



# WORK LEARN

## STUDENT RESOURCE GUIDE

### **Congratulations on getting a Work Learn position!**

This guide is meant to help support you in your role with tips on wellbeing, working remotely, working with your supervisor, and more.

The Work Learn program strives to facilitate experiential learning opportunities that provide students with professional mentorship, guidance, support, and supervision from UBC faculty, staff, and/or community partners. Your Work Learn position has been designed to:

- Enhance your career learning,
- Develop transferable and professional skills,
- Build and expand your professional and peer networks,
- Apply disciplinary and academic knowledge,
- Provide you with an opportunity to contribute to UBC's broader campus community, and
- Ensure you receive exceptional supervision from a UBC faculty or staff member.



## Know Your Rights as a Student Employee

As a Work Learn student, you are considered a UBC employee and are entitled to specific rights. You should be familiar with the **Employment Standards of British Columbia**, the employment law that covers all employees in the province. These standards set specific guidelines that inform:

- **Scheduling:** an employee who reports for work must be paid for at least two hours
- **Breaks:** a 30-minute unpaid meal break must be provided when an employee works more than five hours in a row,
- **Holiday Pay:** Find out if you qualify for Stat holiday pay:
- **Right to refuse unsafe work:** If you feel uncomfortable performing a task that you have not been adequately trained to do, it is your right to ask to be trained first, or to review whether the task is safe to do. All employees in British Columbia have the right to refuse unsafe work.
- For more information, visit the **Employment Standards Guidelines**

## Questions?

Knowing who to go to for help navigating workplace issues or concerns can be tricky. The important thing to remember is that there are people who can help you:

- If you are unsure about any of the procedures or policies (i.e. safety, sick time, etc.) of your workplace, seek clarification from your supervisor(s) as soon as possible. Where possible, ask for written documentation of important policies.
- If you have any questions or concerns during your work term, please contact **work.learn@ubc.ca**.
- You can also bring any questions or concerns about your employment to your assigned Human Resource Advisor to your unit or department – you can find your advisor here: <https://www.hr.ubc.ca/administrators/contact/>

## Accepting the Position

You should receive a formal offer letter/email (**sample offer letter**). If you don't receive one, ask your supervisor or hiring manager to provide one. This letter sets out clear expectations for responsibilities, wage, duration, and other important criteria of your Work Learn position. Prior to your first day, make sure you know when your scheduled shifts are, where to show up (in-person or online), and what is expected of you on your first day!

## Your First Day/Week

Your first day and week will involve participating in activities that are part of an orientation and onboarding process. What's the difference? Orientation is usually considered to be your first one-two days on the job learning the written rules and expectations of a job, while onboarding is an ongoing process where you are applying learning on the job and typically lasts for a couple of weeks. Here are some questions that you may want to reflect on and talk about with your supervisor in the first couple of weeks of your position:

- What is your preferred way of learning? Communicating?
- How do you like to be supported?
- How do you like to receive feedback?
- How do you like to be recognized? What's the difference?
- Have a look at the **Work Learn getting to know you worksheet** for more reflective questions.

## Setting Goals

It is important to consider your personal and/or professional goals in your workplace experience. SMART goals are like a map for where you want to go. This method of goal-setting helps you to challenge yourself, gives you a sense of accomplishment, as well as accountability and purpose in your Work Learn position. When you measure your progress, you begin to see what works for you and what doesn't, and when you need changes to help you stay on track. Creating SMART goals and sharing them with your supervisor helps to maximize what you will get out of this experience.

- Check out this worksheet to help you create SMART goals: **Work Learn goal setting worksheet**



Specific

- State what will be done
- Use action words



Measurable

- Provide a way to evaluate
- Use metrics or data targets



Achievable

- Within scope
- Possible to accomplish



Relevant

- Makes sense within job function
- Improves something



Time-bound

- State when it will be done
- Be specific on date or timeframe

## Wellbeing in the Workplace

Here are some helpful resources and services you can access to help you:

- Find out about the full range of **services provided by Counselling Services**
- If you are concerned about the wellbeing of another student in your workplace, visit **students.ubc.ca**.
- If you are working remotely, it can be especially difficult to feel connected. Schedule social check ins and activities to do with friends, family, and colleagues. For more tips, visit **UBC HR's guide to Wellbeing and Mental Health**

## Workplace Safety

As a new UBC student employee, completion of a number of online modules are mandatory to meet WorkSafe BC and UBC requirements for safe workplaces. If you are working on campus or in a physical workspace other than home environment, you will also need to complete the **Covid-19 module**. Supervisors are responsible for arranging this training. Depending on your role, there may be additional departmental/unit safety training and policies that you might need.

The following online modules must be completed prior to beginning a work term:

- **New Worker Safety Orientation**
- **Preventing and Addressing Workplace Bullying and Harassment Training**
- **Workplace Violence Prevention Training**
- **Privacy & Information Security Fundamentals Training**

Please be sure to successfully complete each of these modules, download the certificate of completion, and send it along to your supervisor as soon as possible.



## Working Remotely

Due to the continually evolving COVID-19 pandemic, many Work Learn positions have transitioned to remote (or a combination of remote and on-site) work environments. This brings unique considerations and accommodations to how and where work gets done.

Remember that everyone is navigating these circumstances, so be patient with yourself and others. It can also be challenging to adjust to these new work environments when we don't get to talk in person, so be sure to discuss with your supervisor (and peers) how you can stay engaged with each other and build community and team culture.

