

UBC Engineering Co-op Program Employer FAQ - COVID 19

During this time of uncertainty, we want to ensure our employer partners that we are both doing our part in helping to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and also supporting our key stakeholders in navigating these unprecedented times.

We would like to advise that during this time the UBC Engineering Co-op Program, in alignment with all Co-op Programs across UBC, will be applying flexibility to co-op work terms for both our winter and summer co-op work terms, these include, but are not limited to:

- Shorting of existing co-op work terms
- Late start of summer work terms
- Work from home arrangements

We have received a number of inquiries regarding our Program, processes, and plans for moving forward. Below we outline and address some common questions. In the event of further inquiries, you may contact us at 604-822-3022 or email eng.coop@ubc.ca for further assistance.

Is the UBC Engineering Co-op office open during the pandemic?

Yes. The UBC Engineering Co-op office is open virtually. In an effort to stop the spread of COVID-19, all co-op staff are working remotely. You may continue to reach our [staff](#) members during normal business hours (8:30-4:30, Monday-Friday).

Are students still available for summer work?

Yes! Our students are keen to obtain work integrated learning opportunities.

Are we still able to post positions and interview?

Yes. We are continuing to [post positions](#) for summer and assist in scheduling interviews for co-op students and employers. To ensure social-distancing, we ask that all interviews be scheduled over the phone, Skype, Zoom, or similar platform.

Has the job offer process changed?

No. This [process](#) remains the same.

What is the latest date I can have a student commence work for summer?

Employers can delay the start date until **July 6th, 2020** or meet the minimum threshold of 8 weeks or 280 hours. Under normal circumstances, the requirement of our accreditation is a minimum of 12 weeks or 420 hours.

Engineering Co-op

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Does the office provide any tips in regard to migrating co-op students into a work from home (WFH) arrangement?

Yes. Our Co-op Coordinator team works very closely with both employers and students, and are happy to set up a call with your organization in regard to WFH best practices and performance management of your co-op student.

A few things to keep in mind:

- (1) Methods of communication — ensure clear communication of WFH guidelines and expectations as it relates to deliverables, hours and flexibility of work, and available resources for support
- (2) Track of work/projects—what are the goals and objectives set for the student? How are they tracked?
- (3) Technology best practices – what device will the student use while at home? What additional security and safety measures need to be implemented?
- (4) Methods of communication – How is management communicating their vision and strategies? Who would the student reach out to in the event of an urgent matter? How will teams collaborate?
- (5) Company culture and cohesiveness – How is the organization keeping up unity and morale?

The Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning (CEWIL) association of Canada provides additional resources for [Onboarding Student Remotely](#) and [Supervising Student Remotely](#).

Our company is unable to offer co-op students a work from home arrangement. What are our options?

There are a couple options available to explore:

- (1) **For summer work terms**, the employer may push the start date back to as late as July 6th, 2020, or potentially change the contract to a different co-op work term altogether.
- (2) In the **worst case**, the employer may rescind the co-op offer altogether during these exceptional circumstances. We are committed to our employers and students and hope this is a **last resort**, as students may have already made housing and financial commitments in anticipation of their work term.

Our business has been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and we no longer think we can afford a co-op student this summer. What are our options?

- (1) There are many pools of funding available to employers via the [Student Work Placement Program](#) and [Innovate BC](#). Please consider funding opportunities directed at hiring a co-op student.
- (2) Despite our hopes that this does not happen, we acknowledge the possibility that employers may face grave financial consequences as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and may be unable to continue with the currently scheduled co-op position. Please let us know if you have to retract your job offer and we will work with you and the student. We trust that you will consider this option only as the last resort.