



# Co-operative Education

Student  
Handbook

Earn While  
You Learn

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**DOUGLAS**

**DOUGLAS COLLEGE**  
CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION

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### Definition of Co-operative Education

The Douglas College Co-operative Education Program enables students to integrate academic studies with related, employment experience. Co-op students alternate semesters of classroom studies with semesters of paid, full-time employment under the guidance of college faculty. The goal of co-operative education is to help students to develop the necessary confidence and employer-valued abilities to succeed in today's competitive job market.

The Co-op Office develops contacts with local business, industry and government. Through a competitive application and interview process, students are partnered with employers. Although the College cannot guarantee a work-term to all qualifying students, co-op personnel work with students to assist them to achieve their goals. Considerable care is taken to match the skills, knowledge and aspirations of co-op students with employer requirements.

### Criteria Governing the Co-op Program

Each work-term is developed and/or approved by the College as a suitable learning situation. The student is engaged in productive work rather than merely observing.

- The student is paid for work performed.
- The student's progress on the job is monitored by a faculty advisor.
- The student's performance on the job is supervised and evaluated by both the employer and the faculty advisor.

The Co-operative work experience must be at least thirty percent of the time spent in academic study. Normally this means one work term for every two semesters of full-time academic study.

### Benefits of Co-op for Students

- A Co-op work-term provides you with an opportunity to acquire valued knowledge and experience and to establish contacts with professionals in your chosen field.
- It provides you with a learning environment to build confidence and self-esteem.
- It prepares you for future career options and strategies.
- It provides an opportunity for international students to gain Canadian work experience.
- You can earn about \$5,000 - \$8,000 per work-term, which you can allocate toward tuition fees, loans, and other expenses. (The salary range is based upon one standard deviation for a normal distribution of students working 35 hours per week for 16 weeks).
- An SFU study shows that Co-op graduates experience a higher employment rate than non-co-op graduates, and find employment sooner after graduation: 91% of Co-op

### Work Activities Performed by Co-op Students

There are many opportunities for students. Job experience for Co-op students may include:

- |                              |                               |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Accounting                 | • Audit and review functions  |
| • Computer support           | • Data collection/compilation |
| • Data entry/work processing | • Planning and programming    |
| • Staff support functions    | • Financial analysis          |
| • Sundry other functions     | • Office duties               |
| • Administration             | • Public Relations            |
| • Research and writing       | • Field work                  |
| • Policy analysis            | • Project work                |
| • Data analysis              | • Supervisory                 |
| • Technical                  | • Trades                      |

### Co-operative Education Programs

Co-operative education is offered as an option within the following academic programs:

- Accounting Management
- Business Management
- Computer Studies and Information Systems
- General Business
- Marketing Management
- Post Baccalaureate Diploma – Accounting
- Post Baccalaureate Diploma – Computer & Information Systems
- University Transfer Arts
- University Transfer Commerce
- University Transfer Science
- Bachelor of Business Administration
- Bachelor of Physical Education and Coaching

To earn a diploma, associate degree or post-baccalaureate diploma with a Co-op Education designation, students must successfully complete two 12 to 16 week work-terms. A degree co-op designation requires three 12 to 16 week work terms.

### Admission Requirements

To be eligible for an employment work-term, students must:

- First have attended all Co-op Education workshops scheduled in the semester prior to the work term;
- Be registered as a full-time student in a program provincially approved for the Co-op Education program at Douglas College. (For the purposes of co-op, this is a minimum of nine credit hours.);
- Have completed at least 18 program-related credits at Douglas College **prior to their first Co-op work semester;**
- Have demonstrated competency in numeracy, as well as language and computer literacy.
- Have attained a minimum grade point average of 2.33 in course work at Douglas College.

Note: If you plan to transfer co-op course credits to SFU, UBC or to another BC public post-secondary institution then your grade point average might be higher. Ask at the receiving institution's co-op office for details.

