

<b>Policy Number:</b>	AOP 243	<b>Policy Title:</b>	Co-operative Education Programs
<b>Supersedes Existing Policy:</b>	N	<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Senior Vice President Academic
<b>Association Procedure:</b>	N	<b>Date Last Approved by the CET:</b>	Oct. 5, 2022

## Co-operative Education Programs

### 1. Introduction and Purpose

Loyalist College is committed to offering programs that meet student and employer needs. To this end, appropriate programs will include a co-operative education (co-op) component. This policy is intended to create and maintain consistency and quality in the design, development, and review of co-op programs with a goal to:

- › enhancing the service and support provided to students enrolled in a co-op program;
- › improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the co-operative education program at Loyalist College; and
- › enhancing Loyalist College's relationships with employers.

### 2. Application

This policy applies to Loyalist College academic programs offering co-operative education as an element and those where the addition of co-operative education is being considered.

### 3. Definitions

**Co-operative Education (Co-op):** A model and format of experiential learning that formally integrates a student's academic studies with work experience. Co-operative education programs comply with the requirements, standards and processes established by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU) and/or Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning Canada (CEWIL CANADA).

**Co-operative Education Student:** A student admitted and registered in a co-operative education program.

**Entrepreneurial Work Term:** Allows a student to leverage resources, space, mentorship and/or funding to engage in the early-stage development of business start-ups and/or to advance external ideas that

address real-world needs. Entrepreneurial work terms are subject to approval by faculty coordinator.

**International Student:** defined as non-Canadian students who do not have “permanent resident” status and have had to obtain the authorization of the Canadian government to enter Canada with the intention of pursuing an education. In other words, international students are those who have come to Canada expressly to pursue their education.<sup>1</sup>

#### **4. Policy**

The Senior Vice-President, Academic (SVPA), in consultation and collaboration with the Vice-President Student Life and Leadership and the College Executive Team, establishes, maintains, and implements standards and procedures that achieve an exemplary College-wide co-operative education program. Such standards and procedures comply with relevant government directives, and align with the College’s mission, vision, and mandate, and are reflective of College values.

##### **4.1 Co-op Fees**

Students registered in a co-operative education program pay co-operative education fees, receive placement support from a faculty representative of their academic program and employment support services from the Career Services & Work Integrated Learning unit (CS&WIL), including the opportunity to participate in employment preparation workshops and work terms.

##### **4.2 Co-op Credentials**

Students in a co-operative education program may, where available, choose to graduate with a non-co-op endorsed diploma, or may choose to participate in co-op work terms as per their standard program after completing the required academic semesters to graduate with a co-op endorsed diploma. In cases where the completion of a co-operative education program is mandatory, students who are unable to complete a co-operative work term due to medical or other serious issues will be required to complete an applied project.

Students must consult with their Program Coordinator to determine minimum academic requirements for co-op eligibility.

Note – Co-op as an option will only be offered to students in programs where it is feasible based on academic achievement and a labour market-driven availability of seats.

##### **4.3 Designation or Alteration of Co-operative Education Programs**

Introduction or removal of a co-operative education component within, or from, a new or existing program requires the approval of the Senior Vice-President, Academic (SVPA) and the Director, CS&WIL. Such program changes must follow Loyalist College policy AOP 212 Program of Study Development.

## Renewal and Change.

### 4.4 Co-op Work Terms - Patterns, Duration, and Scheduling

Co-operative education program term patterns, duration, and scheduling must conform to the standards established by the MCU and/or the CEWIL CANADA Accreditation Standards and Rationale and conform to the Loyalist College *Co-operative Education Programs Policy*.

### 4.5 Participation Requirements for Students

Students are required to meet co-op eligibility before proceeding from an academic semester to a co-operative education work term. Co-op eligibility is outlined in *Addendum A - Implementation Guideline: Student Eligibility*.

### 4.6 Participation Requirements for Employers

Employers of co-operative education students must be approved as per Section 6 of the Loyalist College policy AOP 212 Co-operative Education Programs.

### 4.7 Co-operative Education Evaluation and Permission to Graduate

- 4.7.1 The work of the student on a co-operative work term is evaluated by a faculty member.
- 4.7.2 Students who satisfactorily complete all academic requirements but, either by choice or by circumstance, do not complete the co-operative education work term component may apply to graduate without a co-op endorsement.
- 4.7.3 Students who complete both the academic requirements and the co-operative education work term component may apply to graduate with a co-op endorsement.

### 4.8 Review of Procedure

The Work-Integrated Learning Committee will review the Co-operative Education Programs Policy and associated procedures biannually and report findings to the Senior Vice-President, Academic (SVPA) and the Vice President, Student Life and Learning (VPSL&L).

