**Practicum Frequently Asked Questions**

**How many practicum hours do I need to take the BCBA exam?**
1,000 hours of work at the hosting agency
75 hours of direct supervision with your supervisor.

**How are the practicum hours distributed throughout the program?**

**ABA-510:** 17-20 hours per week at hosting agency for the entirety of a 15 week semester, and exactly 19 individually supervised hours (1 visit per week Total: 250 practicum hours and 19 supervised hours.

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**I work far more than 17 hours per week at my hosting agency. Can I count all of them?**
BACB and Sage requirements will only allow a student to account for 250-255 hours per semester. This will ensure that you receive the proper 7.5%-10% of the total hours as supervised hours and stay on track with practicum assignments. You may not get ahead in supervision hours, including group supervision, each semester. No matter many how many total hours are logged, only 17-20 hours per week will count toward your practicum requirements, without exception.

**Can I do the practicum coursework and worry about the hours later?**
No. All practicum hours and supervised hours must be completed simultaneously in order to receive a passing grade in each of four practicum classes. Your agency representative will submit verification of your work hours and your BCBA supervisor will submit verification of your supervision hours.

**Can I take the practicum sequence in any order I choose?**
No. The practicum courses are designed to introduce concepts to students in a particular order that is beneficial to their performance and learning experience. Students must take ABA-510 for the first practicum and ABA-513 for the las. ABA-511 and ABA-512 may be taken in any order between ABA-510 and ABA-513.

**What criteria must a hosting agency possess?**
A hosting agency must practice the principles of ABA. Please visit the BACB website for in-depth and current information.

**I currently work at a school/agency that practices ABA. Can I use my job as my practicum placement?**
Yes, as long as it meets all criteria set forth by the BACB and The Sage Colleges, and as long as your job is in agreement. Please visit www.bacb.com for current requirements. You may also begin by asking these questions of your chosen agency:

1. Does this agency serve clients diagnosed along the Autism Spectrum Disorder or with other severe disabilities?
2. If not, does this agency service clients with whom behavior analysis services are appropriate? (Yes must be the answer yes to at least one of the first two questions.)
3. Will I have the opportunity to work with at least 5 clients during the practicum experience?
4. Does the agency employ a BCBA who is able to provide supervision, or will the agency consent to the presence of a BCBA supervisor that is not employed by the hosting agency?
5. Will the agency allow one or more of these forms of supervision by their own BCBA employee or by a Sage approved BCBA supervisor? (Face-to-Face is the preferred method of supervision.):
• Face-to-face supervision in which the supervisor is physically present at the agency to observe work with clients.
• Distance supervision in which a web camera and the internet are used to provide real time observation of work with clients.
• Distance supervision in which a combination of real time supervision using a web camera and/or video camera footage is used to provide a means of observation when 100% real time means are not possible.

6. Will the agency allow me to participate in these types of activities?

• Conducting assessment activities related to the need for behavioral interventions;
• Designing, implementing and monitoring behavior analysis programs for clients
• Overseeing the implementation of behavior analysis programs by others;
• Other activities normally performed by a behavior analyst that are directly related to behavior analysis such as attending planning meetings regarding the behavior analysis program, researching the literature related to the program, talking to individuals about the program; plus any addition activities related to oversight of behavioral programming such as behavior analysis supervision issues, or evaluation of behavior analysts’ performance. The supervisor will determine if activities qualify. (www.bacb.com)

7. Does the agency understand that these activities are not appropriate for practicum experience?

• Attending meetings with little or no behavior analytic content
• Providing interventions that are not based in behavior analysis
• Doing non-behavior analytic administrative activities or any other activities that are not directly related to behavior analysis. (www.bacb.com)

8. Will a qualified member of this agency accurately report my practicum hours to Sage at the end of the practicum?

My Nephew is Autistic. Can I work with him to complete my practicum hours?
No. Under no circumstances are students allowed to use their relatives as clients.

One of my Employees is a BCBA. Can he/she be my practicum supervisor?
No. Your BCBA supervisor cannot be your subordinate.

I know someone with a Ph.D. in psychology, but s/he is not a BCBA. Can s/he supervise me?
No. You supervisor must have a current and valid Certificant ID # from the BACB.

I live in a very remote area, and I can’t find a BCBA to supervise me. Can I apply for/remain in the practicum program?
Yes, you will still have the opportunity to apply for or remain in the practicum program. Face-to-face supervision is the preferred method, but this isn’t always possible for some students. Many BCBAs are pleased to have the opportunity to provide distance supervision. This means that the student and supervisor will need to use real time digital media and/or video footage for the supervisor to observe the student’s work. Video supervision would require the student to videotape interactions with clients and send the videos to their supervisor to be observed and critiqued.

Can I use more than one agency per semester to fulfill my practicum obligations?
No. Varying settings and clients across semesters is encouraged, but you should immerse yourself into one setting at a time and maintain that setting for a whole semester.
I have done BCaBA independent fieldwork in the past. Can I apply those hours toward the 1,000 I need for the practicum track program?  
No. Sage does not accept BCaBA hours. All practicum track students must be prepared to immerse themselves in the practicum experience, which differs from the independent fieldwork that most students completed for their BCaBA requirements.

