



HASKAYNE

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Co-operative Education
Program

Student Handbook

WELCOME TO CO-OP

Congratulations on your admission to the BComm Co-operative Education Program. To make the most of your experience, get involved in all the Co-op orientation activities and use the resources offered by the Haskayne Career Development Centre.

With Co-op you will:

- gain practical experience
- develop a network of contacts
- build your communication skills and professionalism
- understand careers in your field of interest
- earn a salary while you complete your degree

After the successful completion of eight months of work experience, the Co-operative Education designation will appear on your academic transcript and degree parchment.

RESOURCES

Your support team

Career Development Specialists at the Haskayne Career Development Centre will support and assist you during your job search and during your Co-op Work Terms. You are encouraged to have your application materials reviewed, discuss the job search process, prepare for interviews, and connect for workplace advice or concerns as soon as you are accepted into the program.

Who do I talk to?

1. If you have questions related to the following subjects...

- I have an application-related question
- I have an academic question about the Co-op program (i.e., Sequencing with academics, course registration, fees, etc.)
- I want to take more than one course during my work term
- Co-op Employment Verification Letter (only if required by the employer)

Please email the Co-op Academic Specialists here: E-mail coop@haskayne.ucalgary.ca

2. I have a question about my Co-op assignments.

Please contact the instructor of the Co-op course, per the instructions on the Co-op Academic Course Outline available through D2L.

3. If you have questions related to the following subjects...

- Elevate
- Developing my resume or cover letter
- Questions about a job search
- Questions about the interview process
- I had an unpleasant interview experience

Contact your Career Development Specialist here: <https://haskayne.ucalgary.ca/current-students/career-development-centre/contact-us>. Get 24/7 resume help using VMock.

4. I would like a practice interview.

Please book an appointment with your Career Development Specialist via Elevate: <https://haskayne.ucalgary.ca/current-students/career-development-centre/contact-us>

Your Career Development Specialist may also recommend StandOut, to practice one-way video interviewing. Request your access via: hscentre@ucalgary.ca

FEES

Co-op course fees

Once admitted to the Co-op Program, you will need to pay a one-time Co-op registration fee through your My UofC account (\$50). Please stay alert to your Student Services Centre for the addition of your fees (potentially to the next semester's fees).

While on a Co-op Work Term, you will register in a Co-op 523.XX course and be considered a full-time student. You will pay an academic course fee to the University of Calgary. Course fees are assessed for each Co-operative Education course at the time that the course is registered - see the University Calendar for fees and deadlines. Please note that visa students will be required to pay the Co-op course fee plus a visa differential.

- Once you have registered in a Co-op 523.XX course, the Co-operative Education course fees are non-refundable.
- Tuition fees are payable for a maximum of three work-terms/ courses (General Fees still apply).
- You may opt out of health and dental insurance in the Fall and Winter sessions with proof of alternate coverage.
- Refer to the fees section of the University Calendar for more information

UPASS

Co-op students must opt in to the UPass program with Enrolment Services by phone or in person if they are not also enrolled in an on-campus course. After opting in, it takes 24-48 hours to be reflected in the UPass system.

Student loans and scholarships

If you are a scholarship recipient, please confirm the status of your scholarship with the Student Awards Office before accepting a work-term.

Please note that every year we offer a total of 7 Co-op specific awards. Depending on the parameters, you will be automatically considered for these awards and no further action is required from you. See below for more information.

QUICK TIPS

- Work Terms are four-month positions starting in January, May or September; you need 2 four-month work terms to complete your Co-op designation

- Eight-month positions count as 2 work-terms
- Third and Fourth work terms may be available.
- Meet with your Career Development Specialists to go over your résumé, cover letter, and to prepare for interviews.

NEW CO-OP STUDENT ORIENTATION SESSIONS

Students must attend orientation sessions before starting the job search process. Schedule time to work on your job search and stay committed to your plan. Remember to start early as regular Co-op employers advertise early to ensure an optimal selection of candidates.

All Co-op students admitted to the Co-op Program will be invited to a New Co-op Student Orientation that will provide you with an overview of the Co-op Program and the process for securing a work-term.

Set up a one-on-one meeting with your Career Development Specialist within two weeks of your orientation to discuss your goals and plan your job search strategy.

Participate in the Practice Interview Program at the start of each semester (September/January) to polish your interview skills.