### Application Requirements

Interested students should attend an orientation/information session. Check the co-op website and/or bulletin boards for details of dates, times and locations of the orientation/information sessions. Application forms for work term opportunities must be completed and submitted by the announced and posted deadline.

Orientation sessions are offered three times each year, usually during the first weeks of the semester between the hours of 10:00am-11:00am on Monday mornings and/or midweek – 4:30pm-5:30pm. (Please check CareerHUB site to confirm times).

In addition to a co-op application form and personal information summary, you must provide further information, including:

- Co-op Application, recent cover letter and resume and your unofficial transcript (if you need help, visit the Career Centre at either campus to update and polish your documents).

### Fees and Credit

Co-op fees for a work term are based on a flat fee per semester. Please review **Tuition Fee Charts** found on the Douglas College website to determine the correct amount. Students must pay for each work term by the beginning of the semester.

Credit for co-op is granted when students have mastered all required criteria. Students will be assigned a grade of MASTERY when ALL of the following are achieved:

- Job search documentation and job interview result in a work placement
- Work term learning objectives are defined and fulfilled
- Work term project is completed based on given criteria
- Employer's evaluation is satisfactory based on given criteria
- Faculty advisor's evaluation is satisfactory based on given criteria

### Remuneration

A student's rate of pay while on a work term is established in accordance with the organization's regular pay scale and the current employment market. Job requirements and level of responsibility also influence the salary paid. While the co-op work term will aid you financially, the reason you choose co-op should be for the experiential learning component of your academic program.

### Program Requirements

To remain enrolled in a co-op program students are required to attend the preparatory lunch hour workshops in the Career Centre and to undertake an academic semester after their first work term and before the second work term (unless hired for an eight month work term), and to finish with an academic semester. They must also receive satisfactory evaluations of work semester performance from both the employer and the College, continue to attend Douglas College full time during academic semesters, and maintain the minimum GPA required for their programs.

Nine Co-operative Education credits will be awarded for each completed work semester. Upon successful completion of the two work semesters (COOP 1100 and 2300), students will be eligible for a co-op designation on their diploma, associate degree or post-baccalaureate diploma. (See Course Sequence and Identification below.) For degree students you will need to complete a minimum of three work semesters (COOP 1100, 2300 or 2310, 3500 or 3510) to be eligible for a co-op designation.

### Course Information and Sequence (sample)

Prerequisite	Mandatory	Optional	Credits
18 credits + mandatory workshops* + interviews	COOP 1100		9.0
COOP 1100 + interviews		COOP 1200	9.0
Academic semester + COOP 1100 + interviews	COOP 2300 or COOP 2310		9.0
Academic semester + COOP 1100 or 1200 + interviews	COOP 2300	COOP 2400	9.0
Academic semester + COOP 2300 or 2400 + interviews	COOP 3500 or COOP 3510		9.0
Academic semester (for BBA students only in 4th year)		COOP 4500	9.0

Note: GPA = 2.33 or greater

\*Must have completed Résumé & Cover Letter + Interview Skills workshops.

### Mandatory Workshops

All interested students wanting to join the co-op program are required to attend an Information Session as well attend a lunch hour workshop(s), in the Career Centre, to revise their cover letter, résumé and obtain interview prep before submitting their co-op application. For students with disabilities, flexible options are available.

**International students will be provided a contact within the International Education department to assist with applying for their co-op work permit. All international students beginning their co-op work term must submit a copy of their work permit to the Co-op office in advance of their start date. If you have questions please contact International Education at 604 527- 5650. For any information concerning operational protocols, contact the Co-op Office at 604-527-5889.**

### Responsibilities of the Partners

The co-op partnership means that employers, students and Douglas College work together for enrichment of experience in the classroom and the workplace. In joining this partnership, each participant acknowledges the requirements of Co-operative Education.

