

## CO-OP STUDENT HANDBOOK

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The Co-op Student Handbook provides guidelines to the students participating in a Co-op option within their program. Participating Co-op students agree to abide by these guidelines. The guidelines contain definitions and procedures of Co-operative Education at Kwantlen Polytechnic University. Procedures are subject to change as Co-op program at KPU evolves over time.

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## A. CO-OP PROGRAM OVERVIEW

### What is Co-op?

Co-operative education formally integrates academic studies with full-time, paid work experiences in related positions with employers. Employers can be businesses, government agencies, not for profit organizations or community based associations. The name Co-op reflects the Co-operative relationship between the employer, student, and Kwantlen Polytechnic University.

The Co-op advantage:

- Co-op students are able to plan their career paths more effectively as they test their learning, aptitudes and interests on the job.
- Personal growth and development are greatly enhanced through experience and working closely with Co-op Instructors from the beginning to the end of a student's time in Co-op.
- Co-op students are paid during a work semester to help defray tuition costs.
- Two to three semesters of work experience help students acquire key employability skills, work relevant to their studies and become more engaged in classroom learning.
- Many graduates find full-time employment with their Co-op employers.
- Co-op graduates' starting salaries tend to be higher than those for graduates from traditional programs without Co-op.
- Employers recognize the Co-op designation as a highly valued academic achievement

### Co-op at KPU

KPU believes in **applying** academic learning, the basic premise of the Co-op educational model. The purpose of KPU's Career Development Centre is to connect students with employers and community partners. We support students to become employment-ready through job postings, volunteer opportunities, Co-operative education and career advising.

### Role of Co-op Instructors and the Co-op Office

The Career Development Centre at KPU serves students, employers and the institution to provide the necessary support to ensure a seamless, effective and sustainable relationship between all partners. The Co-op office operates within the Career Development Centre.

#### Co-op Instructors:

- Deliver employability-related curriculum to increase a student's probability of securing a work placement (COOP 1101)
- Provide one to one instruction to students re: resumes, cover letters and interview preparation
- Instruct and monitor student work experiences in work terms (COOP 1150, 2150, 3150, 4150)
- Assist students in identifying their core competencies and to set goals to achieve greater competence while on a work term
- Mark assignments and work semester reports/presentations
- Work with each program's faculty and administration to communicate Co-op student experiences, providing feedback for academic programs based on industry experience
- Participate in ongoing employer liaison and networking

### **Co-op Office:**

- Supports student inquiries about Co-op programs and related Co-op process, including delivering information sessions
- Generates an employer database of potential Co-op opportunities
- Communicates with potential Co-op employers and assesses suitable work placements
- Posts Co-op roles in Career Connection and delivers applicants to employers
- Coordinates student interviews on behalf of employers
- Facilitates job offers between employers and students
- Oversees registration of students into Co-op work term courses
- Develops operational and promotional plans and materials

### **Co-op programs at Kwantlen Polytechnic University**

#### **Business Co-ops**

Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting  
Bachelor of Business Administration in Entrepreneurial Leadership  
Bachelor of Business Administration in Human Resources Management  
Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing Management  
Bachelor of Technology in Information Technology  
Marketing Management Diploma  
Computer Information Systems Diploma  
Public Relations Diploma  
Post Baccalaureate Diploma in Accounting  
Post Baccalaureate Diploma in Human Resources Management  
Post Baccalaureate Diploma in Operations and Supply Chain Management

#### **Science and Arts Co-ops**

Computer Aided Design and Drafting Diploma  
Environmental Protection Technology Diploma  
Bachelor of Science in Health Science (including Honours)  
Bachelor of Arts in Criminology (including Honours)

### **Co-operative Education Curriculum**

Co-operative Education curriculum includes a one-credit pre-employment, on-campus course and up to three off-campus work term courses. Each course is graded as per KPU's [Student Evaluation and Grading Policy](#).

#### **COOP 1101 – Introduction to Professional and Career Readiness**

COOP 1101 is a mandatory 1-credit course, offered once a week for 3 hours for six weeks. Students will learn the philosophy and goals of Co-operative Education. They will learn to develop effective job search techniques including preparing effective resumes and cover letters, and practicing interview skills in order to secure their first Co-op placement. In addition, COOP 1101 allows a student time to reflect on their present level of competences in the field of studies and how this can be applied in the workplace. COOP 1101 is offered all year around (Fall, Spring, Summer). The course is mainly offered on the Surrey campus but is occasionally offered on the Richmond and Langley campuses. The number of available seats varies per semester. For a list of available courses, including the times and location, please visit the KPU Timetable <https://www.kpu.ca/registration/timetables>

### **Work Term Courses (COOP 1150, 2150, 3150, 4150)**

The work term courses provide students with the opportunity to formally integrate academic studies with full-time, paid work experience in related positions with the host employer organizations. During these work terms, students engage in productive work experience and projects that greatly contribute to students' overall employability skills set development and significantly enhance their resumes and personal portfolios. They also have an opportunity to assess their interests, strengths and weaknesses in relation to their field of study.

