FLEX Activity Supervisor Role

Academic Year 2023-2024

Thank you for taking this opportunity to engage with the UBC Undergraduate Medical Program.

This document contains information to help you in your role as a FLEX Activity Supervisor. It provides a brief description of the course structure across the years, the student experience and course expectations, and an overview of your role and responsibilities as an Activity Supervisor. We encourage all Activity Supervisors to review this document as it provides key dates and updates from previous years.

Contents

Link to FLEX Proposal Submission Form

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **The FLEX Activity Supervisor is an integral component of the student learning experience.**

- **FLEX Activity Supervisors fulfill three major roles:**

  1. Assist in developing the student's FLEX Project Plan (FPP) to capture the scope of the activity, expectations and responsibilities, schedule, evaluation and outcomes, etc.;

  2. Provide mentorship as the 'content expert' to facilitate student success in the activity;

  3. Provide formative feedback to the student and the Course (near the end of the course, <u>you will be sent a link to an online Qualtrics survey</u> where you can comment on areas of excellence or where improvement is required).

- **In the APPENDIX, you will find FAQs about the supervisor role and contact information for course leaders.**

Important Dates/Information for Activity Supervisors (Academic Year 2023-2024)

NOTES:

- On Monday afternoons that fall on statutory holidays, students are not expected to be engaged in their FLEX activities.

- Students submit a final Project Report to the Course on the last day of their FLEX Block. They are also asked to send you this Project Report. If you would like to see drafts of the Project Report prior to the student's submission to the Course, please discuss with the student your timeline for receiving the draft Project Report.

- The FLEX Course will send Activity Supervisors a link to an **online supervisor feedback form** (one to be completed for each student in your activity) approximately **2-3 business days before the student deadline to submit**.

MEDD 419 (Year 1 FLEX)

Time in curriculum that students have available to work in FLEX Activity		Student deadline to submit final Project Report to Activity Supervisor by	Activity Supervisor submits feedback on FLEX Student by
6 weeks full-time FLEX Block (188 hours)	Apr 22 to May 31, 2024	May 31, 2024	Jun 07, 2024

MEDD 429 (Year 2 FLEX)

Time in curriculum that students have available to work in FLEX Activity		Student deadline to submit final Project Report to Activity Supervisor by	Activity Supervisor submits feedback on FLEX Student by
20 Monday afternoon half-days (approx. 80 hours)	Aug 28, 2023 to Mar 18, 2024	May 03, 2024	May 10, 2024
3 weeks full-time FLEX Block (96 hours)	Apr 15 to May 03, 2024		

MEDD 449 (Year 4 FLEX)

Time in curriculum that students have available to work in FLEX Activity		Student deadline to submit final Project Report to Activity Supervisor by	Activity Supervisor submits feedback on FLEX Student by
4 weeks full-time FLEX Block (128 hours)	Nov 20 to Dec 15, 2023	Feb 16, 2024	Feb 23, 2024

Course Description

Flexible Enhanced Learning (FLEX) consists of a longitudinal series of courses in the UBC MD curriculum that take place in Years 1, 2 and 4 (i.e. MEDD 419, MEDD 429 and MEDD 449) of the undergraduate medical program. FLEX provides students with opportunities to explore individual scholarly interests and enhanced learning opportunities in the broad context of medical training.

FLEX activities occur on Monday afternoons (called "FLEX Half-Days") and dedicated full weeks ("FLEX Block Time") – during the latter, students are engaged full-time in FLEX - i.e., there is no other curriculum scheduled.

MEDD 419 (Year 1) consists of the following components: a) Foundations of Scholarship (FoS) (half-days Sept to early mid-Feb); b) FLEX Project Planning Period (May to early Apr) and c) FLEX Activity bBlock (six weeks full time, mid-Apr to late May/early Jun).

MEDD 429 (Year 2) is comprised solely of FLEX Activity time, with some days allocated to allowing students to complete their FLEX Project Plans. MEDD 429 students may opt to continue their FLEX activities from first year (MEDD 419) or select new FLEX activities. Therefore, it is possible that returning supervisors may continue to work with the same student(s) they supervised in MEDD 419. In Year 2, each term is structured so that students are engaged in FLEX activities on Monday afternoons (half-days) and during a three-week full-time FLEX Activity Block.