AWARDS

Student Awards

There are three different scholarships available to Co-op students:

Haskayne School of Business Co-op Student Achievement Award

The Haskayne School of Business selects three students each year who have completed the Co-op program. The criteria for selection include outstanding grades on work-term reports, exceptional performance at the work site as determined by employer performance evaluations, the Career Development Specialists' site visit reports, and supervisor nomination input. Number of Awards: 3

Chartered Professional Accountants of Alberta (CPA Alberta) Co-op Award

Students who have completed a minimum of two accounting positions in industry (not CPA articling positions) are considered for this scholarship. To qualify, students require outstanding grades on work-term reports, exceptional performance at the work site as determined by employer performance evaluations, the Career Development Specialists' site visit reports, and an employer letter of recommendation. Number of Awards: 3

Paramount Resources Ltd. Undergraduate Scholarship

Offered annually to a continuing undergraduate student, who has completed the Co-op program, in the Haskayne School of Business, Bachelor of Commerce Program for academic merit. Based on the employers' letters of recommendation and

outstanding marks on their performance evaluations and work term reports. The student must be continuing full-time in the specified field of study for the upcoming fall term. Number of Awards: 1

Interested students should consult the Co-op website and the Awards and Financial Assistance section of the University of Calgary Calendar.

PREPARE FOR CO-OP

SGMA 303: Personal Career Strategies

Applicants who have received a **B+ or higher in SGMA303 (or MGST 359.03)**, and who meet the Co-op program course prerequisites, will not be required to submit a résumé or letter of intent as part of the Co-op application. Those joining the Co-op program without SGMA 303 (or MGST 359.03) may be required to complete a variety of further activities to learn necessary material covered in the course.

This personal career strategies course is highly recommended for students seeking admission into the Co-op program. The course focuses on workplace skill development through experiential learning. It will help make the connection between skills, interests, values, strategies, and habits that contribute to professional success.

PREPARE FOR YOUR WORK TERM

Required academic courses

You are required to complete particular course requirements before you begin your first work-term.

These courses are:

- MGST 217,
- SGMA 217,
- ACCT 217, and
- ENTI 317.

We strongly recommend that you also complete the relevant 317 course(s) for any work you intend to apply for. For example, if you intend to apply for a finance job, be sure to take FNCE 317 before the start of your work term.

Am I stuck with applying for jobs only in my concentration?

Are you a finance major who would like to give a marketing job a try? No problem! Co-op students are not restricted to positions within their concentration. If you have the minimum course requirements, you can apply for Co-op jobs in any area. That is one of the great things about the Co-op Program - it gives you an opportunity to test the waters before jumping in. Keep in mind that you should have the relevant 317 course finished before starting.

International student requirements

All international students **MUST** apply for their work VISA **as soon as they are admitted into the Co-op Program**. Visit Citizenship and Immigration Canada (www.cic.gc.ca) for details and visit your academic Co-op program coordinator who will provide you with the letter that you require. You should consult with the International Student Services Office to discuss obtaining a work permit.

What to include on your résumé and cover letter

When applying for Co-op work terms, you will need to note your Co-op status and availability to employers. Add a line to your résumé that indicates your availability. You should update your résumé and transcripts each term to include the additional skills and knowledge gained as you progress through your academic semesters and work-terms. A sample of how to include this information is available on Elevate.

FIND A JOB

Activate your account

Once admitted into the Co-op program, you are assigned a work/study sequence. To access Co-op Work Term opportunities online, you must let your Career Development Specialist know that you are looking before every work-term. If you are unable to view the Co-op job board, please let your Career Development Specialist know.

Activation and job search

- Make sure your résumé meets Career Centre standards or your account may not be activated
- You must complete at least one work-term beginning in either January or September
- May is the most competitive work-term, so don't ignore September and January when fewer people are looking
- Many companies look to hire Co-op students for a January work-term because January to May is generally a busy quarter

Use the Co-op jobs database

To access the Co-op job board, go to elevate.ucalgary.ca. In addition to jobs advertised on the Co-op job board, you may also compete for summer or contract positions and postings from job search engines. If you receive an offer from a posting not on the Co-op job board, have the job profile reviewed by your Career Development Specialist to ensure it is eligible for Co-op. In addition, you will need to provide a copy of your letter of offer detailing the job description, start date, length of work-term, and salary details.

Advise the employer you are a Co-op student prior to accepting the offer of employment. The employer may contact your Career Development Specialist if they have any questions.

Start applying early

Many employers post Co-op positions early to ensure a large pool of candidates. Summer positions are often posted as early as September! Make sure you start your search early to ensure that you do not miss opportunities.

Check jobs frequently for short deadline postings

Postings may have short deadlines - sometimes as little as five days. Deadlines may be shorter closer to finals and the work-term start date. Check the job board frequently to ensure you do not miss any opportunities.

Job descriptions

Job descriptions come in a variety of styles - some very detailed and some very general. Consider the company and the industry as much as the position responsibilities when making your decision about applying. Sometimes there are other positions available within large corporations and many Co-op opportunities will change with each student depending on student ability and initiative. Contact your Career Development Specialist if you have questions as previous Co-op students may have been at the company and there may be additional information available.

Apply through the Co-op job board

Job opportunities on the job board (elevate.ucalgary.ca) will indicate how the employer wants you to apply and which application materials are required. Most job postings require a targeted cover letter, and some ask for a copy of your most recent transcripts or other requirements. If you transferred from another educational institution, you may need to supply transcripts from both the University of Calgary and from your previous institution. Apply by uploading the required documents into your account.

