



Welcome to Co-op at the Mount

Welcome to a rewarding academic program! Co-operative education is a value-added component of your degree which integrates classroom study and workplace experience. When co-op students graduate, they find jobs in their field more easily, attain higher starting salaries and have lower student debt loads.

Co-operative education is a partnership between the employer, the student, and the university. Each of these three participants are an integral part of the co-operative education experience. This partnership has benefits for everyone: the employer receives the latest theories and fresh ideas from the university, who in turn gets practical input from the workplace, and the student has the opportunity to experience the two as an integrated whole.

The co-operative education programs at Mount Saint Vincent University are accredited by Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning (CEWIL) Canada, a national organization which promotes quality co-operative education and work-integrated learning programming across Canada.

Your co-op terms will enhance your learning, giving you meaningful experience and the opportunity to build your professional network. It is an excellent way to experience different working environments as you progress from your first co-op term to your final co-op term. The Co-op Office and your co-op faculty advisor are available to assist you throughout the process. We are here to ensure your co-operative education journey is positive and enriching.

The Student Guide to Co-operative Education is designed to lead you through your co-op experience, to maximize your understanding of the program, and minimize your stress as you progress through the program.

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Co-op Program Overview

Co-operative education formally integrates academic study terms with alternating paid co-op terms at partnering employer organizations. This employment is related as closely as possible to the student's course of study, thereby extending the learning process beyond the classroom into the work world.

The co-operative education program abides by the following national standards:

- Each work situation must be approved by the Co-op Office as a suitable learning situation.
- Students complete three co-op work terms over the course of their program.
- The co-op student is engaged in productive work rather than merely observing.
- The co-op student receives remuneration for the work performed.
- The co-op student's progress on the job is monitored by the university.
- The co-op student's performance on the job is supervised and evaluated by the student's employer.
- The total co-operative work experience is at least 30% of the time spent in academic study and in no circumstances is less than 30%.

Benefits of **Co-operative Education**

As a student in the co-op program, you have the opportunity to:

- Understand the relevance of theory to practical application.
- Develop new skills and knowledge.
- Be involved in challenging and rewarding career-related work.
- Draw on workplace experience to enhance the classroom experience.
- Offset some cost of your education with co-op work term earnings.
- Explore career options.
- Build your resume by adding practical experience to academic credentials upon graduation.
- Develop a network of professional contacts.
- Experience professional development and personal growth.
- Become more competitive for post-graduate employment.



Academic Plan Program Sequencing

2nd Year Business Administration and Public Relations

	September - December	January - April	May - August
YEAR 1	Academic 1	Academic 2	
YEAR 2	Academic 3	Academic 4	Co-op 1
YEAR 3	Academic 5	Co-op 2	Academic 6
YEAR 4	Co-op 3	Academic 7	Academic 8

3rd Year Business Administration

or 1st Year Business Administration with 10 units of transfer credits (e.g. Nova Scotia Community College transfer students)

	September - December	January - April	May - August
YEAR 1	Academic 1	Academic 2	Free
YEAR 2	Academic 3	Academic 4	Free
YEAR 3	Academic 5	Co-op 1	Academic 6
YEAR 4	Co-op 2	Academic 7	Co-op 3
YEAR 5	Academic 8	-	



1st Year Public Relations with transfer credits

	September - December	January - April	May - August
YEAR 1	Academic 1	Academic 2	Co-op 1
YEAR 2	Academic 3	Co-op 2	Academic 4
YEAR 3	Co-op 3	Academic 5	

1st Year Tourism & Hospitality Management

	September - December	January - April	May - August
YEAR 1	Academic 1	Academic 2	Co-op 1
YEAR 2	Academic 3	Academic 4	Co-op 2
YEAR 3	Academic 5	Academic 6	Co-op 3
YEAR 4	Academic 7	Academic 8	

^{*}Many tourism & hospitality management co-op terms extend until October.

Notes:

- Timing of the first co-op term may vary for transfer students.
- Tourism & hospitality management co-op students admitted through articulation agreements with various Chinese post-secondary institutions may have customized program sequencing.



Stakeholder Roles

Role of the Employer

Co-operative Education employers will:

- Provide the university with an accurate and complete position description to ensure the best possible match between the employer and student.
- Offer a co-op term of suitable duration (minimum of 13 weeks).
- Ensure the student is aware of company policies, provide appropriate orientation, expectations and direction.
- Provide a learning environment where the student is assigned projects which provide a variety of
 experiences and a progression of skill development and responsibilities.
- Treat the students as regular employees in terms of human resource and labor standards practices.
- Participate in the work site visit with a member of the Co-op Team.
- Assist with setting and approving the student's personal learning plan.
- Provide the student with ongoing supervision and feedback on performance, and complete the final employer evaluation and review it with the student before they return to campus.
- Notify the Co-op Office as soon as possible of any issues or concerns related to the student or
 any situations arising from labor negotiations or other possible work disruptions during the co-op
 term.

Role of the Co-operative Education Student

Co-operative Education students will:

- Complete three paid co-op work terms with a minimum duration of 13 full-time weeks and at least 35 hours per week.
- Fulfill the contractual obligations set by the employer.
- Attend the mandatory professional development sessions delivered by the Co-op Office to prepare you for your first co-op term.
- Actively apply for co-op positions and attend all scheduled interviews until a position is secured.
- Accept the Terms and Conditions prior to the first round of job postings each term.
- · Provide your contact information, updated resumes and reference list.
- Sign a Learning Agreement with the university outlining the registration and financial services processes for each work term.
- Contact the co-op employer within two business days of accepting a co-op position.
- Develop a Personal Learning Plan with the help of the employer.
- Complete a work term report/project for each co-op work term by the date(s) communicated in the work term report/project guidelines, by the Co-op Office and/or by the Co-op Faculty Advisor.

- Participate in the work site visit with a member of the Co-op Team.
- Review the final employer evaluation completed by your employer at the end of each co-op work term.
- Participate in return-to-campus activities following your first and second co-op work terms
 (this includes obtaining an approved resume and reference list and accepting the Terms and
 Conditions document).
- Maintain good academic standing (minimum 2.0 CGPA) in accordance with co-op standards.
- Respect employer practices and conduct yourself in a professional manner throughout your co-op work term.

Role of the Co-op Office

The Co-op Office works year-round to deliver high quality co-operative education work terms. We also work to coach and assist students in securing co-op work terms, which provide hands-on experience and complement the student's academic program.

The Co-op Office will:

- Develop and deliver a series of professional development sessions.
- Provide personalized resume, cover letter and interview support.
- Assist students with effectively marketing themselves to employers.
- Promote co-op programs to related industries.
- Assess suitability of co-op positions, in consultation with the academic departments, if necessary.
- Facilitate the student job application, interview and job offer process.
- Monitor co-op terms through work site visits.
- Mediate between employers and co-op students, when required.
- Provide employer feedback to academic departments on the content and direction of the academic programs and employer needs.
- Develop promotional materials to promote co-op to employers and potential students.
- Manage projects that raise the awareness of the Mount's co-op program.
- Provide ongoing assessment of co-operative education programs.
- Ensure CEWIL Canada national accreditation standards are maintained.



