

Co-op Student Handbook

Version 2.0

UNNB

Saint John

Please note, this document may be periodically updated in order to ensure the most current practices are in place. When referring to the co-op handbook, be sure it is the most current version. Any issues or discrepancies that lie outside the scope of this document are the responsibility of the Co-op Office for clarification and/or approval.

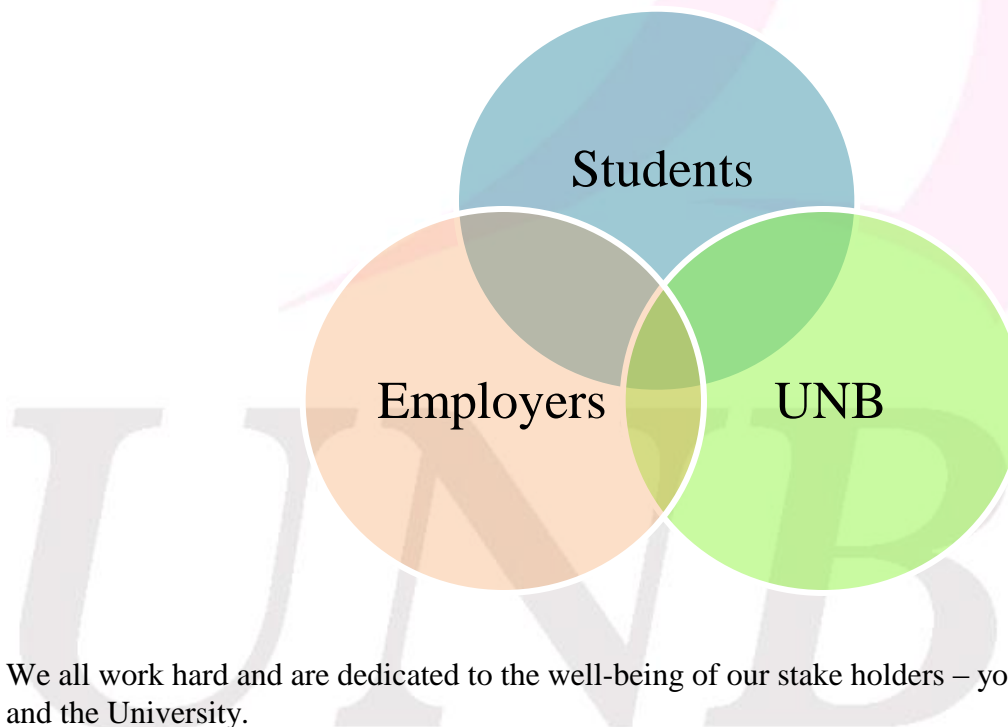


Welcome to UNB Saint John's Co-operative Education (Co-op) Program!

The University of New Brunswick, Saint John, is a recognized leader in the field of co-operative education. Experiential learning coupled with academic curriculum assists in creating qualified, experienced professionals that are ready for the workplace.

In the co-op office, we work in a close-knit, professional environment. We deliver only the best to our students and to our employers so we take pride in only recruiting the best. Congratulations on making Co-op a part of your learning journey.

Our success is built on a partnership between the students, the employers and the University.



We all work hard and are dedicated to the well-being of our stake holders – you, the employer and the University.

We have prepared this handbook to serve as a guide for students opting to take part in our exceptional program. In this guide, you will find information about the history and philosophy of the co-op program. Most importantly, this handbook sets out the basis of our partnership, your responsibilities, benefits and privileges as a member of our team. If we've missed anything, or if you have any questions regarding the information in the handbook, please do not hesitate to ask for clarification.

This handbook has been developed in line with our operating principles, values and beliefs. It is to be used to guide each of us as we find our way. Every one of our actions must be consistent with our shared values, beliefs and goals.

Table of Contents:

Co-op Responsibilities.....	5
Our Goals.....	5
Employers' Responsibilities.....	6
Student's Responsibilities.....	6
Cooperative Education Defined.....	7
Communication with the Co-op Office.....	8
Admissions.....	8
Step One: Academic Achievement.....	8
Step Two: Professional Development.....	9
Step Three: Mock Interviews & Resume Building.....	9
Step Four: Job Competition.....	9
Curriculum.....	10
Change in work term sequence.....	10
Official transcript notation.....	11
Full Time student status.....	11
Co-op Probation.....	11
Professional Development.....	11
Providing on-going feedback.....	11
Co-op Fees & Tuition.....	12
Job Competition.....	12
Postings.....	12
Placement Applications.....	12
Disclosure of Information.....	13
Interview Schedules.....	13
Job Research.....	13
Job Offers.....	13
Location of Position.....	13
Finding placements outside of the co-op program.....	13
Contacting potential employers.....	14
Hourly Wages.....	14
Non-Salary work terms.....	14
Approved Employment.....	14
Work Term.....	14
Registering for your work term.....	15
Deadline for securing a placement.....	15
Taking courses while on work term.....	15
Failure to report to employer.....	15
Vacation.....	15
Sick Days.....	15
Emergencies.....	15
Transportation and Accommodations.....	16

