
Handout for practice instruction for dual study students in their 5th semester



Table of content

Introduction.....	3
1. Cooperation between the departments, university and internship sites.....	4
1.1 BA Social Work dual study program at the KHSB.....	4
1.2 Contact persons at the university	4
1.2.1 The practice unit: Organizational support.....	5
1.2.2 Dual study program management and coordination: Content-related support.....	5
2. The internship: requirements, procedure and objectives.....	6
2.1 Requirements for the practice site.....	6
2.2 Qualification objectives in the internship	7
2.3 Preparation and support of the internship by the university	7
2.3.1 Responsibility of the university	7
2.3.2 Preparation and follow-up in the context of courses	8
2.3.3 Preparation and follow-up as part of supervision.....	8
2.3.4 Examination services	8
3. Instruction in the internship.....	9
3.1 Practice Mentoring.....	9
3.2 Design of the mentoring and training process.....	10
3.3 Instructional meetings.....	11
3.4 Final evaluation and confirmation	12
4. Attachments: Templates and forms.....	13
4.1 Self-disclosure form: Binding information on practice instruction.....	14
4.2 Confirmation of successful completion of the internship	15
4.3 Template for instructional meetings.....	15

Introduction

Dear practice instructors,

Dear all those interested in practice mentoring, thank you for your willingness to offer an internship in your institution and to be available as a practice mentor for a student at our university. The university would like to maintain good contact and exchange with you and your institution to ensure the desired and successful theory-practice transfer during the internship and beyond.

This handout is intended for practice mentors of our Bachelor's degree program in Social Work (dual). It is intended to inform you about how the six-week internship is embedded in the degree program and the requirements for the internship and to support you in your role as a practice mentor.

Through practice mentoring, you make an important contribution to the training of professionals in the fields of social work. The professional experience gained during the internship and reflection in mentoring meetings are of great importance for the students, as they contribute significantly to the development of professional competence and identity. We would like to thank you for your support in this process. We hope that you and your institution will also benefit from the exchange and discussion of current topics from theory and research with "your intern". When it comes to the question of practical orientation, we consider it helpful to point out the joint but shared training responsibility of the university and professional practice, as the overall training takes place at two different learning locations, each with different system logic and specific tasks.

Berlin, October 2024

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1. Cooperation between the departments, university and internship sites

1.1 BA Social Work dual study program at the KHSB

The "Dual Social Work" Bachelor's degree program is the result of a cooperation between the Catholic University of Applied Sciences Berlin and the Berlin Senate Department of Finance in order to train specialists in the field of social work in line with demand and target groups and to meet the state's requirements for social workers in terms of both quality and quantity. The first cohort started on 01.04.2023 with 40 study places. The seven semester Bachelor's degree program with 210 ECTS was successfully accredited in September 2023 for a period of eight years. The dual students are employed in various areas of social work within the public administration of the state of Berlin (including the Department of Social Affairs, Youth Welfare Office and Prison Service) and are instructed by professionals on site. They receive a gross monthly tuition fee of €1,400 as well as special payments and have an annual vacation entitlement of 30 days. The employer finances the tuition fees and the student's semester ticket. In the 5th semester, there is a compulsory 6-week internship with an alternative social work organization. This means that students with a study contract with the civil service complete their internship with an independent organization. This should enable students to get to know the structures and forms of professional work in both public and independent organizations.

The course has a practice-integrated, scientific-academic and generalist orientation. As a rule, students spend one week at the university and one week in practice during the lecture period, which enables them to combine theory and practice at both study locations. The curriculum is based on the Qualifications Framework for Social Work (FBTS) and is closely aligned with the content of the regular Bachelor's degree course in Social Work. At the same time, practical experience provides the basis for reflective processes and academic food for thought during the course. Reflection on the course content and teaching content as well as practical experience takes place throughout the course in the theory-practice module, in which topics such as one's own role in the theory-practice relationship, the importance of ambiguity tolerance as well as observation and reflection methods are addressed.

1.2 Contact persons at the university

With the aim of ensuring prompt and effective communication, the following contact persons are available to you at the KHSB.

1.2.1 The practice unit: Organizational support

The practice unit of the KHSB is responsible for all important matters relating to internships. This applies in particular to the formal recognition of internship places, the processing and approval of the "Praktikumsvereinbarung Träger" and the support of students in their search for a suitable internship place.

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1.2.2 Dual study program management and coordination: Content-related support

The practice unit is supported in all aspects of the dual study program by the head of study program and the program coordinator. They are the contact persons for all aspects relating to the dual study program concept, organizational and content-related integration of the internship into the course of study or queries during the practical phase.