## **5. Related Documents**

- AOP 212 Program of Study Development, Renewal and Change

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# **Appendix A - Implementation Guideline**

## **1. PURPOSE**

This guideline provides definition and direction for the development and delivery of co-operative education programs and services at Loyalist College.

## **2. WORK TERM CRITERIA**

2.1. A co-operative education program formally integrates a student's academic studies with work at experience at one or more employers.

2.2. A co-operative education program usually alternates study terms with terms of work experience.

2.3. The student's work term must be related to the student's program of study as determined by the following criteria:

- › 2.3.1. A work term conforms to the learning outcomes established for the program.
- › 2.3.2. Co-operative education students perform productive work (i.e., they do not merely observe).
- › 2.3.3. Co-operative education students receive remuneration for the work performed.
- › 2.3.4. The student's orientation, training and performance at the workplace are the employer's responsibly.
- › 2.3.5. The student's progress during the work term is monitored by an approved representative of the College. This representative will meet the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB) requirements for academic credentials.
- › 2.3.6. The duration of work term(s) shall be no less than 30% of the time spent in academic study. For programs of two years or less the total amount may be a minimum of 25%.
- › 2.3.7. For a co-operative education designation to be awarded, at least one paid full-time work term of no less than 12 consecutive weeks, or 420 hours, is required.
- › 2.3.8. For entrepreneurial-based work terms, students must adhere to additional requirements as outlined by this policy.
- › 2.3.9. In exceptional circumstances, and with the approval of their Department Head and in consultation with the Director, CS&WIL, students may request an alternative Work Integrated Learning (WIL) option.

## **3. STUDENT ELIGIBILITY**

3.1. Eligibility criteria for a student to enter and remain in a co-operative education program is established by the Senior Vice-President, Academic (SVPA) in consultation with the Director CS&WIL.

3.2. Eligible students are provided with a range of employment support services by the CS&WIL unit (see section 7.2).

3.3. Students who are ineligible for a co-op work term may transfer from the co-operative education stream and continue their education in the non-co-operative education stream, if offered. Alternatively, students may remain in their co-operative education program but will not be permitted to complete a co-

op work term until they meet the eligibility requirements (see section 5.8). Ineligible students continue to receive employment support services from the CS&WIL unit and their program.

3.4. Part-time students registered in a co-operative education program may participate in work terms only after successfully completing the necessary academic semesters prior to each scheduled work-term (see section 9.2).

3.5. Students must successfully complete the Ministry of Labour Workplace Health and Safety course prescribed by the CS&WIL unit before proceeding to their first work term.

3.6. Students must complete and sign a Release of Information form prescribed by the CS&WIL unit before proceeding to their first work term.

3.7. In the event a registered international student is unable to attain a co-operative education work permit, the student may apply to transfer into the non-co-operative education stream of their program, if offered.

- 3.7.1. Several Loyalist College Ontario College Graduate Certificate offerings, with mandatory co-op terms, are approved for international students only. Students who are unable to attain a co-operative education work permit are required to complete an applied project.

3.8. In order for students to be eligible to participate in a co-op work term they must meet the following criteria:

- 3.8.1. Students must be academically complete, or in-progress, of all required courses preceding the first work term.
  - 3.8.1.1. Students not academically complete, as defined in section 5.8.1, should speak to their Placement Coordinator to discuss a plan to complete their work terms once they become academically complete.
- 3.8.2. Students must be active in a co-operative education program, with an Academic Standing of Good, or Conditional. A student's status may not be Probationary or on Academic Suspension.
  - 3.8.2.1. Students who have not completed all required courses for their program of study, may be eligible to complete their co-op work terms at the discretion of the Senior Vice-President, Academic (SVPA) in consultation with the Director, CS&WIL.
    - 3.8.2.1.1. Students who have not completed all required courses for their program of study, may be eligible to complete their co-op work terms at the discretion of the Senior Vice-President, Academic (SVPA) in consultation with the Director, CS&WIL.
- 3.8.3. Students must satisfactorily complete the Co-operative Education Preparation Workshop series.
- 3.8.4. International students are required to submit a copy of their Student Co-op work permit to the International Centre which will be recorded in Banner. Program teams will be provided a list

confirming registration (after day ten) of this permit on file for students eligible to continue onto placement.

3.9. Students who meet the following eligibility requirements may have access to the vacancies posted by employers to Loyalist College's online co-operative education placement posting site maintained at their campus.