Company policies and procedures.....	16
Confidentiality.....	16
Organizing mid-work term visits.....	16
On the job performance.....	16
Mid Evaluation.....	17
Final Evaluation.....	17
Returning to the same employer.....	17
Work Term Report.....	18
Content and Format of the Report.....	18
Submission and Grading of the Report.....	18
Grading the Report.....	18
Reworking the Report.....	18
Program completion.....	19
Conclusion.....	19



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Co-op Responsibilities:

The Co-op Office promises to maintain our partnerships with employers, students, and the Faculty of Business. We will accomplish this through continual communication where goals and expectations are frequently discussed and assessed.

The Co-op Program is responsible for:

- providing a relevant professional development curriculum that reflects the needs of employers
- providing students with the tools to bridge the gaps within their skill set
- providing an effective mechanism to assist students in the job search process
- connecting the employers, educational institutions and students
- maintaining up-to-date and valid co-operative education records
- monitoring students' progress during work semesters through on-site visits, phone calls or e-mail
- assisting students in developing learning objectives for their work semesters
- promoting Co-op with organizations, groups and individuals within the community
- developing and maintaining co-operative education opportunities with professional, business, government and service related industries
- assisting in development of suitable work experiences, evaluation techniques and instruments for employers

Our Goals

Our goal is to offer a Co-operative Education Program that enables students to identify and achieve their individual career goals. To meet this goal, the Program is dedicated to providing:

- an opportunity for professional and personal development that encourages you to establish the skills needed to enter the workplace successfully. This opportunity is provided through a series of professional development seminars specifically geared to enhance problem-solving and soft skills.
- a Co-operative education curriculum linking classroom theory to workplace practice. Professional Development Seminars further enhance classroom instruction and workplace readiness.
- an opportunity to develop the skills required to understand and meet the requirements of the workplace. This opportunity is provided through work experience, along with both formal and informal interaction with different employers throughout the community.

The Co-operative Education Program strives to provide regular, constructive feedback on your performance in all areas of the program, and to work with you on developing strategies to further improve their performance.

Employer Responsibilities

Co-op employers are expected to:

- provide accurate information regarding responsibilities, remuneration and benefits
- advise the Co-op Office of any student job offers
- conduct an orientation at the beginning of the work term to familiarize the student with the working environment and their expectations
- act as resource for students when they develop and work toward achieving their learning objectives for the work term
- whenever possible, provide an increasing degree of challenging duties according to the student's capabilities and level in the program
- contact the Co-op Office about any problems that may affect the student's work term
- be available for a mid-work term performance evaluation by a Co-op Coordinator
- review and sign the student's Work Term Report to indicate approval for its release to the Co-op Work Term Report Evaluator
- evaluate the student and inform the Co-op Team of the student's progress

Student Responsibilities

You are responsible for setting and achieving your own goals. The Co-op Office is glad to help through providing you the proper tools in order to achieve them. It is up to you to apply the lessons you have learned throughout the co-operative education program along with the resources provided.

The Co-op Program expects **you** to exercise the following:

- personal responsibility for achieving their career goals
- initiative
- resourcefulness
- problem-solving skills
- self-directed, ongoing learning
- team work
- accountability

Every semester you should:

- check your e-mail often
- ensure your resume is current
- ensure your current contact information is on file in the Co-op Office
- participate in all Professional Development activities and complete associated assignments

Prior to Work Terms:

read the assigned Co-op material to establish a solid understanding of student benefits and responsibilities related to the Co-op Program, employer benefits and responsibilities related to the Co-op Program, and UNBSJ=s benefits and responsibilities related to the Co-op Program

- adhere to all deadlines
- actively search for placement opportunities
- apply to all job postings that will enhance your learning and career opportunities
- fully prepare for each job interview
- maintain open communication with the Co-op Office regarding your job search

During Work Terms:

