



## Introductory Field Experience Winter 2021 - Summary of Guidelines and Expectations for Mentor Teachers and Student Teachers

**PLEASE NOTE: The following document outlines modifications to the IFX guidelines and expectations that are deemed necessary in consideration of the Winter 2021 COVID circumstances.**

The [field experiences website](#) under *Important Information*, has current updates. Look under **COVID-19 ONGOING IMPORTANT CHANGES AND INFORMATION**

Mentor Teachers	Student Teachers
<p>Mentor teachers support and guide student teachers. They use their professional judgment and knowledge to assess student teachers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional information including video resources about mentoring student teachers is available on the field experiences website in the mentor teacher's section. <a href="https://fieldexperiences.ualberta.ca/mentor-teachers">https://fieldexperiences.ualberta.ca/mentor-teachers</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Roles and responsibilities</b> Mentor teachers provide student teachers with a designated workspace and advance notice of teaching and supervision responsibilities.</p> <p>Mentor teachers coach student teachers in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>planning, organizing and managing instruction</li> <li>determining lesson plan format and expectations (Independently developing a unit plan is <b>not expected</b> in IFX.)</li> <li>obtaining instructional resources and materials</li> <li>understanding Alberta Education documents and expectations</li> <li>assessing and evaluating student achievement</li> <li>understanding student needs</li> <li>using effective teaching strategies and skills</li> <li>managing a positive learning environment</li> <li>establishing relationships with students, parents, and colleagues</li> <li>understanding professional conduct, responsibilities, and obligations</li> <li>developing reflective practice</li> <li>developing strategies for effective supervision</li> </ul> <p>Mentor teachers assess student teacher progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reviewing the growth plan and providing feedback</li> </ul>	<p>The <b>Introductory Field Experience (IFX)</b> consists of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>an eight week on-campus seminar, (reduced to 7 weeks in winter 2021 due to delayed term start)</li> <li>three full orientation days, (<b>NOTE: In winter 2021, no set orientations days are scheduled for IFX. See notes below about orientation days.</b>)</li> <li>a 25-day field experience.</li> </ul> <p>The field experience is designed to give you an opportunity to merge theory with practice in a school setting. You will gain experience in planning instruction, teaching lessons, managing your classroom, tailoring instruction to meet the learning needs of all your students, and assessing student progress.</p> <p><b>General Expectations</b> The University of Alberta expects students in their IFX to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>adhere to the <a href="#">Professional Code of Conduct</a> at all times, as well as the guidelines from the Alberta Teachers' Association regarding <a href="#">E-Liability</a>,</li> <li>share an introductory form prior to the field experience,</li> <li>attend all orientation days and be present on all school days (IFX students are only allowed two days of unavoidable absence without jeopardizing their field experience.)</li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE: COVID-related absences will be dealt with on a case by case basis. Contact your principal, mentor teacher and field experience associate immediately if you will be absent due to COVID exposure or COVID symptoms. If possible, student teachers should continue their field experience by teaching online.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>understand that field experiences need to be approached as full-time teaching positions and discuss start and end times with their mentor teacher (typically 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM. Be flexible and agreeable to times</li> </ul>

- preparing the final assessment in collaboration with the student teacher
- sharing the assessment with the zone field experience associate

### Supporting Student Teachers

**NOTE: COVID-related absences will be dealt with on a case by case basis. If possible, student teachers should continue their field experience by teaching online. Contact your field experience associate immediately with any concerns.**

**NOTE: For this term, extra-curricular involvement is not expected for student teachers.** However, if out-of-class activities are taking place in your school, we encourage student teachers to become involved, if possible.

- *Extra-curricular involvement should not preclude the importance of classroom teaching.*

**NOTE:** IFX student teachers should assume responsibility for 0.5 FTE by the midpoint of the field experience, **understanding that this may be at a different point depending on individual circumstances**, and that teaching time can be a combination of independent teaching, co-teaching and team teaching with mentor teachers.

### Providing Feedback to Student Teachers

A mentor teacher's feedback is critical to a student teacher's success.

