



# CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION

## EMPLOYER GUIDE

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## Introduction

Most NSCC programs have a work-integrated learning component that provides students with an opportunity to combine their classroom learning with learning on the job, which benefits everyone! As employers, you will gain from the fresh perspective a student brings to your workforce and have and you will have opportunity to evaluate and identify potential future employees as part of your long-term recruitment strategy.

At NSCC we offer four broad categories of work experiences: co-operative education; field placements; internships; and professional practice. This guide is designed to provide you with the information you need to prepare for your student co-op experience. Co-operative education is paid full time employment that lasts 12-16 weeks, a minimum of 420 hours, and occurs between the students first and second year of study.

Co-operative education wouldn't be possible without your support. As a partner in the education process, you are providing our students with a real world opportunity to "earn as they learn" while gaining invaluable experience as they prepare for their second year of studies, graduation and ultimately, employment in their career of choice. It also provides you with an opportunity to evaluate student work and provide input to our programs.

At NSCC we offer two forms of co-operative education for NSCC diploma-level programs:

- Mandatory – required in our Culinary Arts and Tourism Management programs
- Elective – optional in most 2-year programs

NSCC maintains the *Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning (CEWIL) Canada's* national standards for co-operative education. For a complete list of CEWIL Canada's standards and guidelines, visit <http://www.cewilcanada.ca/>.

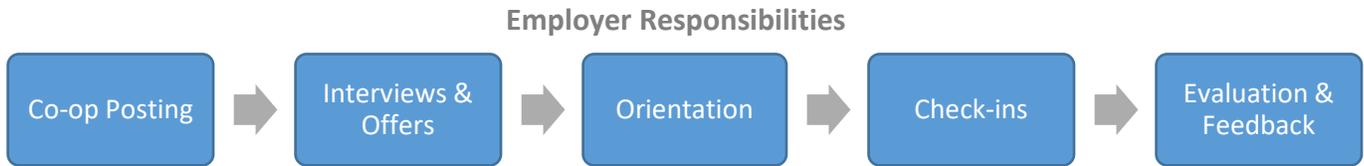
NSCC will track all co-op experiences through NSCC's Work Experience Portal. This portal allows us to record and track all work experiences in a single searchable catalogue. The Work Experience Portal includes student's personal information, employer information (Company Name and Contact Information), and co-op details (Start Date, End Date, Hours, Wages, etc.).

NSCC is committed to controlling the collection, use, and disclosure of the information provided by students and industry partners. NSCC is also committed to the principle of informed consent and supports the right for the employer to know what information is on file. If there are any questions on privacy or data use please contact us at [WorkExperience@nsc.ca](mailto:WorkExperience@nsc.ca).

If you have any questions related to co-operative education or work-integrated learning please email us at [WorkExperience@nsc.ca](mailto:WorkExperience@nsc.ca).

## Responsibilities

As a co-op employer you are responsible for providing relevant work, a safe work environment, proper supervision and student evaluation.



### Employers

- Complete the Co-operative Education Agreement form
- Complete the Risk Assessment and Compliance Agreement
- Assign the student to a member of staff who is willing to serve as supervisor/mentor
- Advise the supervisor of the goals of co-op program
- Assign tasks within the range of the student's capabilities
- Provide a safe and secure work environment, including safe work practices
- Inform the student of company policy, rules, and regulations including occupational health and safety procedures
- Complete the Orientation and Job Safety Review form
- Ensure that the student works the full contract (# of weeks and the # of hours)
- Issue Record of Employment (ROE) at the end of the term
- Ensure completion and return of Employer's Feedback on Student form by reviewing the form with the student and mailing or faxing it to the College, or having the student return it to their faculty
- Contact NSCC in the event of any change in the co-op position or at the first indication of any difficulty with the co-op
- Contact NSCC prior to any disciplinary action and inform your faculty contact of the circumstances surrounding disciplinary action (when necessary)
- Assist the student in compiling information for their oral presentation and written reports