- act as a professional, responsible representative of UNBSJ and the Co-op Program
- honour the acceptance of co-op employment as a contractual agreement with the employer
- give your best on-the-job performance
- use the opportunity to learn and apply new knowledge and skills
- maintain a positive attitude
- develop and submit a learning plan each work term
- complete a mid and final performance evaluation
- write a relevant and meaningful Work Term Report
- inform the Co-op Team of any problems which might affect the work experience

After the Work Term:

- participate in a post-work term meeting
- reassess and evaluate previously established personal, career, and educational goals
- revise resume to reflect gained experience

Co-operative Education Defined

Cooperative Education (Co-op) is strategically designed to broaden knowledge, develop skills and improve self-understanding. Co-op is based on the principle that well-educated individuals develop most effectively through an educational pattern, incorporating work experience to give students the chance to practice their acquired skills. Students take part in work terms in appropriate fields according to the Canadian Association for Co-operative Education (CAFCE) criteria:

1. Each work placement is developed and/or approved by the co-operative educational institution as a suitable learning situation.
2. The co-operative education student is engaged in productive work rather than merely observing.
3. The co-operative education student receives remuneration for the work performed.
4. The co-operative education student's progress on the job is monitored by the co-operative educational institution.
5. The co-operative education student's performance on the job is supervised and evaluated

- by the student's employer.
6. The total co-operative work experience is normally fifty percent of the time spent in academic study and in no circumstances less than thirty percent.

Communicating With The Co-op Office

You are expected to maintain communication with the Co-op Office on all matters pertinent to participation in the Program. Consultation with the Co-op Office is essential to answer any questions or concerns pertaining to regulations and procedures for the program.

ADMISSIONS

Entrance to the program is a four-step process:

- Step One: Academic Achievement**
- Step Two: Professional Development Workshop**
- Step Three: Mock Job Interview**
- Step Four: Obtaining a Work Term Position**

Step One: Academic Achievement

Acceptance into the program is based on completion of minimum 24 credit-hours in your field of study, but no more than 60 credit hours to date.

You will only be considered for acceptance into the program if your GPA is 2.7 or above. If your GPA falls between 2.5 and 2.6, you may be eligible for Co-op under a probationary basis allowing one academic semester to raise your grade point average to the 2.7 standard.

If you are an English Second Language student, it is expected that you have received a minimum score of 550 on the TOEFL examination.

If you are a transfer student, your eligibility from other universities and/or community colleges will be based on the number of relevant transfer credits and your overall academic achievement, including marks from other universities and/or community colleges. You are still required to have at least a B- average in your previous two academic semesters from your transferred university or college.

If you have committed an academic offense, you will not be eligible for admittance into the Co-op Program. If an offense is committed during the course of the program, you will be withdrawn from the Co-op Option. Completing your co-op requirements before committing an academic offence will not qualify you to graduate with the co-op option. A complete description of academic offences, procedures and penalties can be found in the university calendar, page 45-48.

Step Two: Professional Development Workshop

Successfully complete all required elements of the professional development workshops.

You must complete ALL Professional Development along with all associated course-work before progressing to Step Three. Professional Development has been carefully planned to best suit your needs, therefore we take it very seriously.

The first phase of the professional development program concentrates on assisting students in exploring their understanding of their interests, values and special abilities along with developing skills in their areas of weakness. The program moves on to topics preparing students for the job search and success within the workplace. In the senior years, you will change your focus to more advanced topics such as assertiveness, team building and leadership skills.

Step Three: Mock Job Interview

Successfully complete a mock job interview.

During the month of September, you will complete a mock job interview with a designated Co-op Coordinator in-order to prepare for the upcoming job competitions. If deemed ready for interviews, you will need to only participate in one.

It may be necessary for some students to complete additional preparation (interviews, career counseling, etc.). On occasion, some students are asked to spend another year improving their employability skills through volunteer or extra-curricular activities before entering the Co-op Program. Once you have successfully completed your mock job interview, you will move onto Step Four.

Step Four: Obtaining a Work Term Position

Our priority is to help you secure a placement. The Program actively promotes the program and students to employers resulting in many attractive work term postings for students.

The Job Competition begins in October of your second academic year of study. You may apply for jobs within our internal job board but you are strongly encouraged to seek employment on your own. In seeking a position, you should look for something suited to your individual goals as well as ensuring that it will assist you in development of these essential skills prior to graduation.

Please note: The Job Search is a competitive process, and students are ultimately responsible for their own success in securing co-operative education positions. Consequently, the Program does **not** guarantee employment.

