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Handbook on School Practice for Student Teachers

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Prepared by
THE SCHOOL PRACTICE UNIT
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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PREAMBLE

This Handbook, besides providing information on the organisation of school practice, sets out the objectives of school practice and the part you, the student-teacher, must play to help achieve these objectives. In its widest sense school practice includes all experiences and practical activities that help to prepare you for the manifold responsibilities of a teacher. Hence, during the period of training you are expected to achieve instructional skills and competencies, develop a frame of mind that shows concern for the well-being of the learners under your charge and be a responsible member of the school ~~community~~.

School Practice is that part of the course when students come into contact with the actual teaching-learning situation, and interact with it to develop their own teaching competence, broaden their experiences and gain insight into the theory and practice of teaching and learning.

It is therefore very important that you make use of all the opportunities and facilities available during your attachment to learn, practise, evaluate and generally work towards the objectives of school practice. The initiative must come from you.

During teaching practice you are expected

- To acquire an understanding of the responsibilities of a teacher in the classroom and in the school.
- To develop an understanding of a teacher's responsibility for a pupil's cognitive, affective and moral development.
- To develop skills in planning classroom activities.
- To develop skills in direct teaching and in guiding the learning activities of pupils.
- To develop skills in evaluating the learning activities of pupils.
- To develop an understanding of teaching through evaluating certain theoretical concepts.
- To get to know other teachers in the same school and to learn from them the skills of teaching and classroom management.

2 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENT TEACHER

A great deal of thought and planning has gone into the posting of students and the selection of schools to enable the students to teach subject combinations they have chosen. The attachment of students to schools has been made possible through the co-operation of the Ministry of Education and the generosity and concern of principals of schools.

2.1 You should make good use of the time you are in a school to learn, practise, and work towards the objectives of school practice as stated on page 2. Free periods are to be used to prepare and plan lessons, observe other teachers at work in school activities, explore alternative approaches and methods, and mark pupils' written work.

2.2 You should see yourself as being trained for a profession, and you should therefore conduct yourself with propriety and decorum. On the matter of appearance and conduct, you are expected

- to maintain a general appearance of neatness;
- to dress sensibly and appropriately for the different school activities;
- to be courteous and tactful in your dealings with the senior staff, colleagues and pupils;
- to be punctual on all occasions;
- to comply with the school requirements of signing the staff attendance register;
- to report promptly to the school principal as well as the School Practice Unit in case of inability to be at school because of sudden illness, etc;
- to defer to the judgement of the school principal and vice-principal in matters relating to the administration of the School.

- 2.3 You should prepare all your lessons with care. Lesson plans and instructional aids and materials (to be kept in a loose-leaf file) should be made available to your Supervisor. You must prove to yourself and to your Supervisor that you have clear objectives for each lesson, and that the implementation of activities to achieve these objectives is the product of careful and detailed thought. For at least 5 lessons per week, you should have your planning for the lesson recorded in sufficient detail.
- 2.4 You should seek to put into practice what you learn at IE, taking into consideration the needs of your pupils. It is envisaged that you will try to teach creatively, and constantly seek to improve your teaching and your pupils' learning.

- 3.1 While attached to a school, you will have the opportunity to make observations of many worthwhile aspects of school life, both in the classroom and in the wider organisation of the school. It is suggested that such observations as are made be recorded in a systematic manner and that these be kept in such a form as to be readily available for reference.
- 3.2 While no fixed range of classroom observation is prescribed, this being dependent on factors such as the facilities available in the school and your own initiative and time at your disposal, it is suggested that at least one lesson per week be observed and recorded. Your notes and comments should be of a positive nature and you should refrain from including the demonstrator's name and making unprofessional comments. At all times, be humble and tactful.
- 3.3 To assist you to direct your attention to organisational aspects of school life from which worthwhile ideas are likely to be found, the suggestions below are offered.

3.3.1 School routine and organization

These might include the school assembly -
playground supervision - physical education
and sports - use of school garden - bulletin
boards - filing of school records - organisation
of special occasions eg. Speech Day,
Parents' Day, Keep the School Clean
Campaign, etc - use of special rooms and
classes - use of tests - the school library
- use of guest speakers etc.

3.3.2 Classroom organization and procedures

For lesson observation, the left hand page of your observation note book might be kept to indicate:

Standard/Class
 Specific Aim of Lesson
 Presentation (Main Steps and Stages)
 Follow-up
 Teaching Aids.

The right hand pages might be used for your own observations under some of these headings:

Initial control

How was this gained? (Note, for example, methods of changing from one lesson to another, routine procedures for getting children to take their places, distribution of books etc.)

Motivational techniques

How did the teacher arouse children's interest initially?

How was the interest maintained throughout the lesson?

Teaching Aids

How did the use of the chalk-boards, textbooks, illustrations and other A.V. aids assist in the teaching-learning process?

Child participation

How were the children brought into the lessons?

What use was made of the children's previous knowledge?

How did the teacher pose questions to the children (Note purposes, quality, relevance, variety and distribution of questions.)