Apply through a company website

Postings may request that you apply through a company website. Save your cover letter and résumé as one pdf file (with a page break in between) and save the file with your name as the file name (i.e., John Smith) to make it easy for the recruiter to find your résumé among all the applications.

Referrals by the Career Development Centre

The Career Development Centre may forward student résumés to employers without first advertising the job on the job board. This recruiting generally occurs near the end of the semester when students are writing exams (or after) and there is little time to advertise. Stay connected with the Career Development Centre and your Career Development Specialists to ensure you do not miss out on any of these opportunities.

At the end of the term, a résumé book may be made available for you to upload your résumé. These books are shared with employers who are seeking a “last minute” hire for the next term. Contact your Career Development Specialist if you have any questions.

****Remember to save a copy of the job postings (not the URL) that you applied to so you can refer to them during the interview stage**

Persistence pays off

Finding a Co-op work-term is hard work, but consistent effort will pay off. If by mid-term, you are not getting interviews or are interviewing but not getting offers, meet with your Career Development Specialist to review your job search process. In the past, 50% of the offers have occurred less than six weeks prior to the start of the work-term (higher for some concentrations). The process continues through to the middle of the first month of every work-term. Keep in mind the following tips:

- Apply to postings early! Sometimes positions are filled before the closing date and you may miss out if you wait until the deadline
- If you have little or no relevant experience, expect to apply to many job postings (20+) to secure a work term
- Apply to all BComm opportunities that you are genuinely interested in and relevant Co-op or summer postings from other faculties
- Make sure your online résumé is up to date, so you do not miss out on unadvertised job opportunities
- Some jobs get cancelled, so submit enough applications to take this into account

- If you are developing your own Co-op position (see below), please advise your Career Development Specialist so that all marketing efforts are coordinated

International work terms

If you are interested in an international position, please discuss this with your Career Development Specialist. You must have citizenship or a work visa to work in other countries. It can take four to six months to develop a position and process the paperwork. Fluency in other languages is often required. Before leaving for an international work term, it is important to register with the University of Calgary, Risk Management department (riskmgmt@ucalgary.ca) or (403-210-9502) and the International Student Services office (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/student-services/iss>).

Develop your own opportunity

You may develop your own Co-op position. Researching hidden opportunities, looking for invisible jobs, and networking can be helpful in finding good leads. Identifying your personal areas of interest and making informed decisions is important to securing positions that will eventually help you explore permanent career opportunities.

Hidden opportunities

Uncovering hidden opportunities takes more work than researching visible jobs, the good news is that most opportunities are never posted. It is often worth the effort to find a job that exactly fits your interests. The secret of finding hidden opportunities is to look for ways to connect to an industry or organization, which can help you make small steps toward your goal. Key resources or methods to utilize include the six-foot rule, cold calls, volunteering, looking outside the box, and word of mouth

Everyone is a possible connection!

Inform anyone who comes within six feet of you of your goals and plans. Speak with a past employer you see at the grocery store, meet with one of your professors during their office hours, and speak to the stranger in the waiting room at the dentist's office. Anyone could be carrying the knowledge of a potential opportunity. While talking to new people, stay in contact with family and friends to ensure they inform you of any opportunities.

Cold calls

Making cold calls can be intimidating, but if you make cold calls in the context of seeking information rather than a specific job, more people will be willing to speak to you. The hardest part of making cold calls is getting started, so here are some ideas:

- Read articles, in magazines and newsletters, and online resources, to find out about companies moving to your area, companies that are expanding, and new company projects
- Attend networking events, presentations, and seminars with high profile speakers, as these people can become potential contacts for you
- Collect brochures and information off the internet and pick up material at trade shows to develop ideas of where to start cold calls
- Media and government agendas are other great resources to monitor opportunities

Once you have collected resources, make piles and organize them based on your priorities, such as location, size of company, your interests – whatever makes the pile more manageable. Then call some of the companies that interest you but save the ones you want the most until you have your introduction perfected! Ask about arranging an information interview. Remember this is not

interviewing for a job; you are gathering information to explore opportunities.

Volunteering

Building relationships is the key to being memorable. Volunteer for a fundraising event that an organization is holding. Offer a few hours each week to help with some daily tasks. Join a professional association or society recognized by the industry. Stay connected.

Looking outside the box

Do not be trapped into the mindset that you are limited to a particular industry or company. Think of how your skills in research might be an asset to the archive of a major bank. Can you use your knowledge of new technology to help a company market their products or services to your generation? Look outside the box to see how your skills may apply.

Word of mouth

Talking to others is also a very effective way of finding a job. Family and friends are usually willing to pass along leads about job openings. Do your part by making others aware of your goals and following through with the information they provide. People like to see you use the information they give you, and it strengthens your network.

Visible jobs

Resources that can help you locate visible jobs are career fairs, company websites, online job banks, and trade journals.

