



# **Co-operative Education Employer Guide**

*Expectations and Procedures for Employer Partners*

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# Part One: CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION

The University of Regina has a proud history of offering Co-operative Education since 1969. We believe that a student’s learning is enhanced when productive work experience is integrated with academic terms.

The success of this program is dependent upon its three partners: the University of Regina, our students, and you, the employer. Your partnership contributes immeasurably to both the education of our students and their ability to contribute to your professional workplace.

You are more than an employer. As a Co-op employer *partner*, you guide students in developing effective work habits through on-the-job training while they apply what they have learned in classes. Work terms also give students the chance to progress from routine operations to challenging and complicated assignments. Finally, you provide advice on career choices and mentorship for professional development.

## Current University of Regina Co-op Programs

<p><b>Arts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anthropology</li> <li>• Economics</li> <li>• English</li> <li>• French</li> <li>• Geography</li> <li>• History</li> <li>• Indian Languages, Literature &amp; Linguistics</li> <li>• Indigenous Studies</li> <li>• International Languages</li> <li>• Philosophy</li> <li>• Political Studies</li> <li>• Psychology</li> <li>• Religious Studies</li> <li>• Sociology</li> <li>• Women’s Studies</li> <li>• Resource &amp; Environmental Studies</li> <li>• Masters of Arts</li> </ul>	<p><b>Business Administration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accounting</li> <li>• Finance</li> <li>• Marketing</li> <li>• Human Resource Management</li> <li>• Public Sector Management</li> <li>• Computer Science</li> <li>• International Management</li> <li>• Masters in Business Administration</li> <li>• Masters in Human resources Management</li> <li>• Masters of Administration - Leadership</li> </ul>	<p><b>Systems Engineering</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electronic (ESE)</li> <li>• Industrial (ISE)</li> <li>• Petroleum (PSE)</li> <li>• Environmental (EVSE)</li> <li>• Software (SSE)</li> <li>• Process (PRSE)</li> <li>• Masters of Applied Science and Engineering</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Indigenous Co-op</b></p>	<p><b>Science</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Computer Science</li> <li>• Chemistry and Biochemistry</li> <li>• Geology</li> <li>• Biology</li> <li>• Mathematics and Statistics</li> <li>• Physics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Honours Physics</li> <li>• Physics with Computations</li> <li>• Physics with Electronics</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Masters of Science</li> </ul>

**Internship Opportunities are also available in the Following Programs:**

- Engineering: 12- or 16-month terms
- Actuarial Science: 16-month terms
- Indigenous: Full Circle Summer Internship (4-8 months)

Please call the Co-op coordinator responsible for the area to get more information.

## Definition of a Co-op Job

Students alternate periods of work experience in appropriate fields of business, industry, government and human services according to the following criteria:

- Each work situation is approved by the Co-op office as a suitable learning situation.
- The student is engaged in productive work rather than merely observing.
- The student is paid a competitive wage for the work.
- The job must be a minimum of thirteen weeks at 35 hours per work week. Start date, end date and hours of work are negotiated between you and the student.
- We monitor the student's progress on the job; you supervise and evaluate his/her performance.

## Responsibilities and Ethics of the Co-op Partners

### 1 Employer Responsibilities and Ethics

With Co-op office:

- Respect Co-op's schedules for job postings, interviews, and job offers.
- Hire the student during the recruitment cycle facilitated by the Co-op office.
- A letter of offer must go to the student specifying terms of employment (eg. salary, start dates, hours of work etc).
- Send a copy of the employment letter to the Co-op Office.
- **Contact us as soon as possible if you want to re-hire a Co-op student who worked for you previously.**
- Complete the Employer's Evaluation and conduct an exit interview.
- Respect the diversity of our students.

With the student:

- Do not discuss job offers and rankings with candidates before, during, or following an interview.
- Honour all matches and do not rescind offers of employment.
- If for any reason, you must change an offer of employment, you must contact the Co-op Coordinator before contacting the student.
- Reimburse the student for any relocation expenses incurred if job is cancelled.
- Introduce the student to the organization, assign specific tasks, and provide regular evaluation of the student's performance.
- Do not convert a Co-op assignment into a full-time position, thereby encouraging a student to settle for less education.
- Provide a mid-term and final evaluation.