### Employer Supervisor/Mentor

- Assist the student in becoming familiar with the work environment, the employees and the expectations of the workplace
- Assign tasks that will enable the student to accomplish the learning outcomes of the NSCC Co-op program
- Monitor the student's participation in the work environment and provide constructive feedback regarding the student's performance, including any issues on health and safety
- Meet with the student, as required, to discuss issues that arise during placement

### Students

- Student responsibilities are outlined in the Co-operative Education Student Guide. See [https://www.nsc.ca/learning\\_programs/work\\_experience/resources-for-students.asp](https://www.nsc.ca/learning_programs/work_experience/resources-for-students.asp) for more information.

## Co-operative Education Procedures

### Co-op Postings

Co-op postings can come directly from employers or from students who source their own co-op. It is important that a co-op provide a valuable learning experience for the student. All co-op positions must be approved by the faculty member.

### Postings from Employers

If you would like to share a co-op opportunity through NSCC you can do so by providing the relevant information to [WorkExperience@nsc.ca](mailto:WorkExperience@nsc.ca), a faculty member, or a campus and we will work with you to start the co-op process. Please include the following details in your request:

- Company Information
  - Contact Name
  - Complete address
  - Phone, Fax, Email and Website
- Job Information
  - Position/Title
  - Closing Date
  - Number of Positions
  - Position Description
  - Qualifications
- Job Location
  - Address where co-op will take place
  - Indicate any travel required
- Method of Contact and How to Apply
- Any documentation required
- Hourly wage

### Self Directed Searches by Students

Students completing self-directed searches for co-op must communicate with their faculty. Faculty must approve all co-op positions and will require the same details outlined above. The following criteria is considered when approving a co-op position.

- An optimum degree of relevancy exists between co-op work placements and the student's program of studies.
- The employer agrees to fulfill his/her responsibilities as outlined in the Employer Guide.
- An acceptable standard of safety is maintained at the work site.

### Interviews and Offers

Co-op employers may screen and shortlist applications. All students may not be selected for an interview. The employer may contact the student directly to arrange the interview or may contact the faculty member to schedule the interview.

The employer may also contact the faculty to extend an offer or the employer may contact the student directly to make an offer. The student will inform his/her faculty advisor and finalize all arrangements

prior to accepting the offer. The student is required to respond to the employer's offer within 3 business days.

### Orientation

It is important for employers to conduct an orientation with students. This orientation should familiarize the student what is expected of the position and outline the company's mission, vision, values, etc. At this point you should also review your company's safety program, with the student. The *Orientation and Job Safety Review Form* located in the Forms Guide can be used to guide these conversations. .

### Check-in's/Site Visits

As the College considers co-op to be an extension of campus studies, at least two check-in's/site visits should be scheduled during the co-op. The visits can be done either in person, by phone, or through technology depending on the situation or location of the co-op. Faculty members are responsible for arranging check-in's. If there are changes in a student's work assignment, or if any other unforeseen changes develop, the employer should not to wait for the check-in, but notify faculty as soon as possible.

### Employer Feedback

The employer will complete Employer Feedback on Student form at the end of the co-op. The student's overall performance should receive a minimum of a "Satisfactory" rating in order for the student to achieve a successful co-op. If the employer terminates the student's co-op prematurely, the faculty member and Academic Chair will review the student's status and follow up with the student to discuss the situation.

### NSCC Co-op Student of the Year Award

Each year, NSCC awards one outstanding co-op student with a "Co-op Student of the Year" award. Employers, with the approval of the student, are encouraged to nominate candidates for this award. A committee will review applications and the award will be given to the winning student at their campus awards ceremony in June. The *Co-op Student of the Year Nomination Form* can be found in the *Co-operative Education Forms Guide*.