A Co-op work term consists of full-time, paid work experience, typically 35-40 hours per week for a 12-16 week duration with a minimum of 420 hours completed. Students on a Co-op work term are supported by the Co-op faculty and are required to complete various assignments and final reports. Each work term accounts for 9 additive credits. Additive credits do not replace any academic course requirement for the program degree or diploma in which a student is enrolled. The 9 credits applied allow a student to remain as a full-time student.

### **Requirements for receiving a "Co-operative Education" designation**

Work terms occur during academic semesters, offered in January, May and September each year. Once admitted into Co-op, students are expected to alternate work terms and academic semesters and be registered as a full-time student during academic semesters. To receive a "Co-operative Education" designation upon graduation, Co-op students are required to successfully complete COOP 1101 and their required work term courses. Co-op students complete two work terms for a diploma and three work terms for a degree. In accordance with the Co-operative Education/ Experiential Learning guidelines and policies, Co-op option within programs must end on an academic semester to allow a student time to reintegrate the learning that they gained on the job with their academic studies. It is recommended that prior to enrolling into the Co-op program students discuss the details of their academic plan and Co-op component with an Academic Advisor and to keep the Co-op office and their Co-op Instructor informed.

## **B. GENERAL CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS**

### **Declaration (Admission) Requirements**

Co-operative Education is optional and selective. Students wishing to choose the Co-op option must "declare" a change of their program status to include a "Co-op Option". Once declared, students will be eligible to register in COOP 1101 and participate in work terms. In order to declare, students must meet the Declaration Requirements as stated below. To declare Co-op, students must complete a Co-op declaration by contacting the Co-op office.

Seats for COOP 1101 are limited and available to students in a declared Co-op option on a first-come, first-served basis during the registration period.

For a complete list of Co-op programs and their admission requirements, please visit the [University Calendar](#) and [Co-op Program](#) web pages.

### **Continuance and Work Term Requirements**

For students with a declared Co-op option, ongoing requirements must be maintained in order to continue in the program. Specific Continuance Requirements are stated below. Failure to fulfill Co-op Continuance Requirements may result in the student being removed from the Co-op option of their program.

For a complete list of continuance and work term requirements, please visit the [University Calendar](#) and [Co-op Program](#) web pages.

Please note that the Co-operative Education office attempts to secure relevant work/learning opportunities for all qualified Co-op students, however employers follow normal hiring practices. As a result, KPU cannot guarantee that a student will be selected for a Co-op work term.

## Registration

Registration for a Co-op work term must be completed prior to the start of a work term. Extension of a Co-op work term to subsequent semesters or returning for an additional work term with a previous Co-op employer requires registration in the appropriate work term course. **The University reserves the right to register a student placed in a work term if the student fails to do so.**

## Completion Requirements

Please note that for Co-op options you **must complete your program on an academic term, not a work term**. Also, credits for Co-op work term courses may only be used to satisfy graduation requirements for the Co-op option of the Diploma and Degree programs. These credits do not contribute to the overall required academic credits for non-Co-op programs.

## Delaying a Work Term

**Students who have completed COOP 1101 cannot delay more than two consecutive semesters when eligible for seeking a work term. Students who delay more than two consecutive semesters may be removed from the Co-op option of their program.** Also note, in order for a student to register into a work term, they must be admitted to Kwantlen Polytechnic University or be a *continuing student*. A continuing student is defined as someone that has been registered in at least one of the preceding three semesters. A student that is not enrolled for three consecutive semesters is defined as a *returning student* and *must re-apply for admission* <https://calendar.kpu.ca/registration/registration/>

A student must reference the University Calendar to ensure they meet the published prerequisite requirements for each course in which they register.

## Student Conduct

Co-op students may be removed from the Co-op option of their program if currently facing student misconduct issues as identified through the Student Rights and Responsibilities Office.

## Exit Requirements

Students wishing to exit the Co-op option of their program must contact the Co-op office and submit a [Co-op Removal Request](#). Please note that you cannot withdraw if you have already accepted a Co-op job offer or are currently on a work term.

Students completing all the requirements of a Co-operative Education program will receive a Co-operative Education designation on their credential and transcript.

## Re-Entry into Co-op after Removal

It may be possible for a student who has previously been removed from Co-op to re-enter a Co-op program. A student who has been removed but is seeking re-entry should contact the Co-op office to request a review of their situation. Re-entry into a Co-op program is at the discretion of the Co-op office and may require the student and/or Co-op office to consult with a Co-op Instructor.

The student may be required to provide the Co-op office with a structured sequencing plan outlining how the minimum required work terms will be completed while ending their program on an academic semester. The student may also be required to detail a plan on how they will improve and maintain their GPA at the minimum requirement for their Co-op program. It is recommended to discuss course sequencing and ways to improve GPA with an academic advisor.

### **Transferability of Work Terms**

Work terms successfully completed (i.e. noted on transcript) in any approved BC post-secondary Co-op program shall be considered for transfer by the accepting institution using the regular transfer credit process. The acceptance of a student for transfer into another institution having a Co-op program does not guarantee acceptance into the Co-op program at that institution. An institution may still require that the transfer student complete additional work terms as part of his/her new program of study.

