



Cooperative Education Programs

Student Handbook

□ DEFINITION

Students earn Co-op credits by integrating classroom theory with planned learning experiences in the community based on curriculum expectations of the related course. The Cooperative Education course and the related course constitute a student's Cooperative Education program.

□ BENEFITS TO YOU

Cooperative Education ensures that the out-of-school experiential learning enhances your educational experience.

Cooperative Education:

- ✓ enhances effective job search skills: résumé, cover letter writing and interview
- ✓ provides assistance in making career decisions
- ✓ provides first hand exposure to a range of career options
- ✓ promotes understanding of career possibilities and skill requirements
- ✓ develops confidence, skills and on the job experiences
- ✓ develops transferable employability skills
- ✓ develops interpersonal and communication skills and a positive attitude
- ✓ promotes understanding of the link between what is learned in the classroom and how it is applied at work
- ✓ facilitates the transition from school to work
- ✓ builds a network of adult references in the community
- ✓ provides references for future employers
- ✓ increases the opportunity for acceptance into college, university and apprenticeship programs
- ✓ permits training with equipment not readily available in the school
- ✓ provides feedback on the quality of their performance and project work
- ✓ allows for valuable training by experts in the field
- ✓ alternative method of earning credits

□ EXPECTATIONS OF COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PARTICIPANTS

Cooperative Education courses are successful when all participants co-operate with one another.

The participants are:

- ⇒ you, the Cooperative Education student
- ⇒ your parents/guardians
- ⇒ your placement supervisor

- ⇒ your co-workers
- ⇒ your school community
- ⇒ your Co-op teacher

□ **HOW TO ACHIEVE FULL POTENTIAL AT YOUR WORK PLACEMENT**

◆ **Appearance**

The first impression you make on a new placement supervisor is very important. Whether it is fair or not, you will be judged on how you look. Observe how others on the job are dressed. You do not need to spend a lot of money on clothes. It is wise to have a few appropriate outfits that you can mix and match. Where a school uniform is to be worn, individual school rules governing dress codes will apply. Your clothes should be well pressed, clean and co-ordinated. Placement supervisors feel that your concern for your appearance reflects your attitude toward work.

You have the right to dress as you please at home, but at your placement you have a responsibility to match your appearance to your work environment. Your clothing should not interfere with your safety or your ability to do the job.

You should be aware of the importance of personal hygiene. Regular bathing, the use of deodorant and good dental hygiene are strongly recommended. If you wear perfume or aftershave, make sure that it is suitable for daytime wear (not too strong). Your hair and nails should be clean and neat.

◆ **Punctuality/Attendance**

Attendance and punctuality are important in establishing reliability and developing a sense of responsibility.

You are expected to be at your placement on time. On time means that you are there and ready to work at the time stated on your **Work Education Agreement Form**. It is not your arrival time. Allow time for things that go wrong. It is better to be a few minutes early than to be late.

A common complaint of placement supervisors is that some Co-op students leave the job a few minutes early. They sit and watch the clock rather than start something they think they will not finish. This is lost time for the placement supervisor. A few minutes at the end of your placement day to complete your task will be appreciated by your supervisor.

Your placement supervisor expects you to be at the placement every day as outlined on your Work Education Agreement. The YRDSB attendance policy regarding Cooperative Education is as follows:

- ⇒ students must attend both classroom component and placement components regularly and punctually;
- ⇒ if the student is unable to attend or will be late on any day at the placement, the placement supervisor, the school and taxi company (if applicable) must be contacted before the start of the placement's work day;
- ⇒ any assignments missed in pre-placement orientation and integration activities must be made up independently;
- ⇒ students must be in attendance for the minimum of 110 hours per out-of-school credit;

- ⇒ a letter of notification will be sent to the student and/or parent after four authorized absences stating consequences;
- ⇒ any unauthorized absence will result in the student being put on probation;
- ⇒ if a student withdraws from the related course he/she must also withdraw from the Co-op course.

Authorized absences include:

- ⇒ personal illness or injury - long term illness or injury requires a medical certificate or parental note;
- ⇒ important family responsibilities, e.g. funeral;
- ⇒ religious holiday;
- ⇒ authorized school events;
- ⇒ snow days as per individual school policy;

Snow Days

If you are a morning Co-op student and have heard over the radio that York Region buses are not running you do not need to go to your Co-op placement. Phone them to notify them of the snow day as soon as they are open. If you are an afternoon Co-op student and a storm occurs by midday, listen for an announcement over the PA. Your safety always comes first.

