

HWDSB HANDBOOK FOR CO-OP EMPLOYERS AND PLACEMENT SUPERVISORS



HWDSB



A Sincere Thank You

to our Co-op Employers and Placement Supervisors

On behalf of the secondary schools of Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB), we extend our sincere appreciation to you.

Without your active support, time, and training, this educational program would not be a success. Our students are benefiting from your expertise, and you are helping them gain the skills they need in order to enter an ever-changing workplace. The extension of the classroom to the world of work will develop students' life and job-readiness skills and assist them with future career decisions.

This handbook provides:

Specific information concerning goals, program design, and benefits to the student, the employer and the school.

An outline of the general responsibilities of the employer, the student and the teacher.

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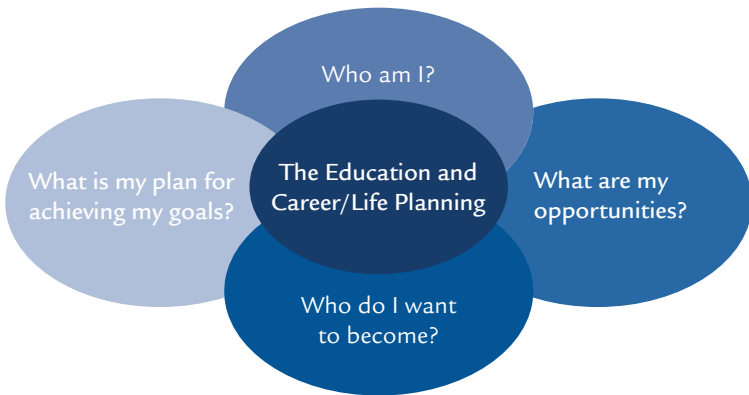
Goals of the Cooperative Education Program

All students can benefit from participating in Cooperative Education.

Through their Co-op experience, students will develop:

- A habit of reflecting on their experiences in order to derive meaning from them
- The ability to apply their learning to influence decisions and actions in various aspects of their lives
- The skills, knowledge, and habits required to become competent and confident education and career/life planners

Cooperative Education teachers support students in education and career/life planning by providing them with learning opportunities filtered through the four inquiry questions. Goals of Cooperative Education include ensuring that all students develop the knowledge and skills they need to make education and career/life choices, and to engage parents and the broader community to support students in their learning.



Design of the Co-op Program

Cooperative Education provides secondary school students with learning experiences connected to communities outside of school. All Cooperative Education courses include a classroom component and a community component.

The Cooperative Education community component can be on-site, virtual or blended. All Cooperative Education platforms (on-site, virtual, and blended) are an extension of the classroom for the students.

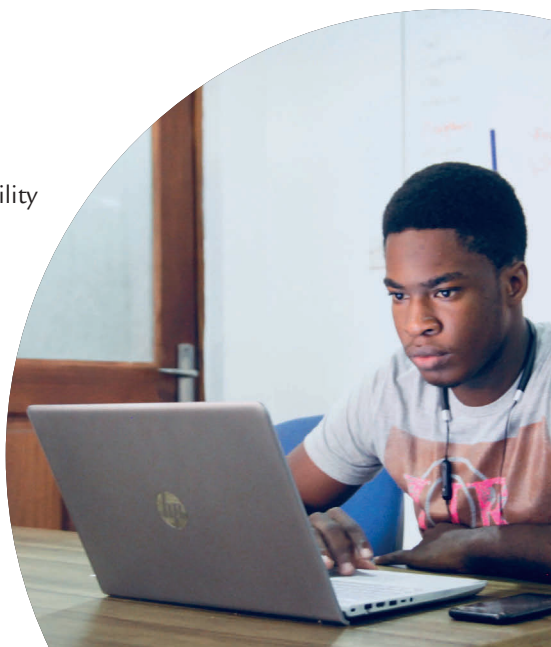
- **On-Site:** students are physically present at their community placement.
- **Virtual:** students complete all of the community placement component of their Co-op program remotely. The placement supervisor may be in their local community, in another community, city, province or country.
- **Blended:** students complete the community placement of their Co-op program on-site and virtually. The delivery model may change throughout the semester in response to the community, the student, and the employer needs.

HWDSB has additional guidelines in place for virtual and blended Co-op. These will be shared with you by the Co-op teacher if applicable to your placement.