### **Co-op Fees and Tuition**

COOP 1101 is a one-credit course which requires the current one-credit tuition amount plus applicable fees. The tuition for a Co-op work term course includes personal consultations, ongoing support and resources in addition to the course instruction. Students will be registered in 9 credits but will actually pay for 4.5 credits.

**Students are required to pay the tuition for each Co-op work term course into which they enroll. Work term tuition is due only after a job offer is accepted and the student is registered.**

**If a student accepts an extension of a Co-op position beyond one semester and returns to the Co-op employer for a subsequent work term/s, the student will be required to register in that subsequent Co-op work term course and pay the Co-op course tuition.**

**The University reserves the right to register a student placed in a work term if the student fails to do so.**

**Zero Text Book Cost (ZTC)** – Launched November 1, 2017, KPU proudly became the first institution in Canada to offer a ZedCred program. The Zed Cred refers to a program where KPU students will be able to access over fifty courses, including the 1101 Co-op course, that use free open textbooks or free library materials that are available online. For the up-to-date fees, please refer to the Tuition, Fees and Credits page. <https://www.kpu.ca/Co-op/tuition-fees-and-credits>

### **Health and Dental**

**Co-op work terms are assessed KSA fees as per the 2022/2023 University Calendar. All students, whether only on a Co-op work term or taking additional course, are opted-in to the Health/Dental plan at KPU.** Students who wish to opt-out of the mandatory health and dental plan should review the specific instructions available at [KSAmystudentplan](#) and visit [Kwantlen Student Association](#). All questions or concerns about plan coverage should be directed to the KSA Student Service Coordinator at [kwantlenplan@mystudentplan.ca](mailto:kwantlenplan@mystudentplan.ca) or by phoning 604.599.2431.

### **Email Communication**

The KPU Co-op office utilizes the student's email account (email.kpu.ca) for all messaging. It is a Co-op student's responsibility to monitor Career Connection and his or her KPU email messages on a daily basis particularly during the work search semester. Emails from KPU Co-op will contain information on job postings, interview shortlists and schedules, deadline notices, meeting times, job offer notices, and other useful information. **A response within 24 hours is expected from emails sent by KPU Co-op.**



## Registering for courses while applying for a work term

As a Co-op work term is not guaranteed, students should consider all course options during the registration period each semester.

If you have not secured a work term prior to your registration date, you are not required register into a work term until instructed to do so. Should you register into classes for the next semester and subsequently be hired for a work term, you may drop your classes at the time of your work term registration. **Instructions on how to drop classes for a work term will be sent once you have secured a work term.**

If your work term is secured, the maximum number of additional credits you are permitted to register in are 8.5 (in addition to your 9 credit work term credits), so not to exceed a **total of 17.5 credits**. Questions regarding course load should be discussed with an academic advisor, Co-op Instructor, Dean's office and the employer.

**Taking courses while on a work term is not encouraged.**

However, if for a good reason you need to take an additional class, please discuss this with an academic advisor, your Co-op Instructor and the employer before taking on more than you can handle. **Additional courses must not impact the work term with your employer. This means that you should not ask your employer for time off because of exams/assignments of other courses.**

## C. CO-OP JOB SEARCH PROCESS

### After COOP 1101

#### Intake meeting with Co-op Instructor

Following COOP 1101, the Co-op instructor will arrange a meeting time to review and discuss each student's interest in starting a job search process. The Co-op office will also review the student's details to ensure the student has met all program requirements, including academic standard and a valid work permit for international students. The Co-op office and Co-op instructor will communicate to students that a Co-operative Education Student Agreement needs to be signed and returned to the Co-op office before being granted access to view jobs. The Co-op Student Agreement can be found [kpu.ca/co-op/resources](http://kpu.ca/co-op/resources).

#### Applying to Co-op Jobs

Students will be granted permission to apply to Co-op jobs and receive access to the Career Connection job board. To meet the *Co-op program continuance requirements*, students are required to remain active in their job search and apply for 25% of the current postings that are relevant to their studies and experience.

### Postings and the competition process

Co-op jobs will be posted on KPU's online job posting website, Career Connection <https://kpu-csm.symplicity.com/students>. Only students admitted into the Co-op program can view and apply for Co-op postings. Co-op jobs can be identified in Career Connection by the title of the job. All Co-op jobs will note the semester and year, Faculty and title of the job, for example: **FA24 BUS: Accounting Assistant**. Co-op jobs can be searched by selecting "yes" in the "Co-op job" search field.

Students are required to keep the Co-op job posting information, employer lists, contacts, passwords to Career Connection, etc., confidential, and are not to share this information with anyone outside the Co-op program.

## Job Postings

The Co-op office strives to generate suitable employment postings for all students. KPU, however, does not and cannot guarantee all students will be successful in securing a Co-op work placement. The Co-op program will make every effort to assist students in obtaining suitable Co-op work term employment. Students are also encouraged to seek their own work term opportunities (see Section C.11).

Students are advised to view the Co-op job postings in Career Connection daily as jobs are posted continuously throughout the semester. Application deadlines and other specific details including documents required are noted within each job posting.