You must follow the correct procedures for an absence as it is important that your Co-op teacher knows where you are at all times. Failure to inform your Co-op teacher of your whereabouts could result in your removal from the Cooperative Education Program.

If you are unable to attend an in-school session, you are required to contact your Co-op teacher before the beginning of the school day.

School Phone No. _____ Placement Phone No. _____ Taxi Phone No. _____

Absences Known In Advance

- advise your Co-op teacher and placement supervisor of expected absence well in advance;
- the day prior to your absence remind your supervisor and teacher that you will not be in the next day;

For All Absences

- telephone your placement supervisor at the start of the placement work day and give your reason for your absence;
- telephone your Co-op teacher or attendance office before the school day begins and leave a message and your reasons for your absence;
- if applicable, contact the taxi company to cancel run well in advance; **if the taxi is not cancelled, you will have to pay the cost of the run;**

◆ **On the Job Procedures**

Learn the policies and procedures of your placement and then follow them, e.g. safety procedures, clothing regulations.

All students must demonstrate an understanding of “Safety at the Workplace” prior to going out to their placements. Students have a responsibility to work in a safe and responsible fashion. All employees have a right to refuse “unsafe” work or to ask for further clarification before undertaking a task.

Policies are there to protect everyone at the placement. Ask, but do not challenge, your placement supervisor for an explanation of a policy or procedure if you do not understand it.

◆ **Positive Attitude**

To get along on the job, you must not only do your work to the best of your ability, but you should also be:

- enthusiastic
- flexible
- honest
- caring

You must listen carefully to instructions. Taking notes may help you remember them. If it is an inappropriate time to ask a question that you would like answered, write it down and ask your placement supervisor later. If you don't understand something say so, or you will waste time and time is money to the employer.

Pitch in when work has to be done. If you help someone out when they are busy, they will help you when you need it. Use your initiative.

Keep your personal problems personal. Personal calls should be made and received at home. Avoid gossip.

Establish and maintain a good business relationship with all fellow workers.

◆ **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is required of you. Some placement tasks will result in your having access to personal information about employees, employers' business and/or customers. You must respect the confidential nature of this information and not discuss it with your family and friends.

□ **WORK EDUCATION AGREEMENT (WEA)**

The York Region District School Board and participating organizations are required to complete a Work Education Agreement. This form must be signed by the parent, teacher, student and employer before the placement begins. The WEA outlines the working contract between all parties and indicates who will be assuming responsibility for WSIB coverage.

□ **ADJUSTMENT TO HOURS AT THE PLACEMENT**

In order to ensure insurance coverage, if the Co-op student's core hours are changed, the following Amendment to Work Education Agreement form must be signed by all parties.

It is the responsibility of the student to obtain approval and signatures from the Co-op teacher, parent or guardian and the placement supervisor, BEFORE remaining at the placement for any time other than what was initially scheduled on the Work Education Agreement.

A form similar to the one on the following page must be returned to the Co-op teacher's mailbox 24 hours before the expected change.

**AMENDMENT TO WORK EDUCATION AGREEMENT:
SECTION B: *SPECIFIC TIME AT TRAINING STATION***

Please be advised that on _____
Date (s)

I will be at my Co-op placement for the following additional hours:

Student Signature & Date:	Parent Guardian Signature: (if under 18 years)
Placement Supervisor Signature:	School Co-op Teacher Signature:

This form must be in the Co-op teacher's mailbox 24 HOURS before the expected change.

□ YOUR FIRST DAY AT YOUR PLACEMENT

You will find that success comes easily in your Co-op placement if you get off to a good start. For the best possible start, your attitude should be one of eagerness to learn.

Do not be discouraged if you are initially assigned entry-level tasks, as most new employees are. You will be trained to do more as you show that you can handle the simple tasks with enthusiasm.

Your first day at the placement may bring out some nervousness that might cause you to doubt your ability. You may also feel strange because you do not know anyone well. After several days of interaction with people at your placement you will feel more comfortable.

Loyalty is extremely important and starts the day you start. Always speak well about your placement to other employees and your friends. If you have any concerns, discuss them with your Co-op teacher.

□ PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Your parents/guardians are aware that you will be assigned a placement in the community. The Cooperative Education credits you earn will go towards your Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

It is expected that your parents/guardians will offer you support while at your placement by encouraging you to go every day and be on time.

□ PLACEMENT SUPERVISOR

Your placement supervisor expects you to do the best job that you can possibly do and will assess you accordingly. You are expected to fit into your placement, to follow the policies and procedures of the organization and to be a willing and productive team member.

You are expected to co-operate with the placement supervisor. The placement is providing you with the opportunity to gain experience and to earn credits.

Your placement supervisor will provide you with a safe and healthy work environment and will teach you the skills and procedures that are necessary to be successful at the placement. An interview will be arranged between you and the placement supervisor before the placement commences.

All students must receive:

- Placement orientation and safety awareness; and/or
- Trade/industry specific Health & Safety training by the placement supervisor prior to performing tasks.

If students have not received adequate instruction, they should refuse the work and ask for clarification.

❑ CO-WORKERS

It is important that you get along with your co-workers. Remain neutral with any differences that may arise between employees. Your placement supervisor and Co-op teacher both expect your loyalty and willingness to co-operate.

In the case that your co-workers assist you when you need help, make sure that you listen carefully, and thank them when they give you their valuable time.

❑ CO-OP TEACHER

Report any problems to the Co-op teacher. Keep all paperwork up-to-date and submit it on time. You are also expected to go to your in-school classes at the scheduled times.

The Co-op teacher will assist you with any problem and will provide feedback on your performance at the placement.

❑ INSURANCE COVERAGE

◆ Workplace Safety & Insurance Board (WSIB)

Workplace Safety & Insurance Board (WSIB) coverage is paid by the Ministry of Education for students participating in Cooperative Education Programs. Should the student become a part-time or full time employee of the organization, WSIB coverage becomes the responsibility of the employer. Students are not covered by the Workplace Safety & Insurance Board when:

- working as teachers' aides; or
- enrolled in the High Performance Athlete (HPA) program; or
- travelling to and from the placement.

◆ Liability Insurance

Students and training organizations are insured against a lawsuit arising out of the negligence of the student while performing the duties of the Co-op assignment. The Board does not cover personal injuries to the student.

◆ Student Accident Insurance

Student Accident Insurance is made available to all York Region District School Board students. This insurance is optional and is paid for by students and parents. This policy covers some expenses not covered by provincial health care, associated with student accidents and injuries while participating in a school authorized program such as Cooperative Education. All Cooperative Education students are strongly encouraged to purchase a policy.

In the event of an accident, even if first aid and/or medical attention is not required, the employer and student must immediately contact the Co-op teacher who, in turn, will contact and report the accident to Human Resource Services of York Region District School Board and the parent/guardian.

❑ **PERSONALIZED PLACEMENT LEARNING PLAN (PPLP)**

The PPLP outlines the course of study for the placement component and is the basis for assessment and evaluation for the granting of credits as defined by the related subject and the Co-op course, and the employer expectations.

The development of the PPLP is an ongoing process involving Co-op teachers, the teacher of the related subject, the placement supervisor and the student.

The PPLP will be reviewed to ensure that both the needs of the student and the placement are being met.

The Co-op teacher will provide copies of the PPLP to the student and the placement supervisor. It may be appropriate to share a copy of the PPLP with the teacher of the related subject and parents of students under 18 years of age

❑ **WEEKLY LOG**

The Weekly Log must be completed every day you are at the placement. This enables the Co-op teacher to determine if the duties outlined on the PPLP are being met and that progressive learning is taking place. The Weekly Log also confirms your placement hours. *You must complete the weekly log in Pen.* It is your responsibility to ensure that:

- hours are totalled before the supervisor signs the Weekly Log;
- the Weekly Log is submitted to your Co-op teacher within the established timelines.

Remember, that if you fail to submit your Weekly log, you will not receive credit for the hours logged.

❑ **JOURNALS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

Journal writing is a required component of all Cooperative Education Programs and must be submitted within established timelines.

❑ **ASSIGNMENTS**

Assignments and integration activities are required components of all Cooperative Education Programs.

STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

I understand that:

- I will be interviewed by the Cooperative Education teacher and placement supervisor(s) to be considered for the placement.
- The Cooperative Education Program requires me to spend considerable time in the community as a Co-op student, and as such I will represent the school in a favourable manner.
- I must conform to all Policies and Procedures of the program with respect to the following:
 - ↔ attend regularly and punctually both in school and at the placement until the end of the scheduled period as defined by the Work Education Agreement;
 - ↔ report all absences promptly to supervisor and school at beginning of each work day and provide reason for the absence;
 - ↔ make up the required hours missed at the placement;
 - ↔ complete all required assignments, both in-school and at the placement;
 - ↔ abide by the Policies and Procedures of my placement;
 - ↔ maintain strict confidentiality regarding placement matters; and
 - ↔ submit hours worked, outside of the contracted time, in advance to the Co-op teacher and employer.
- Course expectations of my related course, Co-op course and the expectations of the employer identify the tasks that I will be performing as part of my Co-op placement.
- I should not expect to be paid for my Co-op hours.
- Any adjustment to Co-op hours to accommodate extra curricular activities and part time employment must be co-operatively arranged.
- If my placement pays me a wage for the hours stated on my Work Education Agreement, or if I stay at my placement beyond the hours stated on my Work Education Agreement and I am paid for those hours, Workplace Safety and Insurance coverage must be provided by the employer. It is my responsibility to ensure that this coverage is in place.
- I am responsible for transportation to and from the placement. It is the recommendation of the York Region District School Board that I use public transit and that if I choose to drive a vehicle to my placement, I must be covered by my own insurance. Appropriate Board forms must be completed if driving or riding in a private vehicle. (*Forms: Co-op6-01/ncr3, NP 679-01, NP679-02.*)
- I must declare to the Co-op teacher any medical condition that may affect my performance at the Co-op placement.
- I may be required to have a medical examination and/or provide medical information to meet placement requirements.
- Immunization is required for some placements and that I am responsible for this at my own expense.

- Some placements require a security check, character check, credit check, or other pre-placement screening and that I may be responsible for this at my own expense.
- Certain placements may require additional specialized application forms and subsequent interviews prior to acceptance.
- I may have to wear prescribed clothing for my placement (e.g. safety equipment, business attire, nursing smock, lab coat).
- I must have the Work Education Agreement (Workplace Safety and Insurance Board) signed by all parties **before** beginning work at the placement. It is my responsibility to obtain approval and signatures of all parties before making any changes to agreed upon hours.
- I must observe all health and safety regulations at the placement and contact the placement supervisor and the school the same day in case of accident, even if it does not require medical attention.
- It is strongly recommended that I purchase Student Accident Insurance.
- My Co-op teacher needs to provide relevant information about me to a prospective supervisor for placement purposes. (IEP with approval.)
- Theft or vandalism is grounds for termination of my Co-op placement and/or removal from the Co-op Program with loss of credits and possible further action under the law.
- I must provide my Co-op teacher with updated information should there be any change in the data provided by me while I am enrolled in Co-op (e.g. change of address, phone, emergency contact information, medical information, mode of transportation).
- I can be removed from the Co-op Program with loss of credits if I am unable to meet program requirements either in school or at the placement. If I drop my related in school course, I must also drop my Co-op course.

In addition for OYAP students:

- If I am placed in a skilled trade as an OYAP student, I may, with the support of my employer, sign an Apprenticeship Agreement with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities' Apprenticeship Branch, and begin my formal apprenticeship training.
- In the event that I am required during my placement to work on restricted skills (as defined under Ontario Reg. 565/99 of The Apprenticeship Certification Act) then I must be registered as an OYAP apprentice.

In addition for HPA students:

- I must abide by the HPA Protocol agreement.
- I must provide the school with YRDSB Form P640-02 in the event of absences greater than 3 consecutive days.

STUDENT SIGNATURE

I have read the **Cooperative Education Student Handbook** and **Statement of Understanding** and I understand my responsibilities. I also understand that failure to comply with these responsibilities may result in probationary measures or my removal from the Cooperative Education Program. I also consent to have information concerning my performance in a Co-op Program opportunity shared with my parent(s) / guardian(s), and placement supervisor.

Student Signature

Date

PARENT SIGNATURE

I have reviewed this Handbook and Statement of Understanding and I understand my son's/daughter's role in the Cooperative Education Program.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

STATEMENT ABOUT IEP

The Personalized Placement Learning Plan (PPLP) of a student who has an Individual Education Plan (IEP) must be developed with direct reference to the IEP.

I understand that some of these accommodations on my son / daughter's IEP will need to be shared with the placement supervisor.

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____