

# Practicum

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Explicit  
Systematic  
Structured  
Research-validated  
Literacy instruction



Orton-Gillingham (O-G)  
Dyslexia Specialists

funlearning.ca

Making sense of language

416.433.9580

- **FAQ: What is the supervised practicum?**

The practicum is designed to guide and support trainees as begin to put into practice what they learned in the training courses. Trainees work with (a) student(s) while being mentored by a Fellow. FUNDAMENTAL LEARNING allows for trainees in various situations and locations to be supported in their learning journey by using a combination of in-person visits and video conferencing. A practicum is REQUIRED to apply for certification as a Classroom Educator, Associate Practitioner or Certified member with the Academy.

*If you are interested in a practicum, please indicate when you submit the course registration form as there are limited practicum spots for each training session.*

- **When can I begin a Practicum?**

A trainee can APPLY for a practicum placement after successful completion of all coursework and assignments at that level.

Limited space is available and requires a strong commitment to learning, self-evaluation and reflection, as well a strong level of competency with the material in the course.

A practicum must be started within a year of completing coursework. If trainees are not yet ready for a practicum at the completion of the course, they may audit future courses to develop their skills and knowledge and apply again later.

*Please refer to Practicum Overview for further information.*

- **FAQ: What is the difference between Classroom Educator and Associate Levels?**

- Associate level practitioners are qualified to provide Tier 1, 2 and 3 instruction.

*\*A teacher who intends to provide remedial support for a student needs to enroll in the Associate training course.*

- The Orton-Gillingham Classroom Educator is qualified to apply the principles of the Orton-Gillingham Approach to modify and to provide literacy instruction for the classroom or small groups (Tier 1 only\*)

The Warranty for Classroom Educator states:

*"I will not engage in promotional/ advertising contexts designating myself as qualified to teach using the Orton-Gillingham Approach outside of my work in a school setting."*

COURSEWORK required: (minimum)

- Fundamentals, Classroom Educator PRACTICUM: 50 hours supervised practicum over 8 consecutive months, minimum, which includes 5 observations of the trainee teaching complete lessons in a group (of at least 2 students) or classroom setting.

- **What is the difference between Associate Option A and Associate Option B?**

- **An Associate A member** is qualified to provide 1:1 Orton-Gillingham instruction under the mentorship of an Academy Fellow.

COURSEWORK required: (minimum)

- Fundamentals, Associate PRACTICUM: All 100 hours and 10 observations are done 1:1

- **An Associate B member** is qualified to provide 1:1 and small group instruction under the mentorship of an Academy Fellow.

COURSEWORK required: (minimum)

- Fundamentals, Associate, Classroom Educator

PRACTICUM: 50 hours and 5 observations are done 1:1; 50 hours and 5 observations are done teaching in a group (of at least 2 students) or classroom setting

- **What does "Certified Level" mean?**

The Certified member is qualified as an independent practitioner in the Orton-Gillingham Approach (Tier 3).

COURSEWORK: 100 hours minimum (*in addition to 60 hours at Associate for a total of 160 hours*)

PRACTICUM: 200 hours over 2 academic years, minimum, with 10 entire 40-60 minute lesson observations (in addition to the 100 hours at Associate for a total of 300 hours)

The Certified practicum is with two different students: one at the lower level of language instruction and another at a higher level of language instruction. One of the practicum students needs to have a diagnosis of dyslexia (although the term dyslexia may not be used).

- **FAQ: Does my practicum student need to be formally diagnosed with dyslexia?**

At the Associate level, although your student **MUST** have a “*dyslexic profile*”, they do not need a formal diagnosis. If the student does not have a formal diagnosis of dyslexia, you would review any school testing performed regardless of the dyslexia word, teacher concerns, or reasons why this student has been flagged for more services, and you would need to do your own informal assessment so you could write a good profile that supports OG as being an appropriate intervention. Testing often avoids the word “dyslexia” but reading disorder, etc., or just testing scores that indicate difficulties with phonemic awareness and decoding can be crafted into a good profile.

At the Certified level, trainees work with two practicum students. One of these students **MUST** have a formal diagnosis.

- **FAQ: Can my student have other challenges?**

Although many students can benefit from an O-G approach, a student with additional and/or other challenges (e.g., ADHD, cognitive impairment, receptive or expressive language impairment, behavioural challenges, etc.) **would not be suitable as a practicum student at the Associate level.**

- **FAQ: Do I need to use the same student for the entire practicum?**

Although it is preferable to use the same student, the Academy realizes that certain situations are not always ideal for doing practicum. You do not need the 100 hours of practicum to be with the same student you present in your application, but you should work with the student for a sufficient time to show progress through the scope and sequence. It is recommended that you complete least 40 lessons with the practicum student that you choose to submit.

- **FAQ: At what level should the student be?**

Age is not as important as level, although most students would not be appropriate for a practicum before grade 2. A practicum student at the Associate level should be at the early stages of instruction.

This means that they are working on grapheme-phoneme correspondences, beginning spelling patterns and some syllable work.

- **FAQ: Will I be certified after I finish the practicum? or are there additional requirements?**

Upon completion of the practicum and all coursework requirements, trainees are invited to submit their application package for review. Each level has different requirements.

*Trainees should create an account on the Academy website to view the current requirements for applying for certification before beginning a practicum, so they are aware of the requirements and the process.*

If the Fellow is an Accredited Training Fellow – the application is reviewed by them first to determine if the criteria have been met. If the ATF is confident that all criteria have been met, the application is submitted to the Academy. If it is determined that the application package is not yet ready for submission, the ATF will provide feedback and support to the applicant to strengthen their application and they can apply again once the requirements have been met.

- **FAQ: I live far away from my Fellow. Can I do a long-distance supervised practicum?**

Long-distance practicums using real-time video conferencing are possible when a trainee lives too far for an in-person visit or under other circumstances (e.g., COVID).

*There may be situations where trainees need to work with students remotely.*

#### **REQUIREMENTS FOR DISTANCE SUPERVISION:**

The trainee is required to have access to high-speed internet, a camera, monitor, speakers, and a microphone. Most people find a laptop is sufficient. *(No Chromebooks)* Using the ZOOM platform, the Fellow joins the session and interacts with the trainee and student. *Under certain circumstances, trainees may video and upload the unedited lesson for review.*

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*All trainees must have access to and decent facility with technology, including the ability to work with Word documents, combine files into PDFs, use Dropbox Paper, as well as scan and upload documents on a timely basis.*

Please go to [funlearning.ca](https://funlearning.ca) for more information or to register for training.