

# **COOPERATIVE EDUCATION**

## **STUDENT HANDBOOK**



**RENFREW COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE**

# ***WELCOME TO CO-OP!***



## **Course Description**

Cooperative Education courses consist of an in-school and out-of-school component to combine learning and experience in an educationally beneficial way.

The out-of-school experience will be designed whenever possible to give the students an opportunity to explore careers in which they are interested.

Both the in-school and out-of-school components are closely monitored and evaluated by the Cooperative Education Department. Evaluation will be based on assignments set for both components, plus periodic evaluations by your placement supervisor (evaluation guidelines are explained in more detail later in this handbook). Evaluation will follow Renfrew Collegiate Institute's policies.

Cooperative Education must be an educational experience shared by the student, parents, school and the workstation.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Student**

- Approach their Co-op placement in exactly the same way they would a part time job.
- Comply with all company rules as to dress, safety codes, work schedule and policies.
- Work in a courteous, responsible, and business-like manner and show appropriate initiative.
- Observe and comply with the rules and regulations of the placement and the school, including confidentiality requirements.
- Comply with school attendance policies in both the placement and classroom sessions
- Submit assignments as required.
- Inform the placement supervisor and have their parents inform the RCI attendance secretary in advance if they are unable to report to their placements (students 18+ may notify the attendance secretary them self).
- Participate with their supervisors and teachers in the assessment of their own performances.
- Complete their course requirements to obtain credits towards the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD).
- Work with teachers and supervisors to ensure that problems are dealt with immediately
- **Students may NOT begin their placement until they have submitted ALL pre-placement assignments, submitted ALL required forms, and received approval from their co-op teacher. Failure to comply with this policy could result in serious liability issues for everyone involved. Any co-op hours completed without previous approval will NOT be counted.**

### Cooperative Education Teacher

- Promote the cooperative education, work experience, and school-work transition programs to students, parents, staff, school councils, and potential employers.
- Organize and conduct pre-placement orientation sessions to prepare students.
- Consult regularly with students, employers, supervisors and employees.
- Make regular on-site learning assessments of students at their placements.
- Assess and evaluate student performance.
- Organize and conduct regular integration activities.
- Provide health and safety instruction.
- Follow WSIB and school board procedures for accident reports.
- Work with students and supervisors to ensure that any problems are dealt with immediately.

### Workplace Supervisor

- Provide a safe working and learning environment.
- Provide placement specific safety training.
- Help students function as an integral part of a team.
- Direct and guide students' learning through on-site supervision.
- Acquaint students with company personnel and procedures.
- Contact the cooperative education teacher when concerns arise.
- Review and sign student log sheets at the end of each week.
- Share their expertise with students.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

**It is the responsibility of the student to arrange their own transportation to and from their Co-op placement. If the student is unable to drive him/herself to and from the placement, then it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that the Co-op student arrives on time to both the co-op placement and to their classes at RCI.** If the student drives to the placement, he/she must be covered by the vehicle owner's insurance. Neither RCI nor the Renfrew County District School Board will accept responsibility for vehicle insurance.

If driving a company vehicle is part of the student responsibility in the placement, as outlined on the student's learning plan, the student must have the appropriate classification of driver's licence, and be covered by the placement's insurance.

## **INSURANCE**

Students in all placements, except as teachers' assistants in schools, must be covered by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB). The Ministry of Education pays for WSIB coverage when the student is not paid for work in the placement. When the student is paid, the employer is responsible for the cost of WSIB coverage. All parties involved must sign the Work Education Agreement **before** the student begins work at the placement.

Students placed in educational facilities are not covered under the school board's accident insurance. The student should have Ontario Health Plan coverage.

## **REPORTING ACCIDENTS IN THE WORKPLACE**

In the event of any accidents involving the Cooperative Education student in the workplace, **the student must report the accident IMMEDIATELY to the Co-op employer and to the Co-op teacher.** Where medical attention is required, the co-op teacher will complete an accident report.

## **SECURITY CHECKS & IMMUNIZATION**

Students applying for placements with day-care facilities, retirement homes, etc. may require a criminal background check and/or particular immunizations prior to acceptance. These can take time to complete and should be initiated ASAP.

## **SAFETY EQUIPMENT UNIFORMS / DRESS**

The student must comply with all safety standards of the workplace including the wearing of protective clothing/equipment. He/she is responsible for the purchase of any clothing/equipment not supplied by the workplace.

Students in all placements must comply with the dress standards of the workplace.

## OYAP

At the same time that youth unemployment is more than double the national average, industry and labour cannot find enough skilled workers to keep up with demand. This skills shortage is critical, and without a concerted effort by industry, labour, education and government, Ontario's ability to compete in today's global economy will be severely diminished.