- › 3.9.1. Meet the eligibility criteria outlined in Section 3.8.
- › 3.9.2. Be an active student in a Co-operative Education Program, with a minimum overall program average of 60% for diploma programs and 65% for degree programs. This restriction conforms to the College's commitment to employers that only fully qualified students will be referred to vacancies posted by employers to the Loyalist College online co-operative education placement posting site.
- › 3.9.2.1. Students who meet co-op eligibility requirements (section 3.8) but do not meet the minimum academic requirements (section 3.9.2) may secure a work term through their own efforts. If successful, the student will inform the Placement Coordinator and the work term will be assessed to ensure it meets work term requirements prior to approval.
- › 3.9.3. International students must submit a copy of their Student Co-op Work Permit to the International Centre.
- › 3.9.4. Students must adhere to Student Roles and Responsibilities (see section 7.1).

#### **4. DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGNATION OF CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

4.1. Loyalist College co-operative education programs adhere to all relevant Loyalist College policies and procedures.

4.2. Loyalist College provides programs in which:

- › There is a co-operative education component; or there is a co-operative education stream and a non-co-operative education stream; or no co-operative education component is required.

4.3. Completion of the co-operative education work term(s) is mandatory for students who enrol in a post-secondary or post-graduate program with a co-operative education component.

4.4. A program that offers a co-operative education component may be initiated by the Senior Vice-President, Academic (SVPA), in accordance with Loyalist College's policy AOP 212 Program of Study Development, Renewal and Change Policy, and in consultation with the Director CS&WIL.

4.5. The proposal to add a co-operative education component will specify the learning outcomes expected from student participation in the co-operative education work term component and the program. This will enable the faculty member or departmental representative to make an informed assessment of potential work opportunities, to confirm student co-op eligibility and to complete a valid evaluation of the student's progress during that term, measured against the proposed learning outcomes.

4.6. Converting an existing non-co-operative education program into a co-operative education program applies only to first-year registrants in the converted program. Typically, approved curriculum changes will take effect for students entering into the first semester of a program and the existing curriculum will be followed for students already enrolled in the program

4.7. The process of removal of the co-operative education component from an existing co-operative education program or alteration of the program to another format for experiential learning credit, aligns with sections 3.1 to 3.3, and in accordance with *AOP 212 Program of Study Development, Renewal and Change Policy*.

## **5. CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM TERM PATTERNS AND DURATION**

The ratio of academic learning to workplace learning in a co-operative education program is set by the Senior Vice-President, Academic (SVPA) in consultation with the Director CS&WIL and follows MCU and/or CEWIL CANADA guidelines.

5.1. At a minimum, the time spent in work experience must be at least 30 % of the time spent in academic study. For programs of two years or less the total amount may be a minimum of 25%.

5.2. Students must complete a minimum of 12 consecutive weeks and 420 hours (14 consecutive weeks and 420 hours for degree programs) of full-time employment in each work term for it to be deemed a valid co-op work term.

5.3. All co-operative education programs will incorporate mandatory “Co-operative Education Preparation Workshops” which may be included within the program audit requirements to reach 30% of academic study, or 25% for program of two years or less.

- 5.3.1. The CS&WIL Unit will support workshop delivery where there is need.

5.4. No co-operative education program will require a student to begin the program with a work term.

5.5. A co-operative education program may end in a work term provided the work duties comply with the principle of being integrated with the academic elements of the program and are evaluated accordingly to ensure that the student has met the program learning outcomes/competencies. In exceptional circumstances, co-operative education work terms may be combined to create a double or triple work term provided the principle of integrating academic and work terms is maintained. This must be in consultation with the Senior Vice-President, Academic (SVPA) and the Director, CS&WIL.

- 5.5.1. A student who leaves a terminal work term to take on employment with a different employer will lose their co-op designation.

5.6. Co-operative education students normally work full-time during their work semester. The definition of full-time is determined by the employer and will normally conform to hours worked by the employer's regular employees. Normally, a student on a work term will not work less than 30 hours per week.

- 5.6.1. By exception, a work term of less than 30 hours per week may be approved if there are mitigating circumstances (e.g., the student has a documented disability, there are limited work term opportunities available, etc.) and the exception is deemed the only viable work term option available to the student. Regardless of the above, the period of time the student must work must always equal or surpass the required minimum of 420 hours.

5.7. Under exceptional circumstances, with the approval of the Senior Vice-President, Academic (SVPA) and the Director CS&WIL, a student may change employers during their co-operative education work term. The total hours worked must meet the required minimum of 420 hours.