What provision were made for children's participation and involvement during the lesson and in the follow-up?

Class supervision and management

Note position of teacher - how was this varied?

How did the teacher supervise children's assignment/activity work?

What means were used by the teacher to develop initiative and sense of responsibility?

Did the teacher provide opportunity for creative response?

How did the teacher deal with problem children eg. the inattentive child, the shy child, the exhibitionist etc?

How did the teacher cater for individual differences?

(Note class groupings and bases for grouping, remedial teaching methods and aids etc. if any.)

3.4

Further comments

Under this heading some of the following might be included:

Teacher-pupil relationship and classroom atmosphere

General layout of the classroom.

Any special problems encountered in the teaching-learning situation.

Any new and interesting techniques used.

System of marking and reporting children's progress.

Source materials used by teacher in lesson preparation.

4. MATERIALS REQUIRED DURING TEACHING PRACTICE

4.1 School Practice File

Each day's lesson plan should be neatly kept in the school practice file. A specially designed file for this purpose is available in the IE Bookshop. Your subject lecturer will discuss with you how schemes of work and lesson plans should be prepared. You may also refer to the hints and suggestions found in the Introduction To Teaching Handbook.

4.2 Lesson Plan

Every lesson must have a lesson plan which is carefully prepared and written neatly. You are expected to prepare five detailed lesson plans per week. The others could be brief. These lesson plans must be kept in the school practice file and be made available to the supervisor.

4.3 Textbooks

Textbooks for use in classroom teaching are generally available on loan from the school to which you have been posted. These books should be returned at the end of School Practice. All loaned material, whether textbooks or other articles, from your school should be returned; materials should be properly looked after.

When such desk copies are not available, you are required to buy them.

4.4 Instructional Materials

If you require filmstrips, soft-ware or other instructional materials, please consult our staff at the Media Loan and Production Service Unit. There you can check out instructional materials that are available. If the materials for the particular topic you require are not available, then you can prepare them at the production area of the Media Studio 1 in Block C. Guidance is available from staff members of the Media Loan and Production Service Unit at any time between 0830 hours and 1700 hours on weekdays and 0830 hours and 1300 hours on Saturday. Please refer to the Resource Centre 'Service Guide' for services available.

4.5 The Teacher's Record Book

The Teacher's Record Book is for recording the lessons to be taught on a weekly basis. The book is usually seen by the principal or vice-principal. If you are required by the school to use this Record Book, consult the principal or vice-principal on how he would like this to be kept.

5. GENERAL

5.1 School Practice Card and Photograph

The School Practice Unit maintains individual records of school postings. You are required to fill in the particulars on the School Practice Card and paste a copy of your recent photograph in the space provided.

5.2 Time-table

5.2.1 Submit one copy of your teaching time-table to the School Practice Unit and one copy to your Supervisor. These must be submitted by the end of the first week of your attachment to school.

5.2.2 Blank copies of specially designed time-tables are available at the School Practice Unit. Ensure that all information is recorded on both sides of the time-table.

5.2.3 Keep your supervisor and the School Practice Unit informed of any changes in the time-table during the year. Prompt action is necessary.

5.2.4 Fresh copies of time-tables are to be submitted to the Supervisor and the School Practice Unit for the new year. This is done during the first week of January. Time-table forms are available from the School Practice Unit.

5.3 Address/Telephone Number/Marital Status

Write to the Deputy Registrar to inform him of any changes in your address, telephone number or marital status so that records can be updated. Forward a copy of your letter to the School Practice Unit.

5.4 Special Method Subjects (Diploma/Cert Ed. 'A' Level students)

At the end of each school year in November, you are to remind your principal of the two Special Method subjects you are required to teach. He can then make provision in the allocation of subjects and time-tabling for the new year.

5.5 Notices on School Practice

Notices pertaining to school practice are placed on notice boards on the ground floor of Block C adjoining the passage way to the **Bookshop**. Information on school postings and supervisors assigned to student teachers are displayed on these notice boards.

5.6 School Practice Files

A special file has been designed by the School Practice Unit. You should date your lesson plans and file them in sequence for the semester. This file is available at the IE Bookshop and is now priced at \$4/=.

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INFORMATION FOR SCHOOLS

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Since student-teachers are both employees of the Ministry of Education and students at the Institute, they are subjected to rules and procedures in the school and in the Institute. The information provided here will be useful to principals and school authorities in planning teaching time-tables for student teachers attached to their schools.

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PLANNING
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Principals are kindly requested to guide the students on all administrative matters and the regulations governing the conduct of civil servants.

1. Attendance

All students are required to be present in the school from Monday to Friday. During the times they are in the school they are to carry out all tasks related to teaching practice and spend their free time preparing and planning their lessons, marking the pupils' assignments and work and evaluating what they have done in the classroom. They may not leave early without the prior approval of the principal of the school. The times they are to remain in school are specified below. It is essential that they take part in the school assembly and flag raising/lowering ceremony.

2. Time and Session

Diploma in Education students (graduates)

These students will teach in the morning session. They will report from the first period onwards. They will teach till noon. This arrangement is made to enable students to commute from school to the Institute for lectures which commence at 2.00 p.m.