### 2 Co-op Office Responsibilities and Ethics

With employers:

- Accommodate employers' reasonable requests for job posting, interview space and presentation facilities.

- Follow ethical and legal guidelines in providing student information to employers.
- Arrange for a representative to meet with employer and student for job site visit.

With students:

- Select and prepare students for the recruitment cycle and work assignment.
- Ensure that the job relates to what the student is studying.
- Facilitate the recruitment cycle and matching of students to employers.
- Comply with all provincial and federal Freedom of Information, Human Rights, and Employment legislation.

### 3 Student Responsibilities and Ethics

- Perform professionally and while on the job, recognizing that students represent the Co-op office, the Faculty, and the University of Regina.
- Take no more than one class (with employer's approval) during a work term.
- Submit the 'Return-to-Campus' forms along with evaluations when each work term is over.
- Honour acceptance of placement as a contractual agreement with the employer.

## **Part Two: THE YEAR-ROUND HIRING PROCESS**

### *How to Successfully Hire Co-op Students*

There are three work terms per year, each four months in duration: Winter (January-April), Summer (May-August), and Fall (September-December). Eight-month work terms are also available for most Faculties.

Our web page ([www.uregina.ca/careercentre](http://www.uregina.ca/careercentre)) has the information you will need plus the Employer Schedule with important dates and an on-line job description form. Contact us: (306) 585-4600 or [coop.office@uregina.ca](mailto:coop.office@uregina.ca).

Our program uses both a Match and Direct Offer process.

### **The Match**

If you want to use the Match process, submit job descriptions to us before the end of the first month of the cycle (January, May or September). Interview weeks are usually scheduled for a two-week period in months one and two, and employer rankings are submitted immediately after interviewing. Match Day is mid-way through the second month.

The Match process is fair to both employers and students. It allows employers to interview from the entire pool of candidates available for work terms, and it maximizes the number of companies that a student is exposed to.

- You submit your job description(s) via email or online form.
- All job descriptions are posted on our web-based job board, which provides 24 hr access to your posting(s).
- On *Resume Day* students submit their applications electronically online for the positions they want.

- We email the resumes directly to you.
- You screen the resumes and let us know which students you want to interview.
- We provide interview space and facilitate the interview process. Interviews may be conducted in person or by telephone or Video Conference (ex. Skype, Zoom, Webex, Microsoft Teams, etc).
- You interview selected candidates and determine which students you would like to hire.
- Rank your selections, taking care to rank only those students you think are acceptable. If you have more than one position, you will have more than one #1 ranking.
- Students submit their own rankings of employers who have ranked them. The ideal placement—a #1 ranking by the employer combined with a #1 ranking by the student for a sum of 2—is considered to be an automatic offer and acceptance by you and the student.
- Placements after 1:1 matches are determined by the lowest combination of numbers. Any ties are broken in favour of maximizing placements.
- **Rank all eligible candidates for every position, and consider ranking some candidates with less experience. If you rank only top students, or one student, you may be disappointed. Remember: rank as many students as possible.**

## Direct Offer

If you prefer not to use the match process, after the Match we use a Direct Offer system.

- In this open posting period, job descriptions are accepted anytime up to and including the first week of classes in the next semester. You make employment offers through the Co-op office at your convenience on a first-come, first-served basis. A coordinator will make the offer on your behalf. Policies are in place to ensure students do not renege on job offers or inconvenience an employer with a delayed decision. Students have 24 hours to accept or reject your offer.
- The second round process continues until all the students are hired, or until the first week of the following semester.
- Any concerns during the Direct Offer period may be referred to the Co-op Office.

## Double Work Terms

Occasionally you might like to have your Co-op student extend his/her placement to a second consecutive four-month work term, called a **double work term**. If so, and the student agrees, the student fills out a “Request for Double Work Term” form and submits it to the Co-op Office. The request usually gets approved if it fits the student’s academic schedule.

If you would like to have a student return for a second four-month work term in your organization after completing an academic semester in between, contact our office as soon as possible. **The Co-op Office will negotiate the student’s return** and, if the student accepts your offer, your formal letter of offer should be sent to the student (with a copy to the Co-op Office) before the end of the first month of classes in the academic semester.

