

Learning Process

The learning process in the Preparation for a Semiskilled Trade program is divided into three phases: preparation for the practicum, performance in the practicum and integration. It is a dynamic, iterative and flexible process that can be adapted to students' needs and the available resources. The teacher

and practicum supervisor in the workplace must support students throughout the learning process.

Preparation

Preparation is a determining factor in the students' choice of practicum. During this phase, students must apply all of their knowledge, as well as their personal and occupational profile, which they established in the Preparation for the Job Market program, to choose a practicum based on their interests and aptitudes. This phase also provides them with access to the information they need to make an informed choice. It enables them to

focus on their training needs, envision different ways of meeting them, increase their motivation and alleviate their fears about undertaking a practicum.

The students must:

- take advantage of their work-related and volunteering experience
- define their interests
- recognize their aptitudes and potential
- validate their perceptions by consulting people they trust
- identify the important elements to consider (e.g. employment sector, nature of tasks, distance and transportation options, specific requirements)

- identify the knowledge they need to perform the tasks
- envision expected attitudes and behaviours
- anticipate the resources they can use
- determine their first and second choice of practicum
- review the preparation phase

Performance

During this phase, students focus on the development of the specific competencies associated with the selected semiskilled trade, as well as on the adoption of attitudes and behaviours expected in the workplace where they will be doing their practicum. They use the necessary knowledge, methods and techniques to perform their tasks and conform to the related legal and regulatory provisions.

The students must:

- become familiar with the work context and organization, the culture of the work environment, appropriate behaviours, etc.
- make sure they understand the tasks to be performed: ask questions, pay attention to instructions and reformulate them as needed
- become familiar with the supervisory structure, communication methods, facilities and work tools
- follow instructions, respect deadlines and do their best
- during the practicum, check with their supervisor or work colleagues that they are meeting requirements and expectations, and make any necessary adjustments
- review the performance phase

Integration

This phase gives students an opportunity to reflect on all their practicum activities and take a critical look at the quality of their adaptation and training in the workplace. This reflection will enable them to discover their strengths and learning, and to identify any necessary improvements and determine strategies for making them. They may also examine how much the practicum enabled them to validate their perception of the trade they chose and whether they are still interested in it. They will then be able to plan the next step in their training.

The students must:

- evaluate the quality of their adaptation and participation in the workplace
- take a critical look at different work methods and uses of resources
- take stock of their discoveries and determine how they enrich their personal and occupational profile
- consider their attitudes and behaviours, evaluate their consequences and make any necessary adjustments
- consider the effectiveness of the strategies used to overcome difficulties, especially in unforeseen circumstances
- consider different ways of improving their performance
- anticipate applying their competencies in other contexts
- reflect on the integration phase

Strategies

These strategies are useful resources that enable students to improve their learning approach and performance during the practicum. Students with learning difficulties will most likely need a variety of strategies to take charge of their performance. They must learn to recognize the need to use strategies in order to succeed, to evaluate the effectiveness of the ones they use and to develop new ones as needed. The following table contains strategies associated with each of the phases in the process. Some may be used in other phases as well.

Preparation Strategies	Performance Strategies	Integration Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Learning about the different employment sectors and the related semiskilled trades: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • talking to workers, parents, school staff, friends, classmates, etc. • consulting different resources: the <i>Directory of Semiskilled Trades</i>, <i>Inforoute de la formation professionnelle</i>, <i>Emploi-Québec</i>, <i>REPÈRES</i>, etc. • determining the semiskilled trade that corresponds to their interests, aptitudes and training plan – Identifying possible practicum positions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consulting the bank of practicum positions provided by the teacher • consulting directories in local employment centres, <i>Carrefours jeunesse-emploi</i>, chambers of commerce, etc. • locating potential practicum positions in their surroundings – Consulting a complementary educational services staff member, in particular, a guidance counsellor – Envisioning ways of managing stress – Making contact with different workplaces in order to make an informed choice – Applying for a practicum position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Observing the characteristics of the workplace – Modelling themselves on good workers – Listening and being open to instructions and explanations – Verifying how to perform the required tasks – Breaking down the task into steps if necessary – Repeating certain tasks to facilitate the acquisition of automatic responses – Bearing the expected outcomes in mind – Accepting that they will not understand everything and asking questions as needed – Taking every opportunity to learn – Paying attention to the terminology associated with the employment sector and using it appropriately – Reformulating the supervisor's instructions to make sure they understand – Using a problem-solving process as needed – Finding ways of remembering the applicable health and safety rules (e.g. taking notes, paying attention to pictographs) – Consulting their workplace or school supervisor when faced with a problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Basing their reflections on facts rather than impressions – Discussing their experiences in the workplace with classmates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support received • working climate • availability of resources • requirements • positive and negative aspects • stressful situations • leisure-school-work balance – Discussing different aspects of their competency development with their practicum supervisors at school and in the workplace <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practical aspects of their integration into the workplace • adaptation to the new environment • achievements • attitudes and behaviours • difficulties encountered • means used to improve their performance • more complex tasks to come – Asking classmates and supervisors for suggestions on how to make improvements

Attitudes and Behaviours That Foster Job Retention

Various sources provide information about attitudes and behaviours that foster successful integration into the work force. Teachers can refer to the following table when developing learning and evaluation situations. In addition, several of the documents listed in the bibliography contain information on this topic, for example, *Essential Skills*, by Human Resources

and Social Development Canada (HRSDC), and *Building Essential Skills in the Workplace*, by the Conference Board of Canada. These documents can be consulted on-line (see Webography).

Appropriate Attitudes and Behaviours

- Sense of responsibility
- Respect for life and the environment
- Self-discipline (e.g. observance of schedules, politeness, courtesy, honesty, appropriate attire)
- Autonomy
- Team spirit and mutual assistance
- Reliability
- Thoroughness
- Constancy
- Attentiveness and open-mindedness
- Curiosity
- Sense of initiative (within occupational limits)
- Self-control
- Desire to learn and improve their skills
- Desire to establish harmonious interpersonal relationships