### The students

- Completes the academic requirement of co-op programs;
- Completes the required number of work terms;
- Prepares résumés and cover letters, and meets interview requirements;
- Attends co-op work term meetings and workshops;
- Honours the acceptance of co-op employment as a contractual agreement with the employer;
- Participates as an ambassador of the Co-operative Education partnership by striving to be a productive, motivated, and responsible employee;
- Respects the policies, confidentiality, and proprietary information of the employer;
- Signs the student evaluation agreement and completes work term documentation, in unison with their faculty advisor who will save paperwork in student’s record in CareerHUB;
- Participates in the on-site visit and in the employer evaluation process; and
- Completes the co-op work term project or portfolio requirements.

### The employer

- Determines the salary, employment status, vacation pay, etc. for the student;
- Provides relevant, paid employment for the co-op education qualifying period;
- Welcomes the student and introduces him/her to the specific tasks of the job;
- Supervises the student;
- Provides a mid-term evaluation of the student during the faculty advisor’s visit;
- Provides guidance on the student’s work term report;
- Completes a performance evaluation for the student at the conclusion of the work term; and maintains Comprehensive General Liability coverage appropriate to the organization’s operations, including Employers’ Liability, and ensures that students are covered by WorkSafe BC, where applicable.

### Team co-op

- Facilitates the selection of students for co-op programs;
- Helps prepare students for work term(s);
- Organizes and facilitates job postings, employer–student interviews and matchings;
- Reviews the mid-term visits between students and faculty advisors to gauge the student’s progress and discuss career goals;
- Ensures effective liaison between faculty, employers and students;
- Assists students with their educational, career and personal development;
- Develops and maintains co-operative education opportunities within the professional, business, government, and service-related industries; and
- Promotes co-operative education to organizations, groups and individuals within the community.

### Co-op Calendar Tentative Schedules

Month 1	Attend orientation session and complete forms for your file. Deadline for co-op applications.
Month 1	Attend preparation workshops. Apply for jobs and attend interviews as opportunities arise.
Month 3	Continue to apply for jobs and attend interviews.
Month 4 (Ideally)	Finalization of placement. Faculty Advisor assigned.
Month 4-5	Register in one of the following COOP courses: 11 00/1200/2300/2310/2400/3500/3510/4500 and pay fees (depending on timing of placement).
Months 5-8	Goal oriented work experience.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Why choose co-op?

In a word - experience! As a Douglas College co-op student, you can gain 4 to 16 months of paid work experience, directly related to your field of study. A co-op work term will provide a learning environment for you to acquire valuable knowledge and experience and to build your confidence and self-esteem, thus preparing you for career options upon graduation. Co-op students also have the benefit of establishing contacts with professionals within the industry, which can increase employment opportunities after graduation. Your earnings in a co-op work term can help you to meet the costs of your education.

### Am I eligible for a co-op work term?

First, you must complete the required forms and attend the preparation workshops. Co-op students are required to carry a minimum of 9 credits in the semester of application and maintain an acceptable grade point average of 2.33.

You must also have completed a minimum of 18 credits in your program of study, including approved courses in numeracy, computer literacy and language literacy. In addition to academic performance, students will be selected on the basis of maturity, motivation, adaptability, and prior work experience.

### Am I guaranteed a co-op work term, and what if I already have a position related to my studies?

Co-op is an educational program, not a job finding service. While no guarantees are possible, the Co-op Office staff will do their utmost to assist you in securing a suitable work term. A great deal will depend on current employment market demands, your particular skills and experience, your ability to “sell” yourself in a job interview with a prospective co-op employer, and your persistence in applying for jobs. When an employer verbally offers you employment, it is vital you contact the Co-op Office to let them know. You will also receive a Letter of Agreement or Job Offer in writing which you will have to sign. You may also be required to sign a confidentiality agreement for that employer. Please note it is vital you follow through on your commitment to work with the employer. The Co-op Office staff, along with Career Centre staff work diligently to create and retain employer relationships which will benefit you and future co-op students. If you already have a job related to your studies and choose to use it for co-op credits, then discuss the possibility with your employer and have him or her contact the Co-op Office for further information.

