

# Work Ready

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## Student Guidelines

College of Business  
Cooperative Education Program



The Cooperative Education Program offers invaluable experience that could put you ahead when applying for graduate jobs. It is on-the-job training in the profession of your choice, putting into practice what you have learnt at university.

You will be introduced to a wide range of new experiences that support your overall professional development and enhance your progress towards becoming a skilled business professional. You may even be offered an ongoing role by the employer who takes you for placement.

## What is Cooperative Education?

- A compulsory component of all Bachelor of Business Applied and Professional degrees, which occurs in the third year of study, after you have successfully completed a minimum of 14 courses.
- A paid placement within industry for a minimum of 34 weeks.  
For information regarding maximum placement duration for international students, please contact [bus.wil@rmit.edu.au](mailto:bus.wil@rmit.edu.au).
- Relevant to your degree of study. The majority of tasks and responsibilities in your role must be related to your degree.
- Supported by RMIT through a comprehensive preparatory program and an academic supervisor once on placement.

## What are the benefits of undertaking the Cooperative Education year?

Objectives of Cooperative Education include:

- integrating academic studies with real world application in the workplace
- enhancing your understanding of contemporary workplaces
- fostering personal growth, maturity and self-confidence
- enhancing interpersonal and generic workplace attributes and skills
- encouraging reflective and analytical behaviour
- enhancing your ability to better understand the value and relevance of your final year of study
- increasing clarity in relation to future career directions and better developed general work readiness
- developing diverse ways of learning and encouraging lifelong learning

**Kiara Selimi** Bachelor of Business (Marketing) (Applied)  
(cover image)

“In the applied degree, instead of just reading text books you have the opportunity to work directly with companies on real business problems.”

## Why do employers participate?

A diverse range of organisations support the Cooperative Education Program as it:

- enables industry input into the training and professional development of their workforce
- allows for the completion of important tasks in a cost effective way
- encourages the development of diverse relationships and connections with RMIT
- encourages organisations to reflect on current practices
- provides direct and indirect input into business programs

## What do I need to do to get ready?

### Registration

In order to receive important information and access to Cooperative Education internship advertisements you must register when prompted to do so by email, and follow subsequent instructions carefully.

### Preparation Sessions

The College of Business, in conjunction with RMIT Careers and Employability, offers a comprehensive program to prepare you for your search for a placement. These sessions include:

- job search strategies including how to tap into the hidden job market
- applications—how to write cover letters and resumés
- interview techniques
- lunchtime drop in sessions for individual assistance

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

Ideally you should attend these sessions when you commence your second year of study but you may start earlier.

## Finding a Placement

The College of Business has extensive relationships with industry partners with whom you are able to apply for positions as they become available. You are also encouraged to source your own position through other means such as:

- RMIT Career Hub
- RMIT Jobs on Campus
- company websites
- job sites e.g. Seek, CareerOne
- your networks and networks of people you know (e.g. family, club)

If you self-source a position, you must ensure your role is full-time, a minimum of eight months in duration and directly related to your discipline of study. Your placement must be paid in accordance with Fair Work Australia. On average, students in recent years have received a salary of \$37,000 per annum plus superannuation.

If you find your own placement, you must send a position description, listing your duties, to [bus.wil@rmit.edu.au](mailto:bus.wil@rmit.edu.au) for approval.

RMIT also encourages you to find placements interstate and overseas. If successful in obtaining a placement overseas RMIT can provide assistance and advice but ultimately you are responsible for ensuring you obtain the relevant visas and travel arrangements.

Please contact [bus.wil@rmit.edu.au](mailto:bus.wil@rmit.edu.au) to discuss your options for overseas placements.

### What happens if I can't find a placement?

Remember that ultimately it is your responsibility to secure a placement. Obtaining a placement is competitive and requires considerable effort and perseverance. However, you shouldn't worry as there is an abundance of help available.

RMIT Careers and Employability has a wide variety of tools to help you succeed in your search. For help with resumé writing, interview tips and much more, visit [www.rmit.edu.au/careers](http://www.rmit.edu.au/careers).

The College of Business Enterprise Relations and Work Integrated Learning team can provide further advice on the Cooperative Education Program or discuss options with you. Please email the team at [bus.wil@rmit.edu.au](mailto:bus.wil@rmit.edu.au).

### During the Placement Year

Remember that your Cooperative Education year is an assessable part of your program.

You are assigned an academic supervisor who monitors your progress, discusses assessment including the business report, and liaises with your workplace supervisor.

You investigate and report on an aspect of the operation of the organisation or prepare an assignment on another topic pre-approved by your academic supervisor and employer.

Contact with your academic supervisor forms an important part of the placement process and ensures that you maintain a link with RMIT at all times. Your appointed academic will contact you.

Further assessment details can be found in your relevant course guide.

### Issues During Your Cooperative Education Year

Even if you have followed all advice provided during the preparation process there may be some issues that occur within the placement. In the first instance you should contact your assigned academic to discuss. If you are unable to reach your academic supervisor contact [bus.wil@rmit.edu.au](mailto:bus.wil@rmit.edu.au) to discuss further.

### Optimising Your Cooperative Education Experience

There are many factors that will influence your success during the year.

- Gaining an understanding of the culture and protocols of your organisation, recognising that these will be different from those you are familiar with.
- Always show courtesy and consideration for others.
- Dressing to the highest common denominator.
- Avoiding involvement in office politics.
- Showing personal commitment and enthusiasm at all times by always trying to do your best. This commitment can be demonstrated through things such as punctuality, attention to detail, meeting deadlines, showing respect to others and a willingness to go that extra mile.
- Asking for help when needed, recording information provided, taking notes wherever appropriate.
- Being mindful of equal opportunity and discrimination issues; being mindful that some comments can easily be misinterpreted and immediately report any unwanted attention to your supervisor.
- Respecting the organisation's property and people's space.
- Developing strategies to deal with the boring aspects of your job should they arise.
- Behaving ethically and asking when in doubt.
- Keeping up to date with the assessable components of your placement.



#### Student Profile

"I want to be a multi-skilled employee who can be put into a business or IT role and know what they are talking about."

The opportunity to complete a work placement as part of your studies is a great learning experience and gives you a competitive edge when you graduate. I continued with my Co-op employer as a Web Support Officer while I completed the final stage of my degree."

**Anthony Debrincat**  
**Bachelor of Business (Information Systems) (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)