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2. The internship: requirements, procedure and objectives

2.1 Requirements for the practice site

The requirements for practice sites are set out in the Social Professions Recognition Act (SozBAG) of the state of Berlin. The law specifies various professional and structural requirements for the practice sites, which must be checked by the universities. Among other things, the following binding minimum standards apply:

- The practice site represents a field of social work.
- The practice site is prepared to conclude the "Praktikumsvereinbarung Träger " with the student in accordance with the practice and study regulations.
- A practice site must have existed for at least one year and must be secured for the duration of the training.
- The practice site has a content-related concept and provides this to the university for recognition of the practice place.
- The practice site offers the opportunity to recognize the complexity and interconnectedness of a field of social work with other areas of society and to relate this to theoretical knowledge.
- The student in practical studies is not a replacement for full-time employees, but rather a temporary team member as a learner.
- The practice site has suitable specialists as practice mentors. It is desirable that:
 - the practice site enables the practice mentor to participate in further and advanced training courses that serve to develop practice mentoring skills;
 - the practice site has job and practice site descriptions.

2.2 Qualification objectives in the internship

As part of the internship, students should

- get to know and analyze the work and functioning of an institution of the alternative organization group (e.g. organization, financing, legal basis),
- deal with a specific target group of social work and their needs,
- get to know and try out action-guiding concepts and methods of social-professional action,
- Deepen the possibilities of theory-practice relations by means of a new field of work.

A further learning outcome is the (further) development of professional identity and attitude. In particular, students should recognize the tension between society, institutions and client expectations and develop their own positioning and action models. Practice mentoring can support this constructively by regularly reflecting on and evaluating learning processes to increase personal and professional judgment.

2.3 Preparation and support of the internship by the university

2.3.1 Responsibility of the university

The university has the task of organizing the preparation, support and evaluation of the practical studies and defining this in the curriculum through appropriate forms of teaching and teaching content. In concrete terms, this means that the KHSB

- ensures the preparation and follow-up of the practical phases through compulsory courses held by full-time lecturers in the theory-practice reflection module;
- checks the suitability of the practice site and the „Praktikumsvereinbarung Träger“;
- offers crisis and conflict counseling during the practical phases by the head of study program/coordinator and the practice unit;
- promotes continuous contact and exchange with the practice sites and offers further training events for practice instructors;
- develops evaluation procedures together with all those involved in practical studies and coordinates quality assurance processes.

2.3.2 Preparation and follow-up in the context of courses

In the 5th and 6th semester, dual students attend the compulsory seminar "Study-Integrated Practice" (Module 21 Theory-Practice-Reflection), in which they are prepared for the role, tasks, content and goals of the internship in a course-specific manner. The focus of this practice-theory reflection is on the specific actions in the chosen field of practice. The practical experience brought in by the students and the increasingly independently designed tasks in practice are reflected on the basis of theoretical principles. The seminar offers students the opportunity to further develop their personal and professional skills in a joint learning process through mutual support, critical feedback and exchange of experience. Students reflect on their role as interns in regards to their professional self-image. They deal with the requirements of their studies, their department and their internship site in the context of their coping skills and reflect on how to establish and shape contact and relationships with the recipients of the practical institution.

2.3.3 Preparation and follow-up as part of supervision

Supervision enables a deeper understanding of work-related reality by analyzing a situation from different perspectives with the aim of exploring options for one's own actions. Students take part in compulsory supervision in the 5th and 6th semester. The group supervision is carried out by external supervisors in a protected and confidential setting in fixed groups of 5 to 7 students. Students have the opportunity to prepare for the six-week internship during the supervision sessions and to discuss challenging situations afterwards. To do this, they arrange appointments with the supervisors independently outside of practice time.

2.3.4 Examination services

For the successful recognition of practical experience, students provide ungraded work in the Theory-Practice-Reflection module. This includes proof of successful completion of the practical period (see Annex 4.2) and the creation of portfolio tasks to analyze and reflect on the practical experience. These are combined with an individual evaluation together with the teacher of the seminar "Study-Integrated Practice" (Module 21 "Theory-Practice Reflection").



3. Instruction in the internship

3.1 Practice Mentoring

A central element for the success of the practical studies is the practice mentoring provided by the practice mentors in the practice sites. As a direct reference person within the training structures, the mentoring specialist assumes a key function and is available to the students as a role model for professional action. The establishment of a sustainable relationship with the students is an important basis, which is characterized by continuity, reliability, openness, a partnership-based approach and role clarity. The practice mentor is expected to structure and manage the students' practical work. Practice mentoring is understood as a didactic tool that takes place on four functional levels:

- the teaching function: it consists of information and knowledge transfer with regard to the practice site, the relevant legal tasks and the specific concepts and methods. It also provides knowledge about the target group;
- the advisory function: they provide implementation assistance in dealing with specific practical situations. The instructing specialist is available for systematic reflection on the practical experience gained and provides suggestions;
- the administrative function: it consists of the effort to classify professional activities in legal and organizational contexts;
- the evaluative function: it has the task of describing and evaluating the student's learning process and assessing it regarding the objective of the internship.

