

Co-OP PROGRAM OVERVIEW



Co-operative Education at Royal Roads University integrates academically relevant, discipline-specific work terms into degree programs, enabling students to apply classroom learning in professional contexts. Structured as paid full-time experiences, co-op work terms are developed in partnership with employers and supported by clear learning outcomes, reflective practice and practical skill development. Through this work-integrated learning (WIL) model, students engage in structures cycles of preparation, participation, and reflection, strengthening career readiness, expanding professional networks and building the capacity to contribute effectively to complex workplace environments.

PROGRAM BENEFITS

For employers:

- Bring fresh perspectives, current knowledge and new ideas to projects and teams.
- Gain a cost-effective recruitment pathway to evaluate potential future hires
- Secure valuable staffing to fill capacity gaps that support both short- and long-term vacancies
- Hire specialized, up-to-date talent from aligned academic disciplines

For students:

- Gain paid work experience relevant to professional interests
- Explore and practice new job skills and opportunities
- Benefit from mentorship and supervision from industry leaders
- Develop key workplace competencies and apply classroom learning in real-world settings

EXPECTATIONS OF THE HOST

- Offer a minimum of 420-460 hours (12-14 weeks) work experience in a mentored environment;
- Offer fair remuneration as per labour standards;
- Read and sign the RRU Co-op Education Contract and all other required documents before assigning any worksite hours;
- Provide hands-on productive work that encourages skills growth and connects classroom learning to work readiness;
- Provide supervision for the student to ask questions and to receive feedback;
- Offer mentorship opportunities or job shadowing with senior coworkers;
- Advise the university of any concerns arising from the student's work assignment or impact on the work environment; and
- Participate in mid-term and final evaluations to assess learning goals and performance.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE STUDENT

- Submit the completed and signed RRU Co-op Education Contract and all other required documents before beginning any worksite hours;
- Conform to all conditions, rules and confidentiality requirements that apply to employees of the partner organization;
- Work with the employer supervisor to set learning goals for the duration of the co-op term;
- Complete all required hours established in the Co-op Education Contract and all academic assignments;
- If work-related concerns arise, communicate immediately with the employer supervisor, university instructor or Career Learning and Development Advisor; and
- Keep in regular contact with RRU staff and faculty supervising the internship.

EXPECTATIONS OF ROYAL ROADS UNIVERSITY

- Review and approve the completed and signed RRU Co-op Education Contract package documents;
- Assist students and hosts throughout the co-op interview and hiring process;
- Conduct a virtual or in-person co-op internship site visit with the student and supervisor;
- Help the student develop reasonable and effective learning objectives and goals aligned to the academic course;
- Support both the student and host if any concerns arise about either the work assignments, ethics or environment; and
- Assess and evaluate the student's academic assignments.

WORKPLACE INSURANCE

Co-op students are deemed employees under the Employment Standards Act and must be covered by the host organization's required employment-related insurance. This includes maintaining active coverage with WorkSafeBC (WSBC) in British Columbia. For work terms conducted outside British Columbia, the host organization is responsible for ensuring the student is covered under the applicable provincial or territorial workers' compensation board (WCB) or equivalent workplace insurance program.

INTERNATIONAL INTERNSHIPS

International co-ops can provide opportunities to combine academic learning with the cultural and personal growth tied to an overseas experience. Students are required to work with a Career Learning Development Advisor to support the development of an international academic co-op opportunity, to ensure it meets the university's requirements and approval.



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