Supervisor Guidelines

Congratulations on hiring an engineering co-op student! As a partner in student learning, your role as supervisor is to provide a challenging and technical work experience to allow students to develop the skills, knowledge, and competencies pertinent to their field of study, to help the students better understand the link between theory and practice, and to guide them through the "world of work" by assisting them in the transition from student to a professional employee. In order to maximize student learning, some areas you may wish to discuss with your student or implement into your student's learning program are listed in this guideline.

Support from the Co-op Office

The Co-op office is here to support both the student and you as the student's supervisor. If you have any questions or concerns about the program, please contact the Front Desk at 604-822-3022 or apsc.coop@ubc.ca for assistance. Your student also has a designated Co-op Coordinator, who has an existing relationship with the student and who can provide assistance specific to your co-op student. Your co-op student can provide their Co-op Coordinators contact information, and if you have any concerns or issues throughout their work term, please contact their Co-op Coordinator or our Front Desk immediately.

Review Policies and Procedures

Discuss your company's organizational structure. Ensure your student understands your company's policies and procedures regarding work schedule (i.e., core hours, flex time, vacation, sick days, personal appointments, etc.); confidentiality and intellectual property agreements; computer, internet and cell phone usage; emergency preparedness; etc.

Provide Training

If necessary, provide relevant safety or job-specific training and personal protective equipment.

Setting Goals and Expectations for the Work Term

Make sure your student understands what is expected from them and what they can expect from you as a supervisor. Be clear on what the student's responsibilities are and what tasks or projects need to be completed and their respective deadlines. Discuss your supervisory style and preferred mode of communication (i.e., phone, email, Skype, etc.).

Having this discussion and setting expectations with your student will also help them to write realistic Learning Objectives describing the achievements they intend to accomplish during the work term. You may also provide your student with advice and guidance on skills you feel they will have the opportunity to develop for their professional growth while at the company and beyond.

Provide Feedback

Ensure students receive and seek frequent feedback on their work. Students crave and appreciate regular feedback. Feedback is vital to ensure that your student knows whether or not they are achieving their goals, the areas in which they are performing well or not well, how their work is impacting others in the organization, and to feel more engaged with your organization.

Assist in Learning

Provide your student with "just in time" learning through one-on-one mini "lectures" in topicsthat have not yet been covered in the student's academic program. Provide or direct your student to sources they can consult (i.e., textbooks, websites, internal/external workshops or courses, etc.) to encourage your student to be responsible for their own learning. Consider pairing your student with a mentor to support them during their time with the organization. Encourage your student to document their learning through the use of a notebook or portfolioand to present the knowledge they have acquired to you and others at the organization at the end of the work term.

Schedule Regular Check-Ins

Establish a regular schedule of check-ins with your student in order to monitor progress, regulate workload, and troubleshoot any concerns or issues they may be facing. Use these meetings to also ensure your student is developing relationships with others in the workplace, is participating in meetings, and is engaging in social activities with your team.

Participate in a Work Term Check-in

Approximately midway through the student's 4-month work term, you will be asked to complete a work term check-in to provide feedback on the performance of your student. If you have any concerns or issues with your student prior to or following the check-in, you are encouraged to reach out to the Co-op Office immediately rather than waiting for this work term check-in.

There are two types of work term check-ins:

1. Phone/Video Call Check-in – if your student is new to your company or is returning to your company after completing an academic term(s), you will likely be asked to discuss the student's performance with a co-op coordinator by phone.* The phone/video call check-in will typically be scheduled through the student, and they will work with you and the Co-op Program to schedule a mutually convenient time for the meeting. If you have multiple students under your supervision, we may contact you directly to schedule the check-in. Conversations with the supervisor are via phone call by default, but if you prefer a video call via Zoom or MS Teams, please let your student know when they are booking their check-in.

2. Work Term eCheck-in – if your student is on their second, third, or fourth work term with your company, you will likely receive an invite via email to complete a work term eCheck-in. This eCheck-in will be a quick survey to check how our student is progressing in their continued work with you. Feedback provided will be shared with the student, if required.

*Note: The Co-op Program is not completing any in-person check-ins at the moment. If in-person check-ins resume, companies that are new to our program, depending on geographic location, may be asked to complete an in-person check-in.

Ask about Work Term Assignment

All students are required to complete an assignment to fulfill the academic portion of their workterm. Most of these assignments are self-reflective in nature and are evaluated by the co-op program. However, one assignment requires the student to prepare either a report, memo or presentation regarding a project or problem they worked on during the work term. For this assignment, the student may require your assistance in identifying a suitable topic. If the topic is confidential in nature, you will be required to grade the student's assignment. Your student will you provide you with the necessary forms to complete and is responsible for submitting them to the co-op program.

Complete the End-of-Term Evaluation

At the end of each four month work term (reminder: a single work term shadows the parallel academic term e.g. January – April, while the employment period may cover multiple work terms), you will be asked to evaluate your student's overall performance. You will receive an email with a link to an online evaluation form approximately two weeks before the end of the term. We strongly encourage you to discuss your evaluation with the student prior to submitting it to the co-op program.

Resolving Work Term Issues

If you experience any problems or have concerns regarding your student, please contact the co-op program immediately and a co-op coordinator will work with you and the student to resolve the issue.

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