - vi. Managing the supervision schedule with students.
  - vii. Managing the practicum evaluation documents.
  - viii. Conducting meetings/lectures with students during the academic weeks.

### **8.3 Responsibilities of Academic Supervisor**

1. The role and responsibilities of the Academic Supervisor include the following:
  - i. Encouraging the personal and professional development of the students being supervised.
  - ii. Ensuring the rights and welfare of clients are protected.
  - iii. Providing the best support system to ensure the well-being of the students being supervised is maintained.
  - iv. Ensuring compliance with counselling ethics.
  - v. Meeting the practicum requirements as required.
  - vi. Conducting supervision three (3) times outside of lecture hours.

#### **8.4 Responsibilities of the Institution**

1. Assisting students in gaining clinical experience to enable them to build and develop basic counselling skills, as well as integrating professional knowledge acquired during their studies.
2. Providing space/place to allow students to conduct individual and group practices as outlined in the practicum placement letter.

#### **8.5 Responsibilities of Practicum Students**

1. Students must **adhere to** and **carry out** the practicum as outlined in Section 5.0 of the Practicum Regulations and Section 6.0 of the Practicum Counselling Implementation, which includes the following:
  - i. Attend the Practicum Counselling briefing held by the Practicum Coordinator.
  - ii. Understand and embrace the objectives and regulations of the Practicum Counselling.
  - iii. Discuss with the Academic Supervisor and the institution/Field Supervisor to reach an understanding of roles and responsibilities during the Practicum Counselling implementation.
  - iv. Build professional relationships with all staff and students at the institution.
  - v. Notify the Practicum Coordinator and Academic Supervisor about any leave or institutional activities during the Practicum Counselling to ensure smooth supervision.
  - vi. Comply with and adhere to the ethical standards, university regulations, and institutional rules throughout the Practicum Counselling period.
  - vii. Be present and carry out duties at the institution throughout the Practicum Counselling period.
  - viii. Record attendance at the institution on each working day.
  - ix. Comply with all regulations under the University and College University Act (AUKU) at the institution where the student is conducting the Counselling Practicum.
  - x. Comply with the Academic Regulations of Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Master's Degree Program by Coursework.
  - xi. Obtain written approval from the institution for any activities organized by external parties.

#### **8.6 Ethics of Academic and Field Supervisors**

All Academic Supervisors and Field Supervisors are subject to the Counsellor's Code of Ethics, Malaysian Counsellors Board, Section F: Supervision, Training, and Teaching.

## 9.0 Evaluation of Practicum Counselling

Marking Criteria and Total Hours for Practicum Counselling, as below:

<b>N O.</b>	<b>ASPECTS OF SUPERVISION</b>	<b>ESTIMATED HOURS</b>	<b>PERCENTAG E MARKS(%)</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>FACE-TO-FACE SERVICES</b>	<b>96 Hours</b>	<b>40</b>
	a) Individual Counselling	60 Hours	25
	b) Group Counselling	36 Hours	15
<b>2.</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES RELATED TO COUNSELLING PROFESSIONAL TASKS</b>	<b>156 Hours</b>	<b>60</b>
	a) Education/Psychosocial Intervention Activities	90 Hours	25
	i. PFA/Mental Health Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)		
	ii. Testing: Administration, Analysis, and Interpretation		
	iii. Referral and Consultation		
	b) Management and Administration	52 Hours	20
	i. File and record management		
	ii. Logbook		
	iii. Final Report iv. Reflection		
	c) Professional Development	14 Hours	5
	i. Professional Conference presenter /participant ii. Workshop related to the field		
<b>3.</b>	<b>PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY</b>		<b>10</b>
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>252 Hours</b>	<b>100</b>