

## DESCRIPTION OF THE 2-WEEK OBSERVATIONAL PLACEMENT

This placement forms part of the Unit 1 Clinical Skills Lab course and the expectations are therefore different from a typical student placement. The Unit 1 Clinical Skills lab course has a heavy emphasis on building students' observational skills and touching on a range of communication disorders across the lifespan. The main tasks students are expected to participate in during this 2-week placement are:

- **Observing and documenting client and clinician behaviours**
- **Tracking session data for the Clinical Instructor**
- **Conducting a research inquiry into a clinical question** the Clinical Instructor has (e.g., Do language outcomes differ between individual and group treatment for children with primary language impairment? Does stuttering treatment with the Lidcombe method result in gains maintained over time? Is there an evidence-based speech therapy approach for patients with Parkinson Disease? Is there a difference between in-person and telehealth treatment for children with articulation disorders?)

Please see the handout **Mac SLP – Summary of Unit and Course Content** (on the [Clinical Education tab](#) of our program website) to see the academic knowledge and clinical skills taught throughout Unit 1.

Clinical Instructors are encouraged to structure this placement in whichever way suits the clinical environment best. It is anticipated that there will be significant variation across sites in the types of experiences students gain. **It is recommended, however, that Clinical Instructors allow students 2 hours per day to complete their Structured Observation Logs, Self Reflections, and Research Inquiry project.**

Students will be evaluated using the **Evaluation of Observational Performance** in Appendix C (also on the [Clinical Education tab](#) of our program website). The Clinical Instructor will review the student's Structured Observation Logs and Self Reflections, their performance on data tracking tasks, their demonstration of self-directed learning behaviour, and their performance on the Research Inquiry project. The Clinical Instructor will meet with the student on the last day of placement to discuss the evaluation. The student will email the completed evaluation to [slpadmin@mcmaster.ca](mailto:slpadmin@mcmaster.ca), cc'd to the Clinical Instructor, within 2 business days of the final day of placement. Evaluation components include:

### Accuracy of Data Tracking

- Students will document session data for you, approximately 2-3 sessions per day
- "Data" could be accuracy tallies, level of cueing tallies, behaviour occurrence tallies, descriptions of on-target and off-target behaviours, test results, etc.
- The Clinical Instructor will compare how the student documented session results to how he/she documented results in order to evaluate accuracy
- By the last 2-3 days of placement, students should be able to achieve at least 80% accuracy (meaning intermittent to no support required to ensure accuracy)

### Quality of Self-Directed Learning Behaviour

- The Clinical Instructor will take note of how well the student demonstrates the following characteristics: asking insightful questions, initiating clinical discussions, setting own learning plans, seeking new knowledge

### Structured Observation Logs

- While students will be observing a great deal more, they only submit Structured Observation Logs covering 6 sessions (3 the first week and 3 the second week); logs should be submitted as soon as completed; logs must be provided to both the Clinical Instructor (in person or via email) and the Director of Clinical Education (via Avenue to Learn); the last log must be submitted no later than 5pm on the last Thursday of the placement
- Students are encouraged to include a variety of different client or session types; students will take notes throughout sessions, but they will need to complete portions of the logs outside of direct observation time; logs may be completed in either audio-recorded or typed format
- The template for these logs is included in Appendix A and also on the [Clinical Education tab](#) of our program website; students must select 7 of the 10 sections to complete for each observation (the Clinical Instructor may provide guidance for this)

### Self Reflections

- Students must submit 4 Self Reflections (2 the first week and 2 the second week); reflections should be submitted as soon as completed; reflections must be provided to both the Clinical Instructor (in person or via email) and the Director of Clinical Education (via Avenue to Learn); the last reflection must be submitted no later than 5pm on the last Thursday of the placement
- The template for these Self Reflections is included in Appendix B and also on the [Clinical Education tab](#) of our program website; reflections may be completed in either audio-recorded format or typed format; all sections (or reasonable substitutes) must be completed for each reflection
- Students must identify a learning goal to achieve (e.g., relating to a disorder area, an approach) prior to the next reflection, and comment on its achievement in that subsequent reflection

### Research Inquiry

- The completed project must be typed, maximum of 5 pages, in standard program format (Arial 11-point font, double-spaced, 1" margins), and must be submitted to both the Clinical Instructor (in person or via email) and the Director of Clinical Education (via drop box on Avenue to Learn) by 5pm on the last Wednesday of the placement
- Students should be prepared to provide evidence of source quality using standardized critique forms

The Director of Clinical Education will review all material submitted by the Clinical Instructor. The Director of Clinical Education will evaluate the calibre of documented observations, analyses, and self reflections (worth 5% of the total grade for the course) and make the final grade recommendation based on the evaluation submitted by the Clinical Instructor (worth 10% of the total grade for the course).

***\*\*Appendix D contains a summary of the various tasks and deadlines\*\****

## APPENDIX A: STRUCTURED OBSERVATION LOG TEMPLATE

7 of the 10 sections must be completed for each observation. Delete any unused sections. Substitute sections may be added if appropriate for the observation. Each completed log must be 1-2 pages in Arial 11-point font.

Student Name:	Student Number:
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Date:	Session Length:	Client Age:
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Gender: Female	Diagnosis:	Session Type: Treatment - Group
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Describe any legislative duties observed (e.g., consent, confidentiality, release of information):

IF ASSESSMENT: Describe the standardized versus criterion-referenced versus qualitative measures used:

IF TREATMENT: What are the goals for this session? How do the goals fit into the ICF framework?

What strategies were taught?

