



Business Co-operative Program — Work Term Reports

Faculty of Business Administration

Lakehead University

I. Purpose of Work Term Reports

Writing a work term report is a required component of the Faculty of Business Co-op program at Lakehead University. We hope you find that writing one enriches your co-op experience.

How can writing a work term report benefit you?

- Helps you integrate theoretical concepts with practical experience.
- Increases your understanding of your employer's organization.
- Helps you analyze your progress towards your learning objectives.
- Enhances your report writing skills.
- Encourages you to actively observe and record your experiences over the course of the work term, and causes you to reflect on your experiences.

How can work reports benefit others?

- Helps future Lakehead Co-op students prepare for interviews and work terms.
- Helps co-ordinators assess the suitability of co-op positions.

II. Six Steps to Success

1. Plan Ahead

Planning ahead will help ensure that you collect relevant information, perform a thorough analysis and meet your deadline. Here are some tips on getting started:

- A. Inform your supervisor of your deadline during your first meeting and ask how much time he or she will need to review your report. Negotiate an advance deadline, taking your supervisor's vacations into consideration.
- B. From your first day on the job, keep a journal of relevant information, assignments and accomplishments.
- C. Decide whether to choose the descriptive format or the research project or special project format. Your supervisor may be willing to suggest some topics.
- D. Set and review your learning objectives for the term.
- E. Prepare an outline to ensure that you develop your ideas and arguments in a logical manner.
- F. Determine which printed materials, web sites and staff resources you will consult.

A note to creative types:

If you have an idea for presenting your work report in an innovative way, don't let our guidelines inhibit your creativity. We've seen excellent reports presented as Web sites or short stories. As long as your report incorporates the required content and analysis, we welcome you to try a fresh approach. Please discuss your idea with your co-op coordinator and your supervisor before you begin.

2. Choose Your Report Type

You may choose to write either a Descriptive Report or a Research or Special Project Report.

Descriptive Reports**Describe the organization:**

- Outline the company's history and structure.
- Identify the company's mission statement, products and services.
- Describe the corporate culture.
- Refer to your use of new technologies.

Describe your department or area:

- Explain the area's activities and structure.

Describe your responsibilities:

- List your responsibilities.
- Show how you have contributed to the organization's productivity.
- Elaborate on your learning.
- Explain how you have met your learning objectives and developed skills.
- Explain what influence your work term has had on your career objectives.
- Relate how your academic program has prepared you for this position.
- Reveal what you have learned about the factors, which contribute, most to your enjoyment of work, such as management styles and degree of autonomy.

Present conclusions:

- Present objective recommendations.
- Present applicable conclusions.

Research or Special Project Reports

As in a Descriptive Report, but in less detail:

- Describe the organization.
- Describe your department or area.
- Describe your learning.

- Present conclusions and recommendations.

In addition:

Provide a detailed description of research or a special project, prepared specifically for your work term report. Include descriptions of your methodology, observations, conclusions and recommendations.

Please note:

A research or special project you complete for your job may not form the basis of your work term report. You may, however, append to your work term report a copy of a report, which you have prepared for your job, providing you have obtained permission from your supervisor.

3. Collect Content

We suggest you create a file in which to collect documents for the work report. You can add journal notes, relevant articles and other documents. Please ensure that you do not release confidential information.

- Include your learning objectives.
- Consult company brochures, manuals, Web sites and any other resources.
- Arrange interviews with staff members with knowledge of your topic.
- Prepare graphs, charts and diagrams.
- Keep accurate records of your sources so you can credit them in the bibliography and footnotes.
- Make notes of assignments, accomplishments and interesting facts.

4. Follow the Format

A professional appearance gives your report added credibility. Below is a recommended format for your report.

A. Preliminary Pages

a) Cover

Enclose report in a cover, and state the report's title and your name on the cover page.

b) Title Page

Please see the sample title page in Appendix.

c) Table of Contents

Include a list of exhibits and appendices, if applicable.

d) Executive Summary

Write this one-page summary so you can outline the purpose and scope of the report, along with key conclusions and recommendations.

e) Work Term Release Form

Include the signature of your supervisor or an appropriate employer representative who has reviewed your report for confidentiality and approved its release to the Co-op Office.

B. Main Body

a) Introduction

Explain your objectives for the report.

b) Main report

Describe either your work term experience or your project.

c) Conclusions

Tie together the main ideas of the report.

d) Recommendations

Suggest a course of action or present ideas related to topics discussed in the report.

e) References

- References or Footnotes
Cite the sources of your quotes.
- Bibliography
List the books and electronic sources you consulted during your research.
- Glossary
Explain technical terms or jargon specific to your field, company or industry.
- Appendices
Add any charts, reports or exhibits that are not included in the body of the report.

5. Check it Out

Your report is an example of the quality of your work and should appear suitably professional for presentation to your organization's management.

Review the following qualities:

- Is your report free from errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar?

- Have you presented the information clearly?
- Have you analyzed the topics thoroughly?
- Have you checked the facts?
- Have you ensured that you followed the evaluation criteria outlined in Section C?
- Has your supervisor signed the report?

6. Don't Miss the Deadline

Work Term Reports are due at the end of each work term. Reports are to be submitted by the determined deadline as indicated in the emailed instructions. Work Term Reports must be submitted to the Student Success Centre by email to coop@lakeheadu.ca

LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY

CO-OP WORK REPORT

(dates)

Prepared by: John Doe (Student Number)

Employer: ABC Ltd.

Date:

Approved by: Jane Smith

Title: Marketing Manager

Signature: Jane Smith

Date: