

# COVID-19 WORK PLACEMENT

## 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 in turn benefits everyone. Work-integrated learning wouldn't be possible without employer support. As a partner in the education process, you are providing our students with a "real world opportunity" to practice the skills and to apply the knowledge they have learned in the classroom and in the lab.

At NSCC we offer four broad categories of work experiences that prepare students for their professional or occupational field of study:

1. **Field Experiences:** can be either paid or unpaid work-related experiences. Field experiences and their outcomes are defined at the course level and are a requirement of graduation. Types of field experiences include job shadow, sea time, work term etc. The traditional work term is a 5-week work placement and typically occurs in the third term (April-May); however, many programs have multiple field experiences that vary in length and take place throughout the program.
2. **Co-operative Education (co-op):** allows student 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. Co-op is paid full time employment that generally lasts 12-16 weeks, a minimum of 420 hours, and occurs between the students first and second year of study.
3. **Internships:** Two NSCC programs include an internship: International Business and Ocean's Technology. These paid internships take place during the final term of the program and last approximately 14-16 weeks.
4. **Professional Practice:** unpaid work placements required for a professional license or designation (including clinical placement, practicums, preceptorships, etc.)

NSCC tracks all work experiences through NSCC's Work Experience and Professional Practice Portals. These portals allow us to record and track all work experiences in a single searchable catalogue. The Work Experience Portal includes your company name, contact information, and work experience details (Start Date, End Date, Hours, Wage if applicable, etc.).

NSCC is committed to controlling the collection, use, and disclosure of the information provided by students and employers. NSCC is also committed to the principal 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 hiring a student, work experiences or work-integrated learning please email us at [WorkExperience@nsc.ca](mailto:WorkExperience@nsc.ca)

## Notice Concerning COVID-19 Guidelines

### Vaccine Information

To remain in step with the Province, NSCC no longer requires proof of vaccination or testing to enter campus. Students have been made aware that employers may have their own vaccination requirements and must be prepared to meet them.

### Onsite Work Placements

Employers must accept responsibility and ensure the safety of all employees and students in their workplace under the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Nova Scotia's COVID-19 health protocols.

Students will be made aware and informed of the COVID-19 related risk associated with any on-site aspect of a work experience. In addition, the student will have signed a Student Consent and Acknowledgment form and returned it to their faculty.

### About Remote Work Experiences

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, NSCC has introduced remote work experience for our students depending on their program. In remote work experience situations, and with faculty approval, students can completely fulfill the expectations of their course from their home and will not be expected to visit a physical work site.

In some cases, a combination of both onsite and remote work may be required. We recognize that many employers are working diligently to ensure that NSCC students can engage in a safe, physically distanced work experience.

See Appendix A – Tips for Supporting WIL Students Working Remotely

## Checklist

The following checklist outlines the required procedures to be completed by employers (in conjunctions with the faculty and student) prior to, during and following the completion of a work experience; as well as some information to guide and support you in organizing the work placement.

### Preparing for the Work Experience

- Post work experience opportunity on NSCC Student & Graduate Employment Site
- Review any funding possibilities
- Screen and Interview students
- Make offer to student and allow them time to consult with their faculty and get approvals
- Assign supervisor/mentor to student
- Complete the Work Experience Agreement form

### During the Work Experience

- Provide student with an orientation and job safety review
- Have check-in meeting with faculty to discuss student performance
- Review feedback process with faculty
- Contact faculty in the event of any change in position or responsibilities
- Contact faculty at first indication of any difficulty with the student
- Submit Accident/Incident Reports as required

### Following the Work Experience

- Debrief the work experience with student
- Ensure the employer feedback is submitted for Student
- Prepare record of employment (ROE) for paid work placements
- Consider nominations for NSCC Work Integrated Learning Student of the Year Awards

## Employer Guidelines

Employers are responsible for providing relevant work, a safe work environment, proper supervision and student evaluation.

### Employer Guidelines

- If applying for funding contact the WIL Office at [WorkExperience@nsc.ca](mailto:WorkExperience@nsc.ca) for endorsement prior to applying.
- Complete all required Work Experience forms
- Assign the student to a member of staff who is willing to serve as supervisor/mentor
- Advise the supervisor of the work placement
- Assign tasks within the range of the student's capabilities
- Provide a safe and secure work environment, including safe work procedures
- Conduct a formal Orientation and job safety review to inform the student of company policies, rules, and regulations including Occupational Health and Safety procedures
- Ensure that the student works the full contract (# of weeks and the # of hours), if changes must be made discuss with the student and contact the faculty
- Contact NSCC in the event of any change in the work experience or should any difficulties with the work experience arise
- 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 final evaluation
- Issue Record of Employment (ROE) at the end of the term (if applicable)

### Employer Supervisor/Mentor Guidelines

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

## Work Experience Procedures

### Preparing for a Work Placement

Work experience opportunities can come directly from employers or from students who source their own placements. It is important that work experiences provide a valuable learning experience for the student. All work experiences must be approved by the faculty member.

#### Posting Positions

If you would like to share a work experience opportunity through NSCC you can post it on our Student & Graduate Employment site ([nscc.ca>Student Services>Career and Employment Services>Student & Graduate Employment](https://www.nscc.ca/Student-Services/Career-and-Employment-Services/Student-&-Graduate-Employment)). If you would like to discuss to funding opportunities available, you can contact [WorkExperience@nscc.ca](mailto:WorkExperience@nscc.ca). You can also reach out to a faculty member, and we will work with you to start the work experience process.

Employers who are applying for funding and must be endorsed by the WIL Office prior to applications being submitted please contact [WorkExperience@nscc.ca](mailto:WorkExperience@nscc.ca) to inquire about endorsements.

#### Interviews and Offers

Employers may screen and shortlist applications, not all students need to be interviewed. You may contact the student directly to arrange the interview or contact the faculty member to schedule the interview. Interviews can be conducted by phone or through an appropriate form of technology.

You may also contact the faculty to extend an offer or contact the student directly to make an offer. The student must inform his/her faculty and finalize all arrangements prior to accepting the offer. The student is required to respond to your offer within 3 business days. It is important to note that faculty must approve all work experience positions prior to the student accepting the position.

### During a Work Placement

#### Orientation

Employers must conduct an orientation with students on the first day of their work placement. This orientation should familiarize the student with what is expected of them and outline the company's mission, vision, values, etc. At this point you should also review your company's safety program, with the student.

At the conclusion of the orientation the student should:

- Be familiar with the job description and have a clear understanding of what is expected of them
- Be familiar with the company's Mission, Vision, Values, Strategic Plan and any relevant business plans
- Be familiar with the company's organizational structure
- Be familiar with the company's internal web sites, if applicable
- Feel welcomed, valued, and a productive member of the team

#### Job Safety Review

Another important component that must be discussed during orientation is job safety. This is when students will learn about your COVID-19 safety measures, occupational health and safety policies, layout of the worksite, job hazards, etc. to ensure they are aware of safe work practices.

#### Confidentiality

Confidentiality is imperative to maintaining privacy, security and trust in professional and personal interactions. In situations where sensitive information is shared or accessible, confidentiality is mandatory. Students are required to hold in confidence all information regarding clients, policies and work materials that they may acquire or be privy to throughout their work placement. It will,

however, be necessary to share general information with the faculty as it relates to the students' educational experience.

### Check-ins/Communication

As the College considers work placements to be an extension of campus studies, at least one check-in should be scheduled during the placement. Check-ins can be done by phone or through technology depending on the situation or location of the employer. Given the current COVID-19 situation, check-ins with students and employers will be determined in consultation with the faculty.

If there are changes in a student's work assignment, or if any other unforeseen changes develop, the employer should not wait for the check-in instead notify faculty, as soon as possible. **Students may not go to a physical worksite without their faculty's approval.**

### Accident/Incident Reporting

While a student is on work placement it is important to contact NSCC should any accidents or incidents occur.

**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.

## Following the Work Placement

### Evaluation of the Work Experience

You must provide feedback on the student's performance upon completion of the work placement. The faculty will discuss this with you during your check-in's. Students are awarded a grade at the completion of the course and your input is essential.

If you terminate the student's work placement prematurely, the Faculty and Academic Chair will review the student's status and discuss the student's options with them.

