

CO-OP EMPLOYER GUIDE

Career Development Centre

ASPER 

SCHOOL OF
BUSINESS



University
of Manitoba

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Getting started	3
What is co-op?	3
Benefits of co-op	3
Five ways co-op can support your business objectives	4
Before you hire a co-op student	4
From what program should I hire?	5
Hiring a co-op student	7
Posting your job	7
Recruitment Periods	8
Interviews	9
The Co-op term	10
Week one	10
During	10
Last month	11
After co-op	11
Responsibilities	12
Responsibilities of the employer	12
Responsibilities of the co-op student	13
Responsibilities of the co-op office	13
Attracting applicants	14
Tips on creating your job posting	14
Requirements and benefits	14
Application and hiring deadlines	15
Advice on mentorship	15
Employer engagement	16
Contact us	16

Getting started

What is Asper Co-op?

The Asper Co-op Programs (BComm and Master's) are your connection to top talent to support your business needs year-round. Co-op students are bright and highly motivated. Whether you need a driven BComm student or an experienced Master's student, the Asper School of Business has a student to meet your organization's needs. Participating in the Co-op Program can bring fresh ideas into your workplace, increase your organization's brand recognition, and strengthen your on-campus reputation.

Co-op is a structured form of work integrated learning that creates meaningful connections between students, employer partners and the University. Our co-op terms have specific requirements:

- The student must be engaged in productive degree-appropriate work for which they receive remuneration.
- The student's performance in the workplace is supervised and evaluated by their employer.
- The work term lasts for a minimum of 12 weeks and/or 480 hours.

Within this model, the employer becomes a co-educator. Co-op is intentionally designed to ensure that the skills the student learns are relevant to today's skills-based economy.

Benefits of hiring an Asper co-op student

- Students bring fresh perspectives and enthusiasm to the workplace.
- Co-op programs offer access to diversely talented and highly motivated students.
- Co-op students can work on a wide range of assignments, from specific projects to general support.
- Recruit once, hire twice. Providing a student with a co-op term allows you to assess the student's capabilities and fit with your organization. Many co-op students go on to work full-time for previous employers, thereby reducing recruiting costs.
- As an employer partner, you are creating resilient students with the mix of skills needed to support innovation and productivity in Canada's skills-based economy.

Top five ways co-op can support your business objectives

1. Fill short-term staffing needs
2. Leverage day-to-day business operations support
3. Increase resource capacity during peak business times
4. Access resource support for new or existing projects
5. Augment your recruitment strategy by building your talent pipeline

Before you hire a co-op student

Before you decide to hire a co-op student, we suggest the following:

1. Assess your business goals

- Review any skills gaps in your workplace or in upcoming projects
- Pinpoint what work needs to be done
- Identify the role/project where you could benefit from hiring a student
- Assess what type of student would best meet your needs

2. Secure your budget

- Do you have the budget to hire a co-op student for 480 hours?
- Determine if there are any funding/tax credits available to support student hiring (the Co-op Office can assist with this)

3. Timelines

- Check the co-op website or consult with the Co-op Coordinators
- Depending on type of student you recruit, understand the recruitment timelines and the student's availability
- Curate your job /post position/ interview/hire
- Apply for eligible funding

4. Mentorship and supervision

- This is a key component of co-op
- Assign a mentor or supervisor to support the student during the co-op term
- Be prepared to host a mid-term evaluation and provide job performance feedback to the student to enhance the learning process and their professional development

“[My employer] is a great company that really prioritizes culture, exhibits transparency, and thrives through collaboration. I was able to contribute to these values by participating on multiple committees during my work term.”

From what program should I hire?

Asper offers co-op programs at the Bachelor of Commerce and Master's level: MBA, Master of Finance (MFin) and Master of Supply Chain Management & Logistics (MSCM).

A big question is which program should I recruit from?

The Co-op Team can work with you to identify which program's students will best meet your business objectives and organization's needs.