## **6. EMPLOYER ELIGIBILITY**

6.1. Employers must provide work in compliance with the criteria described in section 2.3. Employers must provide a written description of the duties to the student, the faculty representative and to the CS&WIL unit. Only positions approved by the CS&WIL unit and in accordance with established program criteria will be eligible for co-operative education endorsement.

6.2. Employers must comply with all relevant legislation and regulations. They must provide the student with appropriate job site orientation, safety training and supervision.

6.3. Employers agree to allow a College representative access to the workplace, to the student and to the student's supervisor for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

6.4. Employers are encouraged to inform the College promptly if the work performance of the student does not meet agreed standards or if the student's duties, or working conditions change substantially from those described in the job description.

6.5. The employer will be required to participate in an evaluation of the co-op student's performance of the duties and objectives defined at the outset of the work term.

## **7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **7.1. Co-operative Education Students:**

- 7.1.1. Submit a completed Release of Information Form to faculty representative prior to their first work term.
- 7.1.2. Successfully complete the mandatory co-operative education employment preparation workshop including all of the following topics and assignments:



- › Workplace Health and Safety Certificate
  - › Résumé
  - › Cover Letter/Email
  - › Employer Research Assignment
  - › Jobsite Assignment
  - › Dress and Deportment
  - › Certifications (as required)
  - › Culminating Quiz
  - › Others as required
- › 7.1.3. Conduct an active job search for a co-operative education work opportunity to develop skills in this area, supported by the Loyalist College CS&WIL unit, or LCIT Careers and Co-op Office, Toronto campus. These units will facilitate and support this effort by identifying employment opportunities, posting positions, engaging with employers, etc. Placement opportunities will be validated by appropriate College staff.
  - › 7.1.4. Apply to work term opportunities posted to the online co-operative education placement posting site, if deemed eligible. Refer to section 5.9 for eligibility requirements.
  - › 7.1.5. Engage and respond to communication with their faculty representative and the CS&WIL unit for relevant co-operative education and employment information, including while on a co-operative education work term.
  - › 7.1.6. Attend all employment interviews to which they are invited. If the student cannot do so, they must inform the faculty representative a minimum of 24 hours before the interview. Accept or decline an offer of employment within 48 hours of it being made, noting that a verbal or written acceptance is binding and that a student cannot accept any subsequent offers of employment after committing to an initial co-op work term position. If the student accepts an offer of employment but fails to report to work, they may receive a failing grade for the work term and have their online co-operative education placement posting site access removed.
  - › 7.1.7. Have the option of declining two job offers at which point access to the online co-operative education placement posting site will be removed for the remainder of that term.
  - › 7.1.8. Confirm their employment status and provide the necessary documentation to the Placement Coordinator by November 1 for a Fall work term, March 1 for a Winter work term, and July 1 for a Summer work term.
  - › 7.1.9. Submit all reports as assigned by their faculty representative. 7.1.10. Submit a completed student evaluation for each work term to the Placement Coordinator by one week prior to grade due dates (note that these are not fixed dates, so students will be advised of the actual dates each semester). For planning purposes, students should expect to submit their evaluations in mid-December for a Fall work term, mid-April for a Winter work term, or mid-August for a Summer work term. Failure to do so may result in the work term being ineligible for credit. Note – the start dates for work term placements will align with the start dates for the relevant term.

## **7.2. Career Services & Work-Integrated Learning (CS&WIL) Unit:**

- › 7.2.1. Promotes Loyalist College, its programs, its students, and the benefits of co-operative education to employers, encouraging them to provide quality work term opportunities.
- › 7.2.2. Facilitates the recruitment process between employers and students.
- › 7.2.3. Educates, advises, and assists students to find a work term.
- › 7.2.4. Provides information and guidance about the labour market, résumé and cover letter preparation, job search techniques, interview preparation, job maintenance skills and other relevant topics.
- › 7.2.5. Maintains Loyalist College's Co-operative Education sites and the online job posting portal.
- › 7.2.6. Informs students about the program's co-operative education requirements and benefits.
- › 7.2.7. Provides general information about Freedom of Information, Protection of Privacy and Ministry of Labour regulations; health and safety requirements; (refers international students to the International Centre regarding visa requirements).
- › 7.2.8. Supports faculty representatives as they monitor students on work terms.
- › 7.2.9. Supports faculty representatives in communication with employers.
- › 7.2.10. Monitors student workplace evaluations.
- › 7.2.11. Collects and inputs to the appropriate College database all information relevant to the student's work term.
- › 7.2.12. Makes all reasonable efforts to resolve issues that may arise while the student is on a work term.

## **8. CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION WORK TERM PROTOCOL**

8.1. All Loyalist College policies, including the Student Code of Conduct, remain in place and apply during co-operative education work terms.