Co-op Student Services

As a co-op student, you will have access to a number of resources provided by the Co-op Office to help guide you along your co-op journey. Your number one resource is the co-op team. You can always call, email or stop by the Co-op Office with questions or concerns.

General Contact Information

166 Bedford Highway
McCain Centre, Room 312
Halifax, NS B3M 2J6
902-457-6139
co-op@msvu.ca
msvu.ca/co-op

Co-op Staff Contact Information

Scott Daniels, Manager

902-457-6375

scott.daniels@msvu.ca

Lisa MacNeil, Coordinator

902-457-6429

lisa.macneil4@msvu.ca

(On leave until September 2021)

Vacant Position, Student Liaison

902-457-6139

co-op@msvu.ca

Courtney Davison, Coordinator

902-457-6588

courtney.davison2@msvu.ca

Cynthia Black, Employer Liaison

902-457-6493

cynthia.black@msvu.ca

Support for Co-op Students

Mount Co-op Staff

You can reach out to any member of the co-op team with questions or concerns.

Moodle

As a co-op student, you have access to the Co-op Moodle page. This page has resources we encourage you to take advantage of including items such as: an overview of co-op, resume, cover letter and interview assistance.

Career Connects

Career Connects is an online platform that will be your one-stop resource for co-op during the job search term. Here you will be able to view jobs, apply for positions, sign up for interviews and receive job offers.

Additional information about Career Connects is provided in this handbook. You can also refer to the Career Connects Student User Guide located on the co-op website (msvu.ca/co-op).

Professional Development Sessions

As a new co-op student, you will receive emails regarding mandatory resume workshops, the Roadmap to Success Conference and cover letter workshops.

You will complete these professional development activities prior to your first work term. These workshops and conference are designed to prepare you for co-op.

Workshops

Occasionally the Co-op Office will host employers for workshops on topics related directly to co-op. Information about these workshops will be shared via email.

Post Co-op

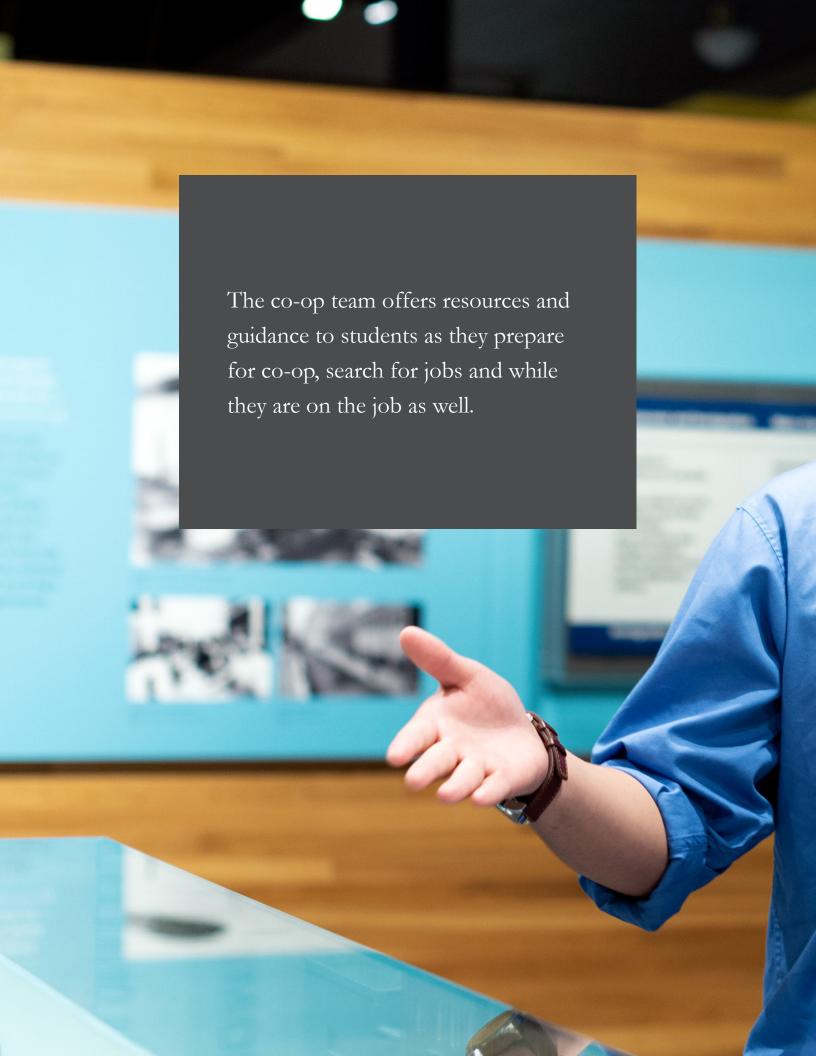
Once you have completed all co-op work terms, you will have access to full time job postings that the Co-op Office receives from employers.

Employers will sometimes reach out to the Co-op Office with a job posting to share with recent and/or upcoming graduates. The Co-op Office will send these postings to the email address we have on file.