## Applying to Co-op Jobs

Students are recommended to submit an online application through Career Connection for each Co-op position they are interested in. Some jobs require additional documentation such as unofficial transcripts, writing samples, etc., so the requirements for each position must be reviewed carefully.

It is recommended that students download a copy of the jobs applied to from Career Connection to their computer's hard drive, as well as keep copies of their applications due to the fact that the job posting won't be viewable after closing. If a student is not contacted after submitting an application, the student may assume he or she was not selected for the interview. Students are encouraged to schedule an appointment with their Co-op Instructor for advice and discussion on how to make stronger applications if they are not successful after submitting several applications to postings.

## Minimum number of applications

Students are required to participate fully in the competition process and apply to a minimum of 25% of the postings **by the end of the third month of the semester**. If a student does not actively apply for job postings, students may be identified as inactive and be withdrawn from the program. If a student decides he or she can no longer participate in Co-op in a particular semester for any reason, the Co-op office must be contacted and the Co-op office will inform the student of the necessary steps to take.

## Creating your own work term

Students may be able to create their own work term through opportunities online or through their own connections. Be aware that:

- Before we can consider your work opportunity, you must successfully complete COOP 1101 and maintain all of the program continuance requirements.
- Send your opportunity to the Co-op office at [co-op@kpu.ca](mailto:co-op@kpu.ca). Please allow 2-4 business days for us to review your opportunity and notify you of its approval.
- Work term registration and tuition for the course are still required. If your work term extends from one term into the next, you are required to register and pay tuition for the extended term as per the Co-op Student Agreement.
- Your work term dates must align with an academic semester (Fall = September-December, Spring = January-April, Summer = May-August).

To approve an opportunity, the Co-op office needs the following information:

- A copy of the job description, with the majority of duties aligned with your program of study.

- The employer's name, contact details (phone, email, worksite address), and your direct supervisor's contact information.
- Details about wages and terms. A minimum of 420 hours for a 4-month work term over 12-16 weeks is required.

The employer should confirm that they:

- Agree to host a Co-op student.
- Can provide the student with guidance and supervision.
- Agree to a site visit from our Co-op instructors around halfway through the semester.
- Have WorkSafe BC coverage and are hiring you as an employee, not a contractor.

## **Work permits and social insurance numbers for international students**

International students must obtain a Co-op work permit before beginning to work. Once enrolled in COOP 1101, you will be contacted to apply for the Co-op work permit with the support of the Co-op office. Students must have a valid student visa in order to obtain a Co-op work term permit.

International students will not be given access to view jobs in Career Connection until they have secured their work permit. Once students have secured a work term, all International students require a Social Insurance Number (SIN). A SIN is a nine digit number required to work in Canada. Students must have a current work permit to apply for a SIN.

Co-op work terms for international students should total 50% or less of your study program. Refer to the [Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada](#) website for eligibility requirements to work as a Co-op student.

## **Interviews**

### **Employer selection**

Once the employer has reviewed all applications, they will notify the Co-op office of the candidates they have selected for an interview. In some cases, an employer will contact a student directly. **The student must notify the Co-op office immediately when this occurs.**

### **Contact by the Co-op office**

Students will be contacted by the Co-op office using their KPU student email address or they may be phoned. **Students must confirm the interview time as soon as possible, absolutely no later than 24 hours after being contacted.** It is very important for a student to have a voice mail. Employers will often contact the Co-op office to schedule interviews on very short notice, therefore a student's most current phone number must be noted in Career Connection. It is essential that students check their messages frequently.

### **Interview times**

Students will be contacted by the Co-op office to schedule interview times based on availability provided by the employer. In some circumstances, the Co-op office may negotiate the interview times on a student's behalf. A student must notify the office immediately if any interview must be rescheduled or cancelled. Rescheduling interview times is at the discretion of the employer.

### **Attending the interview**

Students must arrive at the interview location 10-15 minutes prior to the scheduled interview time. It is critical to be prepared. It is recommended that students carefully review the interview details provided by the employer and bring their resume, cover letter, transcripts, a list of references and possibly samples of work/reports to the interview.

Except for medical or compassionate reasons, **students are expected to attend all interviews scheduled with an employer and follow interview guidelines as taught in COOP 1101. If it is not possible to attend an interview at the booked time or location, a student must notify the Co-op office immediately.** If a student is late to an interview due to an unforeseen situation, the student must contact the Co-op office as soon as possible. Failing to appear for an interview without adequate reason may result in withdrawal from the program.

## **Preparing for Interviews**

COOP 1101 course prepares students for the best performance at the Co-op interviews. Reviewing the Job Search Techniques would be helpful in preparation for meeting the employer. Employers expect students to conduct a thorough research of their organization and the position students are interviewing for. If the employer has previously hired a student, the KPU Co-op office often collects a Co-op work term reports from former students. Students are encouraged to request a copy of the previous Work Term report for a specific employer/position from the Co-op office. Further preparation for an interview such mock interview practice may be requested by contacting your Co-op Instructor.