8.2. Co-operative education students do not have the same rights and obligations afforded to all workers under the Employment Standards Act.

8.3. If a student feels that their rights have been threatened or violated, they must immediately inform their employer, the faculty representative, and the CS&WIL unit. They should then take whatever steps the student deems necessary to ensure their personal safety which may include immediately exiting from the workplace. Refer to Loyalist College's policy *OHS 007 Workplace Violence Prevention Policy*.

8.4. Co-operative education students must comply with all legislation and regulations relevant to the employment sector in which they are employed, and with all legitimate procedures established by the employer. Co-operative education students employed with an employer where there is a collective agreement comply with the terms of that agreement relevant to their position.

8.5. Co-operative education students are responsible for all expenses related to their work term including transportation to employment interviews and to the workplace, the cost of acquiring necessary clothing and equipment, and all living costs incurred during the work term.

8.6. Students wanting to leave the work term before the end of the work term must consult with the faculty representative prior to leaving. Resignation without approval from the faculty may result in a failing grade for the term.

8.7. A co-operative education student terminated by an employer for any reason must immediately report the circumstances to their faculty representative. Lack of communication with the faculty representative within two working days of termination may result in a failing grade for the term.

## **9. CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION FEES**

9.1. A student in a co-operative education program is required to pay co-operative education fees. The fees are levied regardless of the student's level of participation in co-operative education services and work terms.

9.2. Part-time students pay fees equal to the number of academic levels of the program.

9.3. Students who wish to enter the co-operative education stream of a program must do so prior to the tenth day of class during the program's first academic level.

- › 9.3.1. Where there is an identified program pathway, students may transfer into the co- operative education stream prior to the tenth day of class during the last entrance term of the pathway, at the discretion of the Director CS&WIL.

9.4. Co-operative education students who do not meet co-op eligibility requirements are entitled to continue receiving job search support services from the College (see section 5.3).

9.4. Co-operative education students who do not meet co-op eligibility requirements are entitled to continue receiving job search support services from the College (see section 5.3). 9.5. Students who wish to withdraw from a co-operative education program, where a non-co-operative education program stream exists, must do so prior to the tenth day of class during the current academic term.

## **10. PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION (PLAR)**

10.1. Students with previous work experience related to their field of study may apply for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR), for the co-operative education work term and/or the Co- Operative Education Employment Preparation Course, in accordance with the College's policy *AOP 221 Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition, Transfer Credit, Articulation and Exemption*.

10.2. Current students and applicants to the College are limited as to when they may apply for PLAR for the items listed in 10.1. These time limits are listed in policy *AOP 221 Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition, Transfer Credit, Articulation and Exemption*.

10.3. PLAR for Co-operative Education work terms will align with the following:

- › 10.3.1. The work experience must be equivalent in quality and length to the co-operative education work experience.
- › 10.3.2. The work experience must reflect the learning outcomes related to the co-operative education work term and must be validated as relevant by the faculty representative.
- › 10.3.3. Secondary school co-operative education work terms are not considered for PLAR.
- › 10.3.4. If the PLAR request is granted, the transcript will show a “P”, indicating Pass.

10.4. PLAR candidates should contact the faculty representative for additional details.

## **11. CO-OPERATIVE WORK TERM EVALUATION AND PERMISSION TO GRADUATE**

11.1. The co-operative education work term is evaluated by the faculty representative, who shall incorporate employer input in that evaluation.

11.2. The faculty representative monitors and evaluates the student's progress during the work term through such means as site monitoring, student and employer interviews, an employer's evaluation, and assignments that may have been given to the student.

11.3. The evaluation is an assessment of the student's success in achieving the learning outcomes established by the Program.

11.4. Students who complete both the academic and the co-operative education requirements will graduate with a co-operative education-endorsed credential.

11.5. Students who satisfactorily complete all academic requirements but, either by choice or by circumstance, do not complete the required co-operative education work terms may graduate with a non-co-operative education endorsed credential. Degree program students must complete their co-operative education work term to be eligible for graduation.

11.6. Students enrolled in a mandatory co-op program, who are unable to participate in a co-op work term, may be eligible to complete an applied project as an alternative.

## **Addendum: Acronyms and Terminology**

- › CET – College Executive Team
- › CEWIL – Co-operative Education and Work Integrated Learning Canada

- › CS&WIL – Career Services & Work-Integrated Learning
- › MCU – Ministry of Colleges and Universities
- › PEQAB – Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board
- › PLAR – Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition
- › SVPA –Senior Vice-President Academic
- › VPSL&L – Vice-President Student Life and Leadership (Interim)