

What is my role as the host/mentor?

- designate a staff member who will act as a mentor for the student
- provide a safe and inclusive work environment
- assist the student in setting goals and developing a learning plan
- engage the student with meaningful progressive tasks that allow them to explore a career and further develop skills for success
- provide time for consultation with the student's co-op teacher to provide feedback including a mid-term and final assessment

What can students do?

Co-op students are learners and will not have the same level of experience and expertise as employees, however they are eager to be mentored and to learn more about the career and work environment.

Although students are prepared to do introductory level tasks, they will benefit from opportunities to engage in a variety of meaningful, hands-on work.

There will be many things students can observe, assist with, or do independently, depending on the nature of the placement. This is an important conversation to have with the co-op teacher and student.

How do I prepare the workplace for the student?

Prepare your employees for the student's arrival. Let them know what the student's role is and discuss opportunities to participate in the mentorship process. Consider a "go-to" person who likes to work with youth and can build a positive working relationship with the student. Share with mentors any relevant details from the students' paperwork completed during the pre-placement assessment meeting with the teacher.

Your student is about to come into a new environment. Be prepared to introduce the student to the staff and welcome them to your workplace.

What is appropriate supervision?

Appropriate supervision will depend on the nature of the work environment and should be discussed with the teacher and student before beginning the placement.

How do I evaluate the student?

The host/mentor evaluation contributes to the student's grade, although the final course grade is the co-op teacher's responsibility and is based on achievement of learning outcomes in the course. The evaluation focuses on employability skills and positive and constructive feedback, and should be discussed with the student and teacher. Ongoing feedback should be provided throughout the placement.

Scheduling and Attendance

This 80-hour work placement typically takes place one day per week during a semester while the student is attending school. The co-op placement can be completed during regular school hours, business hours, evenings, weekends, holidays, or summer and will depend on employer and student availability and the nature of the career being explored. Students are not permitted to attend co-op when their school is closed because of inclement weather, such as on snow days.

Insurance, Workplace Injuries, Emergency Contacts

Students are covered through the School Insurance Program (SIP) for no fault accident and liability insurance while at the co-op placement. Co-op hosts are not required to pay additional Workers Compensation Fees for their co-op students.

The co-op teacher will provide the student's emergency contact information as well as further guidelines related to student insurance.

Communication

Consult with the co-op teacher if questions or concerns arise. Discuss and establish a communication plan with the co-op teacher and student at the pre-placement meeting.

Great Leaders Demonstrate Respect for All

A safe and inclusive work environment is

- an accepting, respectful environment that honours each student's ability and cultural identity and values their experiences, gifts, knowledge, and world views
- an environment where people feel safe speaking up, where diverse perspectives are heard and valued, where everyone is treated with the same level of respect, and where people are recognized for their contributions
- supported by policies including clear procedures for harassment and discrimination, where employers and employees work together to find solutions
- an environment where every employee is respected, feels empowered to contribute equally, and is supported with access to available resources and opportunities

Considerations

- Grow your knowledge of gender pronouns and respect how each other identifies. If a student discloses to you that they are 2SLGBTQIA+, only share this information with their consent.
- Grow your knowledge and understanding of cultural behaviours. In some cultures, pausing before answering and not making eye contact with an older person are cultural norms.
- Create an environment to get to know your student, not just their skills and experiences.



Co-operative Education would not be possible without the support of the community. Through this partnership, you are making an impact on schools and the labour force. Most importantly, you are setting students up for success, now and in the future.

Thank you!