## **Accepting a Co-op Position**

Once interviews are complete, the employer will notify the Co-op office of the name(s) of the successful candidate(s) typically within a week. The Co-op office will contact the student(s) with a job offer from the employer.

Occasionally, an employer will contact a student directly. Should this situation occur, a student must contact the Co-op office immediately **before accepting the job offer. Offers of employment must be accepted within 24 hours, or as approved by Co-op office team. Students are expected to accept the first job offer unless 2 job offers are received within 24 hours. Once a student accepts a confirmed job offer for a semester, the student will no longer be eligible for other opportunities, applications and interviews.**

## **No access to further postings after job acceptance**

Once a student has agreed to a job offer from an employer, students are committed to that employer and are no longer eligible for other positions. **Students also will no longer have access to Co-op postings through Career Connection for that semester.** Students have a professional and ethical obligation to satisfy the requirements of their employment contract.

## **Salaries**

Co-op work wages reflect the individual organization's and local labour market salary scale and also depend on student's level of training and experience. **Students must accept the salary offered by the employer and should not attempt to negotiate it.** Students are encouraged to focus on learning experience and skills development during their work term placement rather than payment terms.

## **Background checks**

Some government organizations require a background check or security clearance as part of their hiring process. The background check and security clearance may take from two to six weeks. Students who accept conditional job offers should consult the Co-op office and follow the recommendations regarding continuing their job search and courses registration while awaiting the completion of hiring process with the employer.

## **Interview feedback**

If a student does not receive an offer of employment, it is a good idea to contact the Co-op office or their Co-op Instructor for feedback on resume and interview performance. Some employers are open to provide the Co-op office with information regarding the student's interview which can be shared, however, we cannot guarantee receiving feedback from every interview that students attended.

### **Work term extensions**

Some employers may ask successful students to return for additional work term(s). **Students must notify and discuss with the Co-op office work term extension before accepting it.** Students need to consider what is best for their career development and overall academic plan when considering an extension.

**International students** with an expiring work permit need to discuss their availability/application for work permit extension with the employer and the Co-op office before accepting work term extension. Co-op work terms for international students should total 50% or less of your study program. Refer to the [Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada](#) website for eligibility requirements to work as a Co-op student.

Extension of a Co-op work term to subsequent semesters or returning for an additional work term with a previous Co-op employer requires registration in the appropriate work term course. Students will be manually registered into the appropriate course should a student not follow the registration process in a timely manner. Tuition will then be due.

### **Rejecting a job**

**Students are expected to accept a job offer after a successful interview with the employer.** It is therefore vital to consider all aspects of each job opportunity **prior** to accepting an interview. A student should consider such things as pertinence of the position to their academic studies and career plans, available transportation to the physical location, etc. If the student interviewed and was offered a position but realized that it may not be the best fit, it is critical to discuss the situation with the Co-op office or their Co-op Instructor immediately before an offer is extended. Students who do not follow this practice may be withdrawn from the Co-op program.

### **International Co-op Placements**

The Co-op office can help facilitate international Co-op placements that a student has found on their own. The office would need. After successfully completing COOP 1101, the student can contact the Co-op office for guidance on the possibility of creating their own international work term. The Co-op office will ask the student to provide:

- The employer's name, telephone/contact details
- The supervisor's name
- A brief job description

The Co-op office will then speak with both the student and employer to verify the opportunity and ensure that it fits with a Co-op program. Once verified, the office will then connect the student with KPU International for completion of any required forms. Related forms and documentation can be found on this web page:

<https://www.kpu.ca/exchange/documents>

### **Work term registration**

#### **Student registration upon acceptance of the job offer**

Once a student has accepted an offer, they will receive an email from the Co-op office with details on registering for the appropriate Co-op work term course. A student must register prior to the start of the work term. While on a full-time work term, students are considered full-time students of the KPU. **If a student accepts a Co-op position and does not follow the established registration procedures, the Co-op program will manually register that student into the Co-op work term course. This is agreed to when a student signs the Co-operative Education Student Agreement (see Appendix 1).**

### **Tuition and credits**

COOP 1101 is a 1-credit course. Tuition and fees are assessed in the same manner as all other courses at KPU. COOP 1150, 2150, 3150, 4150 (work term courses) are 9-credit courses but tuition is charged at 4.5 credits. Library, technology and student life (LTSD) fees are assessed at 4.5 credits. Work term credits do not count towards KSA membership, services, or fees. For more information, view the "Charges for Co-operative Education Work Terms" in the current KPU Calendar.

### **Registration when extending beyond one semester**

Extension of a Co-op work term to subsequent semesters or returning for an additional work term with a previous Co-op employer requires registration in the appropriate work term course. Students will be manually registered into the appropriate course should a student not follow the established registration process in a timely manner. Tuition will then be due.

### **Taking additional courses while on work terms**

The maximum number of credits students are permitted to register at any time while on a work term is **17.5 (including 9 credit work term credits)**. Questions regarding course load should be discussed with the student's academic advisor, Dean's office, Co-op Instructor and the employer. **Taking extra courses while on a work term is not encouraged.**

However, if for a good reason you need to take an additional class, please discuss this with an academic advisor, your Co-op Instructor and the employer before taking on more than you can handle. **Additional courses must not impact the work term with your employer. This means that you should not ask your employer for time off because of exams/assignments of other courses.**

### **Deadlines**

It is student's responsibility to familiarize themselves with the program and job application deadline dates. Furthermore, it is student's responsibility to meet deadlines set by each of the Co-op programs during the application process.

