



EMPLOYER CHECKLIST

FOR WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING

INTRODUCTION

Camosun College recognizes that strong relationships with businesses are essential in placing students into co-ops, internships, applied research projects, and ultimately sustainable careers. Work-integrated learning opportunities are critical for developing the skilled workforce that Canada needs, but this would not be possible without industry involvement.

Welcome to Co-operative Education and Career Services (CECS) at Camosun College. If you are new to work-integrated learning, we are certain you will find it a worthwhile investment. If you have an established partnership with us already, we hope you will find our new supporting employer resources helpful.

CECS partners with private, public, non-profit, small, or large organizations in BC and across Canada to participate with us in creating quality work-integrated learning experiences for students. We have a robust employer network of human resource managers/advisors, CEO's, business owners, directors, managers, administrators, recruiters, and business stakeholders who are benefiting from; a low-cost way to increase capacity, the concept of recruit once and hire twice, developing specific skills their organization needs, new ideas and energy, government wage-subsidies for hiring, and heightening their community profile.

A workplace experience is a structured and intentional part of an academic program. It is a partnership engagement: between student, workplace and academic institution, between theory and practice, between formal learning and productive work. This resource is designed to support you in creating a mutually beneficial and successful work-integrated learning placement.



Research shows that employers who coordinate more frequently with education providers have better results in their search for talent. However, employers who engage report positive business outcomes.

WHY WIL?



Work-integrated learning, often misunderstood by employers, is a broad term for education that combines academics and its practical applications. It is a workplace experience that is structured and intentional – an engagement between student, workplace and Camosun College, between theory and practice, between formal learning and productive work.

CONSIDER THESE BENEFITS

A planned, well-implemented, organized work-integrated learning (WIL) experience provides powerful educational opportunities for students and unmatched access to rising talent for employers.

A LOW-COST WAY TO INCREASE CAPACITY

Engaging a student is a cost-effective way to tackle ebbs and flows in the workplace—no matter the economic temperature. When the economy is bustling and talent is at a premium, students can fill skills gaps. If the economy cools and budgets tighten, students can step up and be a resource to tackle value-added projects.

TARGET AND DEVELOP SPECIFIC SKILLS

Survey results show that developing specific skills your organization needs is the #1 reason employers participate in work-integrated learning. Camosun College supplies local industries with skilled workers equipped with applied knowledge relevant to today's jobs. We offer WIL programs in Business, Engineering, Technology, Hospitality & Tourism, Humanities, Science and Sport & Exercise Management.

RECRUIT ONCE, HIRE TWICE

Many work placements result in long-term employment, which reduces future recruitment costs. A former student is an ideal new hire: already familiar with your workplace culture and ready to jump in and contribute.

ACCESS FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Over 15 federal and provincial funding programs are available to offset expenses as an incentive to employers to open their doors to Camosun students. [Get the Employer Guide to Funding.](#)

RAISE COMMUNITY PROFILE

Organizations know that corporate social responsibility is a crucial element in remaining competitive. Offering young adults an opportunity to explore their career goals and options is a valuable service to the community and Canada's future.

STRENGTHEN INDUSTRY-COLLEGE RELATIONS

Partnering with a Camosun offers rich opportunities to engage in on-going research and development projects and connect with experts in different industries. Organizations play an important role in strengthening and education.

IN-HOUSE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Offering opportunities for staff to act as a supervisor, manager, or mentor contributes to your organization's culture.

ACCESS NEW IDEAS AND ENERGY

Camosun students are up-to-date on the latest technologies and trends and are drivers of innovation. Integrating a young employee into your team brings fresh enthusiasm, energy, and options for innovation.

CHECKLIST FOR EMPLOYERS

How to create quality WIL placements

Getting started

- Think about your business objectives. What skills gaps do you have? What projects or project pieces do you want to complete? What problems do you want to solve in your organization? Can you align your goals with those of the student?
- Depending on the skills or the type of role you are looking to bring a student on board for connect with one our Employment Facilitators in that area to discuss your business goals.
- Determine the benefits a WIL student can bring to your organization.
- Identify what you can offer the student, and how you will create a learning environment.
- Articulate measurable outcomes for your organization and for the student



The ideal time to begin student recruiting at Camosun is Oct-Dec; Feb - Apr; and Jun - Aug. Most students search for work terms 2-3 months before each semester begins: Jan, May, and Sept.

Assessing your needs

- List the skills you would like your work-term student to possess. Consider both hard and soft skills; focus on any niche skills missing in-house.
- Examine your to-do list, as well as your wish list. Where can the student fill project gaps? Develop a draft task list for the student.
- Determine the length of time you would like to employ the student. How many hours per week and for how many weeks? Camosun co-op programs require 420-hour work terms. Internships require 300 hours.
- Review your schedule and determine when you would like to hire a student. **The ideal time to begin student recruiting at Camosun is Oct-Dec for a Jan start, Feb-Apr for a May start, Jun-Aug for a Sept start. Most students search for a work term 2-3 months before each semester begins in Jan, May or Sept.**
- Reflect on your workplace resources and overall culture.
- Determine what you will need to support the student regarding space, budget, and staff resources.
- If the work term will be virtual or a hybrid of virtual and in-house, do you have the necessary tech stack?
- Determine what supports or resources you need to support a student employee.