This coincidence of high youth unemployment during a period of severe skills shortage is a serious paradox. Many exciting and rewarding career opportunities are available to our young people in the skilled trades. But many young people and their parents believe that these jobs are dirty, labour-intensive and pay low wages.

<b><i>FACT</i></b>	People who work in the skilled trades and technologies are virtually guaranteed long, productive, stable careers
<b><i>FACT</i></b>	Skilled workers require a high level of skill, judgment and creativity to use the sophisticated technology of the trades.
<b><i>FACT</i></b>	People working in the skilled trades make above average salaries, with top performers in some trades earning well over \$60 000 per year.
<b><i>FACT</i></b>	Many tradespeople continue to develop careers in management, teaching, or as owners of their own businesses.

Did you know that there are over 135 apprenticeship trades in the province of Ontario? If you are in grade 12 and are interested in pursuing an apprenticeship in a skilled trade, the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) may be for you! Under this program, the hours you complete during your high school co-op *may* count towards the hours required to receive your trade certification. More details on OYAP will be provided during pre-placement activities.

For more information and a list of the apprenticeship trades in Ontario, please visit [oyap.com](http://oyap.com).

## **ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES**

1. You **MUST** notify the RCI attendance secretary and your employer as soon as you know that you will be absent or late for work. For students under the age of 18, notification to RCI must be made by your parents/guardians. The RCI attendance secretary can be reached (24 hours a day) at 432-4858, extension 274.
2. If you wish to change your work schedule (e.g. you are a half day student and would like to work full day), you need to contact your co-op teacher to get his/her approval for such a change. Such changes must also be approved by the RCI Guidance Department and your parents. Such changes may require that a new Work Education Agreement be prepared and signed.
3. Participation in extra-curricular activities is strongly encouraged. When you are absent from your Co-op placement for a **school-related** activity, you can still record your regular co-op hours on your log sheet. For example, suppose that you are on a field trip from 8 am to 6 pm, but you are usually at co-op from 11:45 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. On your log sheet, you would record your usual co-op hours, but explain the nature of the school activity in your summary of the week's activities.

This policy would not apply if the school activity is shorter in duration than your regular co-op placement. For example, suppose that a full-day co-op student does not attend their placement because they are attending our spring cancer carnival. In this case, they would only record the hours of the cancer carnival (although it would be best to attend the placement in the morning and the carnival in the afternoon).

4. If you are absent for personal reasons, you cannot record any hours for the day.
5. You are under no obligation to attend your co-op placement PA days or holidays. However, these days may provide a good opportunity for students to earn extra hours at their placement or for students who are not full-day to experience the rewards and challenges of a full day placement. Your supervisors may not be aware of PA dates. As such, it is your responsibility to inform them, with sufficient advance notice.
6. On **snow days**, you are still expected to report to your Co-op placement **provided that you can safely get to and from your placement. If you cannot attend you MUST notify your employer!**
7. On shortened school days, when assemblies or special events are held, let your employer know in advance if you will not be able to attend your placement.

8. All Co-op students are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of their co-op status, special dates and times (e.g. overdue log sheets, integration days, PA days, assemblies, assignment due dates, etc.). Students with cell phones are strongly encouraged to sign up for their co-op teacher's **REMIND** program. In this way, you will receive all Co-op updates and special information via text messages. Students are encouraged to follow **@RCISchoolNews on Twitter**. If you are at school in the morning, always listen carefully to the morning announcements. Remember, claiming that "nobody told me" is not acceptable. **YOU** are responsible for keeping yourself informed!
9. You **must** continue to work up to the last day of the term before final exams begin, even if you have already earned the minimum required hours. **Credits may be lost if students do not comply with this policy.**

### **LOG SHEET PROCEDURES**

The log sheets are the most important evidence the teacher has to substantiate the granting of a credit...**NO LOG SHEETS, NO CREDITS!** Because the log sheets affect the student's report card, they must be completed and submitted on time.

1. All log sheets must be completed on a computer (a demonstration will be provided during pre-placement activities). A copy of the log sheet file will be shared with all co-op students via their student e-mail account. This file contains a separate log sheet for each week of the semester. If you do not have a computer at home or at your placement to use for log sheets, then you will be expected to use the computers at school each week.
2. Every log sheet consists of two pages. On the first page, you will specify the hours that you worked each day for the week, along with a detailed summary of the activities you completed. The second page is a reflective journal where you have an opportunity to share thoughts and opinions pertaining to your placement. Each reflective journal contains a number of "starters" to help provide topics for your reflection. You should reflect on each of the starter sentences provided (not just one or two). Every week, **BOTH** pages must be submitted. Remember that some printers are capable of two-sided printing or you can manually flip the page to print on the back of page 1.
3. When completing your log sheet, please remember that you are only able to work between the hours of 7 am and 5 pm, Monday thru Friday. If your placement involves hours outside of this time frame, please discuss this with your co-op teacher. Approval from the Principal will likely be required. Never work outside of the hours stated on your Work Education Agreement, as these are the hours for which you have WSIB coverage.
4. Each of the log sheets has been dated for you. Please remember to type your name and the name of your workplace on each log sheet.