## **D. THE CO-OP WORK TERM**

### **Expectations**

#### **Absenteeism**

If you are ill or running late for your work day you must contact your employer as soon as possible. You should check with your Supervisor regarding the preferred way of communication at the beginning of your work term.

#### **Changes to student status while on a work term**

Any changes to work eligibility, work status, plans that affect participation in the Co-operative Education program or program status **must be communicated to the Co-op office and student's Co-op Instructor.**

#### **Communication with the Co-op Office**

Participation in Co-op requires students to be in continual contact with the Co-op office and their Co-op Instructor. It is therefore essential that students keep their address and telephone numbers up-to-date in Career Connection and also with the Office of the Registrar. **It is mandatory that students check their KPU email account and course website for correspondence from the Co-op office. Responding promptly to all messages relating to Co-op from Co-op Instructors or the Co-op office is crucial.**

### **Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest**

All work performed for an employer must be held in strictest confidence by students. Some employers are concerned about disclosure of confidential information. Student employees must comply with their employer's policies in this respect as the information they encounter, including the results of their own research, is the property of the employer. Evaluation of the Co-op assignments that are deemed confidential by the employer may be determined by the employer. Students may also find themselves in a conflict of interest situation. A conflict of interest may arise when a student's access to an employer's information could result in personal gain for the student or a student's relative. If such a situation has the potential to occur, students must inform their supervisor and their Co-op Instructor immediately.

### **Confidentiality of Co-op Information**

All Co-op job posting information, employer lists, contacts, passwords to websites, etc. must be kept confidential and not shared with anyone outside the Co-op program. To betray this confidence would undermine the Co-op student's future opportunities.

### **Discrimination and Harassment**

It is the student's responsibility to conduct themselves in a way that is free of discrimination and harassment. It is also their right for working in a discrimination and harassment free environment. If any student has concerns regarding the latter, they should contact their Co-op Instructor and the Co-op office immediately. The Human Rights Code and related information for the Province of British Columbia is available on the website of the BC Human Rights Tribunal at [www.bchrt.bc.ca](http://www.bchrt.bc.ca).

### **Failure to Report**

Students who fail to report for their work term after accepting a Co-op job may be excluded from future Co-op work terms and be withdrawn from the Co-op option of their program.

### **Layoffs**

Layoffs due to a shortage of work at a student's workplace must be reported immediately to the Co-op office and their Co-op Instructor.

### **Problems/issues while on work term**

On some rare occasions, issues or problems may arise while student is on a work term. In such circumstances, students must contact their Co-op Instructor immediately to seek assistance, guidance and support.

### **Representing KPU and the Co-op program**

On a work term, students are representing the University as well as the Co-op program. It is expected that students will conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. Failure to do so will result in failure of the Co-op work term course and may result in removal from the Co-op program.

### **Resignation and Termination**

Once a work term is accepted students are expected to commit to the full length of their work term. Should exceptional circumstances arise, students considering leaving a Co-op job before the end of their scheduled work term must consult with the Co-op office and their Co-op Instructor prior to taking any action.

**Students terminated from a Co-op position must notify the Co-op office immediately.** Each termination will be reviewed with the student, the employer, and the Co-op Instructor.

Resignation or Termination from a work term will result in being withdrawn from the Co-op option and failing the work term ("NCG" - No Credit Granted - will be noted on the student's transcript). Typically, tuition will not be refunded.

## **Vacations**

Any vacation booked **before** acceptance of a work term must be discussed with the Co-op office and assigned Co-op Instructor before accepting the job placement offer. **Because of the short duration of a work term students are not to request vacation time.** Students are entered into a semester of learning based on an academic term from which there is no vacation time.

## **Key Information for Co-op student work terms**

### **Income tax and other statutory deductions from wages**

At the beginning of the work term in Canada students will be required by the employer to complete a TD1 form for income tax purposes. The employer can provide a more detailed explanation of the TD1 form when the student commences the work term. Employers are required to deduct income tax, Canada Pension and Employment Insurance premiums from all employees.

Students will receive a T2202A tax form from KPU's Registrar's Office each year for tuition fees. Tax credits are available for amounts paid as tuition, including tuition for Co-op work terms. Students are not eligible, however, for monthly education tax credits for the duration of a Co-op work term. Most students completing two Co-op work terms in a taxation year will have income in excess of personal deduction levels and it is the student's responsibility to plan accordingly.

**International students** completing Co-op work terms in Canada and students completing Co-op work terms outside of Canada should consult the Canada Revenue Agency's website for more information on income taxes.

### **Medical Benefits**

Students are responsible for ensuring that they have adequate medical coverage during work terms. Students placed on work terms outside of Canada should ensure that they have adequate medical or health insurance for the duration of their time away.