Describe the activities, materials, average length of each activity, average number of responses per activity:

Describe how responses were recorded and measured (e.g., frequency of occurrence, percentage accuracy, level of assistance required, client satisfaction rating, other):

Describe any challenges with recording responses/data:

Which activities appeared to engage the client the most? What made these activities engaging? Did the engaging tasks generate the same, more, or fewer responses per activity?

What do you think the client/family learned that they will do differently in their daily lives upon leaving this session?

What is one thing you will ensure you do when you first work with a client like this?

## APPENDIX B: SELF REFLECTION TEMPLATE

*Template headings may be adjusted to suit the nature of the Self Reflection. Each completed reflection must be 1-2 pages in Arial 11-point font.*

Student Name:	Student Number:
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Date:	Day # (out of 10) in Placement:
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Which goals/tasks/activities have been the easiest to track? Why do you think they were easier?

Which goals/tasks/activities have been the most difficult to track? Why do you think they were more difficult?

Describe your most significant learning moment during an observation:

Describe a learning goal (related to disorder areas, clinical approaches, etc.) to achieve prior to the next Self Reflection:

Describe what you learned about the goal area you selected in the last Self Reflection:

Describe your progress on the Research Inquiry project:

Describe anything else notable about your observational experience to date:

### APPENDIX C: EVALUATION OF OBSERVATIONAL PLACEMENT PERFORMANCE

<b>Student Name:</b>	
<b>Student Number:</b>	
<b>Placement Site:</b>	
<b>Clinical Instructor(s):</b>	
<b>Placement Start Date:</b>	
<b>Placement End Date:</b>	

<b>Date of Evaluation Meeting:</b>	
<b>Student Signature:</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Checkbox Certification Required:</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> By clicking this box, I certify that this represents my signature and my affirmation that I endorse this documentation.
<b>Clinical Instructor Signature:</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Checkbox Certification Required:</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> By clicking this box, I certify that this represents my signature and my affirmation that I endorse this documentation.

<b>TOTAL GRADE (OUT OF 20):</b>	
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**General Comments, Recommendations**

### Accuracy of Data Tracking

<input type="checkbox"/>	At least 80% accurate; required intermittent to no support to ensure accuracy	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	60-79% accurate independently; required periodic support to ensure accuracy	3
<input type="checkbox"/>	30-59% accurate independently; required frequent support to ensure accuracy	2
<input type="checkbox"/>	Less than 30% accurate independently; required constant support to ensure accuracy	1

### Quality of Self-Directed Learning Behaviour

<input type="checkbox"/>	Consistently asked insightful questions, initiated clinical discussions, set own learning plans, sought new knowledge	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	Frequently asked insightful questions, initiated clinical discussions, set own learning plans, sought new knowledge; required intermittent monitoring and support to ensure learning	3
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometimes asked insightful questions, initiated clinical discussions, set own learning plans, sought new knowledge; required frequent monitoring and direction to ensure learning	2
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rarely asked insightful questions, initiated clinical discussions, set own learning plans, sought new knowledge; required constant monitoring and direction to ensure learning	1

### Accuracy of Observations Described in Structured Observation Logs

<input type="checkbox"/>	At least 80% accurate	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	60-79% accurate	3
<input type="checkbox"/>	30-59% accurate	2
<input type="checkbox"/>	Less than 30% accurate	1

### Level of Analysis Demonstrated in Self Reflection Logs

<input type="checkbox"/>	Consistently identified important learning moments, selected appropriate learning goals, documented learning gains accurately, demonstrated accurate analysis of task complexity	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	Frequently identified important learning moments, selected appropriate learning goals, documented learning gains accurately, demonstrated accurate analysis of task complexity	3
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometimes identified important learning moments, selected appropriate learning goals, documented learning gains accurately, demonstrated accurate analysis of task complexity	2
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rarely identified important learning moments, selected appropriate learning goals, documented learning gains accurately, demonstrated accurate analysis of task complexity	1

### Quality of Research Inquiry Project

<input type="checkbox"/>	Independently completed a thorough review of relevant, quality research literature; summarized literature review in an easy-to-follow format; clearly answered the question	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	With some support and direction, completed a thorough review of relevant, quality research literature; summarized literature review in an easy-to-follow format; clearly answered the question	3
<input type="checkbox"/>	Required support; literature review was adequate but not robust; summary did not clearly draw the reader to a conclusion	2
<input type="checkbox"/>	Literature review was sparse with questionable analysis of source or study calibre; conclusion was vague or not well supported	1

## APPENDIX D: SUMMARY OF TASKS AND DEADLINES

### WEEK 1

Monday: CI and student jointly complete Safety Orientation Checklist  
CI emails completed checklist to [slpadmin@mcmaster.ca](mailto:slpadmin@mcmaster.ca)  
CI and student discuss parameters of Research Inquiry  
CI and student review the Description of the 2-Week Observational Placement in the context of the placement site and confirm mutual understanding

Tuesday-

Friday: Student submits 3 Structured Observation Logs  
Student submits 2 Self Reflections

### WEEK 2

Monday-

Wednesday: Student submits 2 Structured Observation Logs  
Student submits 1 Self Reflection  
Student submits completed Research Inquiry by Wednesday at 5pm

Thursday: Student submits 1 Observation Log  
Student submits 1 Self Reflection

Friday: CI and student meet to review Evaluation of Observational Placement Performance

Friday-

Tuesday: Student emails completed evaluation to [slpadmin@mcmaster.ca](mailto:slpadmin@mcmaster.ca) and cc's Clinical Instructor