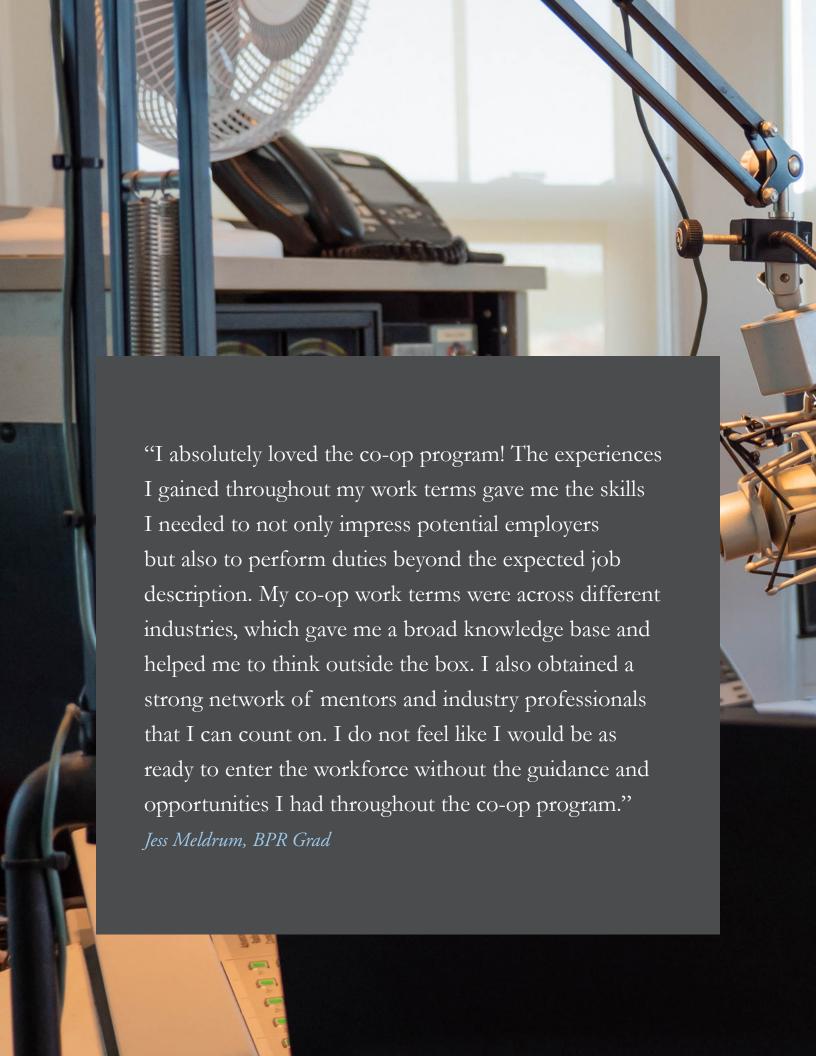
Mount Co-op Connectors

Mount Co-op Connectors are a group of senior student volunteers who promote and support programs and events facilitated by the Mount Co-op Office. Mount Co-op Connectors are responsible for; volunteering at resume and cover letter workshops, and assisting at Mount co-op events throughout the academic year (September-April).











Preparing for Co-op

Career Connects

Career Connects is an online platform where you can view and apply for co-op positions. To access Career Connects, visit careerconnects.msvu.ca. Be sure to review the student user guide located on the co-op website (msvu.ca/co-op) for a more detailed overview on how to use Career Connects.

Co-op Terms and Conditions

The Co-op Terms and Conditions document (Appendix A of this handbook) was developed to comply with FOIPOP (Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy) and is an agreement by students to participate fully in the co-op process.

In order to gain access to the co-op job postings and to be eligible to complete the program, students are required to review and accept these Terms and Conditions on Career Connects prior to each work term.



Resumes

Having a strong resume is one of the keys to a successful co-op job search.

One of the first tasks you will complete in the co-op process is creating your co-op resume. The Co-op Moodle site will be a helpful resource, especially when first developing your resume. Take the time to review the resume module on Moodle, as it will provide you with resume tips, as well as some sample templates to help get you started. If you do not have access to the co-op Moodle site, email co-op@msvu.ca.

Prior to your first work term, you will attend a Resume Workshop where you will have the chance to further refine your resume. Following this workshop, you will work one-on-one with a co-op coordinator via email to finalize your resume so that it is ready for job postings.

Each term you will be required to have your resume re-approved by a co-op coordinator before applying for jobs for your next co-op work term. We recommend keeping a copy of your most up-to-date resume on hand so you will only need to add in new items as they arise. If you have misplaced your most recently approved resume, you can email co-op@msvu.ca for a copy or download it from Career Connects.

When developing your resume, consider the following points which are also included in the relevant videos and documents on Moodle:

- Resume formats
- Attention to detail and consistency
- Include diversified experiences (e.g. education, part-time jobs, volunteerism, extra-curricular activities and course work)
- Tips for writing strong bullet points, including using action verbs
- Review sample resumes
- Reference list

Cover Letters

The average length of time an employer reads over your cover letter is 60 seconds. Therefore, it is critical to have error free, professional, and relevant cover letters to attract the attention of employers. Similar to resumes, there is a cover letter module on Moodle. Take some time to review this module. Prior to your first work term, you will be required to attend one cover letter workshop, where members of the Co-op Office and senior co-op students will attend to provide you with cover letter feedback.

These workshops take place after job postings have started to give you the opportunity to receive feedback on cover letters you will be submitting for job postings.

When developing your cover letters, consider the following points which are further described in the various videos and documents on Moodle:

- Cover letter format
- Customizing each cover letter
- Researching the organization
- Grabbing the reader's attention
- Components of a cover letter (intro, body and closing)
- Review sample cover letters



Professional Development

Attending the mandatory professional development offerings prior to your first co-op work term is vital to your success in the co-op program. You will complete the following professional development activities:

Resume Workshop

The resume workshop details will be emailed to you. Prior to this workshop, it is expected that you have reviewed the resume module on the co-op Moodle site and created a first draft of your resume and reference list.

The majority of this workshop will be spent editing your resume. Co-op staff members and senior co-op students will be available to answer your questions and provide feedback.

Resume One-On-One Support

Following the resume workshop you will work with a co-op coordinator to finalize your resume and reference list. This review and approval process will be completed via email, unless you or the coordinator feels you should meet in person. You will also have the chance to hear from senior co-op students who completed the co-op program.

Roadmap to Success Conference

This one day conference will cover topics that include: an introduction to co-op at the Mount, cover letters, interviews, navigating your work term, and special appearances from some of our dedicated employers who will provide tips related to co-op. You will also have the chance to hear from senior co-op students who completed the co-op program.

Cover Letter Workshop

Once co-op postings have begun for your first work term, you will sign up for a cover letter workshop. You will have the option to choose a day that works for you. This workshop will allow you to work one-on-one with a member of the co-op team and/or senior co-op student to ask questions about your cover letter and for them to provide you with feedback.

Additional Services

Cover Letter Reviews: After the cover letter workshop and throughout the term, as you are applying for positions you can send in a draft of your cover letter to a coordinator for review. They will review your cover letter and provide feedback via email. Please make sure to send your cover letter in for review at least 48 business hours before the application deadline.

Mock Interviews: Once selected for an interview, students can contact co-op@msvu.ca to set up an interview prep appointment with a co-op coordinator.



- 1. Use Moodle as a resource when creating your co-op resume and cover letters.
- Review Moodle and this handbook in detail prior to attending the Roadmap to Success conference to ensure you are able to maximize the event.
- 3. Cover letters are important and should be customized for the organization and position you are applying for.
- 4. Career Connects is where you will apply for co-op job postings, sign up for interviews and accept job offers.
- 5. You need an approved resume and you must have accepted your Terms and Conditions on Career Connects in order to view job postings.







"Co-op gave me the opportunity to apply for jobs before the rush in fourth year university. It was an amazing experience that has already led to many opportunities I wouldn't normally have this early in my career."

Chantel O'Brien, BBA Grad

Job Search

Job Search

The Co-op Office works with employers across Canada to provide co-op job postings for students to review and apply for. The more positions you apply for, the higher your chance of success in securing a work term. The Co-op Office strongly recommends remaining open to as many opportunities as possible.

Applying for Jobs

Co-op opportunities are posted on Career Connects. Unless otherwise stated, application packages are submitted through Career Connects by the application deadline.

The more positions you apply for, the higher your chance of success in securing a work term.

Job postings traditionally start on the third Monday during the first month in the term preceding the co-op term (e.g. third Monday in January for a summer work term). Following the initial group of job postings, co-op opportunities will be posted ongoing as they arrive into the Co-op Office and students will have on average 4-5 business days to submit applications. It is critical for students to regularly check Career Connects for new job postings.

Weighing your Opportunities

All co-op terms are a requirement of the degree program and the co-op opportunities posted have been deemed appropriate learning experiences. Students who place conditions on their co-op term (e.g. geographic) must realize that their options will be reduced. However, students should not apply for positions they are not willing to accept.

Peak Period for Securing a Work Term

The co-op staff wants you to be successful in your co-op journey. Therefore, the co-op team strongly encourages you to maximize the supports available to you through the Co-op Office. This also means committing time to your co-op job search and being active in the job posting process from the onset. The highest volume of jobs are posted in the first two weeks of postings (e.g. January for summer work terms). The Co-op Office will notify you via email when job postings begin. You can also review the important dates section of the co-op website.

Gaining Access to Job Postings

If you do not have access to the job postings on Career Connects once postings have started, check to make sure you have an approved resume and have accepted the Terms and Conditions. Instructions on how to accept the Terms and Conditions can be found in the Career Connects User Guide located on the co-op website (msvu.ca/co-op). If you have completed these two tasks and still cannot view the job postings, email co-op@msvu.ca.

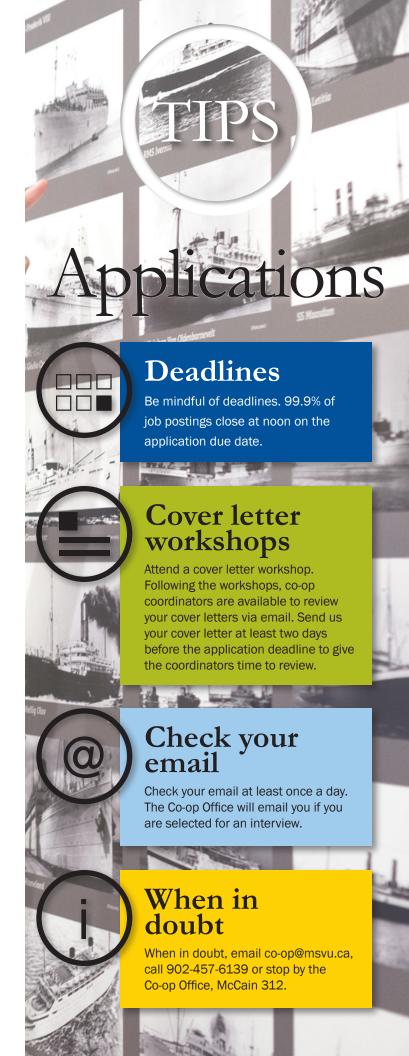
Application Documents

Applications for job postings will consist of a cover letter, resume and reference list. Employers may also request: transcript, writing samples, graphic design samples, or government forms such as the Public Service Commission (PSC) form or Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) form. You can find the PSC and ACOA forms on Career Connects.

Completing Your Own Job Search

Start thinking about building your own job search skills now. Completing your own job search allows you to maximize your opportunities as you can continue to apply for jobs posted by the Co-op Office while also completing your own job search at the same time.

If you wish to complete your own job search, book a 15-minute appointment with a co-op coordinator to go over the job search form. Bring a list of companies you plan to approach to the meeting.



We are here to support you

The Co-op Team is here to support you throughout your entire co-op journey. If you have any questions, please contact us.

Email co-op@msvu.ca or call 902-457-6139



International Work Terms

Although the Co-op Office does not post international opportunities, students are able to complete an international work term provided they are willing to put in the research and work. Similar to the own job search process, contact co-op@msvu.ca to set up an appointment to complete the own job search form and talk about international work terms.

Students completing an international job search will be required to meet with the International Education Centre who will help navigate work permits, forms, discuss risks and opportunities with particular countries, and facilitate a pre-departure meeting.

Co-op students are responsible for securing their own visa and permits required prior to the work term.

Entrepreneurial Work Terms

The idea of developing a business enterprise while going through university is a goal for some students. Recognizing this desire to embark on entrepreneurial activities, the Co-op Office seeks to support students interested in completing an entrepreneurial co-op work term.

Co-op students who wish to pursue their own business venture can complete an entrepreneurial work term to meet the requirements of a co-op work term. The Co-op Office can provide information, support and advice for students wanting to consider an entrepreneurial co-op work term.

Job Search FAQ's

The employer has asked for writing and/or graphic design samples, what should I upload? If the employer does not specify what type of writing or graphic design samples, the Co-op Office suggests reviewing the job posting and uploading samples relevant to the job duties (e.g. if you are going to be writing press releases, upload a press release that you have created in the past through work or school).

If you do not have any similar work samples, you should upload a document that you are most proud of. Make sure to limit samples to no more than two pages in length.

Career Connects will not let me upload my graphic design sample, what do I do?

If Career Connects will not let you upload your design sample, it is likely because the file is too large.

You can either reduce the file size or choose another design sample to upload instead.

The employer has asked for an ACOA or a PSC form, where can I find this?

You can find these government forms in the resource section of the Co-op & Internship module on Career Connects.

The employer has asked for a transcript, how do I get this? Does it need to be official? Unless specifically stated, your transcript does not need to be official. For step by step instructions on uploading your transcript, review the Career Connects User Guide located on the co-op website (msvu.ca/co-op).

I need to make a small change to my resume and/or reference list, how do I do this? If you are only making a small change, you can make this yourself and re-upload the document to Career Connects. If you are looking to make major changes to your resume, re-send it to the co-op coordinator you were working with when you initially had your resume and reference list approved.

Interviews

Interviews begin early in the month following the start of job postings (e.g. February for the summer work term). The first three days of interviews will be held on-campus. When you arrive for an on-campus interview, stop by the front desk in the Co-op Office to check in and a member of the Co-op Team will let you know which room the interview will be held in.

Employers do not have a deadline to book interviews with the Co-op Office. However, the Co-op Office completes regular follow-up with each employer who posts a position.

If you are selected for an interview, you will be contacted by the Co-op Office through email. When you receive this email, it is to your advantage to log into Career Connects and sign-up for a time slot as soon as possible because sign-up is first come, first served.





The Interview Process

Employer selection

Once employers review the application packages, they will decide which students they are interested in interviewing. If you are selected for an interview, you will receive an email from the Co-op Office.

Sign up for an interview

Log into Career Connects to sign up. Interview sign-up is first come, first served in terms of available time slots.

Review interview information

Make note of the interview location. It is important to make sure that you record all relevant details related to your interview. For instance, interview date, time and location.