Some questions to ask yourself and talk over with your supervisor might be:

- What channels of communication should I use and when (ex. WhatsApp, Slack, text, email)?
- How often will we check in and what should I prepare for our check-ins?
- How do I document and communicate progress on projects and timelines?

## Managing Your Time and Work

Manage up! This means keeping your supervisor(s) informed of project progress, support you might need, and any questions you may have. Frequent communication during projects helps to clarify expectations and set realistic timelines.

Here are some tips for how to effectively manage your time:

- Be realistic and honest with your supervisor about how you're feeling, what you think you can accomplish, and be gentle with yourself.
- Know the times of day you are most productive and try to schedule work that requires more creativity/cognitive load during those times.
- Schedule simpler tasks during off-peak times.
- Make a plan for each day as this will help you stay focused and set achievable goals for each day.

## Remote Work Guides

As part of UBC's transition to remote work due to disruptions from COVID-19, there are some key guidelines you should be aware of that inform how work gets accomplished remotely in a safe and secure manner. Your workplace may have other guidelines in addition to those laid out here. Please be sure to clarify with your supervisor any remote work guidelines that may be in place in the department or unit you are working in.

- **UBC IT Guide to working remotely**
- **UBC Guide to Telecommuting**
- **Telecommuting Checklist during COVID 19**

## Building an Effective Relationship with Your Supervisor

Work Learn students often cite the the importance of their working relationship with their supervisor as being key to a successful Work Learn experience.

Here are some things to get you started as you build a relationship with your supervisor:

- **Know that your supervisor wants to hear from you.** Sometimes students worry they are interrupting their supervisor or asking too many questions. Reach out early and often to build checking in into your routine.
- **Ask questions.** Learn how your supervisor likes to communicate and build opportunities for check-ins into your routine and work and share your preferences as well. Building relationships takes time and works best when everyone is aware of how each other like to work.
- **Get comfortable talking about mistakes.** Nothing builds trust like being open and honest when we make mistakes. Bring your reflections on mistakes and learning to your check ins with your supervisor and ask for support and resources proactively.

## Giving and Receiving Feedback

Part of any workplace experience is seeking guidance and feedback. You will have plenty of opportunities to give and receive feedback during your work term.

Here are some important things to remember:

- **Have regular check ins with your supervisor** to discuss projects, progress, and professional development and goals. Your supervisor wants to hear your ideas for improving work and projects.
- **Be kind and make generous assumptions** when bringing up an issue. Focus on a specific behaviour or action rather than a person.
- **Be specific and fair.** It's hard to make changes to something if a supervisor doesn't have a clear picture of what needs to change. Try to provide a clear description and examples of what you mean and focus on solutions.
- **Practice.** Feedback is a process. It requires constant attention and follow up to improve performance. It is a two-way street and you need to practice both giving *and* receiving feedback.

A performance review is a specific practice that provides an opportunity for giving and receiving feedback with your supervisor. This is a great way to reflect on your achievements, set goals, address any challenges, and ask for support if needed. Ask your supervisor about the possibility of setting up a performance review. These can be done half-way and/or at the end of your workplace experience.

## Professional Development

Discussing your professional goals with your supervisor early on will help you develop a learning plan that can help you get the most out of your position. As you adjust to the role, consider reflecting on these questions:

- Have I discussed my goals for this position with my supervisor?
- What actions do I have in place to help me accomplish these goals?
- What are some opportunities for professional development I would like to pursue?
- Who might I be interested in meeting in my supervisor's networks?

The **Centre for Student Involvement & Careers (CSI&C)** provides multiple opportunities for students to learn how to navigate various workplace situations, develop professional skills, and connect with other student employees on campus. These can be found on CareersOnline. You can find more career resources at: <https://students.ubc.ca/career/career-resources>



## Wrapping Up Your Role

Having a meeting with your supervisor at the end of your work term, which can be called an 'exit interview,' is a good idea to help you wrap-up the work term, discuss any final feedback, and identify accomplishments. This can also be an opportunity to share feedback about the role, and discuss any transition pieces on projects or tasks that may be unfinished or handed off to someone new.

Some questions you might want to reflect on and bring up with your supervisor during your exit interview:

- What is something you have learned in this position that you will use in the future?
- What have you learned about yourself (both personally and professionally) in this role?
- What are some things you think would improve the position or workplace environment for future Work Learn students?

## Student Story



**Saloni Mulani (Graduated May 2020)**  
**Work Learn Student Assistant, Summer 2020**

*“Through this position I learnt to work both independently and on a team which allowed me to engage in critical and analytical thinking while making important decisions. I feel that these are some of the skills that I have been able to transfer to my current position [post-graduation] at Perinatal Services BC. Overall, my work learn position helped me find a passion for what I want to do in the future and taught me to work towards a career goal but remain open-minded about what will happen in the future.”*

Questions about your pay

UBC Payroll

<https://finance.ubc.ca/payroll/contact-payroll/payroll-contacts-staff>

Questions or concerns about your workplace, supervision, issues or are unsure of who to contact

Work Learn

[work.learn@ubc.ca](mailto:work.learn@ubc.ca)

Questions or concerns about workplace safety

UB HR

<https://hr.ubc.ca/contact/contact-advisory-services>