### **Health and Dental**

**Co-op work terms are assessed KSA fees as per the 2022/2023 University Calendar. All students, whether only on a Co-op work term or taking additional course, are opted-in to the Health/Dental plan at KPU.** Students who wish to opt-out of the mandatory health and dental plan should review the specific instructions available at [KSAmystudentplan](#) and visit [Kwantlen Student Association](#). All questions or concerns about plan coverage should be directed to the KSA Student Service Coordinator at [kwantlenplan@mystudentplan.ca](mailto:kwantlenplan@mystudentplan.ca) or by phoning 604.599.2431.

**International students** must ensure that they have adequate medical or health insurance for the entire duration of their stay in Canada including Co-op work terms. The Office of International students and Scholars provides further assistance and support for International students or KPU students doing work terms overseas: <http://www.kpu.ca/international/insurance>

### **Safety on the Job**

It is important for students to have a safe and secure work environment. Students should know of and follow the employer's safety policies and procedures. In the event when student is concerned about occupational health and safety issues in the workplace or the injury is occurred during their working hours, students must notify the supervisor and their Co-op Instructor immediately.

### **Strike or Lockout Activity**

If a strike or lockout occurs during Co-op employment students must discuss the situation with their supervisor and Co-op Instructor immediately. Whether to cross a picket line and work or observe a picket line and not work is a personal decision for a student in consultation with their work supervisor. The role of the Co-op Instructor in this situation is to inform the student of potential results of either decision. Student's employer may



also assist the Co-op student in their decision making process. The Co-op office and Co-op instructors must be kept informed of such situations at all times.

### **Transportation, Accommodation & U-Pass/Multipass**

Arrangements for transportation to and from the work site as well as living accommodations are each student's responsibility. The Co-op office may be able to assist with accessing resources for non-local housing options. The Association for Co-operative Education BC maintains a provincial housing list for short term accommodation and roommate search. The Co-op office may assist students in accessing this service by request.

Please visit the link below for details on KSA fees and U-Pass/Multipass. Note that students **ONLY** on a Co-op work term pay KSA related fees except U-Pass BC and KSA Multipass and **do not receive access** to the Multipass. <https://www.kpu.ca/Co-op/tuition-fees-and-credits>

### **Worker's Compensation**

In the Province of British Columbia, WorkSafeBC promotes workplace health and safety for workers and employers. WorkSafeBC consults with and educates employers and workers and oversees compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation Act. In the event of work related injury, WorkSafeBC would work with all parties to provide return-to-work rehabilitation, compensation, health care benefits, and a range of other services (from the website of WorkSafeBC: [www.worksafebc.com](http://www.worksafebc.com)).

In British Columbia, Co-op students are eligible to receive worker's compensation for a work-related injury or illness. The employer assumes the cost of worker's compensation. For information on worker's compensation in the provinces and territories of Canada beyond British Columbia, students should consult the worker's compensation regulations for that province or territory.

Students working in a Co-op position in countries and regions outside of Canada should consult KPU's International advisors.

### **Student Loans**

Students from BC who are planning to start Co-op work terms may be eligible to receive student loan funding while on a Co-op term depending on their financial status including the salary level of the Co-op position. Students must apply one term at a time. Students can submit separate applications for future terms within the academic year. More information is available on the website StudentAidBC: [www.studentaidbc.ca](http://www.studentaidbc.ca).

Students from other provinces in Canada who wish to apply for student loan funding should apply through their provincial student loan program websites. Students planning to do a Co-op work term abroad and who will be applying for a student loan during this same period are strongly encouraged to meet with a Financial Aid Officer before they depart and make arrangements for a third party to negotiate the student loan in their absence.

If a student enrolls in a Co-op work term instead of an original plan of enrolling in full-time courses, their eligibility for student loan funding may be impacted. Students should contact the Student Awards and Financial Assistance office ([www.kpu.ca/awards](http://www.kpu.ca/awards)) to review financial concerns.

Students who are not eligible to receive student loan funding while on their Co-op term may be eligible for interest free status if they are enrolled in a full-time Co-op work term course prior to the study period end date. Updating interest free status for BC students has been made more convenient and can now be done online through the StudentAidBC website: [www.studentaidbc.ca](http://www.studentaidbc.ca)

## E. CO-OP WORK TERM EVALUATION

### Steps to successful completion of a work term

- Successfully obtain a work term
- Pay work term tuition
- Submit work term contact information in Career Connection
- Assess competencies, set learning goals and complete all other work term assignments
- Review learning goals with Co-op Instructor and the employer
- Re-assess competencies and goals during Co-op Instructor's mid-term site visit
- Re-assess competencies and goal attainment and review with supervisor prior to end of work term
- Submit work term forms to the Co-op office
- Submit and receive a satisfactory grade on the Work Term Report

### Setting Goals

During the COOP 1101 course students will learn how to set their work term goals. They will focus on assessing personal competencies and set learning goals for their upcoming work term in areas of importance for their career development.

At the beginning of the work term students will review these with their supervisor to ensure the goals are feasible and meet both employer and student needs.