Review the "Special Instructions"

Review the notes associated with your interview on Career Connects under "special instructions" as some employers may request writing samples, writing tests or other relevant material.

Prepare, prepare and prepare

This is critical in helping you to get to know the company, how you align, and how you can tie your experience to the position you are interviewing for. You can make an appointment with a co-op team member to complete interview preparation.

Rock the interview

Show up on time (even 5-10 minutes early). Should you not receive a job offer, the Co-op Office can contact the employer on your behalf to request feedback. The Co-op Office facilitates this process, so let us know if you would like to seek feedback.

Preparing for an Interview

The Co-op Moodle site is an excellent resource when preparing for an interview. Check out the Interview module for tips and common interview questions. You can also book an interview prep meeting with a co-op coordinator by emailing co-op@msvu.ca.

When preparing for an interview make sure you:

- 1. Complete in-depth research on the organization. The number one piece of feedback the Coop Office hears from employers is that students who do not do their research do not get hired. Impress employers with your knowledge about their organization's values and what they do.
- 2. Review the job description to determine ways your skills relate directly to the job duties.
- 3. Prepare questions to ask the employer at the end of the interview. Asking questions shows the employer that you are interested in the position and curious to learn more.
- 4. Practice answering potential interview questions (review the sample interview questions on Moodle).

Arrive 5-10 minutes early for your interview.

Types of Interviews



Come to the Co-op Office, McCain Centre, Room 312 for your interview.



Come to the Co-op Office, McCain Centre, Room 312 for your interview. The Co-op Office will have a computer and Skype username for you to use.



Come to the Co-op Office, McCain Centre, Room 312 for your interview. The Co-op Office will have a telephone for you to use. The employer will call the Co-op Office and a co-op team member will transfer the call to you.



Go to the address indicated on the interview schedule on Career Connects.

Interview FAQ's

How will I know if I am not selected for an interview?

You can view the status of the job posting on Career Connects. Learn how to check the status of a job on the next page of this handbook and in the Career Connects User Guide located on the co-op website (msvu.ca/co-op).

What happens if I do not get the job?

Do not lose momentum. Continue to apply for available positions and stop by the Co-op Office to talk with a member of our team if you are feeling discouraged. You can email co-op@msvu.ca to seek feedback on your interview. The Co-op Office will reach out to the employer on your behalf for feedback to help you in future interviews.

There is a writing test associated with my interview, what do I do?

Writing tests are quite common with public relations employers. Writing tests are developed by the employer so the Co-op Office is usually not aware of the specifics of the test beforehand. However, given that writing tests often need to be completed in a short time, press releases, blog posts, social media content, or editorial assignments are common.

Your writing test may occur before or after the interview. The interview schedule on Career Connects will provide these details. If the writing test is to take place before the interview, contact co-op@msvu.ca to arrange a time to complete the test.

Job Offers

Job offers will begin at the end of the third day of interviews and continue throughout the term. Following the interview, employers will provide the Co-op Office with their rankings. If you are selected, you will receive the job offer via email. An employer may submit their offer minutes after the interviews or a few days later because they may want to review writing tests, complete reference checks, or complete interviews with students at other universities.

Receiving a Job Offer

Students have one business day to respond to a job offer on Career Connects. For example, if you receive an offer at 3:00 pm on Friday, you will have until 2:59 pm on Monday to accept or decline the offer. If you do not respond in time, the offer will be declined and automatically released to the next ranked student.

Accepting a Job Offer

Once you have accepted a job offer, the Co-op Office will email you when your learning agreement is ready to be signed. This form is an agreement between you and the university and will register you for the upcoming co-op work term.

We will also provide you with your employer's phone number. Make sure you call the employer within two days of accepting an offer. When calling the employer, thank them for the opportunity and check in to see if they need anything from you before you begin. You can also ask any questions you may have (e.g. dress code, parking, start and end dates, office hours, salary, etc.).

Declining a Job Offer

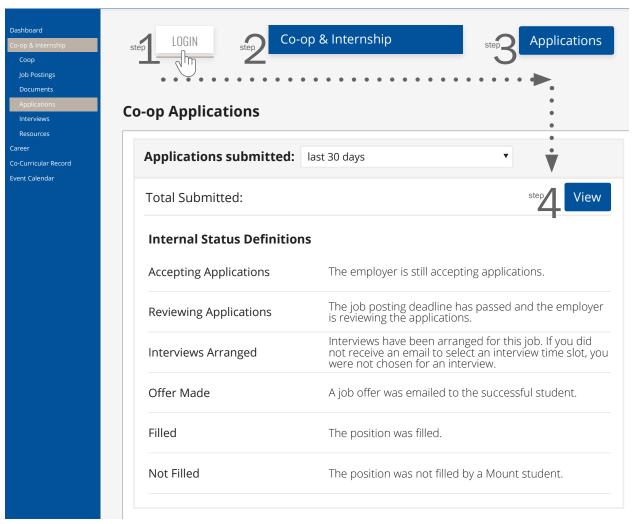
Once you have accepted a position, the Co-op Office will cancel all additional interview requests and job offers on your behalf.

If you receive a job offer, but have an upcoming interview be sure to accept the job offer at least two business hours before the scheduled interview. This will provide ample time for the Co-op Office to contact the employer to advise them about changes to their interview schedule.

Students declining three co-op opportunities a term (including both interview requests and job offers) will be required to complete their own job search. Read more about this policy in the "Co-op Policies and Fees" section of this handbook.



Checking the Status of a Job in Career Connects



Registering for a Co-op Work Term

Once you have secured a work term and have signed your learning agreement, the Co-op Office will send a copy to the Registrar's Office and Financial Services to ensure you are registered for your work term.

Pre-registering for a Work Term

If you are completing a work term in the fall or winter, the Co-op Office will grant permission for you to register for the correct upcoming work term. You will receive an email from the Co-op Office in March (once registration opens) with instructions on how to register for the upcoming fall or winter work term.



Top 10 Things to Remember During your Job Search

- 1. Unless otherwise stated, you will apply for jobs on Career Connects.
- 2. Maximize your opportunities by applying for jobs early on.
- 3. Have a job in mind that is not posted? Contact co-op@msvu.ca to set up an own job search appointment before reaching out to an employer.
- 4. Make sure your contact information is up-to-date. If you are selected for an interview, you will receive an email from the Co-op Office.
- 5. If you have a scheduling conflict, contact the Co-op Office right away.
- 6. Review all of your interview details you do not want to show up on-campus when your interview is off-campus.
- 7. There is no timeframe for an employer to get back to the Co-op Office with a job offer. If you receive a job offer, you will get an email from the Co-op Office.
- 8. Students have one business day to respond to a job offer.
- Once you have accepted a job offer, contact your employer within 48 hours to thank them for the opportunity and inquire about any next steps.
- 10. If you decline three opportunities* you will complete the Required Self-Directed Job Search in order to secure your co-op work term.