MEDD 449 (Year 4) consists solely of a four-week full-time FLEX Activity Block that runs during the months of November/December. Students may continue FLEX experiences from first or second year of FLEX or select new FLEX activities.

The Student Experience: from FLEX Project Plan (FPP) to Activity Engagement

Students produce a FLEX Project Plan (FPP) in which they develop goals and objectives reflecting their learning interests/needs and include components of the activity, e.g., preparation, methodologies, project artefacts (formerly called 'deliverables'), etc. FLEX is an important part of the student's undergraduate medical education and students are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of professional behavior in all interactions undertaken as part of the Course, from activity development through to completion. The Course expects students to be meaningfully engaged in their chosen FLEX activities during the time available to them. To meet the requirements of the Course, students must take a scholarly approach to their activities and projects. For our students, this means applying the six scholarly standards (clear goals, adequate preparation, appropriate methods, significant results, effective presentation, and reflective critique) to planning their activities. Note that not all of these standards may apply to some activities.

The Activity Supervisor Experience: Roles and Responsibilities

There are four areas in which the Activity Supervisor plays a significant role:

A) Development of the FLEX Project Plan (FPP_

B) Mentorship (during the student's engagement with the activity)

C) Feedback (on the student's performance during the activity)

D) (IF REQUIRED) Reporting problematic student behaviors and/or professionalism issues

A) Development of the FLEX Project Plan (FPP)

The FLEX Project Plan (FPP) is a document that the student will develop with you to identify the scope of the activity, how it relates to their professional learning goals and objectives, methodological approach, mutually agreed-upon expectations and responsibilities of student and supervisor, time commitment and schedule, evaluation, knowledge translation and project artefacts. (**Nb**. It is possible that the activity proposed may extend across multiple years of FLEX and should be noted in the FPP.) The purpose of the FPP is to provide a solid grounding for student engagement in the activity and establish a positive basis for the relationship you will develop with the student. A well-thought out FPP will provide a clear 'road map' for the student that will result in both they and you having an excellent experience and ultimately realizing the goals that both of you had intended for the activity. FPP templates for all three years of FLEX are available in the Info for Activity Supervisors folder on the FLEX MedNet page.

The student should share this document with you at the outset - please remind them to do so, if they forget. At a minimum they should have completed a draft of the Learning Goals and Objectives section when they first meet with you. These may be quite generic and broad but still specific enough for you to understand how their goals and objectives will be met by the proposed activity. How the balance of the document is completed is for you and the student to decide – e.g., you may ask them to come back with a 'next draft' that can then be edited for more detail, etc. This may be a good approach for a student-initiated activity versus an activity that you may have proposed to the FLEX course. Alternatively, you may want to provide more direct, hands-on input in completing the fields with the student. This will also be a good opportunity for you and the student to discuss expectations regarding **how and when communication should occur**; and, if applicable to the project, to r**eview expectations regarding authorship** (you may find it helpful to review Authorship Guidelines for FLEX Students).

B) Mentorship

You may find yourself supervising a student who has considerable knowledge in the field of your activity or one with little prior experience (but a keen interest to learn more). Both situations provide challenges as well as opportunities. Your role as mentor will vary depending on the student's knowledge and past experience but in each case it begins with you working with the student to create the FPP. It is important from the perspective of the FLEX course that there is sufficient contact between you and the student that you feel confident in your ability to provide the required advice to the student to provide the best prospect for success. You, as the supervisor, are the *de facto* 'content expert' for the activity, so the student will be looking to you for guidance in meeting expectations described in the FPP.