Students who are unsuccessful in any one of the four steps will remain in their traditional program.

THE CURRICULUM

Consistent with the philosophy of Co-operative education, the program is designed to alternate study terms and relevant work terms, as follows:

Academic / Work Term Sequence			
Year	Sept-Dec	Jan-April	May-August
1	Academic Term 1	Academic Term 2	Vacation
2	Academic Term 3	Work Term 1	Academic Term 4
3	Work Term 2	Academic Term 5	Work Term 3
4	Academic Term 6	Academic Term 7	Expected Graduation

While the BBA Co-op program is designed to be completed in four years, several students take longer to complete the program in order to pursue other areas of interest i.e. study abroad, completing a major, etc.

Every BBA co-op student must complete three work terms with full-time academic semesters directly before and after each work term. Refer to page 168 of the UNB Calendar for academic course requirements.

Change in Academic/Work Term Sequence

Changes in the academic/work term sequence must be approved by the Co-op Office. Approval is given on a case-by-case basis. Generally, changes are only made for reasons beyond your control such as: medical leave from university, accommodating an international work term placement, or for other special circumstances that are in your best interest, the employer's and the University's.

Official Transcript Notations

When you have accepted your first work term and are officially accepted into the Co-op program, the following notation is made on your transcript:

Effective [month and year], Accepted into the Co-op Option

Work term employed with [Employer Name], [Physical Location]

If for some reason, you happen to leave the Co-op Program, either because of choice or lack of meeting requirements, the following notation will then be made on your transcript:

Effective [month and year], Withdrew from the Co-op Option

Full-Time Student Status

We've specially designed the program so a student opting to take part in the Co-op Option is still able to finish their degree in a four-year span. In order to meet this requirement along with our accreditation standards, you must be enrolled in full-time academic studies before and after each work semester.

Program Probation

If your GPA falls below the required 2.7, you will be placed on Program Probation. Although still eligible to compete for postings, you will have to raise your GPA above a 2.7 before beginning your placement. In your best interest, the Co-op Office may temporarily remove you from the program if they feel you need to concentrate on your studies.

If you have already accepted an offer, it is at the employer's discretion to proceed with the placement.

If unsuccessful in achieving a sessional grade point average of 2.7 or higher, you will be required to withdraw from the co-op program. Under these circumstances, you will revert to the traditional BBA program.

Co-op Program Probation does not appear on your transcript.

Professional Development

A central focus of the Co-op program is to help students identify and achieve their career goals. This is largely achieved through Professional Development. These seminars are based on a fully developed and researched curriculum. Materials are reviewed and selected, guest speakers recruited, assignments evaluated, and seminars are co-ordinated with student's class schedules.

Providing Ongoing Feedback to Students to Help Them Improve Performance

At the Co-op Office, we understand that feedback is key to success. Some ways that we provide the feedback throughout the co-op experience include:

- learning contracts
- mid-work term performance evaluations
- work term reports

- post-work term meetings
- employer interview feedback questionnaire
- taped mock-job interviews, followed by extensive feedback
- monitoring student's grades
- counselling students on the improvement of their academic situation

Co-op Fees & Tuition

In recognition of the fact that the co-op program is a value-added educational program within the University, a special tuition fee of \$730/work term is required for participation. The co-op fee is due at the mid-point of each work term.

You will continue to pay full-time tuition fees in each academic term while participating in co-operative education.

THE JOB COMPETITION

While we will try to make every effort to provide a quality learning experience, we cannot guarantee the specific nature of the job, income provided, quality of the experience or assume liability for mishaps during the work term.

The job competition for work term placements occurs in the academic semester prior to each work term.

Job Postings

All placements are posted on the Co-op Job Board. It is your own responsibility to check the postings.

Each posting provides the company name, position, location, and a brief description of the roles and responsibilities the job entails. Each posting will also state a due date for applications.

Placement Applications

Each application must consist of:

- a personalized cover letter
- current resume
- up-to-date copy of your transcript (a copy of your unofficial transcript is sufficient)

Late submissions will not be accepted.

Disclosure of Information

Upon applying to the co-op program, you grant permission for the Co-operative Education Program to release your transcripts and resumes to prospective employers who wish to screen co-op applicants.

Interviews and Interview Schedules

After prospective employers have reviewed the applications and chosen candidates for interviews, the Co-op Office will schedule interviews in accordance to your academic schedule. You will be notified of date, time, and location of the interview, as well as the interviewer's name and other pertinent information.

