

142 – Competencies Assignment

noun: **competency** 1. the ability to do something successfully or efficiently: Oxford Dictionary

Assignment Overview

During the practicum, students are required to develop, practice and document skills within seven competency areas identified as necessary to perform the work of an early childhood educator based on the Child Care Sector Occupational Competencies Assessment Tool (May 2004), Community Care Facilities Branch. Being able to plan and reflect on one's practice and to use current theories, concepts and practices are at the heart of creating dynamic quality environments responsive to children and families.

The assignment is an ongoing project throughout practicum, made up of a collection of observations, creative samples, photos, anecdotes, ideas, reflections, mentor feedback and other artifacts that document and evidence a student's growing experience in practice. Documented weekly and shared on an ongoing basis with both mentor and in weekly seminars, this evolving list will provide data to support the transition of the student from the classroom to the practice setting. The expectation for providing evidence will be one piece of evidence per competency by the mid-term date, and an additional one piece for final submission at the end of practicum, equaling a minimum of 2 pieces of evidence per competency (7 competencies in total).

Mentors and students are asked to develop a plan for reviewing the list over the practicum term, and mentors will provide midterm and final comments that reflect the growth of students' competencies. Collaboration with mentor and instructor will allow the student to develop valuable skills.

Competency #1

Working with the staff the student helps create and maintain a safe and healthy environment for children by . . .

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Learning about the health and safety policies and the emergency procedures of the program.
- Assisting a child with self-help skills responding to children who are tired/hungry/feeling ill or in need of affection.
- Noticing what health promotion materials are posted for families.

- Supporting a practice that promotes good health and nutrition, i.e.. Posting menus, handwashing, setting up lunches or snacks, tooth brushing, nap times etc.
- Identifying unsafe items or risky situations and bringing them to the attention of the mentor
- Learning about children’s allergies, medical conditions, religious or cultural (food) observances that require special attention.

Competency #2

Working with the educators, the student will observe, plan and implement developmentally appropriate programs that meet the observed needs of children by . . .

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Sharing what was noticed about children’s exploration and interests with your mentor.
- Beginning to encourage children’s interest in play situations by offering materials, elaborating on children’s ideas, and encouraging children to use you as a resource in indoor and outdoor environments.
- Posing questions to learn more deeply about the broader context of the children’s experiences.
- Observing, recording, and beginning to interpret and plan for children’s development in all areas.
- Considering the diversity of family structures, ethnic backgrounds, language, cultural differences, and inclusion when planning and adapting activities and materials.
- Applying mentor’s and/or instructor’s feedback to practice; noticing children testing theories, experimenting, engaging in construction, ie. through ELP’s and Loose Parts
- Supporting children in developing their relationship with the land and the living breathing world.

Competency #3

Working with the staff, the student will nurture children to promote positive development by . . .

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Respecting individual child’s body and space using positive communication in supporting children.
- Scanning (being aware of) the whole group. Stopping unsafe situations and articulating what is safe and unsafe with children.

- Using active listening skills, I messages, acknowledgment and encouragement.
- Noticing and using prevention and intervention strategies when guiding children
- Using mentor support to facilitate problem solving with children.
- Finding books or resources that reflect the language or land of the program or are reflective of a child or family in the program.

Competency #4

Support families by . . .

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Acknowledging families by introducing yourself.
- Observing interactions between families and educators.
- Finding resources and materials that support children’s sense of belonging and reflect their family, culture, and community.
- Referring family questions or concerns to educators.

Competency #5

Demonstrate growing professionalism reflecting on the impact of one’s values beliefs, attitudes and behavior on children, families, and communities . . .

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Together with mentor, address attendance, ongoing feedback, expectations (ie. dress, parking, breaks) and shared understanding of this new relationship (world view)
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Display relaxed enjoyment, warmth, friendliness, and playfulness; hearing others’ perspectives and welcoming dialogue with children and adults; making space for listening.
- Learn about the program’s philosophy regarding children’s learning and child guidance, demonstrating flexibility and adjusting expectations accordingly.
- Communicate using discretion re: self-disclosure, appropriate timing, refraining from and redirecting gossip, honoring others stories and treating shared information with respect.
- Use your critical thinking and reflective practice skills to self-evaluate; communicate your learning needs and apply mentor and instructor feedback to your practice.

- Begin to contribute to the program by asking questions, sharing ideas, materials, and suggestions.
- Model the ethical principles of the ECEBC Code of Ethics through caring relationships and through professional development including attending staff meetings, community workshops and/or ECEBC meetings.

Competency #6

Begin to understand what contributes to the effective management and administration of early learning services by . . .

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Finding out which Indigenous traditional territory your program is located on?
- Finding out what professional associations and affiliations exist for educators at your program?
- Exploring the current legislation, regulatory bodies, and program policies governing your program, including licensed child care facility inspection reports <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children>
- Inquiring about the management structure and administration of your program, i.e., unionized, parent board, profit, nonprofit, administration, owner/operator?
- Supporting a classmate in seminar, your mentor, or a staff member; sharing ideas, resources, and learning, ie, assignment, articles, theories and ideas from class.

Competency #7

Advocate for high quality, accessible and comprehensive early learning system by...

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Learn about advocacy work and initiatives of ECEBC at local and provincial levels.
- Discuss with staff at your placement how new government policies impact them, and if they are accessing new funding programs i.e. wage enhancement, affordable childcare benefits for families etc.
- Become a member of ECEBC and the Canadian Childcare Federation.
- Attend professional development workshops to learn more about current topics being researched and discussed in our field. These could be through ECEBC, your local CCRR events or other opportunities.