### How much can I expect to be paid?

Your rate of pay is established by the employer, occasionally in consultation with the Co-op Office. We recommend that employers pay students in accordance with their organization’s regular pay scale, bearing in mind the job duties and level of responsibility. In the Business Management programs, wages normally range between \$15 - \$17 per hour. Wages, benefits, and working conditions vary considerably among employers.

### Are there credits and tuition fees for co-op?

Yes. To recognize the educational value of the co-op experience, nine credits are awarded for each work term successfully completed. Co-op credits cannot be used to meet regular academic course requirements necessary to complete your program, but may be taken into consideration for a co-op designation from other colleges or universities. The cost of a work term is as stated in the fee schedule for nine credits. Payment is made **only when** a work term is secured.

### What is expected of students?

Students accepted into the Co-op program are required to attend all the preparation workshops and complete any assignments, to play an active role in the job search process, to complete projects or reports, and to conduct themselves appropriately on the job as representatives of the College.

### How will I be evaluated?

On-the-job performance is monitored and evaluated by both the employer’s supervisor and the Co-op Faculty Advisor. Evaluation criteria include your contribution to the employer, your ability to communicate, negotiate, and deliver performance objectives, and your state of development in terms of employer valued abilities. A formal work term project is also required for each semester. Co-op work terms are graded as “Mastery” (pass) or “Non-Mastery”(fail).

### When and how can I apply?

Attend the co-op orientation session offered in the Fall, Winter and Summer semesters. Complete your file by submitting all the required documents by the due date. In order to complete your file, you will need the following:

- Application form, cover letter and résumé plus your unofficial transcript.

## **BUSINESS CONDUCT FOR THE CO-OP STUDENT**

(These tips are brought to you by CAFCE's Accreditation Council.)

You may be facing your first work term with a mixture of excitement and trepidation. You will find advice on establishing effective work habits, communication techniques, and working relationships.

### **Presenting Yourself**

First impressions count. A professional appearance in your dress and grooming can help you to gain acceptance from your colleagues and clients. Some organizations encourage professional business attire, and even organizations that allow casual business attire may frown upon jeans and shorts. It is best to seek clarification.

### **Effective Work Habits**

Earn your supervisor's high regard by establishing effective, professional work habits. Don't assume that you are eligible for overtime, flexible hours, and other benefits. You may be evaluated on the following work habits:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Enthusiasm for work
- Initiative
- Dependability
- Time management
- Organization

### **Establishing Collegial Relationships**

#### **Meeting and Greeting**

Making the effort to introduce yourself to your new colleagues can help you to take the lead in establishing effective working relationships. It is polite to rise as you meet a person for the first time, and offering a firm handshake can help you to make contact in a confident manner. Until people invite you to use their first names, it is best to use a formal title like Mr. or Ms. Confirm the positive first impression you have made by continuing to greet your colleagues warmly and respectfully each day.

#### **Team Work**

Offering your assistance and support to colleagues helps you to build relationships. When participating in team projects, do your best to help achieve consensus on goals, keep team mates informed of your progress, and follow through on your commitments. When writing reports or making presentations, acknowledge any colleagues who have assisted you.

### **Social functions**

You may be invited to attend social functions organized by your employer which provide you with an enjoyable forum for enhancing your relationships with colleagues. You can be less formal on these occasions in the workplace, as long as you remain professional.

**ETHICS: DO THE RIGHT THING - MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY**

Some employers, especially those in health and social services, require you to sign an oath of confidentiality to protect the rights of their clients. Even if your employer does not require a signed declaration, it is good practice to avoid discussing your organization's business, clients, and competitors outside the workplace.

### **DECLARE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

If you are in a position to bring profit to a friend or relative through your work, you should declare a conflict of interest and refrain from participating.

### **STICK TO BUSINESS**

- If you are allowed to make personal calls, it is advisable to use this privilege sparingly. Be sure to repay the company for any long distance calls.
- Use company's letterhead for approved business only.
- Don't take office supplies home for your own use.
- Don't send personal information via the company's e-mail or Internet.