Failure to appear for an interview without adequate reason is considered a serious offence. In cases of medical or compassionate reasons, you are expected to attend all interviews to which you have been invited. If unable to attend an interview at the scheduled time or place, you must immediately notify the co-op office.

Researching Jobs

Employers expect you to research their organization prior to the interview. You should conduct your research and prepare your questions for them well in advance of the interview.

Job Offers

All job offers are made through the Co-op Office. You will be granted two working days to accept or reject a Co-op job offer (unless otherwise approved). Once accepted, you are then committed to that placement and no subsequent Co-op job interviews or offers may be accepted for the current work term.

If contemplating rejecting an offer, you must discuss your decision with the Co-op Office. You may not re-apply for the position later in the job competition.

Location of Positions

Some of our positions happen to be located outside of the Greater Saint John Area. We expect that you are prepared to leave region for your placement. Failure to bid on these opportunities will result in a lower likelihood of finding employment thus needing to withdraw from the Co-op Program

Employment Found Outside the Co-op Program

We encourage you to help find your placement rather than merely relying on the provided job postings. You should keep your lines of communication open with the Co-op Office at all times throughout this process regarding the progress of finding your placement. In order for the

position to be deemed valid, an official offer letter from the employer will need to be submitted to a Co-op Coordinator.

All regulations and policies outlined in the UNB Calendar and Co-op Student Handbook apply to students who secure their own co-op job.

Contacting Potential Employers

You should first discuss with the Co-op Office prior to contacting any employer. We may have some contacts or be of assistance in asking for a placement.

Once an employer has posted a job within the job competition, you will not be permitted to contact the employer directly.

Hourly Wages

Wages are determined by the employer. It is likely that you will earn more in your third work term than in your first. Historically, the average wages are as follows:

1st work term - \$12/hr

2nd work term - \$14/hr

3rd work term - \$15/hr

**rate based on average hourly wage of co-op students in 2013.*

Non-Salary Work Terms

In circumstances deemed suitable by both the student and Co-op Staff, you may be permitted to pursue a non-salary work term. You will, however, still be required to pay the Co-op fee, write a Work Term Report and fulfill all program requirements.

Approved Employment

With you in mind, each work term must be approved by the Co-op Office. Work terms are a minimum of twelve successive weeks of full-time, paid employment. We expect students to perform productive activities and tasks in the workplace. There is also the assumption that each work term will consist of a progressively higher level of responsibility and challenge.

WORK TERMS

During the work terms students are expected to apply the knowledge gained from their academic courses, develop professional attitudes and skills, learn to work independently and as part of a team, and gain an understanding of the organization and the industry in which they are working.

Registering for your Work Term

Upon acceptance of a co-op placement, you will be automatically be registered for your work-term.

Deadline for Securing Co-op Employment

Deadline for securing a placement is the last day of the first month of work term.

Taking Courses While on Work Term

You may enrol in one, three credit hour course while on work term. The course must not interfere with your placement and is preferably scheduled during the evening. Where work commitments and school commitments overlap, the employer takes priority.

Failure to Report to Employer

If you fail to report to work with an employer for an agreed upon position, you will be immediately withdrawn from the co-op program.

Absences

Employers expect to hire responsible, accountable, punctual students.

Time off is not permitted unless special circumstances arise. All personal and university-related commitments are to be made outside of normal working hours.

In the event of illness, it is important to contact your employer as soon as possible.

Vacation

Vacation days are not permitted. If you foresee an unenviable circumstance, it must be discussed at the time of a job offer. As the final decision is based on the organization's needs, you should not assume that the request will be approved.

Emergencies

In the event of an emergency situation, such as illness or death in the family, you are required to follow the employer's policies. These policies should be confirmed with your Supervisor during orientation.

Transportation and Accommodation

Unless otherwise stated in the job posting, you are responsible for providing your own transportation and accommodations.

Company Policies and Procedures

As an ambassador of the co-op program, you are responsible for well representing the Co-op Program. As a well-respected program within the Saint John business community, it is crucial that you read and follow all of the company's policies and procedures in order to ensure compliance.

Ignorance of the policies and procedures is not an excuse for inappropriate behaviour. If they are unclear, you should ask your Supervisor for clarification.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality can be a touchy subject. As an employee, you should be informed and observe company policies and practices regarding this matter. When accepting a placement, you agree that information, data, and research material collected and prepared during employment remain the property of the employer. Employer authorization is required for release of company-related information, including your work term report. You must consult with your employer regarding the proprietary nature of any information used in their Work Term Reports.

