

# TIERED MODEL OF EDUCATION: SUPERVISED EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

The Tiered Model of Education provides programs with standards for the entire program: mission, curriculum, outcomes assessment, administration, resources, faculty, student services, public disclosure, and degree/non-degree program requirements. This document includes an overview of the supervised experiential learning standards and examples that may guide programs to demonstrate they meet each component standard.

The purpose of the supervised experiential learning is to develop skills in professional practice and/or research. At the master's, doctoral, and graduate-level equivalents, work towards completion of a thesis, thesis-equivalent, or a dissertation, may fulfill the experiential learning requirement.

## Supervised Experiential Learning Requirements

Supervised experiential learning can take place on or off campus, for example, in laboratories, educational settings, clinical settings, or organizations. It can take the form of basic or applied research or it can involve interventions that change behavior. The experiential learning requirement can be met through the student's professional employment if an appropriate level of supervision or oversight is provided by the program faculty. Furthermore, the experiential learning is required for obtaining the degree and it must occur before the degree is awarded (Tiers 1 and 2a), or before the completion of the non-degree program (Tiers 3a and 4a).

Each level has specific contact hours, with the supervising faculty/instructor, to fulfill the experiential learning requirements. Both doctoral and master's programs, or graduate-level equivalents, must have 90 contact hours and bachelor programs, or undergraduate-level equivalents, must have 45 contact hours. Contact hours are described as instructor-led time with the students and may include supervision, lecture, seminar, or meetings. Please know that the required contact hours are not necessarily the same as the (student's) number of required applied hours required for certification bodies' fieldwork hours.

With reasonable guidance about the kind of information needed by the ABAI, programs can decide how best to specify their goals, objectives, and strategies to achieve them. Furthermore, with adequate information from a program, the ABAI can reach an informed, fair, and reasonable decision regarding granting recognition. All programs are evaluated based on the same standards; but allowing considerable flexibility on course content and supervised experiential learning in research and practicum settings.

## Component Standards for Supervised Experiential Learning:

- i. **Opportunities:** The program defines practicum opportunities, learning objectives, and an evaluation system consistent with the contemporary science of behavior.
- ii. **Objectives:** The program specifies skills and objectives that are differentiated by the level of the degree program or education.
- iii. **Learners' Evaluation:** The program will provide an opportunity for learners to evaluate their training experience and to offer suggestions that may contribute to its improvement.
- iv. **Sites:** Sites are sufficient in number, are spacious, provide a good range of training experiences, and have a sufficient number of professionals who may provide supervision to support the achievement of learning outcomes and program objectives.
- v. **Supervision:** The program assesses experience, qualifications, and availability of site supervisor(s).

*Note: Programs will be expected to meet all five component standards to fulfill the supervised experiential learning standard. If they do not meet one or more components, ABAI may provide conditional approval contingent upon the submission of an approved progress plan.*

Each component standard includes a list of recommended examples a program might demonstrate to fulfill each component standard. These recommendations are considered guidelines or examples to meet the main standards – programs are **not** required to do each of the examples. Further, the examples are not exhaustive. ABAI will verify the program has all the necessary standards and requirements to have experiential learning; it is the program’s responsibility to ensure these standards are met for each of the experiential learning sites.

**i. Opportunities: The program defines experiential learning opportunities, learning objectives, and an evaluation system consistent with the contemporary science of behavior.**

Some examples to demonstrate and achieve this standard:

- The program maintains a set of guidelines with standards for providing services in the practicum setting(s) [site(s)] and a plan for revising these guidelines. For each guideline, the program describes measurement systems most appropriate for the type of the instruction or intervention.
- The program includes direct measures of the learning and performance of all relevant professionals in the system including supervisors, instructors, and learners. Some rubric ratings, while not strictly scientific, may be necessary to capture the personal aspects of learning and performance.
- The program demonstrates that the goals and outcomes of the practicum training experience align with didactic course content.
- The program includes several areas of expertise in which the learner needs to demonstrate competency and fluency in using behavior science-based technology.
- Other

**ii. Objectives: The program specifies skills and objectives that are differentiated by the level of the degree program or education.**

Some examples to demonstrate and achieve this standard:

- The program incorporates objectives for implementing research findings replicated frequently within the latest decade; procedures that are no longer best practices are replaced with those that are currently supported by evidence.
- The program ensures that the learners write accurate reports based on pre- and post-intervention assessments.
- The program ensures that the learners consistently implement education and behavior reduction plans with fidelity.
- The program establishes mastery criteria of learning objectives for a) learners and b) professionals, and maintains a record of progress, based on direct measures.
- The program outlines procedures in case the learner does not demonstrate acceptable competency levels at the end of the practicum (e.g., additional training hours).
- The program incorporates objectives that promote generative or derived responding through problem solving. Specifically, the program requires the learner to go beyond what was directly taught and apply what they have learned in new ways to accommodate new learning situations not encountered in training.
- Other

**iii. Learners' Evaluation: The program provides an opportunity for learners to evaluate their training experience and to offer suggestions that may contribute to its improvement.**

*No current examples specified – as programs submit evidence, ABAI may provide additional examples.*

**iv. Sites: Sites are sufficient in number, are spacious, provide a good range of training experiences, and have a sufficient number of professionals who may provide supervision to support the achievement of learning outcomes and program objectives.**

Some examples to demonstrate and achieve this standard:

- Written agreements for sites are current, specify expectations for all parties, and ensure protection of learners and collaborating sites.
- The program regularly assesses the appropriateness of site(s) to offer practicum experience.
- The program adopts and adheres to professional ethical standards of practice and research in the context of behavior science.
- The program specifies standards for professional behavior including being responsive to supervisor's feedback, working collaboratively with other professionals, and demonstrating respect for the unique backgrounds and histories of all individuals.
- The program provides opportunities for learners to evaluate the site.
- Other

**v. Supervision: The program assesses experience, qualifications, and availability of site supervisor(s).**

Some examples to demonstrate and achieve this standard:

- The program demonstrates that all supervisors meet qualifications.
- The program provides adequate training and supervision by individuals with expertise in the subject.
- The program specifies the types (synchronous/asynchronous, individual/group) of supervision that learners will receive and demonstrates capacity of supervisor(s) to provide those hours.
- The program ensures the site provides opportunities for learners to evaluate supervision.
- The program describes procedures to ensure that supervisor evaluation protocols are used to correct or improve supervision.
- Other

As part of the Tiered Model application process, programs will need to demonstrate they meet these five components of the supervised experiential learning, as they align with standards 2-106, 2-107, 2-108, 2-109, 6-101, and 7-103.