All nominations must be submitted to [WorkExperience@nsc.ca](mailto:WorkExperience@nsc.ca). With consent, the winner of this award will then be nominated for the [CEWIL Canada](#) "College Co-op Student of the Year" award. For more detail on this award please visit [CEWIL Canada's](#) website.

## Health & Safety

Student health and safety is a priority. Safety is a shared responsibility amongst NSCC, the employer and the student. Insurance and risk management practices are of the utmost importance in ensuring the health and safety of our students.

### Insurance Coverage

As a paid employee, student are covered by the employer's WCB account while on a co-op. Students engaged in paid co-op activities are also covered by existing NSCC insurance plans while engaged in work-integrated learning activities.

Most students are members of the Student Insurance Program (SIP) Accident insurance protects students in the event of a workplace accident for some expenses not covered by NS Medical Services Insurance Program (MSI).

NSCC's General Liability insurance protects students and the College in the event that a student causes bodily injury or property damage to a third party while on work-integrated learning. Students in Health & Human Services programs are also covered also medical malpractice coverage.

*\* For information on insurance for international co-op positions, please refer to the International sections of this guide.*

In most cases, NSCC requires that co-op partners carry a general liability insurance policy of at least \$2 million. This not only protects our students, but also demonstrates that co-op partners promote safe workplace and risk management practices.

Some co-op partners may not carry the minimum general liability insurance to guard against risk within their organizations. In these cases, NSCC may allow co-op positions with these partners if the following process is completed.

1. Student and supervising faculty, in conjunction with the co-op partner, complete the *Risk Assessment and Compliance Agreement* located in the Forms Guide.
2. The agreement is reviewed by the Academic Chair, who assesses the level of risk.
3. If comfortable with the level of risk, the Academic Chair consults with OHSE to confirm his/her assessment of the risk.
4. If all parties are comfortable with the level of risk, the Academic Chair and supervising faculty sign-off on the Risk Assessment and Compliance Form

Exceptions are NOT possible if the co-op takes place in an industrial, construction, healthcare, or aviation setting, or any other setting that would be considered as potentially hazardous or high risk.

For more information, please see the *Work-Integrated Learning Insurance Guidelines* under *Work Experience on the College's website*.

### Risk Management

Effective risk management is an integral part of co-operative education. It is important to ensure students are placed in safe work environments, and to ensure students are aware of the employer's safety program and policies.

Prior to the start of a co-op, students and employers are responsible for completing the *Risk Assessment and Compliance Agreement* located in the Forms Guide. This agreement will help to identify any job hazards and control measures, determine any personal protective equipment that is required, and ensure the employer has the appropriate liability insurance. The original copy of this completed form must be kept with the Academic Chair while the student is on co-op.

Student orientation is another important component of a co-op and provides an opportunity to revisit the importance of workplace safety. On the first day of the co-op, students and their co-op supervisor must complete the *Orientation and Job Safety Review Form* in the Forms Guide. This will assist with establishing clear objectives, duties, safe work practices and learning opportunities. The completed form must also be kept with the Academic Chair while the student is on co-op.

### Safe & Respectful Environment

NSCC is committed to ensuring that all students and employees learn and work in a safe environment, free from discrimination and harassment, and conducive to learning and teaching.

NSCC is also committed to ensuring fair and equitable treatment of all members of its community, while maintaining the academic integrity of programs and curriculum, and an academic climate conducive to learning, free from disruptive or inappropriate behaviour.

To learn more about NSCC's commitment to providing safe and respectful work environments, visit [http://www.nsc.ca/about\\_nsc/policies\\_procedures/index.asp](http://www.nsc.ca/about_nsc/policies_procedures/index.asp)

### Accident/Incident Reporting Process

Prior to the start of a co-op, it is important to know what to do and who to contact if a student should find themselves in an unsafe or disrespectful working environment.

In case of a **serious accident or incident** requiring ambulance transport, hospitalization, or emergency care, contact the office of NSCC Occupational Health, Safety & Environmental Services IMMEDIATELY at 902-491-7233.