However, practice mentoring can only be successful if the organizational conditions are favorable and the person providing the instruction is appropriately qualified (see Appendix 4.1). Binding minimum standards should be set:

- the internship always takes place in the work area of the internship supervisor;
- The practice mentor has completed a degree relevant to the mentoring (preferably: Degree in social pedagogy/social work, diploma or B.A., M.A.);
- the practice mentor has at least 2 years of professional experience in a relevant field of work;
- the practice mentor is employed at the practice site with at least 50 percent of a full-time position;
- the practice mentor is available for the student during office hours;
- the practice mentor should not mentor more than two students at the same time;
- The deputy in the absence of the instructor is arranged for the student (especially in the case of part-time work of the practice mentor, vacation and illness)
- the mentoring specialist has the necessary time available for practice mentoring.

3.2 Design of the mentoring and training process

The following binding minimum standards apply:

- The student formulates individual learning objectives for the internship in the Theory-Practice-Reflection module in the 5th semester before the start of the practical activity and discusses possibilities for implementation with the practice mentor at the start of the practical activity;
- For the duration of the practical period, the practical mentor conducts training meetings with the student at a set time (once a week if possible). The topics for this discussion are based on the learning objectives and the requirements of the work;
- Sufficient time is also allowed for reflection and learning processes during the internship;
- the practice site gives the student the opportunity to work independently in order to work on or solve tasks independently within a framework agreed with the mentor;
- The practice site enables participation in internal meetings and events such as team meetings, service consultations, conferences, peer

counseling, case discussions;

- At the end of the practical period, the practice mentor issues a confirmation of successful completion of the practical period; an assessment in the form of a practice certificate for the student is desirable

3.3 Instructional meetings

A continuous evaluation of the practical period takes place through planned instructional meetings between the practice mentor and the student and based on experience, will have to be carried out more frequently at the beginning of the practical period and, depending on the training process, at longer intervals later on. The individual learning objectives and the associated areas of competence serve as a structural element for the discussions.

In addition, a template for instructional meetings has been developed to help structure and support the topics and process for instructional meetings (see Appendix 4.3).

The handout is structured in tabular form in order to link and compare the respective period of the internship, possible tasks of the students, possible tasks of the instructor and expected tasks in the portfolio. The handout is also available to students to help them prepare for the meetings. Other topics for instructional meetings can include:

- Which work areas listed in the learning objectives have been completed?
- Which ones can still be worked on?
- How confident does the student feel in the individual areas of work and where would they like to gain more experience and confidence?
- What knowledge has the student been able to acquire so far with regards to target groups (clients); colleagues; superiors; cooperation partnerships within the given institutional framework?
- Which professional and methodological approaches were tested and with what results?
- What professional interests have emerged in the student; what strengths and weaknesses or personal developments have become apparent?
- How is the cooperation between the practice mentor and the student, what could be improved? For that, mutual feedback should be sought.
- Where do both still have open expectations of the other and resolutions?
- What should be achieved in the remaining time?

3.4 Final evaluation and confirmation

The internship ends with a final evaluation between the practice mentor and the student and, if possible, in the team in which the student was involved. For the students, the evaluation offers the opportunity to look back on the learning process and their own professional development during the practical time and, depending on the state of knowledge, to formulate further in depth or new learning objectives for the further course of the dual study program.

At the end of the practical period, students receive a confirmation of the practical period completed and the successful completion of the practical studies. The university's form can be used for this purpose (see Annex 4.2).

With regard to students' career prospects (e.g. for future job applications), it would be helpful if the practice site could provide students with an assessment of the time spent in practice, describing the goals and tasks of the institution and the student's working methods. An assessment could also be made, for example, with regard to the desired competencies. Such an assessment is not a certificate of employment or reference.



4. Attachments: Templates and forms

Self-disclosure form: Binding information on practice instruction

Confirmation of the practical period completed and the successful completion of the practical study program

Template for instructional meetings

4.2 Confirmation of successful completion of the internship



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Certificate of practical experience for students of the Bachelor's degree program in Social Work (dual) on a completed internship with an alternative social work organization

Name and surname: _____

Born on: _____

Matriculation number: _____

Hereby we certify that the above-mentioned person **has successfully completed** a six-week study-integrated practical activity at our institution from _____ to _____ in accordance with § 11 of the practical regulations of the BA Social Work (dual) degree program to the required extent.

Name and address of the institution:

The tasks/activities of the above-mentioned person were:

At the end, I evaluated the practical activity and the student's associated learning process with the student.

The completeness and correctness of the information is assured.

Place/Date

Signature

Stamp of the practice site

Please hand the certificate to the student.

Page 1/1

4.3 Template for instructional meetings

Date of the instructional meeting:

Student:

Practice instructor:

Recording clerk:

Central consulting topics:

Arrangements:

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