- Feedback is most meaningful when there is an atmosphere of positive collegiality.
- Provide regular **verbal and written** feedback.
- Feedback should be **descriptive** and **specific**. Be clear about what the student teacher is doing well, as well as areas requiring improvement.
- Feedback should be based on the competencies and indicators described in the TQS.
- Mentors should expect to see the student teacher apply feedback.
- Be careful not to overwhelm the student teacher with too much feedback at once. Focus on one area at a time, building to a comprehensive assessment at the end of the field experience.
- Based on feedback received throughout the field experience, student teachers should be well aware of strengths and weaknesses indicated on the final assessment document.

outside of this depending supervision duties, parent teacher conferences and other school activities.

- prepare detailed plans for all lessons in a timely fashion,
- engage in reflective conversations with the mentor teacher,
- attend all meetings initiated by mentor teacher and/or FEA,
- contribute to an extra-curricular activity within the school community,

**NOTE: For this term, extra-curricular involvement is not expected for student teachers.** However, if out-of-class activities are taking place in your school, we encourage student teachers to become involved, if possible.

- assume responsibility for 0.5 FTE (full-time equivalent) by the midpoint of the field experience, **understanding that this may be at a different point depending on individual circumstances**,
- teaching time can be a combination of independent teaching, co-teaching and team teaching with their mentor teacher.

### IFX Seminar

This seminar was developed to support student teachers as they prepare to begin their introductory field experience (IFX). The seminar is intended to provide students an opportunity to connect the content of their education coursework with the expectations for the IFX, with an emphasis on managing the learning environment.

- Students meet once a week with a field experience associate (FEA) for a two-hour block in the weeks leading up to their field placement. Students are expected to actively participate in all activities and attend every class. Additional expectations may include about an hour of on-line reading and viewing each week along with related assignments.

### Extracurricular Involvement and Supervision

- It is the University of Alberta's expectation that student teachers become involved in the culture and community of their placement school, acknowledging that teachers play important roles beyond the four walls of the classroom.

**NOTE: For this term, extra-curricular involvement is not expected for student teachers.** However, if out-of-class activities are taking place in your school, we encourage student teachers to become involved, if possible.

- *Extra-curricular involvement should not preclude the importance of classroom teaching.*

- Potential questions to ask student teachers to support their reflective process can be found on the field experiences website.

### **Assessing IFX Student Teachers**

The IFX final assessment document identifies areas of strength and areas for growth to assist student teachers in being successful in their AFX placements.

- The final assessment form can be found on the field experiences website under the *Forms/Mentor Teacher* tab.
- Feedback provided throughout the field experience should be considered when completing the final assessment.
- Use the *Suggested Language to Support Student Teacher Development* document (under the Forms/ Mentor Teacher tab).

- In IFX, you will be expected to participate in an activity as opposed to lead it. For example, you might assist in the organization of a school concert or assembly or you might support the coach of a sports activity.
- **Supervision of students** during non-instructional time is another important facet of a teacher's role. It is important that you assume some responsibility for supervision. While you may be supervising independently, your mentor teacher should always be readily available for assistance should some difficulty arise

### **Field Experience Guide**

Students entering a field experience are most successful when they take a proactive approach and an active role to meet the universal expectations required. The [Field Experience Guide](#) helps to remind students about the expectations of the field experience, how to exhibit professionalism, and foster healthy relationships with their mentor teacher, students, and school community. These expectations are covered during the IFX seminar.

### **Dealing with Problems**

Student teachers and mentor teachers should begin by discussing the problem with each other. If it cannot be resolved at that level, contact your zone field experience associate.

### **Notification of Concern**

While all of our student teachers are developing as professionals and can be expected to require regular support and feedback, occasionally student teachers do not progress as expected and may fail to address the weaknesses in their performance as identified by their mentor teachers.

- If a mentor teacher feels that this puts a student teacher at risk of *not receiving credit for the course or of receiving a poor final assessment*, the mentor teacher should issue a *Notification of Concern* (NOC).
- **Note: If a mentor teacher is considering a Notification of Concern, they should contact the zone field experience associate as soon as possible.**
- The NOC helps to identify and emphasize for student teachers the areas requiring improvement. It also establishes a plan and a timeline to deal with areas of significant weakness.
- Typically the NOC is administered in cases where persistent problems have not been addressed, despite sufficient feedback from the mentor teacher..
- While serious, the document is not intended to be punitive, and should focus on the improvements required to be successful.
- More information about dealing with problems is available on the field experiences website in the student teachers and mentor teachers sections.