Designing the position

- Review your business objectives. Create a position that fits both the work you need and want to be completed—and the student’s academic goals.
- What salary is your organization able to pay the student employee for 300 to 420 hours of work? Over 15 federal and provincial funding programs are available to offset expenses as an incentive to employers to open their doors to Camosun students. Ask your Employment Facilitator about these while you are creating your position.
- What skills, both hard and soft, does the work require? What foundational knowledge does the role require?
- Would a first- or second-year student or someone nearing graduation best suit the role?
- Would the work term experience best suit a co-op, internship, or research and development project?
- Consider the student perspective and what would make a valuable work experience.
- Consider the level of expertise you require, the length of the work term, and the program expectations. Can all stakeholders be satisfied?
- Allow time for creativity, growth, and mentorship. The position should include routine tasks, special projects, and space to explore.
- Be flexible. Depending on the applications you receive and the candidates you meet, you may be inspired to take the position in a different direction.



[Click here for a Job Development Template](#)



Writing a compelling job description

- Tell students about your organization, the culture, your goals, and your vision.
- Summarize your business objectives and why this position exists. Students will want to be certain of their goals.
- Highlight what your organization offers students who are learning and developing their skills. Students want to work with firms that provide mentorship, guidance, and opportunities to develop their professional skills.
- State the base-level qualifications you are looking for, highlighting skills and attitudes over traditional work experience.
- Include a brief overview of the primary responsibilities - a list of tasks, deliverables, and responsibilities that the potential student candidate would be working on.
- Outline the salary range. In general, our WIL students are paid between \$16 - 22/hour, depending on the role.
- Outline the specific start and end dates you want your job posting to be live on our educationthatworks.ca portal. Job opportunities can be posted anytime to educationthatworks.ca.
- Provide the exact start and end date of the work term.



[Get the Employer Guide to Recruiting Camosun Business Students.](#)



Engage your organization

- Inform your team about the student's work term and expectations for the placement.
- Develop a communications strategy to promote the work term internally and externally.
- Encourage employees to welcome and engage with the student. Be available to answer questions.
- Engage your employees/colleagues in discussing the benefits and responsibilities of hiring a work-term student.
- Be ready to connect your work term student with employees outside of his or her direct mentor or supervisor.
- Schedule team-building exercises that will include the student and offer networking opportunities.

On-boarding and orientation

- Set up a welcoming workspace dedicated to your work term student. If your student is working remotely, have all the necessary technical tools set up beforehand.
- The student's mentor or supervisor can lead the orientation and introductions. Encourage the supervisor to schedule regular check-in meetings with the student, particularly at the start of the work term.
- Provide the student with an orientation to the workplace, policies, and procedures, being cognizant the student may not have other work experience to draw on.

- Discuss expectations regarding breaks, work hours, sick day policies, standards of performance, confidentiality, social media and cell- phone use policies, and human resources. If the work is remote, address your expectations around that arrangement.
- Introduce concepts of your company culture, including preferred methods of communication and chain of command. Discuss standards for attire and grooming.
- Encourage the student to approach you at any time with questions and concerns.
- Work with the student and supervisor/mentor to set achievable and measurable goals for the work placement.
- Outline performance assessment timelines and procedures.
- Discuss the student's specific role and provide any project background information required. Introduce key team players and their functions.
- Encourage a two-sided conversation about expectations for the work term.



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Offering useful feedback

- Feedback can reinforce existing student strengths, keep goal-directed behaviour on course, clarify the effects of behaviour, and increase students' ability to detect and remedy errors independently. Students need help developing self-assessment skills so they can interpret and act on feedback.
- Schedule set meeting times to offer set feedback and discuss goals.
- Feedback should be a continuous process, not a one-time event. After offering feedback, make a conscious effort to follow up. Let students know you are available if they have questions, and, if appropriate, ask for another opportunity to provide more feedback in the future.
- Useful feedback should be specific and avoid general comments that may be of limited use to the student. Try to include examples to illustrate your statement offering alternatives. Students welcome feedback on their job performance and see constructive criticism as part of the learning process.
- Document progress and feedback. This will help you prepare formal evaluations and will be useful for reflections on the program.
- If issues or conflicts arise, immediately contact your Employment Facilitator contact at Camosun for assistance or advice.



Formal feedback methods have been developed for the three parties involved in co-operative education—the students, the workplace and Camosun College.

Performance assessment

- Schedule regular one-on-one meetings for formal assessments. Focus on both the tasks accomplished and the way they were handled. Evaluate the goals you set in week one, and adjust them if required.
- Ensure the student has enough work—and ensure that it increases in complexity as the work term continues.
- On-site visits by a Camosun Co-op Field Instructor are conducted once per work term. The Co-op Field Instructor will meet with you and the student individually to discuss the student's performance and progress in the position.
- Both employer and student are required to complete an evaluation form after the work term has ended.
- Depending on the program, students are required to submit a co-op learning assignment for each work placement. The co-op field instructor's evaluation of the co-op learning assignment is a significant component of the student's work term grade.

Foster a learning environment

- Allow space and time for self-reflection. Ask the student for honest feedback about the placement and the work experience.
- Offer professional development opportunities, including networking events and access to workshops or webinars.



**Co-operative Education
& Career Services**

Phone: 250-370-4181
Fax: 250-370-4110
educationthatworks@camosun.ca

CONTACT INFORMATION

educationthatworks.ca

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