#### Trent University LogoOPSEU JOB DESCRIPTION

**Job Title:** Placement Coordinator

**Job Number:** A-158 | VIP: 1358

**Band:** OPSEU- 9

**NOC:** 1223

**Department:** School of Education & Professional Learning

**Supervisor Title:** Program Manager

**Last Reviewed:**  November 2, 2022

#### Job Purpose:

Using diplomacy and tact to collaborate and consult, the incumbent is responsible for complex communication and relationship building with local school boards to source and secure practicum partnerships that align with the learning objectives of the Bachelor or Education programs. Taking the lead role in coordinating and responding to ongoing practicum matters while problem solving and maintaining positive working relationships between a variety of contacts within the University (faculty and students and Admissions), in combination with several partner school boards including close consultation with school principals and teachers. Works closely and collaborates with the Program Manager, Education faculty members, and school partners in all activities related to the Practicum component of the Bachelor of Education Program. Responsible for establishing and verifying all practicum related to the Consecutive Bachelor of Education program, and the Indigenous Bachelor of Education program, throughout a multi-year program.

#### Key Activities:

* Build relationships with school boards to recruit Associate Teachers, Education Coordinators, Reading Associates within partner school boards.
* Liaise with school principals, Education Coordinators and Associate Teachers to ensure practicum expectations are met in accordance to program guidelines.
* Advise Teacher Candidates regarding practicum requirements, arrangements and resolving practicum concerns and issues.
* Arrange all B.Ed. and Indigenous B.Ed. practica and placements, involving complexities such as:
  + teaching subjects
  + divisional requirements
  + geographic location
  + availability of Associate Teachers
  + specific (accommodations) and/or required requests from Teacher Candidates
  + faculty input
  + principal feedback
  + historical individual and school issues throughout multi-year programs
* Ensure B.Ed. and Indigenous B.Ed. candidates fulfil statutory requirements as per the Education Act, Ontario College of Teachers, school board policies and federation guidelines while acting in a manner that upholds professional standards.
* Take a leadership role in problem solving practicum issues and responds to concerns between all participating parties.
* Deliberate, mediate, and navigate complex practicum issues between:
  + Associate Teachers and Teacher Candidates
  + Education Coordinators and Teacher Candidates
  + Principals and Teacher Candidates
  + Faculty and Associate Teachers
  + Faculty and Education Coordinators
  + Faculty and Principals
* Advise Teacher Candidates how to access appropriate resources, services, options, and next steps in order to ensure correct referrals, advice, and positive outcomes for teacher candidates, faculty, and partners.
* Communicate regularly with Education faculty and retain feedback for future practica. Liaise between faculty advisors, associate teachers, and teacher candidates to ensure that practicum and placement expectations are being upheld.
* Ensure practicum documentation is in accordance with current governing body practicum policies (Ontario College of Teachers) and accreditation expectations.
* Provide confidential support to Teacher Candidates to navigate practicum related issues in a wide variety of different areas, including potential personal challenges and crises, medical concerns, etc. as issues arise, and tracking cases to provide follow-up.
* Monitor and uphold practicum protocols while following Ontario College of Teachers regulations throughout each practicum cycle.
* Review input from Faculty Advisors, Associate Teachers and teacher candidate appointments and files to determine optimal practicum arrangements that align with the needs of each participant (student and teacher).
* Contribute to and consistently monitor the quality of student experience with teachers, schools and principals.
* Review and manage outcomes of international police reports, Vulnerable Sector Screenings and TB tests. Contact police stations to ensure statutory requirements are met regarding official documentation, request incident reports, consult with school boards, etc. Consulting with school board partners to determine outcomes.
* Member of Teacher Education Advisory Committee and synthesize feedback from partners to ensure accurate record keeping for accreditation.
* Consult with Additional Qualifications Manager during Accreditation process to ensure Practicum is accurately represented in submitted OCT documentation.
* Review Work/Education Placement Agreement/Post-Secondary documents, consult with schools and Risk Management regarding workplace injuries and prepare affiliation agreements for appropriate signatures.
* Advise teacher candidates on Alternative Placements that match their interests and project availability.
* Ensure practicum documentation is in accordance with Ontario College of Teachers.
* Attend annual provincial practicum conference as Trent representative.
* Promote positive and long-lasting working relationships with Associate Teachers, Education Co-ordinators, and all participatory school boards.
* Reports periodic updates to the Program Manager, Program Chair and Dean regarding student progress, status of practicum agencies and schools, and problems encountered in practicum.
* Participate and represent the Practicum Office with Read Day, Orientation events, and other related events.
* Lead annual reviewing and updating of practicum-related materials, including the Practicum Handbook, Practicum Expectations documents and other related procedural material.
* Coordinate annual Education Recruitment Fair. Arrange for school boards to attend and interview teacher candidates to be hired after graduation. Guide and support teacher candidates through external hiring process.
* Approve requests for honoraria and release time associated with associate teacher and Education Coordinator activities associated with B.Ed. practica, ensuring that monies are appropriately distributed and that payments to school boards are processed in a timely fashion.
* Other duties as required

#### Education Required:

* Honours (4 years) undergraduate degree (Arts or Science).
* Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree.

#### Experience/Qualifications Required:

* Three years of directly related experience in a Faculty/School of Education***plus***

at least one year of classroom teaching experience (Kindergarten to grade 12)

* Demonstrated experience working with complex and sensitive issues requiring a high degree of diplomacy
* Understanding and commitment to equity and diversity
* Exhibit patience and strong active listening skills and ability to work independently with minimum supervision.