## IFX Timeline - Mentor Teachers

**COVID NOTE:** The IFX dates on the "[Dates by District](#)" document are flexible. As circumstances warrant, extensions beyond the published district end date are possible.

### Prior to the Arrival of the Student Teachers

- Review the materials on the [website](#).
- Review and respond to the student teacher's introductory form.
- Discuss the role of student teachers with your students.
- Arrange to provide student teachers with class lists (with pictures if possible), timetables, seating plans, school handbook, attendance and emergency plan procedures, and student accommodations.
- Provide student teachers with a work space.
- Consider how student teachers will submit student grades.

### Orientation Days (Dates for this term: \_\_\_\_\_)

**Winter 2021 - IFX orientation days are not scheduled this term. If desired, mentor teachers and student teachers are welcome to arrange their own orientation time before the field placement begins.**

Orientation days are intended to assist student teachers to learn about and become comfortable with their school community. .

**NOTE:** If it is not possible to complete the 3 orientation days on the specified dates, an alternative schedule that includes a minimum of 2 orientation days should be arranged with your student teacher.

- If an orientation day falls on a PD day, and your student teacher is allowed to attend the PD activity, this will count as an orientation day.

Things to consider:

- Have student teachers introduce themselves to the class, and perhaps lead a short activity.
- Encourage student teachers to be **engaged and actively involved** in classroom activities and building relationships with students.
- Give information about planned teaching assignments for your student teacher.
- Support student teachers in becoming familiar with available resources

### Days 1-5 (Wk. 1) Guidelines (Dates for this term: \_\_\_\_\_)

- Have student teachers assist with individual or small groups of students.
- Allow student teachers to observe you teach a variety of lessons.
- Engage in reflective conversations with your student teacher.

## IFX Timeline - Student Teachers

**COVID NOTE:** The IFX dates on the "[Dates by District](#)" document are flexible. As circumstances warrant, extensions beyond the published district end date are possible.

### Before My Field Experience

#### Introductory and Emergency Contacts Form

The introductory form is used in several ways.

- It serves as a way for school coordinators and mentor teachers to gain background knowledge about student teachers.
- At the elementary level, students are often placed with a mentor teacher based on the interests and experiences indicated on the form.
- Emergency contact and medical alert information are also included on the form.

Introductory forms are shared with:

- Secondary: School coordinator and mentor teacher.
- Elementary: School coordinator (and mentor teacher, if known).

### Orientation Days (Dates for this term: \_\_\_\_\_)

**Winter 2021 - IFX orientation days are not scheduled this term. If desired, mentor teachers and student teachers are welcome to arrange their own orientation time before the field placement begins.**

Orientation days are intended for student teachers to familiarize themselves with their school community and begin to establish relationships with students, mentor teachers and school staff.

**NOTE:** If it is not possible to complete the 3 orientation days on the specified dates, an alternative schedule that includes a minimum of 2 orientation days should be arranged with your mentor teacher.

- If an orientation day falls on a PD day, and you are allowed to attend the PD activity, this will count as an orientation day.

### Days 1-5 (Wk. 1) Guidelines (Dates for this term: \_\_\_\_\_)

- Observe your mentor teacher teaching a variety of lessons.
- Discuss with the school coordinator and/or mentor teacher regarding the possibility of observing in other classrooms.
- Assist with individual or small groups of students.
- Gather materials for teaching, i.e. programs of study, resources, information about students, and assessment strategies.

- Assist student teachers with gathering materials for teaching, (program of studies, resources, information about students, etc.)
- Discuss and agree upon lesson plan format and expectations, including when your student teacher should submit their lesson plan to you.
- Support your student teacher in planning and delivering **single lessons**.
- Provide feedback prior to and after they deliver their lessons.
- Ensure student teachers assist with supervision.
- Allow student teachers to observe in other classes, if possible.
- Contact your zone field experience associate if you have any concerns.

