

# Employer Guidelines

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Cooperative Education Program

College of Business

## What is the Cooperative Education Program?

The Cooperative Education program is an opportunity for RMIT students to develop into a skilled business professional by applying concepts and theory in a practical context through a work placement.

By completing a Cooperative Education placement students are able to gain experience to assist in determining their career path through the development of real world skills and practices.

All full-time students enrolled in the four year Bachelor of Business degrees must undertake a full-time work placement of eight to twelve months (known as a Cooperative Education Placement) prior to their final year of study.

## Role of Cooperative Education Stakeholders

### ORGANISATION

- Agree to the RMIT WIL Agreement and Schedule
- Provide a workplace that meets minimum government requirements
- Provide the student with an appropriate induction
- Assist in the skill development of the student
- Provide feedback to the student on a regular basis
- Notify RMIT of any issues if and as they arise
- Provide a workplace supervisor to the student who is to meet with the student and academic supervisor during site visits

### STUDENT

- Adhere to relevant professional ethics and codes of conduct
- Adhere to all rules and regulations within the organisation, including Occupational Health and Safety, equal opportunity and confidentiality issues
- Raise issues of concern with Workplace Supervisor and Academic Supervisor
- Maintain communication with RMIT through their Academic Supervisor
- Complete all relevant coursework and placement

### RMIT UNIVERSITY

- Sign the RMIT Higher Education Practical Placement Agreement
- Provide an Academic Supervisor/Mentor who contacts or visits the student during placement
- Provide insurance coverage for the student on placement
- Evaluate student learning through discussions with workplace supervisor and student
- Monitor student performance

### Benefits for Organisations

The benefits for organisations to participate in the Cooperative Education program are:

- **Dedicated resource.** Students can undertake special projects and ease staffing issues created by staff absences such as long service leave or maternity leave.
- **New ideas and fresh perspectives.** Along with knowledge and skills learnt through their education, enthusiastic students bring new ideas and insights that will benefit the workplace or the organisation.
- **Potential recruitment pathway.** Cooperative Education placements provide a preview of a student without the long-term commitment of an employee. A successful cooperative education student can become an employee that grows with the organisation. Creating this talent pipeline reduces recruitment costs and risk associated with hiring unknown candidates. Cooperative Education students can filter into Graduate Programs.
- **Leadership and engagement.** Through the mentoring of students, staff develop their ability to lead and supervise and engage with RMIT.
- **Affordable talent.** Cooperative Education students are highly motivated employees at an affordable pre-graduate salary (approximately 25% less). Students must be paid in line with Fair Work Australia Standards (on average around \$37,000 per annum, plus superannuation).

## Student Capabilities

During two years of study, Cooperative Education students have to complete study in the following areas: accounting; economics; commercial law; computing; management; marketing and statistics.

Furthermore, students develop discipline specific knowledge in one the following six areas:

- Accounting
- Business Information Systems
- Economics and Finance
- Logistics and Supply Chain Management
- International Business
- Marketing

Throughout their education, students have developed the following competencies:

- effective team membership and communication
- development of the ability to work independently
- enhanced career focus and employment prospects
- time management and self-organisation skills

Students are prepared for placement through support offered by a dedicated team. Preparation sessions are run throughout the year for students to attend before placement.

## The Placement

Students are considered equal and treated the same as all other employees during their period of employment, and are subject to the normal conditions of work within the organisation.

Student responsibilities during employment include:

- acceptance of the terms and conditions of placements as advertised and determined by employers
- expectation that student will remain with the employer for the agreed period
- submission of a business report to a satisfactory standard
- students may not resign or vary conditions of employment without initial consultation with the College of Business and the organisation

## Academic Component

Students are assigned an Academic Supervisor/Mentor who monitors student progress, discusses assessment including the business report, and liaises with the workplace supervisor.

## Student Performance

During placement, students are considered employees of the organisation and enrolled RMIT students. Consequently, their behaviour and performance in the workplace has academic implications. Students receiving negative feedback in relation to contract arrangements, job performance or attitude may be brought before an academic progress panel.

## Legislative Requirements

All Victorian employers are required by law to comply with relevant legislation, including Fair Work Australia and the Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Act.

RMIT University is committed to providing and maintaining the highest standard of health, safety and well-being for all staff, students, contractors and visitors.

Placement organisations have the primary duty of care to ensure the health and safety of RMIT students during their placement. RMIT University expects that placement organisations will recognise their responsibilities and have systems in place to reduce the risks to the health and safety of students undertaking placements.

Placement organisations must ensure that RMIT students are aware of the following information prior to commencement of a practical placement:

- Placement organisation's health and safety policy
- Name and location of health and safety representative of the work area
- Details on the process for managing and resolving health and safety issues
- Procedure for reporting accidents/incidents/hazards
- First aid arrangements (including names and phone numbers of first-aiders)
- Emergency procedures including emergency numbers

Hazards associated with the work place, practical placement activities and the measures in place to control the risks to health and safety must be communicated to the student. This should include, but not be limited to, safe work procedures, personal protective equipment, training and supervision.

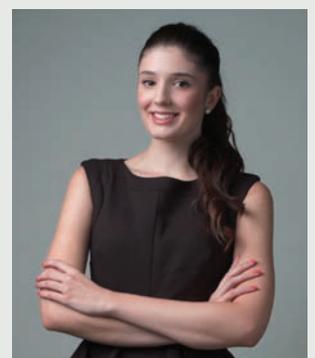
## Student Profile

'The best thing about the program is the connections with industry. Instead of just reading textbooks you have the opportunity to work directly with companies on real business problems.

The Cooperative Education year gives you an amazing insight into what to expect when you graduate. It gave me the knowledge, skills and connections to extend my professional network and provided me with wonderful experience that will help me in my future career.'

**Kiara Selimi**

Bachelor of Business (Marketing) (Applied)



## Contact

College of Business—Enterprise Relations and Work Integrated Learning

Email: [bus.wil@rmit.edu.au](mailto:bus.wil@rmit.edu.au)

[www.rmit.edu.au/bus/wil](http://www.rmit.edu.au/bus/wil)