- BComm students study a broad business curriculum that allows them to leverage their academic knowledge across a wide range of business functions.
- BComm students' alternate academic study with three co-op work terms, beginning after their first co-op term after their second year of university. While in the co-op program, BComm students will acquire 12 months of professional work experience, some with 3 different employers. Most BComm co-op students will graduate 8-12 months after completion of their three co-op terms.
- Master's students have in-depth subject matter expertise in their area of concentration, are life-long learners, and many have existing professional work experience.
- Master's students have one work term, usually at the end of their master's degree, allowing them to apply their full degree knowledge to the workplace and positioning them for immediate hire.

When do I want a BComm student vs. an MBA, MSCM or MFin student?

BCOMM	MBA	MFIN	MSCM
Academic course work covering broad business-related topics/functions	Able to lead or collaborate on projects across a broad range of business-related functions at a strategic level. In-depth academic, technical, operational and management skills.	Specialized degree covering finance topics. Strong analytical, qualitative, and quantitative skills, advanced Excel and technical skills, financial modelling, forecasting and data manipulation and interpretation.	Specialized degree focused on supply chain, logistics, purchasing, negotiations, operations, and the circular economy. Strong planning and operations knowledge, project management skills.
Participate in co-op between years 3-4 in undergraduate degree.	Previous UG degree plus 2 years professional work experience. Participate in co-op at end of master's degree.	Previous UG degree. Participate in co-op at end of specialized master's degree.	Previous UG degree. Participate in co-op at end of specialized master's degree.
Competitive admission: strong GPA, student engagement, communication, and motivation to secure career related experience	Strong GPA and GMAT scores: competitive admission	Strong GPA and GMAT scores: competitive admission	Strong GPA and GMAT scores: competitive admission
Focused on career exploration/professional skills development through entry level work related to a variety of business focused tasks and industries.	May be more specialized in their area of concentration with professional work experience in a variety of fields and industries.	More specialized in their area of expertise. May have professional work experience in a variety of fields and industries.	More specialized in their area of expertise. May have professional work experience in a variety of fields and industries.
Positions should involve integrating academic theory to real world scenarios experienced on the job. Positions should offer meaningful and relevant work experience related to the student's courses and career goals.	Positions should offer challenging higher-level strategic and operational responsibilities related to enhancing management capabilities. Research and analytical positions designed to utilize the student's academic skills to solve real life issues should align with student's concentration and career goals.	Positions should offer advanced finance focused work enabling student to apply their technical, financial and data analysis skills to financial opportunities or challenges.	Positions that require advanced project management, negotiations, supply chain, logistics, operations management, or operations planning at an advanced level.
Perfect for organizations looking to grow and develop new business talent across a broad range of functions.	Perfect for organizations looking to hire someone who can "hit the ground running", and focus more on strategic, decision making or research within your business.	Perfect for organizations looking to expand their finance capabilities through data analytics, financial forecasting and projections, valuations, modelling, and strong technical competencies.	Perfect for organizations looking to expand their supply chain, logistics and operations, negotiations capacity and vendor/supplier relationships. Strong research, technical and project management skills.
Available year round, for 4-month or 8-month work terms: Summer/Fall/Winter	Available year round, for 4-month work terms: Summer/Fall/Winter	Available year round, for 4-month work terms: Fall	Available year round, for 4-month work terms: Summer 2023

Hiring a co-op student

Posting your job

To advertise a co-op position, register on our on-line Career Portal and build your company profile

umanitoba.ca/asper/information-employers

In your job posting please include:

- Job posting close date (we recommend 1-2 weeks, which can be extended if needed).
- Method of application (apply online through the Asper Career Portal or a company website, receive applications on a rolling basis or on a set date after the deadline).
- For BComm Co-op: rank/match method of recruitment and on-campus interview scheduling requires applications via the Career Portal to facilitate the process.
- Required application documents (resume, cover letter, transcript).
- Start and end date of position, hours per week.
- Location of position.

Optimal dates for recruitment for each program follow below.

If you require further instructions for posting your job, please call **204-474-8521** or email aspercoop@umanitoba.ca

“I had the opportunity to take the lead on a major project, which has become one of the most rewarding experiences of my Co-op so far.”