### NSCC's Work-Integrated Learning & Co-op Student of the Year Awards

Each year, NSCC awards one "Co-op Student of the Year" award and one "WIL Student of the Year" award. Applications are initiated by the student through NSCC's Student Awards portal (<https://studentawards.nsc.ca/>). Once a student begins the application process, their faculty and employer will be asked to support the application by explaining the impact the student has had on the College and/or their Organization. A committee will review the applications, and the award will be given to the winning student at their campus awards ceremony in June.

With consent, the winner of this award will then be nominated for the [CEWIL Canada](https://www.cewilcanada.ca/) award. These nominations must be received at the CEWIL Canada office in January each year. The winning student will receive \$1,000 (a CEWIL Canada award of \$500 and the Emery-Dufault award of \$500). More detail on this award can be found on the CEWIL Canada website: <https://www.cewilcanada.ca/>.



## 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.

To demonstrate NSCC's due diligence, it is important that a risk assessment is completed, required forms are reviewed and signed, and safety plans are in place. NSCC maintains several insurance policies to protect employees, students and the organization. These include errors and omissions, general liability, and student accident insurance should any accidents or incidents occur.

### Student Insurance

Most students are automatically enrolled in or covered by existing NSCC insurance plans while engaged in work placement activities. 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). If the student is from another province in Canada, they have basic coverage provided by the equivalent Medical Services Insurance program from their home province. The same is applicable for students from Nova Scotia who intend to complete their placements in another province.

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

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

*\*For information on insurance for international work placement and/or international students please refer to the International sections of this guide.*

### Employer Insurance

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

Some employers may not carry the minimum general liability insurance to guard against risk within their organizations. In these cases, NSCC may allow work placement with these employers if the following process is completed.

1. Student and supervising faculty, in conjunction with the employer, complete the *Work Experience Agreement* form.
2. The assessment 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

Exceptions are NOT possible if the work placement 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 College's website*.

## **Risk Management**

A vital component of work placement is ensuring that our students are placed in safe work environments with proper risk management practices in place.

Prior to the start of a work placement, faculty and students 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 their work placement.

## **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)

## International Work Placement (Work Placement outside Canada)

Students considering completing a work placement outside of Canada must complete the *Intent to Complete International Form* (Forms Guide) and an orientation offered by NSCC International. This form must be submitted before the last day of classes in the Fall semester to [WorkExperience@nsc.ca](mailto:WorkExperience@nsc.ca). Students are asked to copy faculty on this email. Work-Integrated Learning will share the details on the form with the NSCC International Office. NSCC International will then connect with the student to discuss next steps.

### 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 work placement.

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 work placement 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. Please contact [international@nsc.ca](mailto:international@nsc.ca) to arrange insurance coverage.

## International Students (Work Placement in Canada)

Completing a work placement in Nova Scotia is a proven factor to help international students find employment in Nova Scotia after they graduate. If international students intend to stay and work in Nova Scotia after graduation, they should be advised that it is advantageous for them to complete their work placement in Nova Scotia rather than in their home country.

### Insurance

International students attending NSCC must purchase, and will be automatically enrolled in, the mandatory International Student Emergency Health Insurance (EHI). To confirm coverage for international students, please contact [nscplan@mystudentplan.ca](mailto:nscplan@mystudentplan.ca).

### Work Permits

International students are required to obtain a “Co-op Work Permit” in order to participate in any type of work placement. A “Co-op Work Permit” is different from a “Study Permit”. Without a Co-op Work Permit you will be removed from your work placement.

*Co-op Work Permit applications* can be completed online and there is no fee for this permit. You should apply for your co-op work permit at least 4 months before you are scheduled to begin your work placement. The *Co-op Work Permit Application* can be found on NSCC International’s website. (<http://international.nsc.ca>). Once you receive your “co-op work permit” you can use the [iCent app](#) to upload a copy of your permit.

\* *Students enrolled in health care programs are also required to have a co-op work permit for their clinical experiences.*

## Resources

### Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

The Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) policy and other relevant NSCC policies and procedures applicable 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).

Information on how to seek help if experiencing an unsafe, disrespectful or harmful workplace environment can also be found on the College website under Policies and Procedures.