Your role as mentor will also extend to helping the student identify a potential artefact (i.e. deliverable) that will be produced at the end of the activity. In the case of a research project, this may be a report, a paper, an abstract, a poster, or a presentation. Project Artefacts are an important component of the FLEX activity but do not form part of the assessment process. Students working with community groups or agencies should work with the community/agency to identify a legacy artefact that is valuable from the perspective of the community/agency. The types of artefacts produced from any given FLEX activity will be dependent on the type of project the student is engaged in but it is an important component of the work the student will do with you. It should be expected that, in the Course of an activity, challenges may arise that require the modification of expectations regarding artefacts. This is quite normal and, in fact, can be an important aspect of the learning experience for the student.

If you feel that the student you are supervising needs some support from the FLEX leadership, please reach out to your local FLEX Site Director (see **Appendix 3** for contact information).

Building Safe and Supportive Learning Environments

The UBC Faculty of Medicine has created a helpful module titled Building Safe and Supportive Learning Environments for all individuals (faculty or community members) who work with undergraduate medical students and post-graduate residents. Activity Supervisors are encouraged to review this informative resource.

C) Feedback

Supervisors contribute to the overall evaluation process by providing feedback to the student and the Course on how the student performed while working with you in your activity. This feedback is delivered though an online Qualtrics form that uses a series of brief narrative statements and check boxes relating to the student's development in the competencies of Communicator/Collaborator, Scholar and Professional. This process should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. You will be contacted by the FLEX course with instructions on how to access and complete the Supervisor Feedback form 2-3 days prior to the student submission deadline (see sample form in **Appendix 2**). Students greatly benefit from open and honest feedback, both positive and constructive. The learning experience and skills the student gains with you will be taken forward into new activities in the following year.

D) Reporting problematic student behaviors and/or professionalism issues

The FLEX course expects that students be fully engaged in their chosen FLEX activities and behave professionally at all times. This means students must:

a) communicate respectfully and in a timely fashion with supervisors (including advising of any absences)

b) strive to understand/work to meet the identified expectations for their activities

c) identify gaps in their learning and work towards improving these areas

d) meet deadlines associated with both the FLEX course and the activity and

e) be a positive team member

Activity Supervisors who start to notice any problematic behaviors/professionalism issues with the student are encouraged to report this right away using the **FLEX Incident Report**. This will help us determine what the situation is and how to best support you and the student, in order to resolve the issue. Of Course, you can also reach out directly to your local FLEX Site Director (see **Appendix 3** for contact information) at any time should issues arise that require immediate attention.

Appendix 1: FAQs

a. **What are the qualifications required to become a FLEX Activity Supervisor?**

   An Activity Supervisor is anyone with expertise in a project. They can be university faculty, physicians, and leaders of community groups or initiatives. Since FLEX projects must contain all 6 Glassick's Scholarly Standards, sometimes students may choose to find a co-supervisor who can provide additional academic support, if a particular Activity Supervisor lacks expertise in certain areas.

b. **Will I be paid as an Activity Supervisor?**

   The Activity Supervisor is not financially compensated for their role. However, it is expected that non-monetary benefits will result from the student's FLEX engagement, such as the creation of an identified artefact(s) of the activity. For University of British Columbia Faculty, working with medical students can be captured as mentorship activities in Departmental yearly reports and teaching dossiers, and may be listed as the training of Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP) in grant applications. On request, the Course Directors will provide letters to Activity Supervisors who need to demonstrate teaching engagement.

c. **How many hours should I expect to devote to a student I supervise?**

   This will be entirely dependent on the nature of the activity, the student's prior knowledge base, the nature of the deliverable(s), etc. You may find that you are spending more time with the student at the outset than later in the activity. Students are required to be engaged in FLEX activity(ies) during all of the hours available to them in a given FLEX Cycle.

d. **What will the actual time commitment be for a supervisor?**

   The actual time commitment will depend on how long it takes you and/or your team to onboard your student – e.g. ensure the student comprehends the methodology needed to understand/work on your project, set up access for your student in any required systems, etc. However, once this is in place it is expected that you would need to meet with your students much less frequently – to ensure they are on track, etc. The supervisor and student should draw up a clear path of communication, i.e., how frequently and by what means they will communicate, while working on the project.

e. **Are supervisors also responsible for teaching their project methodology to FLEX Advisors?**