5. Before you complete your log sheet, take a few minutes to look at the rubric located near the top of the log sheet. This is the rubric your co-op teacher will use to mark your log sheet so make sure you have fulfilled all of the requirements (aim for level 4).
6. When your log sheet has been completed, you must present it to your placement supervisor so that he/she may confirm the details and add their signature. Be sure to leave sufficient time for this to take place. Log sheets that are incomplete or not signed by your placement supervisor will be returned to you for proper completion.
7. The properly and neatly completed log is to be turned in to your Co-op teacher no later than 3:00 pm on the Tuesday following the week of your log sheet.
8. **Forging of signatures or falsification of information on the log sheets will result in the student's removal from the Cooperative Education Program (please refer to the Log Sheet Punctuality & Integrity form).**
9. **Students who are more than two weeks behind in their log sheets will be temporarily removed from their placement until such time that all log sheets have been properly completed, signed & submitted.**

## **SKILLS AND WORK HABITS**

### **Initiative**

One of the most valuable skills you can develop on the job is that of *initiative*. That means using your judgement and intelligence to find tasks to do when your supervisor is busy. You do not stand around waiting for him/her to tell you what to do next. For example, duties during down time *might* include:

- Tidying up an area or sweeping the floor
- Reviewing training material pertaining to the work you do
- Asking another employee if you can help him/her
- Doing some routine tasks like filing, preparing a bulletin board or putting stock away.



Your supervisor will appreciate the fact that you do not need to be supervised and directed constantly.

### **Punctuality and Attendance**

Since all employers demand punctuality and good attendance habits, Co-op places strong emphasis on these work skills. Frequent absences or tardiness for work or school classes may lead to removal from the Co-op program. The Co-op teacher will carefully monitor your attendance and punctuality in all subjects taken (not just Co-op).

## Confidentiality

Confidentiality means keeping all information about a company's business and customers strictly within the company. Do not discuss such information with anyone outside the company. If you do share confidential matters, you could be dismissed from your placement immediately. This could result in removal from the Co-op program.

An important exception to this rule is if you feel that there is something improper happening at your placement (an illegal activity, you are experiencing harassment, etc.) In such cases, please speak to your Co-op teacher right away.

## Attitude

Having a positive attitude towards your work means always making the best of every situation and being willing to do what you are asked, even when you may not enjoy some aspects of the job. Employers rate enthusiasm, cheerfulness, and being responsible highly in an employee.

## Communication

Listen carefully when your supervisor gives you instructions. Ask questions if you do not understand something. Respond courteously and positively to all customers and co-workers.

## **UNSATISFACTORY WORK HABITS**

When it is obvious that a student is not putting forth a satisfactory effort in any part of the Co-op program OR his/her courses, the following procedure will occur. The purpose is to improve a student's attitude, encourage progress, and ensure that a credit is earned.

1. The Co-op teacher will meet with the student to discuss the problems observed by the teacher or the supervisor, and to attempt to develop viable solutions.
2. If the problem persists, or further problems arise, the teacher will again meet with the student to attempt to resolve the situation. Other people (supervisor, school administration, parents, counsellors, subject teachers, etc.) may be involved.
3. When necessary, a formal contract may be drawn up which will contain the steps to be taken by the student to improve his/her work habits. The contract will be signed by the student, parent, Co-op teacher and possibly school administration and/or your placement supervisor.
4. If the student violates the terms of the contract, he/she may be removed from the Co-op program.

5. Probationary contract: Occasionally, a student may be enrolled in Co-op on a probationary contract of 3 to 6 weeks. This may be necessary in a case where a student's work habits or attendance may be unsatisfactory and he/she is in Co-op on a trial basis. The student will be carefully monitored and he/she has to prove that they can succeed in Co-op.
6. Please note that for violations of a more serious nature, immediate dismissal & removal from the co-op program may occur.
7. Employers have the right to terminate your placement at any time.



### Cell Phones

Remember that you are at your placement to work – not to text, use social media, etc. We have had students fired from their placement for poor work habits, including inappropriate cell phone usage. Don't let this happen to you!



### Theft and/or Vandalism

Theft and vandalism are grounds for immediate termination of your co-op placement and removal from the Co-op program, with loss of credits and possible further action under the law.