Recruitment Periods

BComm students

Recruitment periods for BComm Co-op happens three times per year within a structured timeline. There is a schedule for job postings, interviews and job offers.

	Summer work term	Fall work term	Winter work term
Post job	February	June	October
Interviews	March	July	November
Start	May	September	January

Master's students

Master's Co-op uses continuous placement therefore employers can post positions anytime within the semester preceding their desired start for a co-op work term. For example, if you would like a student for a summer co-op term, you can post anytime from January to April. Please note, posting early provides you with access to the highest number of applicants as students are continually accepting offers throughout the semester.

The following tables are suggested timelines.

Master of Business Administration (MBA)

	Summer work term	Fall work term	Winter work term
Post job	February	June	October
Interviews	March	July	November
Start	May	September	January

Master of Supply Chain Management and Logistics (MSCM)

	Summer work term
Post job	February
Interviews	March
Start	May

Master of Finance (MFin)

	Fall work term
Post job	June
Interviews	July
Start	September

Interviews

BComm Students

Interviews for shortlisted BComm students are facilitated by the Co-op Office and generally take place within a two-week period on campus. If you wish to interview in-person on campus, simply send us the list of students you wish to interview along with your preferred interview times, and we will make arrangements with the students on your behalf. If you are interviewing virtually, please contact the student directly and provide the Co-op Office with a list of candidates being interviewed.

BComm Co-op: Employer and student placements use the rank/match method. This method is used to manage a recruitment period involving many students and employers in a short timeframe. This method supports the greatest number of matches for both students and employers.

What is rank/match?

Rank/match is a matching algorithm that uses both the employer's and the student's preferences to place individuals into positions, working on the principle of lowest sum wins. The Co-op Office notifies employers and students of successful matches.

Master's Students

All three Master's Co-op Programs use continuous placement in which employers post co-op jobs when they wish, invite students for interviews, and make offers directly to desired students.

Job offers can be presented in writing directly to the student. Employers are asked to give students 48 hours to accept or decline the offer. It is important to note that many of our students are applying for multiple positions during the same time. Delays in formally extending an offer to a student can result in your chosen candidate being no longer available.

Employers and students are asked to inform the Co-op Office of accepted positions and provide the Co-op Office with a formal letter of offer.

“I felt that everyone in the organization really invested in me, through various one on one training, as well as by enrolling me in a number of professional development courses related to my work.”

The co-op term

Week one

As part of the program, students are required to outline several Learning Objectives during their work term. During the first 2 – 3 weeks, students will request a meeting with the supervisor to review their Learning Objectives as well as their assigned tasks and duties. We encourage you to integrate your Co-op student into your team and develop a good rapport with them as soon as possible. This will help the student transition into your organization and will enhance the co-op experience for both you and the student.

During

It is recommended that you meet periodically with your Co-op student to discuss work progress, new interests and problems or concerns that may have arisen. A formal mid-term meeting, which may be on site or held virtually, will be scheduled near the end of the second month from the start of the co-op work term.

Both the Co-op Office and your student will be responsible for scheduling this meeting. Your student will ask for your availability for this meeting. The mid-term meeting consists of a group meeting with the Co-op Coordinator, the student and the supervisor, followed by an individual meeting with the student. If desired the supervisor may request to meet with the Co-op Coordinator privately, if needed.

The visit typically takes 30-45 minutes to complete. During the mid-term meeting, we will engage in a discussion around your student's learning, progress, performance, and experience. As well, the meeting will provide an opportunity to discuss the student's Learning Objectives and Work Term Report which the student will submit to the Co-op Office before the end of the work term. The visit from the Co-op Coordinator can also address any concerns or problems that have arisen.

United Nations 17 Sustainability Goals and Asper Co-op

New to the Asper Co-op Programs and in alignment with the Asper School of Business' strategic initiatives is a commitment to enhance our students' understanding of the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which aim to end poverty, improve health and education, reduce inequality, and encourage economic growth while tackling climate change by 2030.

