A. Definitions

Co-operative Education (Co-op): Academic study that alternates with paid work experience developed and/or approved by the College. A program that formally integrates a student’s academic studies with work experience in co-operative employer organizations. Students receive remuneration for the work, and the student’s performance on the job is supervised and evaluated.

Program of Instruction: A group of related courses leading to a diploma, certificate, degree or other credential awarded by the College Board of Governors.

B. Procedure Purpose

Niagara College is committed to delivering programs that meet the needs of students and employers. To this end, the College offers many programs that include a Co-operative Education component in which the work experience contributes to student development and success and intends to show how classroom material and theoretical concepts are used within a workplace setting.

This procedure document outlines the College’s approach to ensuring the above goals are met, as well as the responsibilities of key stakeholders in the Co-op experience.

C. Procedure Statements

1. Co-op work term opportunities are not guaranteed. Securing a Co-op is a competitive process and is ultimately the responsibility of the student.

2. Students enrolled in a Co-op program will pay a mandatory fee to cover the costs of employer relations development, career development, career-readiness, career preparation and Co-op service administration. This fee is non-refundable.

3. Niagara College will ensure each Co-op is developed and/or validated by the Co-op staff in the Student Services division as a suitable work integrated learning experience. Students must submit their work experience details prior to the start date. The Co-op student will receive financial remuneration for the work performed from the employer. Student
progress will be monitored by Co-op staff, and student performance will be supervised and evaluated by the Co-op employer.

4. Under exceptional circumstances Niagara College may recognize an unpaid and/or volunteer work experience as meeting the requirements of Co-op. Students requesting approval of an unpaid, or volunteer experience will make that request prior to the work experience and once approved, will have the work experience evaluated by Co-op staff.

5. Co-op staff assist students in the following activities prior to and during the Co-op experience:
   a) deliver the Co-op Preparation classes
   b) set and achieve Co-op objectives and expectations; and
   c) provide support during the Co-op work experience.

6. In addition to the activities directly related to student success, Co-op staff also engage in a number of other activities to ensure a quality Co-op program, namely:
   a) develop, source and post Co-op job opportunities
   b) if requested, coordinate the interview process for employers
   c) provide employers support in the evaluation process
   d) assist employers and students in problem solving situations that may arise during the Co-op work term as requested
   e) communicate the final grades to Enrolment Services, and
   f) ensure continuous improvement of Co-op programming based on employer and student feedback.

7. In order to be eligible to proceed to a Co-op work term and have their Co-op hours recognized by Niagara College, the student must maintain academic standing of either “good standing” or “academic alert”. Academic eligibility is based on the two terms immediately prior to any Co-op work term. All prerequisite requirements for Co-op courses must also be met.

8. Students are responsible for:
   a) being aware of their academic eligibility to progress to their Co-op work term
   b) participating in Co-op Preparation classes organized and delivered by Co-op staff
   c) attending all appointments scheduled by Co-op staff
   d) applying for jobs until they secure a Co-op job
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RELATED POLICY: NC800 Experiential Learning

9. Once a Co-op position has been secured, students must:
   a) submit the Work Term Record form(s) in the MyCareer Portal
   b) register for their Co-op work term via the online registration system (NICOLE) in the appropriate term according to their Program of Instruction
   c) remain at approved Co-op positions. Any changes to the Co-op employment must be discussed and approved by the consultant in order for hours to be counted
   d) communicate any concerns to Co-op staff; and
   e) submit all required documentation to be considered for a successful (S) grade.

10. Enrolment Services will provide the following supports to ensure a quality experience:
   a) maintain up-to-date grade and GPA information enabling accurate assessment of eligibility
   b) assist Co-op staff in confirming academic eligibility of candidates
   c) ensure eligible candidates are able to register online for Co-op courses in the appropriate term(s)
   d) notify students if they are no longer academically eligible to proceed with a Co-op work term
   e) post final grades to the student record once received by Co-op staff and
   f) ensure the appropriate Co-op designation is added to the transcripts of students who have satisfied all requirements of the Co-op program.

11. Students in Diploma programs who are unable to complete the Co-op requirements of their program, but who satisfy all other academic requirements, will be eligible to graduate, but without the Co-op designation on their transcript. These students are not eligible for a refund of Co-op fees.
    In order to access the academic stream of their program, students in this situation must see their Academic Advisor to:
    a) map out a new academic plan
    b) complete the Program Change Form, OR
    c) complete the Application for Alternate Graduation Form
The Academic Advisor will advise Enrolment Services of the outcome.

12. Students enrolled in Bachelor Degree programs must successfully complete a minimum of 14 weeks of separate, paid, full-time equivalent work. Hours are confirmed by Co-op team per degree program (420, 450, 520 hours) either in one (1) block or in multiple cumulative blocks prior to graduation, appropriate to achieving the learning outcomes, to earn the degree credential. There is no option for academic exit from co-operative or work-integrated learning for Bachelor Degree students.

When a paid work term is not feasible for the degree program, under consent by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board may grant consideration to the College for a full-time, unpaid work term of comparable duration to meet this requirement. Such consideration will be noted in the Ministerial consent to grant the degree.

13. Employers are responsible for:
   a) providing appropriate training and support for the student as a typical new employee
   b) providing the student with productive work assignments related to their program of study
   c) meeting with the student and a College Employer Relationship Consultant or designate, once during the work term, and
   d) assessing the student’s performance and completing the Employer Evaluation Form at the end of the work term and providing it to the student who will submit it to Career Services.

D. Forms

Work Term Record
Change of Program
Application for Alternate Graduation
Employer Evaluation
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RELATED POLICY: NC800 Experiential Learning

E. Document History

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>October 31, 2017</td>
<td>New</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 16, 2022</td>
<td>Addition of prerequisite completion for Co-op</td>
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<td>Update of Co-op Prep course title</td>
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