### **TAKE THE MORAL HIGH GROUND**

Even if your colleagues engage in unethical or offensive practices, it is wrong for you to be involved. Furthermore, you may be judged more harshly than a permanent employee.

- Avoid making offensive jokes or using offensive language.
- Avoid getting involved in gossip and office politics.
- Remain honest.

### **EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

Communicating effectively is vital in maintaining good relationships and providing good customer service.

### **CONSULTING WITH YOUR SUPERVISOR**

Communicating openly with your supervisor will enhance your work term by ensuring that you both have the same expectations for your performance. Meet with your supervisor at the beginning of your work term to discuss your assignments. Schedule regular meetings with your supervisor so that you can report on your progress, seek clarification on further goals and discuss any pertinent issues. Between meetings, communicate via memos or e-mail messages so that your supervisor can respond at his or her convenience.

### **COMMUNICATING IN PERSON**

The following suggestions may be helpful in communicating effectively with individual colleagues, clients, and customers.

- Remain patient, courteous, and calm.
- Use direct eye contact.
- Listen carefully, and take notes.
- Ensure that you understand by asking questions and paraphrasing answers.

### **E-MAIL AND INTERNET**

Observe your employer's policies regarding e-mail and Internet use. Even if no policies exist, you should use the company's e-mail and Internet strictly for business, and transmit nothing of a personal nature electronically.

### **TELEPHONE COMMUNICATION**

When making calls:

- Have an agenda and any needed files at hand;
- Identify yourself, and state the reason for your call;
- Speak clearly and concisely;
- Determine whether there is a need for action by either party;
- Summarize the next steps;
- Be prepared to leave a clear, concise message;
- Close with thanks, if appropriate.

### **When answering calls:**

- Identify your name and company;
- Return messages promptly so that the caller feels valued;
- It is usually preferable to take a message rather than put someone on hold, but if you must do so, thank people for waiting. If they are waiting for someone else, check back frequently to verify whether they want to continue holding;
- Before passing on messages, verify the spelling of the callers' names and take their phone numbers;
- Wait for the caller to say 'goodbye' before hanging up;
- Request permission before putting a call on the speakerphone;
- Learn how to transfer calls when you begin your new job.

### **RESOLVING PROBLEMS AND CONFLICT**

It is not uncommon to find yourself facing problems or conflicts occasionally. Make sure you inform your supervisor of any problems as early as possible, and feel free to ask for advice on resolving the issues.

#### **Potential Problems**

##### ***What if I find my work is not challenging enough?***

Let your supervisor know that you are willing to complete your assignments, but that you would welcome additional assignments that are more challenging. Be proactive. Suggest some projects that you would like to tackle.

##### ***What if my supervisor refuses to give me more challenging work?***

Try to get some feedback. Perhaps your supervisor needs you to complete an undemanding but important project before you tackle new ones. Or perhaps your supervisor thinks you need training in some areas first. If, after obtaining feedback, you still feel that your talents are being under-used, ask your supervisor for guidance.

#### **Conflict**

- Avoid being drawn into an argument with a colleague or customer. The following steps can help you to resolve conflict.
- Even if you feel angry, you will appear professional and dignified if you remain poised and calm.
- Pause to think (and breathe) before you respond.
- Choose your words carefully, and speak slowly.
- Discuss only relevant details.
- Avoid making accusations.
- Listen completely before responding.
- Restate the problem, and be sure that you are both on the same track.
- Focus on finding a fair and equitable solution.
- If you have made any errors, acknowledging them with a sincere apology can help to heal the rift.
- Consult your supervisor

#### **Responding to Criticism**

Accepting criticism graciously can be difficult. Your supervisor may suggest changes to improve the quality of a written assignment, or she/he may suggest a change in work habits. Try not to take this as a personal insult. In most cases, your supervisor is genuinely concerned about your development. Clarify your supervisor's expectations, and determine how to meet them.

If you have made errors or mistakes, it is best to acknowledge responsibility for them, and take steps to correct them. However, if you believe the criticism is not well-founded, you may discuss your concerns with your faculty advisor.