These goals are of keen importance to many of our students and are now being incorporated into the Asper Co-operative Education curriculum. Students are asked to learn about the SDGs, assess their ability to make a positive impact at the individual level in their co-op work term, and possibly act while on a co-op work term.

We encourage you to learn more about the UN's SDG's and to discuss with your student how your organization is embracing policies/practices, to implement positive change.

Last month

During the beginning of the last month, you should discuss the progress of the Work Term Report with your student. In some cases, you will be asked to sign off on the report to ensure no confidential information is included. We ask employers to complete an evaluation of your student's performance during the work term. You will receive an email from the Co-op Office with instructions on how to complete the evaluation online along with the deadline for submission. Students also submit an evaluation of their work term experience. It is recommended that you share your evaluations with one another.

If pleased with the student's performance, you may also wish to discuss the student's future with your organization. Co-op students often return to previous employers for another co-op term, in a part time capacity or for a full-time opportunity post graduation.

After co-op

Evaluate ROI

After the co-op term is over, you may want to reflect on your return on investment (ROI) and the process. Questions you may want to ask include:

- Were you well supported through the process by the Co-op Office?
- Did the student possess the skills, attitude, and initiative to offer value?
- Did your job posting reflect what you truly needed or had the student do? Does it need to be adapted?
- Are there other areas within your organization that could benefit from co-op students?
- Has the experience been rewarding for your team involved?

For organizations, developing a plan to integrate co-op students into your workplace can allow you to access motivated business students to contribute to your business objectives while creating a robust talent pipeline. Many employers set up consistent hiring every semester to ensure continual inflow of student talent which leads to improved and lower cost hiring for permanent positions within the organization. Creating work integrated opportunities in your organization also allows you to contribute to the development of resilient employees with the balance of capabilities needed today, and in the future, for Canada's skills-based economy. As an employer you are contributing to the education and professional development of Canada's future workers.

Responsibilities

Co-op employer

- Provide full-time, relevant work that allows students to expand their learning.
- Offer work terms that are a minimum of 12 weeks or 480 hours in total.
- Offer competitive wages. For annual average salaries for each program please see the Asper Co-op website.
- Provide the co-op office with an accurate job description.
- Provide a written letter of offer to the student outlining offer details.
- After accepted, provide a copy of the letter of offer to the Co-op Office.
- Discuss issues of confidentiality with the student. May require the signing of a non-disclosure agreement (NDA).
- Provide an orientation to the workplace, a workspace, and the equipment necessary to carry out the duties of the job.
- Foster a positive learning environment for the student.
- Meet with the student to assist in developing learning objectives related to business objectives, and potentially assist student in reflecting on experience in the end of work term report.
- Provide a supervisor responsible for overseeing the student's work, discussing expectations, and providing regular feedback to the student.
- Participate in the co-op mid-term meeting to discuss the student's performance, progress, and experience.
- Complete the Employer Evaluation of Co-op Student form at the end of the work term and discuss it with the student.
- Communicate any potential difficulties in completing work terms with the student and the Co-op Office.

“I got a chance to work on projects that exposed me to a variety of different industries.”

Co-op student

- Follow all employer policies and procedures.
- Honour all contractual agreements and obligations to the employer, including confidentiality. May require the signing of a non-disclosure agreement (NDA).
- Report to work punctually and complete assigned duties to the best of their abilities
- Accept and act on constructive feedback and suggestions from their supervisor and/or Co-op Coordinator.
- Communicate any potential difficulties in completing a co-op work term with the employer and the Co-op Office.
- For international students, ensure work permits are valid and available prior to applying for co-op jobs.
- Submit Learning Objectives and Work Term Reports to the Co-op Office by the deadline
- Complete the final evaluation of the co-op term.