Pre-course Requirements

Before beginning a Co-op program, a student is required to have:

- A structured interview with a Co-op teacher to assess suitability and readiness for the program
- Parental approval if under 18
- An understanding of the responsibilities of participating in Cooperative Education
- An idea of the learning goals they would like to achieve at their placement



Design of the Co-op Program

Duration

The program normally lasts one complete semester. Some students may enter the Co-op program later in the semester due to schedule changes.

Schedule

Students will normally spend half of each day in school and the other half at their Co-op placement, as outlined in the Work Education Agreement (WEA). In some cases, students may participate in all day Co-op placements.

Pre-placement Learning

All Co-op students will participate in pre-placement learning at the school before beginning a community work placement. Pre-placement lasts for approximately two to three weeks. For the summer Co-op program, most pre-placement learning occurs virtually during the month of June. During pre-placement, students will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of legislation, practices and behaviours related to health, safety and well-being in connection with the Co-op experience
- Demonstrate an understanding of the requirements and various considerations related to the Co-op experience

Integration Sessions

Students will regularly attend their placement as outlined in the Work Education Agreement. Students will be required to engage in integration sessions with their Co-op teacher. Integration sessions provide students with the opportunity to make connections between their learning in the community component and the classroom component of their Co-op course. The Co-op student will provide you with a list of in-school reflective days.

Monitoring Meetings

A Co-op teacher will have regularly scheduled meetings with the placement supervisor to review the student's Cooperative Education Learning Plan (CELP), discuss the student's learning goals and review the student's progress in meeting those goals.

For more information about the Cooperative Education Program, please refer to the Ontario Curriculum and Policy Document:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/cooperative-education-2018.pdf>

General Information

Insurance Coverage

All Cooperative Education students, including adult learners, are considered workers and are covered by the Workplace Safety Insurance Board (WSIB). During the Co-op program, students are deemed employees of the Ministry of Education for the purpose of WSIB. Cooperative Education students must complete a Work Education Agreement (WEA) form before beginning work at a placement. The WEA form must be signed by the teacher, the student, a parent or guardian (if the student is under the age of 18) and the placement employer/supervisor.

WSIB coverage, arranged through the Ministry of Education, will apply only to the hours and days stated in the Work Education Agreement (WEA) form. In cases where the student and the placement supervisor wish to modify the hours, dates, or work location set out in the WEA form, a WEA amendment form must be completed and signed by all parties to ensure that necessary WSIB coverage remains in place for the student.

Students who, in special circumstances, receive an hourly wage or salary must be covered by the employer's Workplace Safety Insurance.

Driving

Students Driving a Company or Customer Vehicle:

In general, Cooperative Education students should not drive a vehicle as part of their Co-op experience.

In those special instances where a student may be driving a vehicle because of the nature of the placement, the company assumes liability. If a student is asked to drive the employer's vehicle and/or a non-owned company vehicle, it is the responsibility of the employer to ensure that the student is covered under the company's own insurance policy. A statement such as: "Driving/Moving vehicles" should be included as a workplace expectation on the student's Cooperative Education Learning Plan.

Student Passengers in a Employer's Vehicle:

If a student is travelling as a passenger in an employer's vehicle, the employer must ensure they have appropriate insurance. The Co-op teacher and parent/guardian (if the student is under the age of 18) must be informed that the student will be travelling in a employer's vehicle. A statement such as: "Travelling to various job sites in a employer's vehicle" should be included as a workplace expectation on the student's Cooperative Education Learning Plan.

General Information

School Holidays and Professional Development Days

Usually, students do not attend their work placement on any statutory holidays, school holidays or professional development days. If a special learning opportunity is available on a holiday or PD day, attendance at the placement may be possible. This would require approval from the Co-op teacher, parent/guardian and the school principal.

Inclement Weather

If schools are closed due to inclement weather, students do not attend Co-op placements. Students should notify their employer that they will not be attending.

Strikes and Lockouts

Students do not attend their placement if there is a strike or lockout at the place of employment or at the school.

Remuneration

Learning is the emphasis in all secondary school Cooperative Education programs. For this reason, students do not typically receive a wage for hours spent at the placement.

Students are permitted to receive an expense allowance from their Cooperative Education employer in the form of an honorarium. Honorariums are completely at the discretion of the employer.