Career fairs

Career fairs are a great way to see who is hiring now. Companies may distribute job descriptions and company merchandise with the hope of enticing the strongest candidates to their organization. Take your résumé along and distribute it to companies that interest you.

Company websites

Many companies post summer and contract opportunities on their own sites. If you are interested in a particular company, check their website regularly for opportunities. Larger companies may also accept applications at any time to keep in a database for future use. It is a good idea to submit your information for future opportunities but remember to continue to check back for specific job postings.

Online job boards

The Career Development Centre has a list of web links and recommended job bank sites. The ones we recommend can save you time as they search the internet, including any available job sites and company web postings. The trick is to know what type of keywords to use. For more support on locating key words, speak to your Career Development Specialist.

Use your network

Advise your contacts that you are a Co-op student seeking formal work experience as part of your university program. Information for employers about the Co-op Program is available through our website HireHaskayne.ca to assist you in finding your own Co-op position.

Approval is required for student-found Co-op opportunities to ensure that the term will:



- offer productive work
- have an office environment with four or more co-workers
- be supervised so your performance can be evaluated
- work within a stable organization
- startups can be acceptable under certain regulations
- guarantee a minimum of 35 hours each week for a period of 13 to 16 weeks
- receive a salary (minimum wage or more)

To register a student-found Co-op position you need to enter the job information in a Work Term Record on Elevate. You will need to provide the job description, offer letter, start date, length of work-term, and salary details. Your Co-op position must be registered on Elevate prior to your start date.

Interview candidate selection

When chosen for an interview, you will hear from the employer directly or from the Career Development Centre via e-mail. Be sure to check your @ucalgary e-mail account daily. Since employers may contact you directly, ensure that your e-mail address and voice mail message are professional.

If you receive an e-mail interview request from the Career Development Centre, you will also receive instructions to sign-up online through Elevate. You must accept an interview request until you have accepted another position. Please notify the Career Development Centre immediately if you need to decline an interview

Preparing for interviews

Here are a few quick tips to help you prepare for an interview:

- Review the job description and your résumé. Identify your skills and experience that match the employer's requirements so you can easily discuss these in the interview
- Research the company: Most employers today expect you to review the company website at a minimum. The Business Library is a great resource for looking up recent articles on the company and reading up on industry trends
- Prepare a few questions to ask the interviewer: Ask employers about job responsibilities, training offered, the work environment and culture, and about the company's experience with the Co-op Program
- Gather information during the interview: Make informed employment decisions should you receive an offer
- **Keep the job posting for reference

Remember that when you are interviewing, employers are looking for a student who not only matches the company's requirements but will also fit well in their corporate culture. Prepare in advance and identify what skills the employer is looking for, target your conversation to those needs. Employers will hire individuals who show enthusiasm for the position - research the company and industry. Review the interview preparation material online on Elevate and register for the Practice Interview Program.

Dressing for interviews

Your appearance will have a strong impact on the image you create with a recruiter, so make sure you are dressed appropriately. Walking into an interview in the wrong attire is like showing up to a black-tie event in your shorts and t-shirt. It is very difficult to overcome a poor first impression, regardless of your knowledge or experience. Remember to dress for the position you want, not for the position you have (see section What to Wear).

After an Interview

Evaluate your interest in the position following each interview, so that if an offer comes you can decide quickly.

If you decide the job no longer interests you, please contact your Career Development Specialist as soon as possible. Remember, you do not want to offend a recruiter, even if the position is not very interesting to you; the recruiter may someday end up being the interviewer for a position you really want. Always present a professional image and request contact information so that you can send a thank-you note to the recruiter. Not everyone sends thank-you notes, and this gesture may help you stand out from the crowd

QUICK TIPS

- Work terms are four month positions starting in January, May or September; you need to successfully complete two four-month work terms/COOP 523.XX to complete your Co-op designation.
- Your D2L course and Haskayne Elevate at elevate.ucalgary.ca have many career resources including sample résumés and interview tips
- You must attend the Career Development Centre orientation for Co-op students before you start your job search process
- Schedule time for the job search process as many regular Co-op employers
- Apply early to ensure a good selection of opportunities
- Prepare examples for common behavioural questions
- Research the company and prepare a few questions for the end of the interview
- Plan your interview outfit in advance; ask your Career Development Specialist if you are unsure
- Make sure you know where the interview is and arrive five to ten minutes early (even for online interviews)
- Smile and maintain a positive attitude
- Listen to the interviewer's questions carefully and ask questions if you do not understand

RECEIVING JOB OFFERS

Accepting an offer of Co-op employment

Upon receiving an offer, you should respond within 48 hours. Carefully consider job offers before accepting. The offer, verbal or written, is a contractual agreement between you and the employer. Career Development Specialists are available to discuss job offer questions with you prior to accepting a Co-op position. As soon as you accept a Co-op position, and enter it into Elevate, it is registered as a work-term and you cannot withdraw from it without penalty (see section Rules and Regulations).