*An opportunity is defined as an interview or a job offer





Congratulations!

You've secured a job and are ready to start working.

On the Job Timeline

Below is a checklist and timeline for a typical co-op work term. The Co-op Office will go into further details on each bullet point in this handbook.

CHECK DUE DATES

Due dates for work term projects vary depending on your academic program. If you are unsure, contact us.

WEEK ONE

Submit an "on the job" form that will be sent to you by email from the Co-op Office.

WEEKS THREE TO FOUR

Develop a personal learning plan. Work with your supervisor to develop four to six well-rounded learning objectives.

WEEKS SIX TO TEN

Work site visits will be completed in person or by phone.

FINAL WEEK

Employer evaluation will be completed by your last day of work.

"My co-op experience has certainly opened up many doors for me, giving me valuable experience for when I entered the workforce. It has provided me with connections, references, experience and confidence that certainly gave me my edge when seeking my first job." *Kathleen Yurchesyn, BPR Grad*

On the Job

On the Job Form

During the first week of your co-op work term, fill out the "on the job" form. The Co-op Office will send out an email with a link to the form. If you want to get a head start, go to msvu.ca/co-op and under "For Co-op Students" click on "Forms & Documents". You will find the form under "General Forms and Documents". It's important that you take the time to fill this out as the co-op coordinators will use this information to arrange your work site visit.

Personal Learning Plan

By week three of the co-op term, you should be finalizing your personal learning plan with your supervisor. The personal learning plan sets your learning goals for the term and is a great way to discuss work expectations with your supervisor. The personal learning plan template can be found on the same webpage as the "on the job" form (noted above).

When developing your objectives, the Co-op Office encourages you to develop SMART goals. SMART goals are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and timely.

We suggest that you work on a draft of your personal learning plan once you have been working for a few weeks and have a sense of some of the projects you will be involved in. Initiate a meeting with your supervisor to share your draft plan with them and get their feedback on your goals. Your supervisor may be able to identify additional goals or re-align your plan based on your projected workload. Make sure to send a copy of the plan signed by both yourself and your supervisor to the Co-op Office by the end of the first month of your work term.

The personal learning plan is a great tool to use as a point of conversation with your supervisor to get on the same page about priorities for the term. It is meant to be reviewed throughout the work term. The Co-op Office strongly encourages students to use the learning plan as a point of reference if they are feeling under-challenged and/or if priorities are unclear.

Work Term Projects

Public Relations students: You will be assigned a co-op faculty advisor who will add you to their Moodle page and contact you via email to outline the co-op work term project which will be completed throughout the work term.

Business and Tourism students: You will complete a work term report that is due on the first day of classes following your work term. To determine which work term report you can complete, visit the "Forms and Documents" page at msvu.ca/co-op.

Work Site Visits

About mid-way into your work term, a co-op coordinator will visit you at your workplace. If you are outside of the province, your visit may take place by phone or Skype. During the work site visit, the coordinator will speak with both you and your supervisor to hear how the work term is progressing.

Employer Evaluations

Your employer is required to complete an end of term evaluation via Career Connects. This evaluation will be shared with you following your work term. Students are evaluated on items such as: oral and written skills; problem solving and decision making; planning and initiative; teamwork; workplace skills; integration of theory and practice; and overall performance.

Work Term Reflection Survey

Similar to the employer evaluation noted above, you have the option to complete an end of term reflection survey of the work term and your supervisor. This will be emailed to you in the last month of your work term.

Workplace Harassment

While the Co-op Office hopes that no one will experience harassment on the job, it is important to note that supports are available in the case you should ever need them.

The Mount has a Harassment and Discrimination Advisor (respect.advisor@msvu.ca) who works on-campus. The advisor is a free service for all Mount students. Any information shared with the advisor will remain confidential.

Please, contact the Co-op Office if you ever find yourself in a situation that makes you feel uncomfortable.

Challenges in the Workplace

The most common challenges that previous co-op students have experienced are:

- Attendance: Sick time, time off and illness.
 While we all get sick, co-op students should not expect to be paid for any missed time. Be sure to check your employer's policy regarding time missed (e.g. when is a doctor's note required). Also, be sure you know the process for communicating sickness ahead of time.
- Under challenged: If you are feeling under challenged, we recommend talking to your supervisor. Perhaps bring ideas with you on items you can work on and reflect on projects included on your personal learning plan.
- Expectations: It is best to set clear expectations
 with the employer right away. If you are
 uncertain if something is allowed (e.g. having
 you cellphone at your desk), simply clarify with
 your supervisor.
- Fit within the organization: In your first week,
 we recommend introducing yourself to the team.
 Get to know others, eat lunch in the lunchroom
 and participate in team activities. These things
 may help you feel like part of the team.

Many challenges in the workplace have one thing in common:
lack of communication.
Communicating with your employer and the Co-op Office about challenges you are facing or questions you may have will help you in your work term.



Feedback and Why it is Important

You will likely be receiving feedback regularly from supervisors and colleagues as you are new to the organization and will be adapting to a new workplace. When accepting feedback, it is important to listen, keep feedback in perspective, and apply what has been discussed. Look at feedback as an opportunity to grow and learn. Ask questions and seek examples if anything is unclear.

GOOD FEEDBACK IS... Describe the issue and consequence Clearly, examples are helpfur to bring Resolutions should be developed to gether





- Arrive on time. Do not be afraid to ask for a workplace tour on your first day as this is great way to meet the team.
- Communication is key. You will want to ensure you have open communication with your supervisor to get the most out of your work term. Do not be afraid to ask questions.
- 3. Submit your "on the job" form within your first week. Submit your personal learning plan by the end of week 3 of the work term. Talk to your supervisor when developing this plan as they will be able to foresee some of the projects you will be a part of.
- 4. Ensure you are completing your work term project deliverables on time (Public Relations students) with your co-op faculty advisor or have an idea of which work term report you are going to complete (Business Administration and Tourism and Hospitality Management students) prior to the work site visit.
- 5. If you have any questions or concerns at any point in the work term, contact the Co-op Office.

We are here to support you.





Policies and Fees

Required Self-Directed Job Search Policy

Students that are placed on the Required Self-Directed Job Search Policy are required to find their own co-op work term without the usage of the jobs posted by the Co-op Office for the upcoming work term. The Required Self-Directed Job Search is assigned to a student when they decline three co-op job opportunities (job offers or interviews).

Example:

You receive a job offer from the Co-op Office for a position you recently interviewed for and you decide to decline the job opportunity. That decline would be counted as a missed opportunity. If you decline a third opportunity/offer, the Required Self-Directed Job Search status will be assigned to you. This will require you to secure your own co-op position for the upcoming work term.

Deferral Policy

Deferring a co-op work term means postponing/rescheduling a co-op term until an upcoming semester.