## CO-OP WORK TERM REPORT FORMAT AND GUIDELINES

### Purpose of the Work Term Report

Students in the co-op program at Douglas College may be required to submit a written, descriptive work report for work terms, or they may be required to complete a project such as a handbook, user or procedures manual or the like.

**Please note:** Academic Integrity policy and expectations are expected of Co-op students when they submit objectives, written report and/or share information orally in a presentation format. Information of Douglas Colleges' Academic Integrity Policy can be found at <https://www.douglascollege.ca/-/media/27C599ABC76048A0A713648565906273.ashx>

The preparation of work reports is expected to benefit co-op students in a number of ways.

1. It will facilitate an understanding of the employer's organization and work environment.
2. It will enhance the student's integration of practical experience and theoretical concepts.
3. It will aid the development of the student's written communication skills.
4. It will showcase the student's research, analytical, and writing skills to the employer.
5. It will assist in the development of learning objectives for subsequent work terms.

### Description of Your Report

We suggest that you write a descriptive report dealing with the company and the job you were expected to perform. The report should focus on the following aspects of the work term:

1. The Company
  - a) What is the history of the company?
  - b) What are the company products, activities or services provided?
  - c) Who are the customers?
  - d) What is the size of the company in terms of personnel, and in which departments are they employed?
  - e) Who are the company's main competitors, if any?
  - f) What new technologies does the company rely on?
  - g) What was your perception of the "corporate culture"?
2. Description of the Department, Area or Unit
  - a) How does your department relate to the overall organization?
  - b) What are the major activities of the department?
  - c) How is the department organized with regard to its employees, and with regard to work flow?

### 3. Description of Your Co-op Work Experience

- a) Discuss each of your learning and performance objectives using the following outline. If you wish, attach supporting information. NB: Refer to Writing Objectives Guidebook for assistance, found in the Co-op Resources area in CareerHUB
  - i List each learning and performance objective, and explain why you selected it.
  - ii Tell how you originally planned to fulfill the objective.
  - iii Tell what aspects of the plan worked.
  - iv Tell how you changed your original plan.
  - v Report on how effectively you met your objectives.
  - vi Explain how useful the learning and performance objectives were to your own skill development. Consider the full range of human skills – manual and technical, communications (speaking, listening, reading and writing), and human relations.
  - vii Explain how your selected learning and performance objectives were useful to your employer.
  - viii If you were unable to begin or accomplish an objective, state the reason.
- b) Briefly list your major responsibilities and the duties that you performed during your co-op education assignment related to your current career objectives.
- c) Describe the relationships you see between your college major and your co-op education experience.
- d) Identify any strengths or weaknesses you have discovered in yourself as a result of your co-op education experience.
- e) Identify any noteworthy job-related accomplishments or achievements that are the result of your co-op education experience.
- f) Identify what you consider to be the best or strongest features of your co-op education assignment and what you consider to be the least desirable features of your co-op education assignment.
- g) Explain how your co-op education experience has affected your attitudes toward yourself, toward others, and toward your future educational and career plans.
- h) Outline what recommendations you would make to the organization(s) where you have been working about employing co-op education students in the future.
- i) Make suggestions or recommendations for a future co-op education student in regard to working for your employer(s).
- j) Describe the impact you think your co-op education experience will have on your future career plans and development.
- k) Co-op education students usually have no difficulty identifying job skills that they have developed or refined as a result of their work experience(s). Identifying learning that is not specific to the job, however, is somewhat difficult. Explain some of the other things you have learned about people, work and organizations as a result of your co-op education experience.

- l) Explain how your co-op education experience improved your ability to work with others, including your supervisor(s) and your fellow worker(s).
- m) Identify a problem area in the organization(s) where you completed your work assignments.
  - i Define the problem clearly.
  - ii Outline all the relevant information surrounding the problem.
  - iii Provide suggestions for alternatives that would address this problem.
  - iv State your best solution, explaining the rationale for your choice.
- n) Based on your observations in your most recent job environment, characterize the general attitude of the employees toward work. Do you believe this represents the typical view of the work ethic in our current society?