If the accident/incident is not serious in nature:

1. The student must complete the *Accident/Incident Report* in the Forms Guide and connect with their faculty/academic chair.
  - Completed forms must be submitted to Work-Integrated Learning by email ([WorkExperience@nsc.ca](mailto:WorkExperience@nsc.ca))
  - Work-Integrated Learning will forward the completed form to the Faculty, Academic Chair, Principal and Occupational Health, Safety & Environmental Services.
  - Upon receipt of the completed *Accident/Incident Report*, if Faculty/AC and students have yet to connect, faculty will make every effort to contact the injured student.
2. The Faculty or Academic Chair must submit the online *Incident Reporting Form* located under *Occupational Health, Safety & Environmental Services on OurNSCC* (<https://ournsc.nsc.ca/Departments/OHSE/Pages/AccidentIncidentReporting.aspx>)

## International Co-operative Education

### Health & Safety

The health and safety of students travelling internationally for study is paramount, there are risks associated with travel to certain regions and countries due to social and local factors. These conditions are dynamic and must be evaluated prior to any international trip. As such, NSCC has the right to deny requests for international co-operative education.

Travel advice and advisories issued by the Government of Canada will be applied. The College may also deem other locations to be of very high or extreme risk and prohibit travel to those locations.

### Insurance

When completing a co-op outside of Canada additional Student Guard insurance for students is mandatory and must be paid for by the student. The purchase of insurance can be coordinated through NSCC International.

*\* Information for students intending to complete an international co-op can be found in the Student Guide.*

## Quick Checks

The following checklist outlines the required procedures to be completed by the employer prior to, during and following the completion of a co-op.

### Pre-Placement Checklist

- Review length of co-op and working hour requirements for program
- Ensure following forms are signed with student prior to placement beginning:
  - Co-operative Education Agreement
  - Risk Assessment Compliance Agreement
- Assign supervisor/mentor to student

### In-Placement Checklist

- Provide student with orientation and occupational health and safety training at the beginning of each co-op
  - Complete Orientation & Job Safety Review form
- Participate in check-in's/site visitations with faculty
- Submit Accident/Incident Reports as required

### Post Placement Checklist

- Submit Employer's Feedback on Student's Work form
- Consider nominations for Co-op Student of the Year Award

## Resources

### Guides

Student, Employer and Faculty Guides have been developed to ensure there is a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities.

The Employer Guide can be found on our website [www.nsc.ca](http://www.nsc.ca) under “Hire a Student”

- Employer Guide  
[https://www.nsc.ca/learning\\_programs/work\\_experience/hire-a-student.asp](https://www.nsc.ca/learning_programs/work_experience/hire-a-student.asp)
- Student Guide  
[https://www.nsc.ca/learning\\_programs/work\\_experience/resources-for-students.asp](https://www.nsc.ca/learning_programs/work_experience/resources-for-students.asp)

A Forms Guide has been created to keep all required documents in a central location. Some forms are mandatory and must be completed by all stakeholders (Students, Employer and NSCC). Stakeholders and timing for each form is indicated in the table at the front of Co-operative Education Forms Guide and on each form.

- Forms Guide  
[https://www.nsc.ca/learning\\_programs/work\\_experience/resources-for-students.asp](https://www.nsc.ca/learning_programs/work_experience/resources-for-students.asp)

NSCC International has created an International Student Guidebook for students wishing to complete their work placements outside of Canada which can be found on NSCC International’s website: <http://international.nsc.ca/guidebook/>

### Policies and Procedures

The Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) policy and other relevant NSCC policies and procedures that apply to students during a work experience can be found on the College website under Policies and Procedures: [https://www.nsc.ca/about\\_nsc/policies\\_procedures/index.asp](https://www.nsc.ca/about_nsc/policies_procedures/index.asp).

### Versioning

Version	Last Updated
1.0	September 2016
2.0	February 2017
3.0	April 2018