When students find themselves in unexpected medical situations, academic situations or not able to secure a work term, they may be eligible for a deferral. A co-op deferral is approved by the Co-op Office and academic departments under the following specific circumstances:

- CGPA is below the required minimum of 2.0. Students who do not meet the 2.0 CGPA will be
 notified by their academic department or the Co-op Office that they are required to defer the
 co-op term.
- Students were unable to secure a co-op position by the last business day of final exams in the semester prior to the start of the scheduled work term. Refer to the important dates on the co-op website for the specific date.
- Cannot enroll in required courses during the scheduled academic period due to availability of courses. This only happens on occasion for business administration accounting students.
- Documented medical issue(s).

Students can only defer one co-op term.

To request a deferral, students must apply in writing to the Co-op Office. The request will be forwarded to the academic department for consideration.

Co-op Work Term Evaluation

Evaluation for successful completion of a co-op term is comprised of the following:

- employer evaluation;
- · work site visit; and
- work term report/project.

The results of the co-op term are indicated on the student's transcript. There are three possible grades for a co-op work term:

- Pass student has a satisfactory work term and employer evaluation; work term report/project
 has been submitted on time, and is satisfactory; student is eligible for the next co-op term in the
 program sequence.
- Fail student is terminated from the workplace with cause; has an unsatisfactory work term and employer evaluation; work term report/project has not been completed; or work term report/ project is unsatisfactory; student is dismissed from the program.
- NCR (no credit repeat) student's performance does not meet the requirements in any one of
 the evaluation criteria (work term and employer evaluation or work term report/project) but has
 demonstrated measurable progress to warrant continuation in the co-op program; student must
 repeat the work term.

Full tuition fees apply for all co-op grades.

Co-op Fees

Co-op fees are equivalent to one unit of tuition per work term.

Fees are due the last business day of the second month of your work term. For example: co-op fees are due the last business day of June for students completing a summer work term. Contact Financial Services at financial.services@msvu.ca or 902-457-6277 for more information.

Withdrawal Fee Structure

30% of fees will be charged once resume reviews are completed and job postings have started

50% of fees will be charged once interviews have started

100% of fees will be charged once a co-op position has been accepted

*fees are based on the value of one unit of tuition

Withdrawing from Co-op

With Permission

You cannot withdraw from the co-op program without permission. Students who wish to withdraw from the co-op program must contact the Co-op Office to sign the Student Release Form. Students will be withdrawn from their co-op job search or work term and may still be required to pay a co-op withdrawal fee depending where they are in the current term (see Co-operative Education Fee Structure).

Permission to withdraw from a co-op work term is only granted by the Co-op office in consultation with the chair of the appropriate academic department in cases of serious illness, domestic affliction, workplace harassment or safety concerns, academic issues, or for students who are leaving their academic program. Release from a work term requires a written submission detailing the student's request to withdraw with permission.

Students who withdraw from a co-op work term with permission of the Co-op Office and Department Chair will be assigned a grade of "NCR" or "no-credit, repeat," which will remain in place until and unless the student is able to secure a secondary work term which meets all co-op requirements and is approved by the Co-op Office. Students who do not secure a secondary work term should contact their respective academic department for academic resequencing.

Note: Students assigned a grade of "NCR" are still required to pay the co-op tuition fee for the work term.

Without Permission

Students who decide to leave their current work term or withdraw from co-op without permission will be assigned a grade of "F". Students will be required to withdraw from co-op and pay any outstanding co-op fees due.

University Closures Due to Weather

Once interviews begin for the term, it is important to be aware of the university's winter storm closure policy. Unless the Mount website and radio stations state otherwise, the Mount is open for business.

Check msvu.ca/en/home/weathercentre.aspx for the most up-to-date information.

If you have an interview and are unsure if the interview will proceed due to weather conditions, call the Co-op Office at 902-457-6493 to check on the status.





The Co-op Team enjoys taking time to celebrate outstanding Mount co-op students and employers. The Mount Student and Employer of the Year awards were created to acknowledge our exceptional students and employers.

Co-op Awards

Mount Co-op Student of the Year

Mount co-op employers are invited annually to nominate co-op students they have worked with over the past calendar year for the Mount Co-op Student of the Year Award. This award was instituted in 1999 in recognition of the Mount's 20th anniversary of co-operative education.

One student from each co-op program may be chosen based on nominations received from co-op employers. Award recipients are announced each February.

Mount Co-op Employer of the Year

Mount co-op students are invited annually to nominate co-op employers they have worked with over the past calendar year for the Mount Co-op Employer of the Year Award. This award was instituted in 2009 in recognition of the Mount's 30th anniversary of co-operative education.

These awards may be granted on a yearly basis to co-op employers in each of the following academic disciplines: Business Administration; Public Relations; and Tourism & Hospitality Management.

Award recipients are announced each March.

Appendix A



Terms and Conditions

This agreement is designed to comply with the requirements of Nova Scotia's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPOP). It reflects your right to privacy and permits the Co-op Office to disclose relevant information about you to current and potential co-op employers. It also stipulates co-op regulations and policies.

It is intended to assure procedural fairness for all individuals by articulating one set of principles governing co-op students at Mount Saint Vincent University (the Mount). These Terms and Conditions are in addition to those regulations listed in your respective program description section in the Mount Undergraduate Academic Calendar and the Student Guide to Co-operative Education.

Academic

I understand that I must comply with the academic standards and regulations as outlined in the program description sections of the Mount Undergraduate Academic Calendar.

I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that I am registered for each co-op term. I understand that to maintain my co-op status I must be registered as a full-time student in either an academic term or a co-op term, including before and after each co-op term.

I agree to sign a Learning Agreement with the university upon confirmation of securing employment for each co-op term.

I understand that when I accept a co-op term, I am committing to undertake and complete that co-op term. I understand that I may not terminate a co-op term, or change the conditions of employment, without first discussing the situation with the Co-op Office. I understand that leaving a co-op term without permission results in a "Fail" for the co-op term and a dismissal from the Co-operative Education Program.

I understand that evaluation for successful completion of a co-op term is comprised of a) work site visit; b) employer evaluation; and c) work term report/project. The results of the co-op term are indicated on my academic transcript, with three possible grades (Pass, Fail and No Credit, Repeat).

I understand that the work term report/project requirements must be submitted by the deadline(s) outlined in the work term report/project guidelines or by the deadline(s) communicated by the Co-op Office and/or co-op faculty advisor.

I understand that since co-op terms are considered to be a full-time course of studies, I am not expected to take courses while on a co-op work term. However, I can register for one-half unit of credit while on a co-op work term. In order to take a course while on co-op, I must notify my employer prior to the beginning of the work term to ensure the course will not interfere with my work term. I understand the academic department will de-register me from courses should I register for more than one-half unit of credit.