   No, supervisors are not responsible for teaching any methodology to FLEX Advisors. FLEX Advisors are not necessarily experts in any particular area. They read the FLEX Project Plan only to ensure that the required scholarly standards are addressed by the student and that the activity selected is a good fit for the student's identified learning goals and objectives.

f. **Can I supervise more than one student at a time?**

   Yes. FLEX provides the opportunity for students to collaborate on activities; students may collaborate with other students from the same site (e.g., VFMP + VFMP) or from different sites (e.g., VFMP + NMP + SMP). Some supervisors also have more than one FLEX activity running so they can have multiple students engaged in multiple activities (and in multiple years of FLEX).

g. **How long can a FLEX activity be?**

   A FLEX activity may take only a few hours (such as an online module), or many weeks (a longitudinal research project or community service learning opportunity). As noted earlier, activities can extend across FLEX cycles or years. What is important is that the time spent in an activity is meaningful and contributes to achieving the goals as outlined by the student in the FLEX Project Plan.

h. ***Do I need to sign the FLEX Project Plan (FPP) document to indicate my agreement with all the components outlined by the student or is an email acknowledging my agreement sufficient?***

An actual signature on the FPP document is not required. An <u>e-mail approval</u>, indicating that you agree to support the student in the activity as outlined by details provided in the FPP, is sufficient. This is also valid for any revisions that are made to an existing FPP document. Your student must ensure he/she submits your approval email(s) to their Assessments folder in Entrada, along with FPP document.

i. ***Are students covered by insurance for their FLEX activities?***

Although UBC Medical Students have insurance coverage (limited liability) which covers them for most school activities during curricular time, we recommend that Activity Supervisors advise students as to the type of work involved in their FLEX activity. It is a student's responsibility to verify with their provider (or Student Affairs) that their insurance covers that type and scope of work related to the activity (including where the activity is taking place).

Activity Supervisors who have students engaged in an activity <u>outside of curricular time</u> may need to organize insurance coverage for the student (but this should be discussed by both parties).

j. ***My activity is based outside of Canada. Are there any special requirements for students regarding travelling out of the country to attend my activity?***

Students are allowed to travel outside of Canada for their FLEX project. Before departure, they must obtain their local FLEX Site Director's approval and complete other requirements, as outlined in the FLEX Project Plan document.

k. ***Access to electronic health records for research purposes requires the principal investigator holding the research ethics certificate to make the request of their institution***

Please remember that access to electronic health records for research purposes requires REB approval, so only the PI who holds the ethics certificate can request access to the records for research (for QI projects, please see point "L" below).   Note that the clinical education program of the UBC medical school does arrange access to patient records for 3rd year students doing clinical rotations, or 4th year students doing electives. 3rd and 4th year students have completed the privacy and confidentially training required for access to records for patient care, and can only access these records for patient care purposes.

l. ***Checking in with your Research Ethics and Health Authority operational approval offices***

For all projects involving people (including Quality Improvement/Program Evaluation projects), the Health Authority Operational/Ethics offices have requested that students check in with the Health Authority or local institution's (eg. hospital) operational approval offices to confirm whether they need approvals. Some Health Authorities/Institutions have approval requirements even for Quality Improvement/Program Evaluation type projects. Students have been provided with the contact information of these offices. The email response from these offices should be uploaded to the student's Assessments folder in Entrada to confirm they have contacted these offices.

m. ***Project Research Ethics certificate requirements.***

Research studies involving human subjects and/or interventions which are above minimal risk level require ethics approval from the UBC Behavioral or Clinical Research Ethics Board (BREB or CREB). Students can be added to an existing Research Ethics certification, but if a new Research Ethics certificate is needed, students should plan for the lead time required for applying for ethics approval when they are developing their FPP. Please note that UBC Medical students come under the authority of the UBC REB. However due to the provincial Research Ethics harmonization (<u>Research Ethics BC | BC AHSN</u>), students can choose to apply either to their regional Research Ethics board or to the UBC REB. Detailed information is provided to students in the "Ethics" folder posted in Entrada.