If you receive an offer of employment directly from an employer, please notify the Career Development Centre as soon as possible and complete the work term registration in Elevate. You must register a work term to inform the Career Development Centre of your position and have your name removed from other job competitions.

Refusing offers of Co-op employment

If you are unsure of a position, carefully weigh your options before you decide to decline an offer of Co-op employment. Refusing offers of employment may jeopardize prospects and it may leave a negative impression on employers. Please meet with your Career Development Specialist before refusing an offer.

Extensions

Extensions are possible with Co-op opportunities. If you receive an additional work-term with the same company, it will count as a subsequent Co-op course. Create a new work term record on Haskayne Elevate. You do not have to accept an offer of extension if you are interested in pursuing other opportunities. If you find yourself in this situation, discuss it with a Haskayne Career Development Specialist.

Recruitment ethics

You want to make a positive impression on recruiters throughout your job search process. To ensure you do not make mistakes you are not even aware you are making, review the guidelines below.

Student ethics

It is your responsibility to:

- abide by the Co-op policies and procedures at the Haskayne School of Business
- ensure that employers are provided with accurate and appropriate requested information regarding your qualifications and interests apply only for the jobs in which you have a genuine interest
- if an interview must be cancelled or rescheduled, notify the employer immediately
- be well prepared for interviews
- not provide information to employers on other students/employers
- honour your acceptance of a position as a contractual agreement with the employer
- honour your employer's relocation policy (if applicable)
- respect the policies of employers regarding confidential/proprietary information

Employer ethics

Employers are responsible to:

- provide reasonable notice of candidates to be interviewed and of interview cancellations
- be informed and adhere to the Co-operative Education policies and procedures
- not provide candidates with information on other companies or applicants
- not seek a candidate's assessment of another candidate
- not submit/make multiple job offers unless prepared to accept multiple acceptances
- honour all job offers and not renege on accepted offers nor rescind offers of employment
- confirm all job offers in writing
- not translate a Co-op assignment into a full-time position encouraging a student to settle for less education
- comply with all provincial and federal freedom of information, human rights and employment legislation.

Institutional ethics

It is the Co-op office's responsibility to:

- inform students, employers, and other interested parties of their policies and procedures
- provide equal services to all students and employers
- provide students with accurate and approved information (including promotion materials and salary/benefits), on all recruiting employers
- follow ethical and legal guidelines in providing student information to employers
- notify the employer of any hiring limitations prior to them conducting interviews
- notify any employers of any students who, after being hired, do not achieve an academic level high enough to allow them to continue in the program comply with all provincial and federal freedom of information, human rights and employment legislation

WHILE ON A WORK TERM

Register in the Co-Operative courses

Students pursuing the Co-operative Education designation will complete the following work-term courses. These courses do not replace any of the BComm program requirements):

- Co-operative Education (COOP) 523.01
- COOP 523.02
- COOP 523.03 and COOP 523.04 (optional)

The Academic Co-op Program Coordinator will send instructions about registering yourself in the corresponding Co-op work-term course after you have received an offer of employment, entered your work term information into Elevate and your work term has been approved. If you are offered the opportunity to complete a third or fourth work- term, you will need to register in COOP 523.03 and COOP 523.04 respectively.

D2L and work term assignments

The Co-op Student Handbook, course outlines, assignments, and forms required throughout your work term are available on D2L.

Work-term assignments are an academic requirement of the University of Calgary. They provide a link between the academic portion of your degree and your workplace experience, and help the university measure your skill development during your work term. Work term assignments can take different forms including reports, presentations and videos. The details will be housed on D2L. A minimum level of achievement is necessary for each component to be considered "Completed Requirements" (CR). If assignments are not handed in or are of inadequate quality, they will receive a "Fail" (F) grade.

Work site visit

Your Career Development Specialist will arrange a visit with you and your supervisor approximately six to eight weeks into your work term. The purpose of this visit is to discuss the position from both the employer and student perspective. Career Development Specialists will review your learning objectives and your progress to ensure the work term is going well. If your supervisor is overseeing several students and has assigned a mentor to you, the mentor should also be included in the site visit. Students located outside of Calgary may receive a phone call in lieu of a visit or meet virtually.

The site visit is an opportunity for your supervisor to gain an understanding of your learning goals and expectations. New opportunities may result from this discussion, so it is important to be honest. This is also an opportunity to receive feedback from your employer on your fit with the position as well as strengths and weaknesses.

Site visits may be in person or conducted virtually.

To Do List:

Item	Tasks
<p>1. Work Term Record</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Login to Elevate : (elevate.ucalgary.ca) 2. Click on your Profile tab and then on the Co-operative Education Work terms tab 3. Click on the Edit button of your current work term 4. Complete the work term information 5. Click on the save button
<p>2. Work Site Visit</p>	<p>As part of the evaluation process, you will arrange for a site visit (likely virtual) with your Career Development Specialist and your supervisor approximately 6-8 weeks into the work term.</p>
<p>3. Work term assignments</p>	<p>Students are required to complete a number of assignments for each work term. Details will be housed on D2L. All assignments must be completed and submitted to the Co-op Course Instructor by the deadline indicated in the course outline.</p> <p>You are expected to submit your required documents on time. <u>We suggest you place your assignment deadlines in your WORK CALENDAR.</u></p>
<p>3a. Performance Evaluation (work term assignment)</p>	<p>Students arrange the performance evaluation with their manager and need to submit it by the deadline.</p>

Please see your course outline for specifics including deadlines). All details will be housed in D2L.