#### Supervision:

* Lead Hand to Job # SO-466
* Additional supervision of Job # SO-425

**Analytical Reasoning**

Due to a number of changes in the needs of this position, predominantly prompted by:

* the removal of the Practicum Manager position as part of the on-going reorganization of the administration within School of Education
* the introduction of the Program Manager and B.Ed. Coordinator positions
* the introduction of the Indigenous Bed program
* the amendments to Regulation 347/02 *Accreditation of Teacher Educations Programs* and the commensurate move to a four-semester program,

The level of analytical reasoning required for this position has significantly increased over time. For each practicum being booked, the following factors must be taken into consideration, alongside statutory requirements for accreditation:

* evaluate the previous challenges that a given school has experienced (if a school has repeated challenging situations in back-to-back years, they will withdraw support for our program)
* review each Teacher Candidate (TC) summative evaluations to determine reported strengths and weaknesses and decide how they can be best supported and by whom, based on available Associate Teachers.
* negotiate an optimal learning environment with consultation with the school principal, factoring in the location of the school with respect to the home address of the TC (and accounting for the total distance of intercity travel that has already been logged by the TC so far in the program).
* TC Student Accessibility Services (SAS) accommodation requiring placement in a specific location or classroom requirement.
* Meeting and consultation reports with TC to review their circumstances and individual, specific needs.
* the previous grade levels the Teacher Candidate (TC) has already had
* specific requests made by the school (e.g., for a TC who is strong in math, or experience with high needs youth etc.)
* the number of Teacher Candidates in a given school per practicum, plus additional considerations.
* other factors as they arise.

All of the above have to be carefully considered and balanced for each and every single placement and practicum that is booked. The Placement Coordinator individually arranges approximately 1000 practicum placements per year. One error such as missing a notification that a given TC requires a practicum with specific SAS accommodation could result in having to rearrange one placement, and then a chain reaction of multiple changes can often result. The Placement Coordinator must therefore have all of these issues in mind at once, while multi-tasking serval urgent issues while under time pressure and overriding degree requirements.

**Decision Making**

As outlined in the tasks described above, decision making has the potential to significantly impact outcomes for teacher candidates, faculty, partners and the B.Ed. programs. One example of this would be a situation in which a school contacts the office during a practicum, to relay a situation whereby a developing conflict is taking place, in which the Teacher Candidate's practicum might be terminated. The actions of the Placement Coordinator will be essential in terms of determining whether the conflict will be resolved or not. Due to the fact that a terminated practicum is automatically viewed as a failure, and two failures will remove a Teacher Candidate from the B.Ed. program, it is critical that appropriate decision making under these circumstances be invoked. The specific circumstances of such communications are frequently scrutinized in subsequent appeals. The Placement Coordinator needs to be an individual upon whom the Dean can rely on to make sound decisions under pressure.

**Impact**

This role potentially impacts:

* Teacher candidates, whose program progression depends upon successful practicum outcomes
  + The consequence of errors will result in a teacher candidate failing the program
* The faculty advisors (20+ faculty members) who depend upon timely, accurate, and detailed information to ensure they maintain the positive relationships established by the Practicum Coordinator
  + The consequence of errors is that a school may withdraw from the partnership thus limiting potential placement locations and the viability of the program which depends upon success placements and relationships as negotiated and arranged by the Placement Coordinator
* The program, which depends upon practicum placements to positively reflect the institution throughout the region
  + The consequences of errors will result in reputational harm to Trent University as an institution and to our graduating teacher candidates in seeking employment
* The accreditation of the program, which requires accurate record keeping and documentation which reflect the implementation of the mandatory standards for teacher education programs in Ontario
  + The consequences of errors are significant. If errors are undetected by the Placement Coordinator, and are then presented to OCT during accreditation, the integrity and on-going viability of the B.Ed. programs are in jeopardy

**Motor/ Sensory Skills**

*Motor Skills:*

* Fine Motor Skills – Data entry via keyboard, mouse
* Dexterity – Word processing

*Sensory Skills:*

* Hearing – Responding to student, faculty, school and school board queries
* Sight – Reading various reporting data and significant attention to detail required.

**Effort**

*Physical:*

* Long period of sitting at a desk answering emails, entering data and meetings with students, staff, faculty, speaking with principals and teachers.
* Regularly must stand at events while talking to various parties,
* Light to moderate lifting of equipment, boxes, and display signs for event setup
* Visual attention and extended periods of mental concentration
* Ability to respond to deadlines and work under considerable pressure.

*Mental:*

* Multiple competing demands and deadlines related to practicum planning as well as placing students in time for each practicum under pressure while maintaining focus.
* Sustained concentration - Compiling data, determining student placements, frequent interruptions.
* Long periods of visual attention and sustained concentration - Input and verify accuracy and completeness of various types of data, compiling information from various media into database with frequent interrupts.
* Ability to self-regulate under stressful and demanding circumstances.

**Working Conditions**

*Physical:*

* Fatigue – frequent interruptions, continuous re-prioritization of work
* Several evenings and weekends required during practicum (minimum of 10 weeks per year)

*Psychological:*

* Constant interruptions - Walk in (students, faculty, public), telephone calls and emails.
* Agitated students - Student not yet assigned to placements and in distress because of deadlines.
* Persistent teacher requests for practicum adjustments and program input
* Stress Resolution – Navigating the emotional stress of students and teachers to alleviate potential situations with existing school partnerships in mind.
* Multiple competing demands - Nature of the work results in unavoidable busy periods.
* Keeping all stakeholders informed and addressing any concerns; resolving complex issues as necessary
* Confidentiality - Working with sensitive academic/student/partnership situations
* Failure to arrange appropriate, timely student placement - Problems and delays in securing a placement could affect the student's ability to complete their program in an effective and timely way.
* Failure to resolve situations and maintain positive working relationships with schools and boards would directly damage the reputation of Trent University and School of Education.
* Increased difficulty in securing placements for students.