Co-op office

- Ensure the integrity and administration of the Co-op Program.
- Communicate with students and employers and help resolve any problems.
- Monitor the student's progress and act as a resource to students and employers throughout the work term.
- Review the employer final evaluations of the student and the student's evaluation of the work term.
- Establish guidelines for students to follow, providing coaching and advice to students to ensure application packages (cover letter, resume, and transcripts) are accurate, professional, and appropriate to the best of our ability.
- Facilitate the selection process in a fair and ethical manner in compliance with all provincial and federal legislation.
- Evaluate the student's performance during the mid-term meeting.
- Ensure that international students have valid work permits prior to accepting a co-op job.
- Build relationships within the business community to foster development of the Co-op Program.

Attracting applicants

Tips on creating a job posting

- Create a clear, descriptive, and engaging job title such as “Marketing Coordinator” or “Accounting Assistant”, rather than simply “Co-op Student” or “Summer Student”.
- If you have one, attach a customized job posting as a Word or PDF document on the Career Portal.

Job description

- Include information that briefly describes the company and workplace culture.
- Be detailed about the position duties. What does a typical day look like? What are the specific tasks and projects? If you’re not sure what the job involves, a potential candidate won’t be either!
- Clearly indicate the location, particularly if you have multiple offices, and if it is a possibility that the term can be remote or hybrid.
- Include any relevant health-related safety precautions and procedure.

Overall

- Ensure your job posting is pleasant to read overall and avoid jargon. If you get bored reading it, chances are, students will too!
- Try to exhibit your company culture in the writing style of your job posting.
- Ensure your posting is an accurate reflection of what the student will be doing.

The requirements

- Keep it meaningful and concise. Include three to five key skills and competencies the ideal candidate should possess. Focus on the knowledge, experience, and skills a student must have.
- Be clear about what skills and experience a student can expect to gain as well.

The benefits

- Include perks such as health and wellness plans, flex time, and professional development opportunities.
- Discuss advancement opportunities – is there potential for long-term employment? Post grad or part-time?

Application and hiring deadlines

- If you choose a longer-term deadline as a “rolling deadline”, indicate that you intend to review applications and interview suitable candidates as they come in, and the posting will be removed once a suitable candidate is selected.
- If you need to make a hiring decision soon, then select a shorter deadline, such as one or two weeks, to create a sense of urgency.
- If you are participating in rank/match (BComm Co-op), comply to all scheduled deadlines.

Advice on mentorship

Supervising a new student employee

- Arrange a welcome orientation and a tour. Introduce your new employee to their new colleagues. Ensure that anything a new employee needs (computer, phone, tools, workspace, etc.) is set up in advance.
- Tailor your orientation process to the student’s level of experience. This could include providing information about workplace behaviour and safety, information about etiquette, and expectations surrounding confidentiality.
- Allow for a learning curve. This may be their first experience in a professional environment.
- Establish check-ins on a regular basis. Assign a person within the organization to be a coach or mentor. This does not necessarily have to be the supervisor.
- Provide feedback regularly at scheduled review sessions. Be open and flexible to adjust the student’s responsibilities as needed.
- Provide the student with relevant materials that will help them in their new role, like information about past projects, examples, and templates.
- Invite students to connect with their colleagues or other professional colleagues that may help them explore their path.
- Facilitate meetings.
- Invite students to staff social activities.
- Help your employee to learn about the company’s culture. Share success stories and stories of challenges that have been overcome.

Engagement

Share your experience

The success of co-op programs depends on the engagement of employers. If you've been satisfied with your experience, we'd love to hear from you again. Many employers use co-op students for peak seasons, special projects or on a continual basis as part of their staffing strategy.

Referrals about the Asper Co-op Program are greatly appreciated. If you've had a good experience, please let your network of colleagues and other units in your organization know, so we can continue to grow our programs. With your permission, we would love to publish a testimonial of your experience on our website or marketing channels.

Stay in touch

The Asper School offers many ways for employers to engage with students, whether as a speaker in a class, as a judge or coach for case competitions, as a guest at conferences or events, or as an interviewer for practice interviews – your insights and expertise are greatly appreciated. Please contact us to find ways to become involved in our many programs.

Contact us

aspercoop@umanitoba.ca

204-474-8521

Career Development Centre

Asper School of Business, University of Manitoba
Room 254, Drake Centre
181 Freedman Crescent
Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada R3T 5V4