What do I do prior to signing up for ABA-510?  
Most students will enter the program with an agency willing to host them for the duration of their practica. Most will also have access to a BCBA on-site who will be willing to supervise them. For those students who are struggling to find an agency and/or supervisor, please use the information provided here to assist you in the process.

Students who cannot find a practicum agency:

- Begin by going to the BACB website.  
  - Click on Find/Contact Certificants  
  - Enter your zip code (if in United States) or country (if outside of the United States).  
  - Write to all of the BCBAs in your area to ask them about potential opportunities. These opportunities may be volunteer or paid, part-time (20 hours per week minimum), or full-time positions.  
  - Follow any leads you receive as instructed.  
- Use a search engine like Google to search for agencies that provide ABA services to clients with autism.  
  - Search example: "applied behavior analysis" + "Your city and state (or international equivalent)"  
  - Search example: "autism" + "your city and state (or international equivalent)"  
  - Contact agencies that provide ABA services to see if they would be willing to host your for the duration of your practicum (four semesters, 15 weeks each).  
- Since Sage accepts students from all over the world, we do not have formal ties with agencies to take in practicum students. We cannot guarantee practicum placements will be available in your area.

Students who cannot find a BCBA supervisor:

- Begin by going to the BACB website.  
  - Click on Find/Contact Certificants  
  - Enter your zip code (if in United States) or country (if outside of the United States).  
  - Write to all of the BCBAs in your area to ask them if they are available to provide you with weekly supervision for 1-2 hours per week at your practicum agency.  
    - Please note: BCaBAs may also come up in your list. BCaBAs cannot provide you with supervision. You must receive your supervision from a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA).  
- If you cannot find a BCBA in your area who is available to provide you with supervision, then you should talk to your agency about using a distance supervisor.  
  - There is a list of distance supervisors in the Practicum section of the ABA Moodle site. Use this list to contact BCBAs.  
  - Make sure your agency will allow you to use Skype and/or video to receive supervision.  
- Sage can provide students with a distance supervisor, but we cannot guarantee on-site supervision if your agency will not allow distance supervision.
What do I need to do after ABA-510 begins?

To Complete Right Away:

- Be settled on your placement agency and BCBA supervisor by the first week of class.
- Review the contract submission deadlines posted at the Practicum Resources site.
- Complete the Student Contract. The contract and submission deadlines are posted at the Practicum Resources site.
- Provide your agency representative with the link to the Practicum Resources page. Your agency representative should fill out the Agency Contract by the date posted.
- Provide your BCBA Supervisor with the link to the Practicum Resources page. Your supervisor should fill out the the BCBA Supervisor Contract by the date posted.
- Upload email verification (copy and paste into a Word document) of completed contracts to your Moodle class by the date specified in class.

Failure to return a completed contract by the posted due date will result in the need to drop the practicum.

To Complete Throughout Practicum:

- Track the number of hours spent practicing ABA at your practicum placement each day. You should have at least 250 hours by the end of the semester.
  - Use the Academic calendar to help you determine how many hours you need to complete each week to reach 250 hours by the last day of class. This will generally be 17-20 hours per week. You may accumulate practicum hours when Sage is closed for a holiday.
  - In order to comply with BACB standards, you may not count more than 25 hours per week.
  - Print out or save the BACB Fieldwork and Practicum Experience Supervision Form from www.bacb.com. Your supervisor must complete this form and provide you with a copy at the end of each supervision session (each week).
    - Talk to your supervisor to determine who is responsible for bringing a blank copy of this form to each session.
    - Keep the completed forms for your own records. The BACB may ask to review supervision forms prior to taking the exam. You do not need to submit your weekly supervision forms to Sage.
    - Use the Academic calendar to help you determine how many hours of supervision you need to complete each week to reach 19 hours by the last day of class.

What do I do when the practicum course is over and I’ve completed my hours?

To Complete at the End of Practicum:

- Review the deadlines posted at the Practicum Resources site.
- Provide your agency representative with the link to the Practicum Resources page. Your agency representative should click on the Hosting Agency link and complete the online verification form by the posted deadline. You need 250 practicum hours to complete the course.
  - Be sure to send the link to your agency representative well before the deadline.
  - You will receive an incomplete in the course if we have not received the appropriate documentation for your practicum hours by the deadline.
- Provide your BCBA Supervisor with the link to the Practicum Resources page. Your Supervisor should click on the BCBA Supervisor link and complete the online verification form by the posted deadline. You need 19 supervision hours to complete the course.
  - Be sure to send the link to your BCBA Supervisor well before the deadline.
  - You will receive an incomplete in the course if we have not received the appropriate documentation for your supervision hours by the deadline.
• Upload email verifications (copy and paste into a Word document) of both work experience and supervision hours verification into your Moodle class by the date specified.

• Ask your supervisor for a completed Experience Verification Form (download the latest version from www.bacb.com). You will not need this form until it’s time to apply for the exam, but we advise students to obtain a signed form at the end of every practicum course in the event that your supervisor changes or becomes unavailable to sign for you. DO NOT submit this form to Sage. Save it for when you apply for the certification exam.