I agree to alternate co-op terms and study terms according to the academic course sequencing plan prescribed by my academic department. I understand that only under specific circumstances outlined in the Student Guide to Co-operative Education would I be able to defer a co-op term. Application for a deferral must be made in writing to the Co-op Office. Students who qualify may only defer one co-op term.

I understand that in an optional Co-operative Education Program, I am able to withdraw during my program at any time except when on a co-op term, or once a co-op position has been confirmed for the subsequent co-op term. Otherwise, withdrawing from the program will result in academic penalty. I must notify the Co-op Office if I intend to withdraw and complete the Student Release form. I understand that a "W" (withdrawal) will be added to my transcript to reflect this change and I will be assigned withdrawal fees as outlined in the *Student Guide to Co-operative Education*.

I understand that not meeting the academic standards for the Co-operative Education Program as published in the Mount Undergraduate Academic Calendar, or failing a co-op term, will result in automatic dismissal from the Co-operative Education Program.

Freedom of Information Protection of Privacy Act - FOIPOP

I give my consent to the Co-op Office to disclose and release personal information consisting of my résumé, unofficial transcripts, reference list, and to discuss my academic records, employment history, co-op work term performance, references and qualifications to co-op employers for the purpose of assisting me in securing and maintaining employment while I am enrolled in the Co-operative Education Program.

Accessibility Services

I understand that if I am a student with a disability who may require accommodations in the workplace, I will register with the University's Accessibility Services as soon as possible.

If I am a student with a disability, I understand that I am encouraged to discuss my required accommodations with a co-op coordinator as soon as possible in order to access the information and support needed to succeed in the co-op process and in the workplace.

Co-operative Education Policies and Procedures

I understand that I am required to attend and complete the Co-operative Education Professional Development (PD) Sessions. These PD Sessions are a prerequisite for my first co-op term. I understand that after my first and second co-op terms I will be required to participate in return-to-campus activities, such as updating my resume and reference list before being able to apply for co-op positions.

The Co-operative Education Program facilitates all co-op job offers for positions posted by the Co-op Office. I should not accept any job offers made directly from a co-op employer until I have consulted with the Co-op Office.

I understand that if I am an international student, it is my responsibility to apply for a work permit and Social Insurance Number to secure a co-op term. I understand I am not eligible to begin my co-op work term without a work permit and Social Insurance Number.

I understand that once I receive a co-op job offer, I have 24 business hours to confirm with the Co-op Office whether I am accepting or declining the job offer (i.e. if I receive a job offer at 3:00 pm on Friday, I will have until 2:59 pm on Monday to accept). I understand that if I do not accept or decline a job offer within 24 business hours, it will count as a decline and the offer will be released to the next ranked student.

I understand that I will be assigned a Self-Directed Job Search Status if I decline more than two job offers and/or interviews.

I understand that if I do not sign up for an interview by 9:00 a.m. the business day prior to an interview I will be removed from the interview shortlist and it will be counted as a missed opportunity.

I understand that once I decide to accept a job offer, I must contact the Co-op Office to cancel any additional upcoming interviews no later than two business hours before the scheduled interview time.

I understand tuition and withdrawal fees apply to each co-op term. Tuition fees are payable to Financial Services by the last business day of the second month of each co-op term.

I understand that if I wish to pursue an entrepreneurial co-op work term, I will consult with the Co-op Office and submit the information outlined in the "Entrepreneurial Co-op Term Application" located on the co-op website.

Co-op Competition Process

I agree to comply with the open competition process and actively participate in this process until I secure a co-op work term. I understand that not securing a work term will result in having to defer it to a future semester, which may delay my graduation date. Students can only defer one co-op term; any subsequent deferral requests will result in dismissal from the co-op/academic program.

I agree to meet all deadlines for co-op job postings and provide cover letters and résumés, and where applicable, references, transcripts and/or work samples.

I understand that I must be on campus to participate in the interview process until such time as I have secured an approved co-op work term.

I understand that participation in the Co-operative Education Program may require me to apply for and accept positions anywhere in Canada in order to secure a position. Once I have accepted a position, I understand I will be responsible for the necessary travel expenses to relocate when the employer does not subsidize these expenses.

I understand that co-op terms are paid employment and reflect the organization's salary scale and the student's level of experience. I understand that co-op terms are a minimum of 13 weeks in duration, a minimum of 35 hours of paid employment per week, and continuous employment with one organization.

I understand that I am committed to the position once an offer has been accepted either verbally, electronically or in writing. I understand at this point that I am no longer eligible for other co-op opportunities for this term.

In the Workplace

I understand it is my responsibility to request two copies of my signed contract from my employer at the beginning of my co-op term, in order to retain one copy for myself and to forward one copy to the Co-op Office.

I understand that while on a co-op term I am representing my educational program and the University and therefore agree to conduct myself in a professional and ethical manner. I agree to abide by my co-op employer's policies, procedures, guidelines and code of conduct.

I understand that as a co-op student, I am representing my co-op employer. Therefore, I will adhere to policies and legal requirements when using the Internet and email. As a user, I will comply with the license agreements associated with computer software. I agree to use the internet responsibly and productively while on a co-op term.

I understand that documents that I complete or have access to during a co-op term are the intellectual property of the employer. I am not entitled to accessing this information outside of the co-op term without the expressed written consent from the employer.

I understand that if I experience any serious difficulties or conflicts in the workplace throughout the course of my co-op term, I agree to attempt resolution of these issues with my co-workers and/or supervisors and to communicate with the Co-op Office so they can provide support and guidance.

I understand that if my co-op term is interrupted (e.g. lay off), the University will make every effort to ensure alternate arrangements so that I can receive academic credit for my co-op term. I understand that the University does not accept responsibility for lost earnings.

Own Job Search

I agree to allow the Co-op Office to solicit positions on my behalf and agree not to solicit positions from a co-op employer directly on my own behalf. I will advise the Co-op Office if I pursue my own co-op position and I will sign the Job Search Agreement form.

If I secure my own co-op position I understand that the Co-op Office must approve the position. A job description, start and end dates, confirmation of hours, salary and employer's contact information must be submitted for approval prior to my accepting the position.

I understand that if I secure my own co-op work term, I am committed to this position once an offer has been accepted either verbally or in writing. I understand at this point that I am no longer eligible for other co-op opportunities for this term.

I have read the above Terms and Conditions of enrolment in the Co-operative Education Program and I agree to abide by them during my participation in the Co-operative Education Program. I understand that failure to comply with any of the above can result in my being required to withdraw from the Co-operative Education Program.

- AND -

I have read the information in my respective program description section in the Mount Academic Calendar and the Student Guide to Co-operative Education and I agree to abide by this information during my participation in the Co-operative Education Program. I understand that failure to comply with any of the above can result in my being required to withdraw from the Co-operative Education Program.

Completing the following information is voluntary

The information will be used by the Co-op Office for statistical purposes, funding opportunities and potential scholarships/bursaries. Information about individuals will not be released without the student's expressed written





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