### Preparation for Mid Term Site visit

Within each work term, students will:

- Work towards achieving success in the established goals set
- Complete work term assignments such as online discussions and reflective journaling
- Review and reflect on personal goals set in preparation for discussion with the Co-op Instructor's site visit

### Work term report or project

#### Report/Project Guidelines

Co-op students are required to prepare and submit a work term report/project for each work terms. The reports/projects aim to document students' learning experience in the professional environment and assists them with future transitioning into the full time employment. Assignments guidelines are typically discussed at the beginning of each work term.

#### Academic Honesty/Plagiarism

Academic honesty is the fundamental principle and foundation of intellectual ownership. KPU requires all students to uphold this principle and views any act of academic dishonesty including cheating and plagiarism as a serious educational offence.

Further information on academic honesty (cheating and plagiarism) can be found in Kwantlen Bylaws & Policies Policy C.8 : <http://www.kwantlen.ca/policies/C-LearnerSupport/c08.pdf>

## Work term grading

To achieve a Mastery (passing) grade on a Co-op work term as per KPU's [Student Evaluation and Grading Policy](#), completion of the following is required:

- Satisfactory or better rating on all supervisor and Co-op Instructor evaluations
- Satisfactory or better rating on all work term assignments

Employer evaluations will remain part of a student's confidential records in the Co-operative Education office.

## F. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

### Cancellation of Co-op work term

If a student's accepted work term placement is cancelled through no fault of the student, the student must contact the Co-op office and their Co-op Instructor **immediately**. The Co-op office will make every effort to secure an alternate placement.

### Extenuating circumstances during a Co-op work term

If a student cannot complete a Co-op work term for medical or compassionate reasons, he or she should discuss their options with their Co-op Instructor.

### Failing a work term

A student may be given a 'No Credit Granted' for his or her work term for the following reasons:

- Failure to report for work at the employer's location
- Ending a work term without permission from the Co-op instructor and/or employer
- Dismissal based on student conduct and actions
- Unsatisfactory performance as determined by the employer
- Failure to submit required work term documents to his or her respective Co-op Instructor
- Failure to obtain a satisfactory grade on Employer and Instructor evaluations of all work term assignments
- Other circumstances may apply
- In all of the above cases, a Co-op Instructor will consider and review all the circumstances prior to assessing the 'NCG' grade. Any student failing a work term will be asked to discuss his or her situation and circumstance with their Co-op Instructor. Failing a Co-op work term may result in the student being withdrawn from the Co-op program.

## G. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

KPU International provides extensive support and information for International students studying at KPU as well as students interested in doing Co-op work terms in another country (termed **International scholars**). Please review the following link for general information <http://www.kpu.ca/international>. Information related specifically to the Co-op placements is discussed in detail below.

## International students

International students attending KPU and who are interested in participating in Co-operative Education have special conditions to consider prior to being accepted into Co-op. The first step is to discuss his or her desires with an International Educational Advisor.

## International scholars

Domestic KPU students may have the opportunity to complete a work term overseas. The first step to explore work terms overseas is to consult with the Co-op office.

## Location of pertinent information for International students

Generally speaking, all information within the Co-op Student Handbook applies to all Co-op students. There are areas however, noted below, where International students and students completing work terms overseas will find specific information relating to their unique circumstance.

Work term permits & SIN numbers	Section C - Work permits and social insurance numbers for international students
Income tax	Section D - Income tax and other statutory deductions from wages
Medical benefits	Section D - Medical Benefits/Health and Dental
Worker's compensation	Section D - Worker's Compensation

## H. GRADUATION

### Graduation

Students who successfully complete COOP 1101 and two Co-op work terms in diplomas and a minimum of three Co-op work terms in a degree are awarded a Co-operative Education designation upon their graduation. The Post Baccalaureate diplomas require one work term to be awarded a Co-operative Education designation when they graduate. In certain programs additional course requirements may apply. Consult the KPU Calendar or schedule an appointment with the Academic Advisor if you require more information.

NOTE: According to the Co-operative Education Guidelines, Co-op students are expected to graduate on an academic semester. Students must select the Co-op option for their program when they apply to graduate.

### Awards for Co-op students

KPU Co-op students are eligible for the annual \$1,000 Co-op Student of the Year Award. The Melville School of Business also offers \$1,000 awards for each of the Co-op options. Two additional awards – Bill & Benita Francis (1 x \$1,000), and EC Managed IT (1 x \$1,000) – are also offered to eligible Co-op students.

Interested students should discuss eligibility for the award with their Co-op Instructor and the Co-op office. Students identified as obtaining outstanding achievement will be considered for recommendation by the provincial Association for the **Co-operative Education Student of the Year Award** and the **National Canadian Association for Co-operative Education Student of the Year Award**.

## I. CONCLUSION

Co-operative education opportunities for students of Kwantlen Polytechnic University continue to grow and expand. Many more programs are considering Co-op options to provide a “polytechnic” or applied experience

to their students. Through the model of Experiential Learning, Co-op education offers students an opportunity to apply their academic learning in a real life employment environment and clarify student's personal career and educational goals. Co-op education creates a win-win situation for both students and the hosting employers while simultaneously enhancing students' learning process in the classroom.