



## Supervised Practice Period

### Question:

I am an SLP working for a school board. My school has recently hired a new SLP and asked me to supervise them. I was told that they are an internationally educated professional, and that as part of their registration with ACSLPA, they must complete a period of supervised practice under the supervision of a registered SLP. I'm not familiar with this supervision requirement or process, and I am hesitant to agree. Can you tell me more about this?

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### Answer:

To help potential supervisors and employers understand the requirements for registration for internationally educated SLPs and audiologists, and how they may be involved in the process, ACSLPA has developed the following Q&A:

#### 1. Why do internationally educated registered members need to be supervised?

Applicants for registration with ACSLPA (SLPs and audiologists) who were educated outside of Canada and the United States undergo an extensive assessment of their qualifications to ensure they are substantially equivalent to Canadian qualifications. Once their qualifications have been assessed, they are then required to pass an entry to practice exam.

After successful completion of an entry to practice exam, the last step to becoming fully registered to practice in Alberta is the completion of a period of supervised practice, for which internationally educated registrants are granted a conditional practice permit. The purpose of the supervised practice period is to ensure that the new conditional registrant has the knowledge and skills required to practice their profession while supporting and assisting them in becoming successful, independent practitioners in Alberta. The period of supervised practice is meant to allow the registrant to obtain experience in a number of areas that would be reflective of their practice for their profession and to demonstrate that they meet minimum competency to practice requirements.

The supervised practice period therefore helps ACSLPA meet its mandate of public protection by taking steps to ensure that new registrants can provide competent, safe, and ethical care.

#### 2. What is the basic structure of the supervised practice period? How much paperwork is involved?

Conditional regulated members are required to complete at least 450 hours of supervised practice (roughly equivalent to 12 weeks of full-time work). The supervised practice period may be extended on the recommendation of the supervisor.

In terms of paperwork, ACSLPA requires that the supervisor and supervisee sign a supervised practice agreement, and that both a midterm and final evaluation of the supervisee's competence to practice are completed. These evaluations must be submitted to ACSLPA within the deadlines agreed upon at the start of the supervised practice period. Please see the sample supervised practice agreement and evaluation forms for each profession below:

Audiology: [https://www.acslpa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/SAMPLE\\_Supervised-Practice-Plan-and-Evaluation-Package-Audiologist-Entry-to-Practice-Nov2022.pdf](https://www.acslpa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/SAMPLE_Supervised-Practice-Plan-and-Evaluation-Package-Audiologist-Entry-to-Practice-Nov2022.pdf)

Speech Language Pathology: <https://www.acslpa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/SAMPLE-Supervised-Practice-Plan-and-Evaluation-Package-SLP-Entry-to-Practice-Nov2022.pdf>



### 3. Are there any requirements for being a supervisor?

Yes. All supervised practice period supervisors must be approved by the ACSLPA Registrar. An approved supervisor must:

- Be a practicing member of ACSLPA;
- Have a minimum of 3 years of clinical experience in their respective profession;
- Be of good character and reputation; and
- Be in good standing with ACSLPA and not be subject to any complaints or investigations at the time of the supervision.

### 4. What will I be required to do as a supervisor?

The conditions and requirements for both the supervisor and supervisee are detailed in the supervision agreement that is signed by both parties prior to the supervised practice period. This agreement can be found on pages 1-4 on the links in question 2. Key points to be aware of include:

- The supervised practice period will need to include direct (supervisor physically or virtually present during clinical activities) and indirect (supervisor monitors supervisee's performance through recordings, written records, and/or discussion) supervision.

The amount of direct vs. indirect supervision required will be variable and dependent on client complexity, site, caseload, registrant skills, and experience, and should be adjusted to meet individualized placement needs. As a guide, a minimum of 50% combined direct and indirect supervision during the first week of the placement would not be uncommon, decreasing to a low of 5-10% of supervision during progressive weeks of the placement, depending on the registrant.

- You may be required to evaluate the registrants' ability to provide professional services in English (this will be outlined in the supervised practice plan, if required) For example, the registrant will be required to demonstrate that clients are able to understand and discriminate their verbal instructions, to demonstrate comprehension of questions and comments from clients, and to formulate appropriate responses. You will also be required to comment on the registrant's written language abilities, and whether their documentation in English meets minimum standards.
- Supervisors and supervisees are expected to contact their ACSLPA liaison if major concerns or questions arise that cannot be resolved between the supervisor and supervisee independently.

### 5. Can I share supervisor duties with a colleague?

Absolutely! In some situations, this may even be preferable as it allows for the extra duties of supervision to be shared among two clinicians. It is preferable in situations where the conditional registrant is working across different departments or settings, allowing for the supervisor with experience/expertise in each department to evaluate the registrant's competence. Collaborative supervision may also increase fairness in evaluating the registrant's skills and provides opportunities for each supervisor to model and learn effective supervision (and collaboration) strategies.

If you are going to share supervision duties, it would be important for you and your colleague to have a discussion prior to the supervised practice period to clarify roles and expectations (e.g., how will you handle concerns? How much direct supervision can each supervisor realistically provide? Who will be responsible for communicating with ACSLPA?).



## Supervised Practice Period - continued

### 6. Is this similar to student supervision? Would I be accountable for the services provided by the supervisee? Are there any tasks that a supervisee would not be allowed to do?

The supervision process for entry to practice internationally educated professionals is different from student supervision. Remember that conditional registrants have already been vetted to have the academic qualifications and clinical practice hours required to become registered as an SLP or audiologist in Alberta. In many cases, they will already have work experience in their profession. Supervision should therefore typically involve less direct teaching of clinical skills, and more teaching around procedures and processes specific to the Alberta/Canadian setting. There may be instances, however, where direct teaching of a specific skill is required.

Conditional registrants have their own practice permit, and so are able to engage in any professional activities under the scope of practice for their profession. Until such time as the supervision period is completed, however, the supervising professional is responsible and accountable for the services delivered. Supervisors need to monitor that services are being provided in a safe, ethical, and competent manner and to step in if the supervisee is not meeting requirements for safe and competent care, providing direction and guidance as appropriate.

See the ACSLPA standard of practice on [Clinical Supervision](#), which outlines the minimum requirements of supervisors during the supervised practice period. Regulated members who are supervising the practice of restricted activities should also refer to the standard of practice on the [Supervision of Others by Regulated Members](#) for the minimum supervisory responsibilities for restricted activities.

### 7. Am I obligated to agree to being a supervisor?

ACSLPA does not require that regulated members serve as supervisors for internationally educated registrants if they are asked to do so by their employer.

Ideally, given the various requirements outlined above (e.g., providing direct supervision, completion of the mid and final evaluations), a regulated member would agree to supervise only if they had sufficient time and resources to provide adequate supervision. To that end, it may be helpful to have a discussion with your employer or administrator about the practical requirements of supervision in your setting and what supports might be available to you before agreeing to supervise.

## Top Skills for Supervisors

- Communication Skills
- Conflict Resolution
- Leadership
- Critical Thinking

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If you have any questions or need further clarification, please contact ACSLPA's SLP or Audiology Advisors through the [Contact Us](#) form on the ACSLPA Website.