Workplace problems?

If you feel uneasy about sitting down with your supervisor for the site visit or have sensitive issues to discuss, contact your Career Development Specialist to discuss these prior to the day of your site visit. This will give you an opportunity to prepare for the meeting and your Career Development Specialists can coach you on how to discuss sensitive issues. If necessary, your Career Development Specialist will book a separate meeting for you and your supervisor.

WORK TERM EXPECTATIONS

Setting realistic expectations

Your experience will be different from the experiences of other Co-op students, as each position and organization are different. Just as each student has different strengths and interests, your attitude and performance in your first couple of weeks on the job can have a strong impact on the work assignments you are given. Focus on gaining a strong understanding of the company while developing organizational and communication skills during this period. Take the initiative to discuss your progress with your supervisor and seek out opportunities to take on projects in your areas of special interest.

Many work terms start with basic responsibilities while you become familiar with the company and industry. It is very important for you to gain an in-depth understanding of the company before you can contribute in a meaningful way, and often this will occur through administrative tasks and research. Maintain a positive attitude during your initial orientation period and focus on learning as much as you can. Let your supervisor know when you are ready for more challenges in your area of interest. As your supervisor gains confidence in your abilities, you can expect the work to progress to a more challenging level.

Other work terms will have you jump right in and learn as you go. The industry language (lingo) may seem like a foreign language, and you may feel as though you are in over your head and everyone around you is busy all the time. It is very helpful to prepare yourself by researching the company, industry, competitors, and industry terms before your work term begins. It is also important to ask a lot of questions (often you will feel you are asking too many questions and your supervisor will say you do not ask enough). Do the best you can, as tasks will get easier as you learn.

Use your work term as a career exploration tool and be open to new experiences outside of your initial expectations. Take the initiative to develop a network of contacts for the future and gain business savvy. Understand how your academic knowledge applies to the business setting but remember you are a student- in-training, not a manager – your attitude is very important.

Training

Different employers manage student training differently. You may receive a formal orientation and/or training program or you may learn the job under the direction of another employee or supervisor. It is important for you to understand both your employer's expectations and company policy from the start of the term. You need to seek out this information if it is not provided.

Employers expect you to take the initiative to learn about the company and its business on your own. Research can be undertaken before you start the job.

Salary and benefits

Each employer sets the terms of your employment (salary, benefits, and hours of work). Wages account for a number of academic

and/or work terms complete and vary with industry sector and geographic location. Pay periods vary with each organization. Ask questions of your employer so you understand your pay cheque.

Holiday pay is based on the labour code of the province where the job is located. Please review the labour code for your province of employment.

Develop your work term expectations

To maximize your experience and succeed in your position it is important to:

- Learn what your manager expects
- Communicate what you are doing and how you are doing it
- Work independently, but regularly confirm you are on the right track
- Ask for feedback
- Get the job done to the best of your ability
- Contribute ideas even if they are not acted upon
- Find other work when projects are complete or at a standstill
- Maintain a positive attitude

During your first week of work, you should schedule time with your supervisor to discuss some of the topics below. If you are uncomfortable or unsure of how to approach these topics, we have a suggested work-term contract that you can use to break the ice and get the information you need.

Honour your commitments

Accepting a Co-op position is a commitment. Begin and end your work term on the dates agreed to in your offer letter. If you have questions, contact your Career Development Specialist. Deliver any promises you make to customers or team members. Consult your supervisor if you run into problems meeting commitments. Communication about what you are (and are not) able to do within deadlines is absolutely essential.

Accepted hours of work

Earn your supervisor's high regard by establishing effective, professional work habits. Do not assume you are eligible for overtime, flexible hours, and other benefits. Regardless of your present salary, the people around you, or your future career goals, you are building the foundation for your work habits, and it is your choice to make them positive or negative. Your final evaluation includes attendance, punctuality, enthusiasm, initiative, and dependability, as well as other qualities noted on the Co-op Performance Evaluation form.

Dress standards

Appearing professional in your dress and grooming can help you gain acceptance from colleagues and clients (see section What to Wear). Seek clarification from your supervisor on appropriate business attire. Some organizations encourage professional business attire while others allow casual business dress.

Maintain confidentiality

Some employers require you to sign an oath of confidentiality in order to protect the rights of their clients. Even if your employer does not require a signed declaration, avoid discussing your organization's business, clients and competitors outside the workplace.

If you are in a position to bring profit to a friend or relative through your work, please declare a conflict of interest and refrain from participating.

