Co-op Supervisor Tips and Resources

Program Support & Partnership

SFU’s Co-op Program is a partnership between you, the employer, along with the student and SFU. The Co-op program supports you before, during and after the work term. Through the hiring process, Co-op works to promote your opportunity and sends applications to you via email. After you have reviewed the candidates, we will help with interview arrangements and job offers.

Once the student is working, the Co-op program continues to provide support and assistance. A Co-op Coordinator will formally check-in with the student and supervisor half way through the work term with a mid-term check-in meeting in person, by phone or through an online video platform.

What is your role as a Co-op employer?

- Engage the student in the organization’s work and provide relevant learning opportunities
- Provide the student with a supervisor they will report to who will discuss expectations for the work term and provide the student with training, ongoing support and feedback on the student’s work
- Assist the student with setting realistic learning objectives/goals
- Participate in the mid-term check-in meeting to help assess the student’s progress
- Complete the end of term evaluation of the student’s performance— we encourage you to discuss the evaluation with the student one-on-one

Learning Objectives/Goals

Students set learning objectives for themselves and will be asked to discuss these with their supervisors for feedback and input. This is a great opportunity to discuss your expectations and set a learning plan for the work term.
Mid-Term Check-In Meeting

The purpose of the mid-term check-in meeting (also known as the site visit) is to check-up on how things are going for the student and supervisor. The supervisor portion of the meeting is generally 15-30 minutes to check in with you regarding the student’s progress in their role and discuss their strengths and areas for improvement. This is also a good time to discuss work term extensions, recruitment needs for the upcoming term, and share about what’s going on in the organization.

Final Supervisor Evaluation

Our office will send you a link to an online Supervisor Evaluation form near the end of the 3rd month of the term. This is an excellent opportunity for you to share your feedback on the student’s overall performance on areas including:

- Interest in Work
- Managing Work Flow
- Quality of Work
- Versatility
- Responding to Supervision
- Solving Problems
- Using Judgement
- Showing Integrity
- Building Relationships
- Adapting to Organization Culture
- Demonstrating Resourcefulness
- Communication
- Using Work Time Appropriately
- Becoming a Professional
- Overall Work Performance

Supervisor Support Resources

- Employment Standards of BC
- WorkSafeBC
- Worker’s Compensation Coverage
- Small Business BC
- Funding Resources for Hiring Co-op Students
- SFU Communication Co-op Program

SFU Student Support Resources

- Health & Counselling Services
- Sexual Violence Support and Prevention Office
- My SSP - Student Support Program
  - Download app or call 1.844.451.9700
  - Call or chat online with a counsellor
  - Available 24/7
- International Services for Students (ISS)
- Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL)
- Workplace Bullying and Harassment
  - Free SFU training course available for both student employees and employers
1. Ensure your student has the tools and resources necessary to be successful by planning an orientation using the Orientation Checklist. This is particularly important in remote work situations where more planning and structure may be necessary for orientation to ensure your student is situated in their role, team and workplace.

2. Provide clear expectations for the position requirements, reporting structure, workplace norms and other elements that impact the student’s ability to be successful and integrated into the team.

3. Ensure your student has the necessary technical tools like computer, mouse, wifi connection, software applications, and resources such as training manuals and documentation.

4. Create communication guidelines and set expectations with your student on the frequency and modes of communication depending on the task, urgency or timing. For example, you could plan for weekly check-in meetings via Zoom for project updates and weekly assignments, and instant messaging for small or urgent questions in between the meetings.

5. Consider using multiple modes of virtual communication tools such as instant messaging platforms to allow for quick questions and video calls to build rapport with your student.

6. Provide regular, effective and deliberate feedback to your student through weekly one-on-ones and project reviews.

7. Support your student in building relationships with colleagues through networking opportunities.
The relationships and professional network students build during their work term are important for their career. This is most impacted in the remote workplace context where it is much more difficult to build relationships with colleagues. To support students in this, creating deliberate networking and relationship building activities are crucial to feeling a part of a team.

### Buddy System

- Create a **buddy system** by pairing your student with a senior co-op student or a junior staff member to virtually meet weekly.

### Virtual Networking Cafe

- Consider offering a virtual networking cafe like Ten Thousand Coffees where the student is paired with a new staff member every few weeks, to meet people outside of their department.

### Virtual Team Socials

- Consider coordinating a **virtual team social** within the first few weeks or month of the students work term. Online apps or guessing games can be fun and effective for building personal connections.

### Casual Chitchat

- Reserve the first 10 minutes of a meeting to casual **chit chat** to connect about non-work related topics to build team comradery.

### Virtual Company Events

- To expose your student to the **organization culture**, consider hosting virtual events such as lunches and themed gatherings, having non-work related Slack channels for social dialogue or creating fun organization-wide challenges.
Orientation Checklist

Workplace Expectations/Policies and Procedures

☐ Hours of work & breaks
☐ Overtime policies and procedures
☐ Policies for medical and other appointments
☐ Reporting structure/expectations
☐ Workplace norms
☐ Health and Safety as covered by WorkSafeBC including Covid 19 Safety plan

Introductions & Meet the Team

☐ Warm welcome and introduce your student to the team
☐ Explain team dynamics/norms

Job Expectations

☐ Explain student’s role and job expectations
☐ Provide resources, manuals, and training documents for student to review
☐ Create short and long term goals with the student

Technology Requirements

☐ Computer (mouse, keypad, monitor), video conferencing camera, Wifi
☐ Email, calendar, chat and video conferencing apps or other communication channels
☐ Introduce tech support if applicable
☐ Access to remote databases if applicable
☐ Access to software applications required for the position

Department/Organization Background/Overview

☐ Organization big picture overview and explain organizational structure
☐ How the student’s team is situated within the organizational structure
☐ Organization vision and mission
☐ Organization culture
☐ Provide organization handbook if applicable

Communication and Support

☐ Best mode of communication and point person to ask questions
☐ Frequency of check-ins/meetings
☐ Assign a buddy/mentor to student
☐ Create communication guidelines

For any questions, please contact:
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SFU Communication Co-op