## **Part Three: THE WORK TERM**

### *Ensuring a Mutually Beneficial Co-op Employment Experience*

#### **Orientation and Policies**

Your new Co-op student will require an orientation to your organization. Tours of facilities, staff introductions, and information about your organizational policies and procedures—all these things would help the student clarify his/her objectives and performance expectations for the term.

The student may be on a first work term at a location far from home and friends. Although adjusting to a new work and social environment is the student's responsibility, you might want to help orient them with matters such as local transportation to and from work, surviving until first pay day, coffee breaks, lunch, social activities, etc.

#### **Salary and Benefits**

Your organization's wage structure determines the salaries paid to the Co-op student, but if you have general questions, please feel free to call the office. Generally, the more senior the student, the higher the salary paid.

Benefits such as vacation pay and sick leave are also determined individually by each employer according to its Human Resource policies and provincial labour standards.

#### **Supervision of Student**

- The work term should be a positive experience for both the supervisor and the student.
- Give the student ongoing feedback. Focus on strengths as well as areas for improvement.
- Keep the student busy and productive. Plan ahead so that the student does not have idle time.
- Try to challenge the student. Some routine work may be expected, but the emphasis should be on the professional development of the student.
- Contact the Co-op Office if any problems occur prior, during or after the work term is completed.

#### **Job Site Visit**

During the second or third month of the work term, a University of Regina representative will conduct a job site visit. This visit, an informal interview process, lasts about 30 minutes, of which half the time is spent with the supervisor and half with the student (or it can be a joint meeting if everyone agrees). The visit lets us assess the performance of the student and what he/she is learning in relation to the academic program.

Either the student or supervisor will be contacted in advance to arrange the meeting. If travel costs prohibit an on-site visit, a Co-op Coordinator will conduct the interview by phone instead.

## **Evaluation**

A formal evaluation of the student's work term performance takes place at the end of each work term. This evaluation, to be done by the person in the best position to whom can best evaluate the student's performance, should be completed and discussed with the student before the student's last day. The appropriate form—Employer's Evaluation of Co-op Student—can be obtained either from the student or [www.uregina.ca/careercentre](http://www.uregina.ca/careercentre). Please return the form to us in time for the first week of classes following the work term.

## **Problem Work Term**

In evaluating the Co-op student, consider him/her to be a regular employee in areas of conduct and responsibility. If your evaluation results in the need to terminate a student's employment because of misconduct or unsatisfactory work, please contact the Co-op Office prior to dismissal action.

## **Student Work Term Report**

Students must submit a report on a topic related to the work assignment once they return to campus. These reports are submitted to their Faculty for evaluation and then returned to the student.

The intention of the report is to contribute to the student's learning. Although it is the student's responsibility to select a topic, you can offer general guidance and make reference material available. Selection of a topic of interest to both student and employer could result in a mutually beneficial report.

Not merely a chronicle of job events, the work term report must be an original work done by the student that includes conclusions and/or recommendations. The student should not use work time to write the report unless it is considered to be part of his/her regular duties.

If you have concerns about confidential content in the report, please contact the Co-op Office for special evaluation arrangements.



## University of Regina Policies

### *Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy*

Students are entitled to a workplace free from all types of harassment. Because Co-op students are registered as full-time students at the University of Regina, they are subject to our policy on harassment and discrimination. A representative of the University of Regina Harassment and Discrimination Prevention office must be directly involved in any investigative process. The University's policy is found at <https://www.uregina.ca/policy/browse-policy/policy-GOV-100-015.html>.

Co-op students must also comply with your organization's policies.

### *Strikes or Layoffs*

Should a strike or layoff occur prior to the work term or early in the work term, please let us know. If we find out on time and if you agree, we may be able to arrange alternative employment for the students involved. Otherwise, students must adhere to the Co-op policy on strikes: If they are union members, they will follow the example set by Union leadership. If they are **not** Union members, they will report for work each day.

### *Accidents*

The employer is responsible for arranging Worker's Compensation coverage for Co-op students on the job. If a student is involved in an accident, he/she will be contacting you about claims procedures. The Co-op Office should be contacted as well.