Stick to business

Treat the company's resources with respect and use them only for business purposes. Minimize personal calls at work and use company letterhead for approved business only. Do not take office supplies home for your own use.

Work not challenging enough?

Understand the reason for the work you are doing. Is it part of an important project the company needs completed, do you need additional training before you can advance to another project, or has your supervisor underestimated your abilities? Let your supervisor know that you are willing to complete your assignments, but you would welcome additional assignments that are more challenging. Be proactive; suggest some projects you would like to tackle.

Complete your work term

You want to finish the work term on the best possible terms to ensure a positive reference and continued employment opportunities for yourself and future Co-op students. To accomplish this:

- Leave your work in a state that another employee can take over
- Arrange an exit interview with your supervisor to exchange feedback and discuss if you may use your supervisor as a reference for future jobs
- Ask for permission to use present work as samples for work or writing initiatives
- Discuss opportunities for future employment, if appropriate
- Leave a forwarding address and phone number

WORKTERM EVALUATIONS

Employer: performance evaluation

We ask your employer to complete an evaluation of your performance and discuss it with you. The Performance Evaluation form is part of your Co-op work term grade. Students arrange the performance evaluation with their manager and must submit it by the deadline

GET OFFICE READY – WHAT TO WEAR

First impressions matter, whether it's a job interview, a networking event or the first day at a new job. It is possible to look professional and feel comfortable and confident that your clothes express your unique personality.

Here are a few tips for selecting clothes for a professional setting:

- Clothes should be clean, in good condition and free of wrinkles, holes, lint, pilling and excessive fading.
- Clothes should fit properly and not be too tight or too baggy.
- Make sure that any piercings or visible tattoos you have align with company guidelines.
- Add some color and personality to your outfit with accessories, shoes and layered items, such as cardigans and jackets.
- When in doubt, consider how your coworkers dress and follow the same general principles. For instance, if no one wears jeans you will want to reserve those kinds of outfits for weekends.

It is typically appropriate to err on the side of business casual unless there is an industry standard. Once you can observe the way others dress you can adjust your clothing accordingly. It is also appropriate to ask the recruiter, HR manager or hiring manager if the company has a dress code.

COMMUNICATION TIPS

Face-to-Face

To communicate effectively:

- Use direct eye contact
- Listen carefully and take notes
- Ensure you understand by asking questions and paraphrasing answers
- Remain patient, courteous and calm

Communicate with your supervisor

Meet with your supervisor at the beginning of your work term to discuss your assignments and performance expectations. Schedule regular meetings with your supervisor to report on your progress, seek clarification on further goals, and discuss pertinent issues. Between meetings, communicate via e-mail so your supervisor can respond at his or her convenience.

Take the initiative to communicate with your supervisor in a positive manner if you have concerns about your workload. If you are experiencing downtime or are not feeling challenged, you might propose a project you would be interested in or ask if there are other people you can assist. If you are feeling a bit lost and your supervisor seems too busy, you might set up a meeting to discuss the best ways of communicating when you have questions (e-mail, scheduled meetings) or ask if there are additional resources for you to access.

Responding to feedback

Accepting feedback graciously can be difficult. Your supervisor may suggest changes to improve the quality of a written assignment or suggest a change in work habits. View this as a constructive critique and not as a personal insult. In most cases, your supervisor is genuinely concerned about your development. Clarify your supervisor's expectations and determine how to meet them. If you have made some errors or mistakes, it is best to acknowledge responsibility for them and then take steps to correct them. If you disagree with the feedback, discuss your concerns with your Career Development Specialist.

Meeting and greeting colleagues

Make the effort to introduce yourself to your new colleagues and take the lead in establishing effective working relationships. Rise as you meet a person for the first time and offer a firm handshake. It is considerate to use a formal title like Mr. or Ms. until they invite you to address them by their first name, especially with senior executives. Greet your colleagues warmly and respectfully each day

Teamwork

Offering your assistance to colleagues helps you build relationships. When participating in team projects, do your best to help achieve consensus on goals, keep teammates informed of your progress and follow through on your commitments. Acknowledge colleagues who have assisted you when writing reports or making presentations.

Social functions

You are encouraged to attend social functions organized by your employer as they provide an enjoyable forum for enhancing your relationships with colleagues. You can be less formal on these occasions than in the workplace, as long as you remain professional. If alcohol is being served, limit yourself to one drink.

Conflict

It is common to find yourself facing problems or conflicts in the workplace. Ignoring them and hoping things will get better is not an effective way to deal with them. Inform your supervisor of problems as early as possible and ask for advice on resolving the issues. Contact your Career Development Specialists for help with how to handle sensitive situations.