n. ***Expedited approval for minimal risk behavior research studies via the FLEX BREB Class project system.***

For behavioral research studies with minimal risk populations and interventions, ethics approval may be granted via an expedited process, endorsed by BREB, but managed by the FLEX course ("FLEX BREB Class project" system). Detailed information is provided to students at the "Ethics" folder posted in Entrada.

o. ***Can an activity continue on, outside of 'FLEX time'?***

Yes. However, a student can only receive FLEX course credit for that part of the activity engagement which occurs during the course schedule (i.e. curricular time). See item 'i' for information about insurance requirements outside of curricular time.

p. ***Can students be paid while engaged in a FLEX activity? What about incurred expenses?***

Students cannot be paid for participating in FLEX activities as this ispart of their medical school training/FLEX course. A student can be compensated if they continue in an activity outside of FLEX (e.g., conducting research and being paid from the associated grant). The Course does not have a budget to cover expenses incurred by a student in carrying out their FLEX activity.

q. ***I understand that students write a short literature review (minimum 8 references) as part of their FLEX course requirements. (This requirement is waived if their their FLEX project is to actually write a literature review.) Do I need to read the FLEX course-required review?***

No, you are not obligated to read the FLEX course-required literature review. Students may ask you guidance on how to find literature. You can refer them to the medical program librarians if you do not have time.

r. ***What software is available to support students' work in FLEX?***

- *SPSS Statistics*
- *Prism*
- *GraphPad*
- *NVivo*
- *Mendeley*
- *Zotero*
- *EndNote*
- *UBC Survey Tool (Qualtrics)*

Appendix 2: Sample of Supervisor Feedback Forms

*Activity Supervisors will be sent a Qualtrics survey link to complete an online feedback form like the one below (one for each student in their activity(ies) approximately 2-3 business days before the student deadline (see **Important Dates for Supervisors**).*

SAMPLE FORM - MEDD XXX ACTIVITY SUPERVISOR FEEDBACK FORM

(Please complete one form for each MEDD XXX (Year X) FLEX student involved in your project this term)

This assessment form is designed to illustrate the exercise of three complex skills within the student's FLEX activity environment. Using this tool, you can provide students with feedback and suggestions for progress. Your feedback will contribute to the aggregated information about each student, collected over the Course. It should take approximately 10 minutes to fill out this form.

Note - If you would like to keep a copy of a form that you complete, please print a copy before you submit the form.

Instructions - Please check all boxes that apply and enter your narrative feedback and suggestions for progress in the boxes provided. Students value your narrative and face-to-face feedback.

Supervisor Name (Last Name, First Name): _____

Name of FLEX Student (Last Name, First Name): _____

1. Did your student provide their Project Report to you by the due date?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No, provided after the deadline with a satisfactory explanation
- ☐ Not provided at all (The Course will follow up with the student to ask them to provide you with the report)

2. Communicator and Collaborator Roles

Please check the appropriate box for each action, and provide narrative feedback, if any, for your students:

	Consistently	Frequently	Seldom	Not At All	N/A
Effectively communicates (by email or orally, as needed and in a timely fashion) with you and/or third parties associated with the FLEX Activity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Actively solicits information from you or colleagues as needed in order to effectively engage in their FLEX Activity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Prepares for and contributes to discussion(s) in a constructive and respectful way	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Works congenially with others and is a benefit to the experience of others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrates accountability to group (e.g. being on-time, prepared, engaged)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comments or suggestions for student: _____

3. Scholar Role

Please check the appropriate box for each action, and provide narrative feedback, if any, for your students:

	Consistently	Frequently	Seldom	Not At All	N/A
Articulates clear goals and objectives in FLEX Activity planning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrates an appropriate level of independence and self-direction in planning and/or implementing their FLEX Activity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Identifies gaps in their knowledge and works to fill those gaps using relevant sources of information	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Responds to challenges in the FLEX Activity and appropriately modifies the activity (in discussion/consultation with you) to create a successful learning experience	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Displays overall growth and development throughout their FLEX experience with you	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Engages in constructing and sharing knowledge with immediate and broader learning community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comments or suggestions for student: _____

4. Professional Role

Please check the appropriate box for each action, and provide narrative feedback, if any, for your students:

	Consistently	Frequently	Seldom	Not At All	N/A
Displays accountability and responsibility in performing duties required by their activity, such as providing documents in a timely manner	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Attends consistently and is punctual - communicates absences appropriately	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comments or suggestions for student: _____

If you responded 'Seldom' to any statements in the previous sections labelled Communicator/Collaborator Role, Scholar Role and Professional Role, please provide a brief explanation for the FLEX Course Directors. **Your comments will not be shared with the student**.

