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Prior
Learning

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The Early Childhood Education Recognition of Prior Learning Program

Situational Interview Guide

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Interview Registration

As a Candidate for RPL Assessment for the Level 2 Early Childhood Educator classification, you will participate in a Situational Interview Assessment. Once you have successfully passed the examination, you are eligible to register for the interview.

During your Interview, you will be assessed by a panel of trained assessors, who will score your analysis and discussion of three different Scenarios.

Interviews will be scheduled based on the availability of candidates and qualified assessors.

Interview Fee and Payment

When you complete and send the registration form for the Interview, you will receive an invoice from AECENS for the Interview Assessment Fees. The interview fee is \$1 150.00 plus HST. Payment can be made by Visa, Mastercard, etransfer to ed@aecens.ca or by sending a cheque to AECENS. AECENS will provide receipt of payment as well as confirmation of registration.

Interview Process

Please arrive at the interview site approximately 15 minutes before your interview to complete the registration process. You will be asked on-site to provide one piece of government-issued, photo identification (driver's license, passport, or identity card).

Should you require any special accommodation for a documented medical condition or a disability, please inform AECENS as soon as possible. More information on special accommodations can be found on the AECENS website at <https://aecens.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/RPL-Accommodations.pdf>

After a brief introduction by the Lead Assessor, you will receive a 2-page Scenario handout (see the example below). Each Scenario handout is comprised of three elements:

- a) A short description of an authentic workplace situation which you are asked to analyze and discuss,
- b) A standard set of Initial Questions, intended to help you structure your discussion of the described Scenario, and
- c) A set of Assessment Criteria, matched to the Scenario, that the Assessors will use to score your responses. Each Criterion is a sub-skill as described in the *Level 2 ECE Competency Profile*.

You will have up to 10 minutes to review each Scenario handout before the interview / discussion of that Scenario begins. The Lead Assessor will indicate the timing. The interview discussion period for each Scenario is a maximum of 20 minutes. Your assessment interview will be scheduled for 90 minutes – enough time to cover 3 Scenarios.

Use the Initial Questions and the list of Assessment Criteria to guide your assessment and discussion of the Scenario. The Assessors may pose additional questions during the Interview to assist you in fully sharing your experience and understanding of the Scenario.

The purpose of the Scenario Interview is to provide an opportunity for you to demonstrate your competence, based on your knowledge and experience as an Early Childhood Educator. The Assessors will be listening for evidence of competence that meets or exceeds the performance standards described in the *Nova Scotia ECE Level 2 Competency Profile*. In order to meet the competency standard for the RPL Assessment Interview, you must demonstrate minimum overall competency, as determined by the Assessors based on your discussion and assessment of the three Scenarios.

Interview Tips and Techniques

In situational interview candidates are asked specific questions involving problem-solving and handling difficult workplace issues and circumstances. Success in a situational interview is all about preparation and structuring your responses in a way that conveys your knowledge and experience clearly. There are not necessarily wrong answers to situational interview questions, however, the best answers will provide concrete examples on how you would handle the situation presented.

Use the STAR Format

The STAR Interview Response Technique is a method of answering interview questions.

“STAR” stands for situation, task, action, result:

- (S) A specific situation
- (T) The tasks that needed to be done
- (A) The action you took
- (R) The results, i.e., what happened.

Begin by describing in detail a similar situation you have previously faced. Next discuss the specific challenge and how you handled it, and end by explaining the outcome you achieved. Be as specific as you can and ensure your response paints a picture and clearly articulates your experience and skills. Ensure your story is primarily about the action and results.

Hold a situational interview dress rehearsal!

Create your own situational interview questions and practice your responses out loud. In creating your questions, consider the types of detailed situational questions you may be asked and how they relate to your past responsibilities, including any challenges and how they were resolved. Practice your responses out loud. This will allow you to ‘hear’ your own responses which can help you evaluate the way they sound as well as their content and completeness.

Situational Interview Results and Rewrites

You can expect to have your interview results emailed to you within 2-3 weeks of your situational interview date. You will be provided with a letter of completion and certificate.

If you are not successful the first time you take the situational interview, you will have the option to register for another situational interview on any subsequent date. You will be invoiced for the situational interview fees each time you choose to retake the situational interview. Remember that you have one year to successfully complete the RPL examination and interview, beginning on the date of your acceptance into the RPL Program.

EXAMPLE INTERVIEW SCENARIO

You work in a medium-sized, urban day care centre. You and your co-worker Lisa are responsible for a class of 12 three- and four-year-olds. Lisa has shared with you that she is stressed lately, due to problems at home.

Late today, just as the first few parents were arriving for pick up, three of the girls began fighting over a piece of paper in the art area. As they were arguing and pulling the piece of paper out of each other's hands, Lisa walked over and yelled "Stop it. I've had enough". She took the paper away from them and threw it in the trash. The girls immediately became very quiet.

One of the parents looks very concerned when she asks you, "Is that how you handle things here?"

Initial Questions:

1. What is your assessment of this Scenario?
 - Describe the key problem(s) or question(s)
2. What do you see as your alternatives for responding?
3. What would your chosen course of action be?
 - Your immediate response?
 - Your next steps?
4. What are your objectives?

Assessment Criteria

Your responses to the Scenario will be assessed using the following Sub-skills (from the *Level 2 ECE Competency Profile - 2018*) as criteria:

#	Sub-Skill / Criteria
A2.2	Implement positive behaviour guidance
A2.4	Use natural or logical consequences
A2.5	Facilitate problem-solving skills
B2.1	Build and maintain meaningful relationships with parents
G1.1	Demonstrate professionalism
G1.2	Maintain confidentiality
G1.4	Demonstrate leadership skills
G2.1	Develop relationships with colleagues
G3.2	Use verbal skills in a variety of contexts