Do your best to avoid arguments with colleagues or customers. If you do experience conflict, remain calm and try to apply the following techniques:

- Listen completely and pause to think (and breathe) before you respond
- Restate the problem to be sure you are both on the same track
- Choose your words carefully and speak slowly (focus on the facts)
- Keep the discussion focused on only the relevant details
- Avoid making accusations and do not get personal
- Focus on finding a fair and equitable solution
- If you have made any errors, acknowledge them with a sincere apology
- Consult your supervisor for guidance

Electronic communication

Use the company's e-mail and internet for business only and do not transmit anything of a personal nature electronically. Follow these tips:

- Include a subject line indicating content of message
- Keep e-mail messages short, concise and clear
- Check your spelling and grammar before sending
- Review the message to ensure it carries the meaning and tone you intended (avoid using e-mail for sensitive issues – handle



those in person)

- Determine whether you need to respond to the sender only or all participants
- If sending attachments, add them first so you do not forget
- Include your title, company name and phone number at the end of each e-mail
- Realize that each e-mail you send can be forwarded to other people

Telephone etiquette when making calls:

- Identify yourself and state the reason for your call
- Speak clearly and concisely
- Determine action required
- Summarize and close with “thank-you”
- Always include your phone number when leaving a message and speak slowly

When answering calls:

- Identify your name and company (not too quickly)
- Return messages promptly
- Take a message instead of putting the caller on hold if you are more than 30 seconds
- Check back frequently with callers holding for others to verify whether they want to continue holding
- Before passing on a message, verify the spelling of the caller’s name and take their phone number
- Wait for the caller to say goodbye before hanging up and using the release button
- Request permission before putting a call on the speaker phone
- Learn how to transfer calls when you begin a new job
- **Voice mail messages:**
 - Personalize your message and use a professional tone
 - Start with your name so callers know who they have reached
 - Ask your caller to leave their name, number, and a brief message
 - Respond to all messages promptly
 - Change your message if you are away from the office and update it when you return

QUICK TIPS

Standing out from the crowd

To set yourself apart and leave a positive impression always:

Be professional: be on time, respect breaks, ask for feedback, and dress appropriately

Maintain a positive attitude: look for opportunities to get involved in new projects

Immerse yourself: learn about the industry, meet your coworkers, and always find ways to go above and beyond your supervisor's expectations

Do your best work: build your supervisor's confidence in your abilities to earn more responsibility

WHAT DOES SHOWING INITIATIVE MEAN?

Do not be afraid to ask your supervisor what skills and traits they value. When on the job, if you want to impress your supervisor, look for ways to apply your problem solving skills to a work scenario:

Identify a problem

Ask questions to clarify

Develop potential solutions and evaluate feasibility

Present solutions

Request feedback

Revise based on feedback

Gain co-worker buy-in and implement

REVIEW THE FINE PRINT

Rules and regulations

1. You must complete a minimum of two work-terms to complete the Co-operative Education Program. Each work term is 13 weeks at minimum.
2. You must successfully complete at least 18 units towards your BComm Program before starting your first Co-op work term. You need to begin your first work term within one year of being accepted into the Co-op Program. Students with over 90 units towards their BComm Program will only be allowed to start their first work term with special permission, otherwise they will be withdrawn from the Co-op Program without penalty. Sequencing work terms with academic sessions is a flexible process that depends on availability of positions, length of positions (four or eight months) and your academic requirements.
3. You need to end your Co-operative Education Program with a full-time academic term (minimum of 3 academic courses). That is, after you have finished your last work term, you must still have a minimum of 3 courses left to finish your degree. That is why the suggestion is made that students should begin their first work term before completing over 30 half courses

towards their Bachelor of Commerce degree.

4. You must complete at least one work term in either the fall or the winter semester.
5. Co-operative Education courses are in addition to the normal requirements for your degree.
6. You will maintain full-time student status while on a Co-op work-term.
7. If you are required to withdraw from the Haskayne School of Business, or are placed on probation, you will be required to withdraw from the Co-operative Education Program. If you withdraw from the Co-op Program and have already accepted a position, we will advise your employer that you are no longer part of the Co-op Program. Termination of your employment will be at the employer's discretion.
8. If you receive a grade of Fail (F) on a work term, you will be required to withdraw from the Co-operative Education Program.
9. You may register for a maximum of one academic course during a Co-op work term. Permission is required to take more than one course.
10. You may transfer only one Co-op work-term for credit from other faculties within the University of Calgary or from other approved institutions.

Withdrawal policies

The Co-operative Education Program strongly values the commitment that is made between students and Co-op Employers. Our withdrawal policies have been set to encourage students to be accountable for their commitments.

Students cannot withdraw from a Co-op course (or leave a work term) without permission from both their Co-op program office and the faculty. Permission is only granted in cases of serious illness, domestic affliction, or for academic issues. Students who receive permission to withdraw will receive credit for completed course/work terms. They will be withdrawn from the current registered course/work term.

Students who leave a work term without permission will be assigned a grade of "F" on the course and will be dropped from subsequent courses. In addition, students will be required to withdraw from the Co-op program.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR HSB CO-OP STUDENTS

Please refer to your letter of admission and Co-op Student Agreement (the documents you signed when joining Co-op).

Thank you!