

# Work Term Report Guidelines

There are several types of work term reports available, and students are encouraged to try different formats.

- 1) A General Report is an overview of your workplace and work term experience.
- 2) A Document Report may be written if your Co-op employer required that you complete a document, manual, or report as part of your job duties. If you choose to do a Document Report you must submit a Co-op Title Page, Introduction, Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations.
- 3) A Technical Report is written on one specific aspect of your work term. This report could be focused on a specific technology, project or other aspect of your work term. This report must also include a Co-op Title Page, Introduction, Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations.
- 4) A Diary Report describes one week on your work term. This report must also include a Co-op Title Page, Introduction, Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations.
- 5) An Oral Presentation (live, video or audio) is made to an audience. You would choose a main theme and 4-6 key points that relate to the main theme.
- 6) A Career Portfolio is an opportunity for you to showcase your accomplishments in preparation for an effective graduate work search.
- 7) A POSTER-Discuss this option with your Co-op Coordinator for process and requirements.
- 8) Other Options may be possible with the approval of your Co-op Coordinator.

## **ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION DEADLINES**

- A final assignment is required at the completion of every 4-month work term.
- Due dates will be sent to you by your Co-op Coordinator.
- It is your responsibility to understand all assignment due dates and submit your assignments on time.

## *Work Term Reports/Presentations*

### **Purpose of the Co-op Ed Work Term Report or Presentation**

For each work term, students in Co-op Ed programs are normally required to provide a report or presentation for evaluation and grading. The preparation of work reports is expected to benefit Co-op students in a variety of ways, including:

1. Facilitating an understanding of the employer's organization and work environment.
2. Enhancing the student's integration of practical experience and theoretical concepts.
3. Aid in the development of the student's communication skills.
4. Provide an opportunity for an employer to recognize research, analytical, and written/oral communication skills in a co-op student.
5. Assist in the development of learning objectives for subsequent work terms.

### **Who Will Read or Listen to The Report?**

Because information which is redundant to one person might be essential to another, students should know their audience. Reports should communicate ideas effectively to employers, who will benefit from its contents, and those responsible for the report's evaluation.

### **How to Prepare the Report or Presentation**

Criteria to be considered:

1. Clarity
2. Conciseness
3. Completeness
4. Accuracy
5. Objectivity

A proper plan which assures the arguments/discussions are developed in an orderly and rational fashion aids greatly in achieving these criteria. In fact, the preparation of an outline before starting is recommended to indicate what the essential elements of the topic are and to avoid including great amounts of extraneous material which may contribute to detail, at the expense of obscuring ideas.

Much more important than length is conciseness, clarity and completeness. In other words, use as much space as required to cover the topic adequately, but no more. Care in preparing prompting key words and phrases will help make the development of ideas orderly and clear.

Many ideas are far better explained using graphs, diagrams or photographs. Clearly identify where you are going to show a diagram, table, photograph, etc., and credit the sources. One should bear in mind, however, that in any illustration the main ideas to communicate must be clearly discernable. Use of main topics and sub-topics aid in indicating divisions of the material and assist the development of ideas in a logical manner. Major sub-headings should be listed and indented into levels of importance consistently throughout. Simply photocopying pages from tests or manuals is not satisfactory. Reports and presentations must be professional, i.e. neat, adequately documented, with correct spelling and grammar. Errors are not acceptable at the professional level.

### **Additional Tips**

Most reports go through two or three drafts before the final version is issued. Students must be encouraged to review and revise the first draft as many times as required to produce a satisfactory proofread quality.

In addition to referring to published material relative to the employer (in either internal or external publications), it will likely be necessary to ask questions of selected individuals within the organization. Although in most instances, questions will be answered, there may be the odd case in which resistance is experienced. To avoid such a situation, students should:

1. choose the resource people carefully.
2. be well prepared before asking their questions.
3. phrase your questions so they are as straight-forward as possible.

In some cases, Co-op employers may be uneasy having what they consider to be "confidential information" appear in a student's work report. Students should discuss this with the employer early in the work term when planning the outline. To ensure that no confidential information is contained in the report, arrangements can be made for the employer to review the report prior to submission. If the employer feels certain information is confidential, modifications should be considered or perhaps policy is in place to have the report graded by the employer.

### **Report and Presentation Components**

A formal written report may contain the following components. Students should be provided with specific guidelines for each component.

Report Outline, Cover letter, Front cover, Title page, Executive Summary, Table of Contents, Introduction, Discussion, Conclusions, Recommendations, Glossary, References or Bibliography, Appendix, Back cover.

### **The formal Presentation may contain the following.**

Presentation Outline, Cover letter, Front & back cover, Title page, Executive Summary, Table of Contents, \*Speaker Notes, Closing.

### **\*The following Speakers Notes topics may be addressed:**

Description of the Companies Employed by:

- State job title and full name of company.
- Brief history including products, activities or services provided.
- Size in terms of personnel, departments, etc.
- New technologies.
- "Corporate culture".

### **Description of the Departments, Areas or Units You Worked in:**

- Department organization and relation to the overall organization.
- Major activities of the department considering employees and work flow.

### **Description of Your Responsibilities:**

- Summary of responsibilities and relationship to activities of the overall department.
- Contribution to the productivity of the department.

### **Personal Awareness:**

- What was the main learning objective for the work term? Has it been met?
- What effect has the work term had on career objectives?
- What motivators have been discovered?
- What has been identified as specific job needs (e.g., working alone, teamwork)?
- How well did the Co-op Ed/Academic program prepare students for work experience?