## **ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION**

Students will be provided with numerous and varied opportunities to demonstrate the full extent of their achievement of the curriculum expectations. Progress will be monitored on an on-going basis using a variety of assessment tools, including employer evaluations, written work, and teacher-student communication.

Your final mark will be determined as follows:

Term mark	70%
Culminating Activity	30%

Your term mark will be determined as follows:

Employer evaluation	50%
Log sheets	20%
Pre-placement & integration assignments	20%
Professional conduct	10%

Professional conduct will be evaluated using the following rubric:

Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<b>Attendance &amp; Punctuality</b>				
Attendance and/or punctuality were significant issues during this placement.	Attendance and/or punctuality were poor.	Attendance and/or punctuality were fair, but there was room for improvement.	Attendance and/or punctuality were very good.	Attendance and/or punctuality were always exceptional.
<b>Submitting log sheets on time</b>				
Log sheets were frequently & excessively late. Student may have been temporarily pulled from their placement as a result.	Log sheets were regularly late. Student might have been temporarily pulled from their placement as a result.	Some log sheets were submitted on time, but many were not.	Most log sheets were submitted on time.	All log sheets were submitted on time.
<b>Informing RCI attendance secretary in advance of all absences</b>				
RCI was rarely (or never) informed of absences in advance.	RCI was occasionally informed of absences in advance but often was not.	RCI was informed in advance of some absences, but not others.	RCI was informed in advance of most absences.	RCI was informed in advance of all absences.
<b>Informing workplace supervisor in advance of all absences</b>				
The workplace supervisor was rarely (or never) informed of absences in advance.	The workplace supervisor was occasionally informed of absences in advance but often was not.	The workplace supervisor was informed in advance of some absences, but not others.	The workplace supervisor was informed in advance of most absences.	The workplace supervisor was informed in advance of all absences.
<b>Participation in integration days</b>				
The student did not participate in most (or any) integration day activities.	The student actively participated in few integration day activities.	The student actively participated in some integration day activities.	The student actively participated in most integration day activities.	The student actively participated in all integration day activities.
<b><u>Fulfillment of all terms of the co-op contract, even if the required number of hours were completed prior to the end of the semester</u></b>				
Significant portions of the co-op contract were violated. After the required number of hours were completed, performance declined dramatically.	Multiple terms of the contract were violated. The student achieved the required number of hours, but continued to attend every day until the end of the semester.	Some terms of the contract were met, but minor violations occurred. The student achieved the required number of hours, but continued to attend every day until the end of the semester.	Most terms of the contract were met. The student achieved the required number of hours, but continued to attend every day until the end of the semester.	All terms of the contract were met. The student achieved the required number of hours, but continued to attend every day until the end of the semester.

## **CULMINATING ACTIVITY**

### **Expectations**

“Each student must complete an independent study project that demonstrates an understanding of the relationship between his or her placement experience and the curriculum expectations of the related course”. (Cooperative Education and Other Forms of Experiential Learning, Page 20)

“Demonstrate the ability to assess related career information”.

“Demonstrate an understanding of labour market trends and of the nature of the workplace in the future”.

“Reinforce the job-skills theory acquired in the classroom and the skills, techniques, and principles learned at the placement”.

“Reflect and analyse their placement experiences”.

Cooperative Education and Other Forms of Experiential Learning

### **Assignment**

All Co-operative Education students will complete a culminating activity. You will find this assignment on the e-learning website under Content – Culminating Activity (check it out today if you like!) We will discuss this activity later on in the semester.

## **GRANTING OF CREDITS**

For every 110 hours that you work, you will earn 1 high school credit. Therefore, if you are a one period peer tutor here in the school, you will need to work 110 hours to get your credit. For a half day student, you will need to work 220 hours for your 2 credits and a full day coop student will need 440 hours in order to get his/her 4 credits.

Please note that Co-operative Education students may only earn ONE more credit than what they were originally scheduled to earn. For example, the maximum number of credits that a half-day Co-op student can earn is three (you will need 330 hours for 3 credits). The maximum number of credits that a full-day Co-op student can earn is five (you will need 550 hours for 5 credits).

**If you think that it is possible to complete enough hours to earn an extra credit, please discuss this with your co-op teacher early in the semester. An extra credit cannot be awarded unless it appears on your timetable!** Even if you do not have a spare, an extra co-op credit can still be added & will appear on your timetable during your lunch hour.

## **INTEGRATION DAYS**

Co-operative Education students will be required to attend one Integration Day each month throughout the semester. An integration day is when you will be expected to be at the school instead of your coop placement. This is an opportunity for us to gather as a group to hear a guest speaker, work on activities and reflect on your experiences at your placement. The dates of our integration days have not been finalized at this time.

We look forward to working with you this semester. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Respectfully,

Ms. Lester

Mr. Ferguson

Mr. Edwards