Organizing Mid-Work Term Performance Evaluation Meetings

Each of your work terms will consist of a mid-work term visit. This is a chance for the Co-op Coordinator to meet with the student and the employer at their workplace. These meetings are a means of ensuring that the Co-op student's performance meets the expectations of their employer, and that the work experience meets the expectations of the student. If any concern arises, a strategy will then be developed to help remedy the situation.

Remember, if you have any concerns about your work term, do not hesitate to contact the Co-op Office at any time.

On-the-Job Performance

Do not forget to have realistic job expectations. Employers will expect you to learn, practice, and perfect skills before moving onto new tasks. However, you may have to be patient during brief periods of inactivity which leave you feeling insufficiently challenged. The experience of preparing a Work Term Report can optimise less than ideal working conditions. It is your responsibility to be proactive and ask your employer and co-workers for additional responsibilities. Keep in mind, you can always consult the Co-op Office for advice in the event of either too heavy, or too light, work load.

Mid-work term Performance Evaluations

You are responsible for submitting a mid-work term evaluation which discusses your on-the-job progress. This ensures that both your and your employer's expectations are being met. If there are any concerns about this, action will be taken to resolve the situation.

Each work term, you will also receive a mid-work term visit from the Co-op Coordinator. This serves as a check to make sure working conditions are suitable and a chance to meet and discuss your placement. To prepare for the visit, you and your supervisor will need to complete and discussing an evaluation of your work performance.

If an on-site meeting is not possible, a tele-conference will be set-up to accommodate the visit.

Final Evaluations

The final evaluation forms are meant to serve as a tool to indicate how well your performance has improved since receiving mid-work term evaluation. Similar to the mid-work term evaluation, both you and your supervisor complete the forms independently, meet to discuss each other's evaluations and then submit both to the Co-op Office prior to the due date.

Returning to a Previous Co-op Employer

You may return to the same organization, if re-offered, but should weigh-out all options in-order to make the best decision.

It is important to remember that working with the same firm does not provide the opportunity to experience differences among organizations. It is likely that you would also have the same supervisor for all three terms, thereby limiting your exposure to diverse leadership styles.

In addition, those students employed by the same organization throughout their Co-op Program are not given the opportunity to fully develop their job search and interview skills. Most students who accept placements with different organizations will have developed a well-rounded resume, written several cover letters and completed numerous job interviews. These skills are an asset in today's economy.

The Co-op Office cares about your development. If you feel strongly about returning to the same position, it is necessary to demonstrate that the responsibilities and duties will be progressively increased.

Work Term Report

The work term report plays a pivotal role in your success as a co-op student. Each work term will consist of one work term report designated as BA 2903, BA 3903 and BA 4903 respectively to the three work terms.

Work Term Reports are either a project-based or an experiential, reflection-based report. You may only choose the experiential option once.

The below schedule outlines the timeline when each work term report will appear on your transcript:

Work Term Report	BA 2903 Winter	BA 3903 Fall	BA 4903 Spring
Transcript placement	following Winter	following Winter	Following Fall

Failure to submit the report by the due date will result in a “fail” (NCR).

Keep in mind, each work term is the pre-requisite to the next therefore, a “pass” (CR) must be received in order for you to continue in the Co-op Program.

Content and Format of the Report

For details, please refer to the Work Term Report Manual.

Submission and Return of Work Term Reports

All work term reports are due on the specified date. Once corrected, these reports will be returned to you during the post-work term meetings.

As these reports often contain confidential information, the employer must sign the final report releasing it to UNB Saint John for marking purposes, exclusively.

Grading the Work Term Report

Work term reports follow a Pass/Fail, Credit/No Credit marking scheme. Each work term report deemed “Pass” will receive one credit-hour up to a maximum of three.

Reworking the Work Term Report

As an opportunity to learn, you are given the opportunity to rework a work term report if you should happen to receive a fail. All revisions must be completed by the end of the second month of the following term.

Program Completion

To receive your three credit hours, you must complete the co-op program in full. This includes:

- successful completion of all three work terms
- creating 9 S.M.A.R.T. goals during the duration of the program
- passing the three work term reports
- attending all professional development

We're here to help. If at any time a problem occurs in the workplace, you or your employer can always contact the Co-op Office. We will work alongside you and the employer to develop an action plan to improve overall performance.

Conclusion

On behalf of the Faculty of Business at UNB Saint John, we would like to take the opportunity to welcome you to the Co-op family. We look forward to working with you as part of our team.

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