Certificate in Education students

i) ~~Certificate-in-Education~~ 'A' level students will teach in ~~primary/secondary~~ schools in the afternoon session only. They will report from the second period and teach till the end of the session.

This arrangement is made to enable students to commute from the Institute to schools after their lectures which normally end at noon.

ii) ~~Certificate-in-Education~~ 'O' level students will teach in primary schools in the session they have been assigned. Those assigned to teach in the morning session will report from the first period onwards and teach till noon. Those assigned to teach in the afternoon session will report from the second period and teach till the end of the session. This is to allow students adequate time to commute between the Institute and the schools and vice versa.

3. Teaching Load

Student teachers are not expected to carry a teaching load that is more than two-thirds of the teaching load of a qualified teacher under normal circumstances. Hence Diploma and ~~Certificate-in-Education~~ students will teach up to twenty period per week in secondary schools. For trainees in primary schools, this will be in the region of twenty-four periods.

4. Extra-Curricular Activities

Students are required to assist the school during the session they teach. However, they are not required to turn up in school to do ECA on Saturdays or the other session. ~~Teachers-in-Training~~ have their own Co-Curricular Activity on Saturdays at the Institute.

5. Subject Combinations

5.1 One of the working principles to be kept in mind for allocation of subjects for Diploma and Certificate ('A' Level) students is that they should get an opportunity to teach 2 subjects in which they have had academic preparation.

5.2 Certificate in Education, 'A' level students teaching in primary schools are also required to teach other subjects in the curriculum in addition to the 2 subjects mentioned above. Certificate in Education, 'O' level students are required to teach 5 or 6 subjects in the primary school curriculum

6. First Week of Attachment

Students will require some time to get adjusted to the new working environment and to familiarize themselves with the organization, routine, syllabuses, resources, facilities, rules, pupils and staff members of the school. They will need the help of the principal and the co-operation of the staff to achieve the objectives set for this first week.

7. Absence/Leave

Procedure

Students who fall ill are required to inform the principal/senior teacher early for them to make alternative arrangements to cover your work. They will have to show the principal/senior teacher their Medical Certificate when they return to resume their school practice.

They will then have to forward a copy of the Medical Certificate to the Deputy Registrar for record.

8. Evaluation and Feedback

The Institute is grateful for the school principals' assistance in guiding the students on school practice and providing periodic feedback on their progress and attitudes. Evaluation forms will be sent to schools at the end of each semester.

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PLANNING & PRESENTATION OF LESSONS

The following list represents some of the aspects of teacher performance that your supervisor may look for in your lesson. You are advised to keep these suggestions in mind in your teaching practice.

1. Statement & selection of objectives

You should

- a) state objectives clearly in terms of pupil performance.
- b) select objectives that are worthwhile, appropriate to the pupils' ability, and relevant to the lesson topic, or unit of work.

2. Planning of activities

You should

- a) show a good knowledge of subject matter in your lesson plans.
- b) design activities that meet the interests and needs of the pupils and the stated objectives.
- c) arrange and organise activities in some logical sequence.
- d) plan a variety of learning experiences for the pupils.
- e) select and prepare a range of appropriate teaching materials.

PRESENTATION OF LESSONS

3. Teaching methods and techniques used

You should

- a) begin and end the lesson in an effective way.
- b) use methods and techniques that enhance the learning of your pupils.
- c) ask appropriate questions.
- d) adjust your teaching to the learning pace of your pupils.
- e) organize classroom activities efficiently.
- f) provide opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in your lessons.

4. Teaching aids, etc

You should

- a) make effective use of the chalkboard.
- b) make use of teaching aids in addition to the chalkboard.
- c) attempt to use a variety of aids.
- d) show skill in handling teaching materials and projectable aids.

5. Teacher-pupil relationship

You should

- a) establish and maintain discipline in the class.
- b) gain the respect of your pupils.
- c) use appropriate reinforcement to show approval or disapproval of pupil behaviour.
- d) respect pupils' feelings and views.

6. Use of tests to evaluate pupils' learning

You should

- a) select appropriate assessment techniques to evaluate pupils' achievement.
- b) construct various appropriate types of test items.
- c) administer tests efficiently.

7. Setting and marking written work

You should

- a) give adequate assignments for lessons taught
- b) follow a system of marking to facilitate feedback.
- c) return pupils' assignments promptly.

POINTS OF CONTACT

Whenever you need any clarification or advice regarding your teaching practice arrangements, please get in touch with any of the IE staff listed below:

Mr Wallace Muthu Head, Department of Professional Services	Room 2 Block D	Tel 7374511 Extension 11
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Mr Jim Madden Head, School Practice Unit	Room 2 Block D	Tel 7374511 Extension 11
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Mr Foo Chee Min Lecturer, School Practice Unit	Room 2 Block D	Tel 7374511 Extension 11
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Mr Poon Tsui Yeong Lecturer-Coordinator for School Practice	Room 2 Block D	Tel 7374511 Extension 11
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