- <https://www.nsc.ca/docs/about-nsc/policies-procedures/nsc-respectful-workplace-learning-environment-procedures.pdf>
- [https://www.nsc.ca/docs/about-nsc/policies-procedures/nsc\\_respectful\\_workplace\\_learning\\_environment\\_policy.pdf](https://www.nsc.ca/docs/about-nsc/policies-procedures/nsc_respectful_workplace_learning_environment_policy.pdf)

The College's Drug and Alcohol Policy can also be found under Policies and Procedures on the college website.

- <https://www.nsc.ca/docs/about-nsc/policies-procedures/drug-and-alcohol-use-policy.pdf>

Insurance Guidelines can be found on our website [www.nsc.ca](http://www.nsc.ca) under "Programs & Services – Work Experience..."

- <https://www.nsc.ca/docs/about-nsc/policies-procedures/work-integrated-learning-insurance-guidelines.pdf>

### Versioning

Version	Last Updated
1.0	September 2016
2.0	February 2017
3.0	February 2018
3.1	September 2019
COVID Update	April 2020
4.0	September 2020
4.1	February 2021
4.2	March 2021
5.0	October 2021

## Appendix A: Tips for Supporting WIL Students Working Remotely

Given the impact of COVID-19 we are seeing an increasing number of students working from home – working remotely can be a great option! Many students are new to the workforce and may not be experienced with working remotely so here are some important tips to ensure a successful work experience:

### Communicate expectations and guidelines

It's helpful to establish a central place for staff/students to access supporting documents when working from home. This would include any policies, guidelines and expectations when working remotely.

Other topics to address in your expectations and guidelines include:

- Communication: What tools are required to communicate effectively? (Phone, email, instant messaging, virtual meetings, etc.)
- Time Management: Will students be required to work regular office hours or is there flexibility? What are the expectations with regards to emails or requests that come in after hours?

Here's a great resource for building your policy, guidelines and expectations: [Five Steps to Setting Up and Effective Work From Home Policy \(Timesheets\)](#)

### Tracking and monitoring work

Time tracking and monitoring work are essential for students working remotely and it starts in the onboarding process. Hold an online orientation and be clear about accountability and how you want students to track their time. Schedule regular check-in meetings through video/phone conferencing systems (i.e. Outlook, Skype, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, or Slack) and keep lines of communication open.

Be clear in communicating how you expect students to log their time and who they should contact if they are having difficulties.

Here's a great resource on Managing a remote team: [Managing a Remote Team? Here Are 10 Tools That Can Help \(Inc\)](#)

### Provide reliable technology and resources

It is the student's responsibility to have a computer, phone and internet connection in order to work remotely. If there is additional software or equipment required you, the employer, will need to provide it.

Some key factors to consider relating to technology include reliability of internet connection; bandwidth; and access to additional software.

Here's a great resource on technology for working remotely: [Best Technology for Working Remotely: 6 Remote Working Tech Tools \(OWLLabs\)](#)

### Ensure leadership visibility and communication

In order to have a successful work placement when a student is working remotely, you will need to ensure everyone (including supervisors and leaders) is present, visible and available to be reached online.

Be sure to communicate with your student who they should contact if they need assistance, if there will be designated times when the full team will be online for questions and/or open discussions and schedule one-on-one meetings with your student.

Here's a great resource creating visibility when working remotely: [Five Ways to Increase Visibility at Work When You Work from Home \(Flexjobs\)](#)

## Consider new ways to unify your team

It takes time to get comfortable working from home and shifting company policies to allow for remote work. It is important to understand that remote work might not be easy, or even possible, for every industry, team or student.

Critical skills for students to develop while on work placements pertain to teamwork and interpersonal communication. Think about how you can unify your team when working from home and establish a plan to keep teams connected and communicative while they are working remotely.

Here's a great resource on connecting teams virtually: [Unify Your Remote Workforce with These 12 Management Tactics \(Forbes\)](#)

### Additional resources:

- [Amid Coronavirus Fears, How to Support a Shift to Remote Work \(Forbes\)](#)
- [How to Setup Remote During Coronavirus \(Fast Company\)](#)
- [Resources for Companies Embracing Remote Work \(Gitlab\)](#)
- [How Telecommuting Can Save Your Team: 3 Top Tips To Manage Any Team Remotely](#)