The Work Learn program strives to facilitate experiential learning opportunities that provide professional mentorship, guidance, support, and supervision from UBC faculty, staff, and/or community partners. Work Learn students report the following as key predictors of a successful workplace experience:

- Early discussions about work expectations,
- Receiving regular and ongoing feedback,
- Having an orientation to the workplace, and
- Receiving training directly related to their role

All of these elements are also critical aspects of exceptional supervision! In an effort to support you in the supervision of your student employee, Work Learn has created this guide to help you as you begin to hire, and select a student employee, and design their workplace experience.

*Work Learn, 2016 N=191
Interview Strategies

An interview is more than just the questions you ask. Think about creating an experience for the student from the moment you invite them for an interview to when they walk out the door:

• Give them information to prepare
• Introduce yourself
• Lay out the format of the interview

• Don’t wait to make an offer to a candidate who you want to hire. Students interview for many jobs.

• Consider hosting remote interviews via Skype or Zoom.

• When you are ready to make an offer, create an offer letter to ensure you have written confirmation of the student’s acceptance of the terms and conditions of their employment with you.

Student Story

Jovin (Faculty of Arts, 4th year), Arts Peer Advisor

“When I applied for the Work Learn position with Arts Academic Advising, I was away visiting family during the summer and I was able to participate in the interview process via Skype”

Avoiding Bias

Creating a student recruitment and hiring plan will help you prioritize and select for the skills and experiences a student will need to be successful in the role. Being aware of the biases you bring into a hiring process will help you ensure that you are providing an equitable opportunity for all students to apply for your position.

People’s beliefs and biases have been found to influence decisions around hiring and promoting. Dr. Toni Schmader’s research at UBC suggests that “biases are most likely to leak out into people’s behaviour when they don’t believe bias is a problem”*

Be aware of your biases as you prepare to hire a student employee. Here are some potential biases that can show up in hiring:

- Anchoring: Relying on one thing when making a decision (student schedule availability)
- Confirmation bias: Searching for or focusing on information that confirms one’s preconceptions
- Stereotyping: Expecting a member of a group to have certain characteristics without having information about that person

Consider taking one of Harvard’s Implicit Association Tests to discover your hidden biases.

Interview Questions:

There are also many different types of interview questions, be sure to ask the questions that will help you make your hiring decision:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Situational</td>
<td>How a candidate would deal with a given scenario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competency-based</td>
<td>Assess the skills and attitudes that the position requires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural</td>
<td>How a candidate has dealt with scenarios in the past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Fit”</td>
<td>Looks for signs that the candidate will be comfortable and successful in your workplace</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Supervisor Tip:

There are many ways to interview your candidate: skills tests, 1-on-1, group panels, candidate presentations – think about a format that is best suited to you and your workplace.

*Schmader, 2018

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Supporting Your Student Employee

If you have concerns about your student employee’s wellbeing: UBC’s Green Folder is an excellent resource that can help you address concerns while also respecting a student’s privacy.

If you’re reaching out to a student:

1. Be specific about the signs and behaviours you’ve noticed (Ex: “I’ve noticed you’ve missed the last two shifts.”)
2. Express your concern (Ex: “I am concerned and wanted to check in to see how you’re doing.”)
3. Reassure the student that reaching out to students who may be struggling is something all UBC faculty and staff do to help.

Orientation and Onboarding

There are a few things you may want to do before your student employee’s first day:

• a welcome email that introduces your student employee to your department.
• an orientation plan with dates/times/locations,
• necessary paperwork that students need to complete (i.e. direct deposit forms).
• prepare work station and required equipment (i.e. laptop).

DAY 1:

• Orientation to the workplace (including remote)
• Introduction to colleagues and other student employees in your workplace.
• Review the job description and discuss expectations of the role and of the workplace.
• Understand the values, goals, and preferred work habits of your student employee.
• Provide dates/times that you are available to the student employee.