### Who Will Read Your Report?

Reports should communicate ideas effectively to those responsible for evaluating it, as well as to employers who might benefit from its contents.

### How to Write the Report

Style is a very broad subject. For an appreciation of its significance to report writing, consult the staff in the library to obtain books on report writing. Simply adopting five criteria, however, will help you communicate effectively. These criteria are:

- Clarity
- Conciseness
- Completeness
- Accuracy
- Objectivity

A proper plan, which ensures that your sub-topics are developed in an orderly and rational fashion, aids greatly in achieving the 5 criteria noted above. In fact, we recommend that you prepare an outline of the report before you start.

Focus on the essential elements of your topic, and avoid including great amounts of extraneous material which contributes to the thickness of your report at the expense of the clear expression of your ideas.

Normally, reports are approximately 2,000 to 2,500 words, although they could be longer. Much more important than length are conciseness, clarity and completeness of the report. In other words, use as much space as you require to cover the topic adequately, but no more.

Many ideas are better explained using graphs, diagrams or photographs instead of words. One should bear in mind, however, that, in any illustration, the main ideas you wish to communicate must be clearly discernible. Simply photocopying pages from texts or manuals may not be satisfactory. Reports must be professional in presentation – i.e. neat, adequately documented, using correct spelling and grammar. Errors are not acceptable at the professional level.

### SOME FINAL TIPS

The only way to learn how to write is by practice. Each report you write will be read by the coordinator or faculty advisor and, we hope, by your employer. Their comments and criticism are meant to help you in developing your skills in writing and critical thinking.

As a professional, you will have to be your own critic, but it is good practice to have a colleague or friend check your work whenever this is possible.

Most reports go through two or three drafts before the final version is issued. You should always review and revise your first draft as many times as are required to produce a finished report of satisfactory quality. When the final draft has been typed, you must proofread it for spelling and typing errors, and correct it before submitting it.

In addition to referring to published material relative to the employer (in either internal or external publications), it will be necessary to ask questions of certain individuals within the organization. Although in most instances you can expect your questions to be answered, there may be the occasional case in which you are met with resistance or even outright refusal by the person being questioned to cooperate. To avoid such a situation, you would be wise to:

- Choose your resource people carefully (clear it with your supervisor)
- Be well prepared before you ask your questions, and know exactly what information you require
- Phrase your questions so they are as straight-forward as possible

In some cases, co-op employers may be uneasy about having what they consider to be “confidential information” appear in a student’s work report. You should discuss this with your employer early in the work term when planning the outline of your report. Check with your employer to make sure no confidential information is contained in your report. If the employer feels certain information is confidential, you should make modifications to comply with his/her concerns.

### SETTING UP THE REPORT

The principal components of a work report are:

1. Cover
2. Covering letter
3. Title page
4. Table of contents
5. Introduction
6. Main body of report
7. Glossary
8. Bibliography
9. Appendix

The form of a report varies from department to department and from subject to subject. The order listed above may vary slightly according to the purpose of the report and to the person for whom it is intended. You will use your own judgment in setting up your report to give it the most effective presentation.

#### Cover

The report should be in a cover, and should have a label stating:

- title of report
- name of employer
- date of issue
- student author's name
- course number (COOP 1100,1200, 2300 etc.)
- name of college

#### Title Page

Title of Report  
by  
Name of Student  
Prepared for the  
Co-operative Education Program  
in (program name, co-op course number)  
Date  
Name of Employer  
City, Province  
Douglas College

**Note:** The title of the report should be a concise, but comprehensive, summary of the subject matter. Once a report has been filed, the ease with which it can be recovered when needed depends on the clarity and accuracy of the title. All pages should have at least a 1.5" left-hand margin for binding.

#### Table of Contents

Indicate by page number the position of the summary, introduction, all report headings (and important minor headings intended to show relative importance), appendix and references. The cover letter should not be included.