**Days 6-10 (Wk. 2) Guidelines (Dates for this term: \_\_\_\_\_)**

Continue with existing guidelines/expectations, and in addition:

- Increase teaching time of student teachers to at least 0.25 FTE. **With your support**, have them take on responsibility for planning, preparing, and delivering lessons. Teaching time can be a combination of independent teaching, co-teaching and team teaching with the mentor teacher.
- Provide feedback to support student teachers prior to and after they deliver their lessons.
- Support student teachers with the development of their growth plan. Growth plans should be discussed and completed by the end of day 10.
- Issue a *Notification of Concern* if warranted. Ideally, a *NOC* would be issued prior to the 50% withdrawal deadline.
- Contact your zone field experience associate if you have any concerns.

**Days 11-15 (Wk. 3) Guidelines (Dates for this term: \_\_\_\_\_)**

Continue with existing guidelines/expectations, and in addition:

- Gradually have student teachers assume responsibility for 0.5 FTE of your teaching load by the end of day 15. Teaching time can be a combination of independent teaching, co-teaching and team teaching with the mentor teacher.
- Allow student teachers to assume the responsibility of teaching independently. Be readily available to them.
- Contact your zone field experience associate if you have any concerns.

**Days 16-20 (Wk. 4) Guidelines (Dates for this term: \_\_\_\_\_)**

Continue with existing guidelines/expectations., and in addition:

- Ensure student teachers maintain a minimum of 0.5 FTE.
- Contact your zone field experience associate if you have any concerns.

- Discuss your planning and teaching with your mentor teacher, including lesson plan format and expectations.
- With the support of your mentor teacher, begin to plan and deliver **single lessons**.
- Engage in reflective conversations with the mentor teacher.
- Assist your mentor teacher with supervision.
- Contact your zone field experience associate if you have any concerns.

**Days 6-10 (Wk. 2) Guidelines (Dates for this term: \_\_\_\_\_)**

Continue with existing guidelines/expectations, and in addition:

- Increase teaching time to at least 25% by day 10. You are responsible for planning, preparing, and delivering lessons. Teaching time can be a combination of independent teaching, co-teaching and team teaching with your mentor teacher.
- Seek support from your mentor teacher as needed.
- Share your lesson plans with your mentor teacher at least 24 hours in advance or as requested by your mentor teacher. This allows your mentor teacher to give you feedback.
- Work on your professional growth plan. **This document requires collaboration between you and your mentor teacher.** Your professional growth plan is expected to be submitted to your mentor teacher by the end of day 10, and then shared with your zone FEA.
- Contact your zone field experience associate if you have any concerns.

**Days 11-15 (Wk. 3) Guidelines (Dates for this term: \_\_\_\_\_)**

Continue with existing guidelines/expectations, and in addition:

- Assume responsibility for 50% teaching time by the end of day 15. Teaching time can be a combination of independent teaching, co-teaching and team teaching with your mentor teacher.
- Contact your zone field experience associate if you have any concerns.

**Days 16-20 (Wk. 4) Guidelines (Dates for this term: \_\_\_\_\_)**

Continue with existing guidelines/expectations, and in addition:

- Maintain responsibility for a minimum of 50% teaching time. Teaching time can be a combination of independent teaching, co-teaching and team teaching with your mentor teacher.
- Contact your zone field experience associate if you have any concerns.

**Days 21-25 (Wk. 5) Guidelines (Dates for this term: \_\_\_\_\_)**

- Gradually resume control of your teaching assignment.
- Ensure student teachers hand in graded student work, and all resources and school materials that have been borrowed.
- Meet with student teachers, on or before day 23, to review their growth plan.
- Complete the final assessment with collaboration from student teachers to create goals and strategies for ongoing development.
- Share the completed assessment form with the zone field experience associate.

**Days 21-25 (Wk. 5) Guidelines (Dates for this term: \_\_\_\_\_)**

- Gradually return the class to the control of the mentor teacher.
- Ensure student work is graded and returned.
- Return school materials and resources.
- Meet with your mentor teacher, on or before day 23, to review your growth plan in preparation for your final assessment.
- Meet with your mentor to collaboratively write goals and strategies for ongoing development.
- Your mentor teacher will share the final assessment with your zone FEA.
- Your zone FEA will upload the official final assessment to eClass.
- Students are responsible for downloading their official document from eClass by the end of the term.