If students are hired and paid as employees beyond the hours of the Work Education Agreement form, this arrangement will not involve the school or the teacher. The Ministry of Education's coverage for the WSIB will apply only during the hours stated on the WEA form.

In special circumstances where the student is earning Co-op credits by connecting their learning to a pre-existing job, the employer should continue to pay the student at their regular wage. Opportunities to engage in new learning should be provided for the student whenever possible.

Responsibilities of an Employer/Supervisor

- Employers/Supervisor interview the student to determine suitability for the placement.
- Employers/Supervisor sign the Work Education Agreement (WEA) and Program Acknowledgement form before the placement begins and sign a WEA amendment form if there are any changes to the original work schedule or work environment.
- Employers/Supervisor provide job orientation at the Co-op placement dealing with workplace values, ethics, human relations, confidentiality and work expectations.
- Employers/Supervisor provide the student with training in health and safety requirements and practices specific to the placement and ensure that workplace safety rules are always followed.
- Employers/Supervisor ensure a safe working environment for the student, following all Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development requirements and all recommendations of the Ministry of Health and local Public Health unit.
- Employers/Supervisor report accidents immediately to the Co-op teacher, no matter how minor. The employer is responsible for completing a WSIB report if the student is a paid employee.
- Employers/Supervisor assist the Co-op teacher and student in developing a Cooperative Education Learning Plan (CELP) and assign tasks and learning experiences that are challenging but attainable for the student.
- Employers/Supervisor ensure that the Co-op student is always supervised.
- Employers/Supervisor consult with the Co-op teacher to discuss the student's progress during monitoring meetings.
- Employers/Supervisor inform the Co-op teacher if the student is missing from work frequently.
- Employers/Supervisor verify student attendance and number of hours worked.
- Employers/Supervisor provide feedback to the student regarding progress in meeting the learning goals outlined in their Cooperative Education Learning Plan.
- Employers/Supervisor attempt to resolve any problems with the student as they would with a regular employee and involve the Co-op teacher when necessary.

What should you expect from your Co-op student?

- Students will make a commitment to regularly attend the placement for the planned duration of the program.
- Students must contact the workplace supervisor and school/Co-op Teacher in advance if they are unable to report to work.
- Students must notify their supervisor well in advance if they are participating in any school function which would prevent them from attending the Co-op placement. These requests are to be kept to a minimum.
- Students will report to work punctually and notify the employer in case of lateness.
- Students must report any accidents/injuries immediately to their supervisor, Co-op teacher and parent/guardian.
- Students are expected to behave as responsible employees.
- Students will respect the confidentiality of the employer's work and clients.
- Students are expected to maintain a level of cleanliness and grooming acceptable to the standard of the placement as established by the supervisor. Students are expected to wear appropriate attire at the Co-op placement.
- Students are expected to follow specific company safety regulations and those outlined in the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Students must check with the supervisor when they are unsure of the safety practices.
- Students will participate in both the classroom component and the community component of the Co-op program.
- For the purpose of WSIB, students will track their work hours on a regular basis and ask their supervisor to verify the hours.
- Students will inform their Co-op teacher and placement supervisor of any problems or concerns which may affect workplace performance.



How will the Co-op teacher support you?

- The Co-op teacher will strive to ensure a compatible match between the student's skills and career interests and the employer's expectations.
- The Co-op teacher will discuss health and safety requirements and procedures with the employer.
- The Co-op teacher will provide general safety awareness training to the student prior to the start of the work placement.
- The Co-op teacher will provide a contact number and email and will be available to discuss any concerns that may arise.
- The Co-op teacher will assist the employer and student in developing a Cooperative Education Learning Plan (CELP) that will ensure a worthwhile and varied work experience.
- The Co-op teacher will do a combination of in-person and virtual visits for scheduled monitoring meetings and discuss the student's performance with the student and employer on an ongoing basis.
- The Co-op teacher will promptly contact the school board regarding all student injuries. WSIB reports for unpaid Co-op students will be submitted by HWDSB.
- The Co-op teacher will work collaboratively with the employer and student to resolve any issues or concerns that may arise.



Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)

How do Co-op and OYAP work together?

The Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) is a Cooperative Education experience in a skilled trade placement. Students become OYAP Participants when they submit an OYAP form and a record of their learning is created in the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development (MLTSD). An OYAP Participant may become a registered Apprentice, while still enrolled in high school. Students must be at least 15 years of age and have 14 credits to become an OYAP Participant. (All MLTSD regulations for specific ages on certain worksites still apply. For example, a person must be at least 16 years old to be at a construction worksite.)

What is Apprenticeship?

Apprenticeship is an education and training post-secondary pathway. An Apprenticeship is an agreement between a person who wants to learn a skilled trade and an employer who needs a skilled worker. It involves a combination of on-the-job training under the supervision of a journeyperson and in-school training. The Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development regulates this agreement. There are 144 Apprenticeship occupations in Ontario. You can contact the HWDSB OYAP Coordinator or local MLTSD for a complete list of apprenticeship occupations. OYAP Apprentices may be able to complete OYAP Accelerated Level 1 Training through all day Co-op.

Benefits to Employers:

- Directs motivated young people to the skilled trades at an early age
- Allows the employer to take a student on a trial basis before making a commitment
- On-going involvement provides your business with a continuous source of potential apprenticeship candidates
- Provides the opportunity for the employer to be involved with schools and inform educators of their requirements with respect to future employees
- OYAP apprentices do not impact the employer/apprentice ratios

Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)

Benefits to Students:

- Provides experience to inform better career choices and a possible start in a chosen career
- Begins a record of Apprenticeship learning in the MLTSD database, easing the transition from school to working in Skilled Trades
- Increases opportunities for post-secondary training and employment
- Develops both specialized and general employability skills including problem-solving, decision-making, teamwork, good work habits, confidence and self-reliance
- Develops an understanding of employer expectation in the work world and the need for lifelong learning

How can an Employer Participate?

- Agree to take on a Co-op student
- Consider signing that student as an Apprentice during the Co-op placement (even if you cannot commit to keeping that student after the end of the Co-op term)
- Consider keeping the student after the Co-op term is finished
- Contact the Co-op teacher or HWDSB OYAP Coordinator for more information

For more information about OYAP,
call **(905)527-5092** or visit:
www.hwdsb.on.ca/oyap

Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM)

The Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) is a Ministry approved program that allows students to focus on knowledge and skills that are of particular importance in a specific economic sector. Participating students obtain specialized training and industry recognized certifications in those sectors. This specialist pathway program allows students to experience a range of customized, career-focused learning opportunities that will give them the chance to explore, identify and refine their career goals and make more informed career decisions.

Students who graduate with their SHSM designation earn a special seal on their Ontario Secondary School diploma and a record card outlining the courses and certifications they have obtained. SHSM students must complete a minimum of two credits in Cooperative Education in their sector of study. SHSM programs help students better prepare for success in their postsecondary destination of choice, whether it be apprenticeship training, a college or university program, or the workplace.

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board has been approved to deliver SHSM programming in several sectors including:

- **Arts & Culture**
- **Aviation & Aerospace**
- **Business**
- **Construction**
- **Energy**
- **Environment**
- **Health & Wellness**
- **Horticulture and Landscaping**
- **Hospitality & Tourism**
- **Information & Communications Technology**
- **Justice, Community Safety and Emergency Services**
- **Manufacturing**
- **Non-Profit**
- **Transportation**

For more information about the Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) Program, call **(905) 527-5092** or visit:
www.hwdsb.on.ca/shsm

Experiential Learning

At its core, Cooperative Education immerses students in an experience, in which the student is an active participant, not merely an observer. Students reflect on the Cooperative Education experience to derive meaning from it and to identify what they have learned. Students apply their newly acquired skills and knowledge to inform current and future decisions and actions.



Thank you again for your generous support of HWDSB Co-op students!

Interested in supporting HWDSB students in other ways?

We are also looking for community partners to provide short-term experiential learning opportunities for students:

- **Job shadowing:** Allows students to observe a worker in a specific occupation (e.g., Take Our Kids to Work, interview an employer/ community member or industry partner).
- **Job twinning:** Allows students to observe a cooperative education student at the student's placement.
- **Work Experience:** Provides students with hands-on learning opportunities connected to the community for up to a period of four weeks.
- **Industry Tour:** Provides students an opportunity to see how a workplace in their sector of interest operates.
- **Class Guest Speaker:** Allows students to hear about a career of interest from an industry professional.

Please contact us at: **905-527-5092** or coop@hwdsb.on.ca

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