The table of contents helps the reader to locate any major section of the report quickly. It provides an overall plan of the subject matter.

#### Introduction

The introduction is an important part of the report. It should:

- Capture the reader's interest
- Indicate why the report is important to the reader
- Define the purpose of the report

The form of an introduction may vary considerably. Sometimes it is a single paragraph at the beginning of the body of the report; sometimes it is required at the beginning of sections or sub-sections, and sometimes it is a complete section which provides historical background, limitations, qualifications, methods and/or procedures used.

### **Main Body of Report**

(Note: 'main body of report' is not a section heading.)

The theme of the report is developed in the main body of the text. Care in planning before writing will help you in making the development of your ideas orderly and clear.

Use of topical sub-headings aids in indicating divisions of the material, and assists the development of ideas in a logical manner. Headings and major sub-headings should be listed in the table of contents.

Sources should be given for all diagrams, tables, photographs etc. included in the body of the report.

### **Summary Conclusions and Recommendations**

Depending on the type of report, it may be useful to include summary and separate sections for both conclusions and recommendations, even though this may mean repeating statements already given in the preceding discussion. Conclusions and recommendations should be listed in logical order, and based only on the evidence presented in the body of the report.

The length of the report will be decided by the student. Your goal is the minimum number of words required to explain properly the contents and findings of the report.

Reports which require the frequent use of unusual technical or "trade" words, and where the meaning of those words is not clear from the context, should contain a glossary, or list of definitions of those words. A glossary of symbols is sometimes useful, as well, to summarize, in one convenient location, the symbols used. Glossaries may be placed either at the beginning of the report, before the introduction, or as an appendix.

### **Bibliography**

For some reports, a bibliography listing major sources of information may be useful to the reader, particularly for the reader who desires more information or who wishes to pursue the subject in greater depth. Sources listed in the bibliography would not necessarily have been cited in the report, whereas all sources cited in the report will appear in the bibliography.

In addition, important details of the organization, which are obtained through interviews or conversations with senior people, should also be referenced.

### **Appendix**

This is the place for documentary material (detailed calculations, charts, statistics, etc.) which need to be included, but which is not an integral part of the main body of the report.

Every section of the appendix should be connected to the text by a footnote or by direct reference in the text.

Sections of the appendix should be arranged in the same order in which they are first identified in the text, and should be lettered Appendix A, Appendix B, etc., one item or related item to each appendix. Each item or exhibit should be listed under Appendix in the table of contents, or in a special table of contents preceding the appendix if numerous exhibits are included. The source of all items in the appendix should be identified.

### **Evaluation of Work Term Report**

1. The report will be evaluated by the faculty advisor. Provision is made for an employer to evaluate a report at the faculty advisor's discretion.
2. Work reports are graded excellent (64-80 points), satisfactory (40-63 points) or unsatisfactory (0-39 points).
3. See Work Term Report Evaluation form on the next page for all evaluation criteria.

### **Due Date of Report**

The work term report must be presented to the Co-operative Education Department on the date agreed upon by you and your faculty advisor. Failure to meet the deadline for a work report may result in the work term being recorded as NM (Non Mastery).

### **Final Check-List Before Submitting Your Report**

#### **Ask yourself:**

1. Have I cited references properly?
2. Have I referenced my objectives and if I met them or not?
3. If this is your second work term with the same employer ensure you have noted new responsibilities and revised your objectives,
4. If your faculty advisor agreed on a report submission date,

FORMAT	4 Points (64-80) Excellent	2 Points (40-63) Satisfactory	0 Points (<40)Unsatisfactory	Comments
Preliminaries				
Title pag				
Table of contents				
Main body				
Introduction				
Text				
Conclusions				
Recommendations				
Reference Materials				
Appendix				
Bibliography				
Literary Quality				
Grammar				
Spelling				
Clarity				
Style				
Content				
Suitability of topic				
Accuracy				
Completeness				
Interest				
Appearance				
Neatness				
Graphics				
Organization				
Overall Grade				