MONTH 1:

• Provide ongoing support and training around technical skills required for the role.
• Set up meetings for your student employee to meet other colleagues or student employees in your workplace or department.
• Arrange for some professional development opportunities.

Mandatory Safety Training

All UBC employees (including student employees) are required to complete specific workplace training. The following online modules must be completed prior to beginning a work term:

• Preventing COVID-19 Infection in the Workplace
• New Worker Safety Orientation
• Preventing and Addressing Workplace Bullying and Harassment Training
• Workplace Violence Prevention Training

As a supervisor of a student employee at UBC, you are required to uphold the Employment Standards Act of British Columbia. Please ensure you are familiar with these guidelines that include (but not limited to):

• An employee who reports for work must be paid for at least two hours
• A 30-minute unpaid meal break must be provided when an employee works more than five hours in a row
• For more information on topics such as STAT holidays: visit the Employment Standards Guidelines

Providing clear expectations for students on how they are to show up in the workplace is setting them up for success in their role. Consider what the expectation is, along with when and how you will communicate it; how should a student communicate if they are running late? how do they book time off?

Equity and Inclusivity

It is important to support equity seeking students. Building a work culture of inclusion and equity takes hard work on the part of everyone in the workplace.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Equity and Inclusion Office: https://equity.ubc.ca/

https://equity.ubc.ca/resources/equity-considerations-in-virtual-interviews

Additional Resources

Click on the links for more information:

• Working with neurodivergent students
• Resources for Career Conversations with Students of Colour
• Resources for Career Conversations with Students with Disabilities
• Resources for Career Conversations with LGBTQ+ Students

*Taylor, Raykov, and Sweet, 2018

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Working Remotely

If your student employee is working remotely, consider that:

• Students learn at different speeds and some may be navigating financial/housing insecurity, isolation, and grief
• Cognitive load will be much lower at times, so Consider using tools that students are already familiar with – ask them!
• Remember that productivity tools should be used to encourage participation rather than enforce productivity- we are all navigating extreme circumstances.

Resources:

Remote Work Guides:
• UBC IT Guide to working remotely
• UBC Guide to Telecommuting
• Telecommuting Checklist during COVID 19

Meeting/Workshop Facilitation:
• Best Practices for Virtual Participation in Meetings: Experiences from Synthesis Centers, ESA
• 20 Tips for Facilitating Virtual + Blended Meetings, The Grove
• Forbes’ 16 Tips For Leaders Managing Their First Remote Team

Supporting Students:
• Virtual team meetings: An analysis of communication and context, ScienceDirect
• Supporting Students Remotely (University of Waterloo)
• Creating an Inclusive Environment for Remote Employees, Cook Ross
• Support Employees of Color Through the Pandemic, Harvard Business Review

Solutions to some common remote work challenges:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Solution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Timelines can be disrupted and unpredictable</td>
<td>Encourage students to establish clearly defined times during the day — and ideally in different places at home — to separate work and personal life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There may be limited contact with mentors and peers</td>
<td>Establish regular check ins for students to connect with each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive load will be much lower at times</td>
<td>Have conversations about what is feasible, anticipate challenges and when to communicate. Encourage taking screen breaks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Online platforms for Project Management:

• Slack - a single place for messaging, tools and files
• Asana - web and mobile application designed to help teams organize, track, and manage work.
• Basecamp - platform that allows for managing teams and projects, providing updates, sharing files, and managing tasks.
• Microsoft Teams - platform that combines persistent workplace chat, video meetings, file storage, and application integration.
• Google Sheets/Gantt Charts - simple way to collaboratively work on documents.
• Trust – trust that your student employees will complete their work.

Supervisor Tip:

Send out a weekly email at the beginning of the work week with important updates and a question of the week or a fun challenge. Having something small but fun can go a long way to making people feel like a part of the team.
Performance Management

Performance management involves creating goals, assessing progress, and providing guidance and feedback to student staff. Setting professional and performance goals together with your student employee early on will help you develop a learning plan to ensure that the work gets accomplished, and that the student employee is both optimally challenged and supported in their role.