5. To date, this student's performance in my FLEX Activity has met my expectations.

☐ Yes
☐ No

6. If you responded NO to Question 5, please provide an explanation in the box below, including suggestions as to what the student could do to improve their performance.

_____

7. If you have any other feedback you wish to share with this student, please do so below.

_____

OPTIONAL 1 - Do you have any comments about your experience with the FLEX program that we can share with the public on our website? (Please do not include student name(s) in your comments for this question)

_____

OPTIONAL 2 – Given the diversity of our students and their backgrounds, do you have any general suggestions as to how the FLEX program could assist students (at this stage of their medical training) to better prepare for their experiences in FLEX activities like yours?

_____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN FLEX AND SUPPORTING OUR STUDENTS!

Appendix 3: Contact Information

FLEX PROVINCIAL TEAM

Dr. Alice Mui, Course Co-Director Director (alice.mui@ubc.ca)

Dr. Heather Yule, Course Co-Director (heather.yule@ubc.ca)

Niki Giannopoulos, FLEX Course Manager (niki.giannopoulos@ubc.ca)

Benjie Agovida, FLEX (MEDD 419) Senior Program Assistant (vfmp.flex@ubc.ca)

Chandra Shekhar Arya, FLEX (MEDD 429/449) Senior Program Assistant (flexpa.vfmp@ubc.ca)

FLEX SITE TEAMS

Island Medical Program (IMP), Victoria

Dr. Richard Veerapen, Site Director (rveerapen@uvic.ca)

Eleanor Good, FLEX Site Manager, Yrs. 1, 2 & 4 (egood@uvic.ca)

Nicole Wells, MEDD/FLEX Program Administrator, Yrs. 1 & 2 and Yr. 4 FLEX (impcurr1and2@uvic.ca)

Northern Medical Program (NMP), Prince George

Dr. Richard Lazenby, Site Director (richard.lazenby@unbc.ca)

Chrissy Ingram, FLEX Program Manager, Yrs. 1 & 2 (Chrissy.ingram@unbc.ca)

Amelia Kaiser, Senior Manager, Medical Education (amelia.kaiser@unbc.ca)

Eileen Hunsaker, Clinical Program Assistant, Yrs. 1 & 2 (Eileen.Hunsaker@unbc.ca)

Suzanne Evans, Program Assistant, Yr. 4 (Suzanne.evans@unbc.ca)

Southern Medical Program (SMP), Kelowna

Dr. Kamran Golmohammadi, Site Director (kamran.golmohammadi@ubc.ca)

Allison Gilbert, Year 1/2 Program Manager (allison.gilbert@ubc.ca)

Elaine Sykes, FLEX Site Manager, Yr. 4 (elaine.sykes@interiorhealth.ca)

Shonna Malczewski, Program Coordinator, Yrs. 1 & 2 (Shonna.Malczewski@ubc.ca)

Heather Wray, Program Coordinator, Yr. 4 (heather.wray@ubc.ca)

Vancouver Fraser Medical Program (VFMP), Vancouver

Dr. Horacio Bach, Site Director (hbach@mail.ubc.ca)

Dr. Alice Mui, Site Director (alice.mui@ubc.ca)

Dr. Amy Salmon, Site Director (asalmon@cheos.ubc.ca)

Niki Giannopoulos, FLEX Course Manager (niki.giannopoulos@ubc.ca)

Benjie Agovida, FLEX (MEDD 419) Senior Program Assistant (vfmp.flex@ubc.ca)

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