Have regular check-ins to discuss projects, progress, and professional development and goals. Find Performance Review templates on the UBC Staff/Faculty Work Learn webpage.

Giving and Receiving Feedback

Students identify the feedback given by their supervisors as one of the most valuable pieces of professional development they receive in the workplace. Here are a few things to remember:

- Ask a specific question to solicit feedback from student employees. Asking general questions or saying “my door is always open” is vague and can result in student employees not sharing their questions and concerns.
- Balance critical feedback with positive feedback. (Example: “Great job handling that difficult interaction, you really stayed calm under pressure. In the future, you can always ask another staff person for support as well.”)
- Address concerns you may have as soon as possible. A good guideline is to follow up the day you notice something, even if it’s just an invite to talk briefly the next time the student is scheduled to work.

Check-ins

Having regular, scheduled check-ins with your student employees, especially if they are working remotely, is important to allow them space to ask questions, give project updates, request support, and feel like a part of the team.

To make the most of check-ins, consider sending your student employee a template of questions to follow to help them prepare in advance. These questions could include:

- What is a moment of success you had this week?
- Where could you use more support?
- What are your priorities for the coming week?

Setting SMART goals early on in the work term can help provide a framework for check-ins and performance reviews:

Supervisor Story

Tam Uden, Student Health Promotion & Education

“Connecting with my Work Learn student staff has been more difficult while working from home, as there are fewer opportunities to have the informal interactions that build rapport. Instead, I’ve had to be conscious of building this more into our weekly check-ins, as well as having informal drop-in (remote) lunch once a week with all the student staff. It’s really helped me to get to know them and be able to help with their skill development.”

Supervisor Tip:

Here are some other questions to consider during first month:
- Have I discussed the student’s learning goals with them and have the goals changed since we initially discussed them?
- What actions do we have in place to help the student accomplish these goals?
- Who might the student be interested in meeting in my networks? How can I connect them?

Supervisor Resource:

Check out Kim Scott’s book, Radical Candor, which offers a radical framework for supervisory leadership—consider how you want to approach supervision.

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Celebrate

Work Learn experiences have a significant impact on students’ personal, professional, and/or academic aspirations. It is important to recognize their efforts and achievements during the work term.

Wrapping Up The Role

Invite your student to participate in an exit interview before the work term is over to help them transition out of the role, wrap up any loose ends, and for you to learn about changes you may want to make to the role, the workplace, and/or your supervision.

Some questions you might want to consider:

• What kind of impact does this experience have on your personal, academic, and career goals?
• How will you use what you’ve learned in your Work Learn position to future opportunities or work?
• What areas would you like to improve in or what skills would you like to develop further in your next position or role?

Resources:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>British Columbia Employment Standards Act</td>
<td>The law in B.C. sets standards for payment, compensation and working conditions in most workplaces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UBC HR – Student Workers</td>
<td>This site provides information to administrators for planning, hiring, and managing a student employee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UBC HR Advisory Services</td>
<td>Advisory staff can support with expertise with HR issues, such as interpreting the collective agreements and handbooks, day-to-day staff management concerns, and employee relations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UBC Workplace Learning</td>
<td>Contact us if you have any questions related to your Workplace Learning Experiences (Work Learn) or need guidance on where to escalate concerns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor Workshops</td>
<td>Every term, workshops are added to the ‘Resources for Educators’ tab on the UBC Staff/Faculty Work Learn webpage.</td>
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Student Story

Chelsea (Faculty of Arts, 4th year)
Aboriginal Student Affairs Outreach Coordinator

“This role enabled me to pick my work hours according to my academic schedule, which was very helpful in helping me balance work and school. I could also work after 4:00pm, which gave me the opportunity to meet with more students.”

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