



POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

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1.1.18 EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Preamble

Experiential Learning (EL) at the postsecondary level is an educational activity where students learn by doing. St. Clair College recognizes the positive impact that Experiential Learning (EL) has on students, the College, and in instances of Work Integrated Learning (WIL), employers and the community. The College is committed to the implementation of EL activities in all programs where such activities are feasible.

Definitions

1. Experiential learning (EL)

- 1.1. An educational activity that allows students to learn by doing in order to enhance their employability, develop interpersonal skills, and transition to the workplace through College supported or facilitated experiences.
- 1.2. In order to be deemed an experiential learning experience, the following criteria must be met:
 - i. The student is in a workplace or simulated workplace.
 - ii. The student is exposed to authentic demands that improve their job-ready skills, interpersonal skills, and transition to the workforce.
 - iii. The experience is structured with purposeful and meaningful activities.
 - iv. The student applies program knowledge and/or essential employability skills.

- v. The experience includes student self-assessment and / or evaluation of the student's performance and learning outcomes by the employer and / or College.

2. Work-Integrated Learning (WIL)

2.1. Experiential learning experiences in which the workplace is that of, or is conducted under the direction of, an external industry or community partner and the student performance is evaluated by the employer and / or College.

2.2. Any course or part of a course that takes place in the following instructional settings are deemed a work-integrated learning experience:

2.2.1. **Clinical:** scheduled hours of activities intended to give students hands-on experience in a hospital or health care setting; this instructional setting is characterized by:

- i. Activities that are an integral component of the curriculum of the program and necessary for the successful completion of the program.
- ii. Activities in which students are continually supervised directly by college staff or individuals working on behalf of the college.

2.2.2. **Co-operative Education / Internship:** scheduled hours of activities intended to give students hands-on experience in the workplace and for which students usually receive a regular salary or wage from the employer. This instructional setting is characterized by:

- i. A period of time that is normally between 30% and 75% of the time spent in academic study. The work placement does not replace the academic component of the program.
- ii. Activities that are not an integral component of the curriculum of the program and are an enhancement to the program.
- iii. Activities in which college staff do not directly supervise students and for which college staff undertake one or more of the following activities:
 - i. Evaluate the work placement site
 - ii. Make periodic site visits
 - iii. Ensure that assignments given to students and the work being done by the students are suitable for the program.
- iv. Activities in which college staff do not directly supervise students and for which college staff undertake one or more of the following activities:
 - i. Evaluate the work placement site
 - ii. Make periodic site visits
 - iii. Ensure that assignments given to students and the work being done by the students are suitable for the program

- 2.2.3. **Placement:** scheduled hours of activities intended to give students hands-on experience in the workplace and for which the students do not receive a regular salary or wage from the employer; this instructional setting is characterized by:
- i. Activities that are an integral component of the curriculum of the program and are necessary for the completion of the program.
 - ii. Activities in which college staff do not directly supervise students and for which college staff undertake one or more of the following activities:
 - i. Make periodic site visits
 - ii. Ensure that assignments given to students and the work being done by students are suitable for the program
 - iii. Monitor the student progress in the field placement activity
 - iv. Help address problems encountered by student in the field or work placement activity
 - v. Evaluate student's performance in the field or work placement activity
 - iii. The terms **field placement**, **work placement**, and **practicum** may be used interchangeably.

2.3. Apprenticeship

- 2.3.1. Apprenticeship is an intensive type of WIL that combines in-school training for employment in a skilled trade or skilled occupation with on-the-job workplace training over the designated length of the apprenticeship program. Workplace training makes up about 90 percent of the apprenticeship program, and is delivered under the guidance and instruction of a qualified or certified journeypersons. The remaining in-school training provides both theoretical and practical instruction. After completion of an apprenticeship training program, apprentices can become certified "journeypersons" by writing a trade exam to obtain a Certificate of Qualification.

3. Enterprise Learning Experiences

- 3.1. Experiential learning experiences in which the workplace is simulated by the College and the student performance is evaluated by the College.
- 3.2. Any course or part of a course that takes place in an instructional setting that would otherwise be deemed a clinical or work placement except that the College acts as the employer is deemed an enterprise learning experience.
4. Any course or part of a course that contain any of the following experiences are deemed work integrated learning or enterprise learning experiences according to the level of involvement with external industry or community partners:

- 4.1. **Applied Research:** Work-based projects that are theoretically underpinned by situated learning theory, recognizing projects as learning environments in which students can participate in authentic practices and apply skills needed in real life.
- 4.2. **Service Learning:** Work experience designed to foster civic or social responsibility and leadership that is undertaken with a local, provincial, national or international organization to address community or global needs.
- 4.3. **Interactive Simulation:** Experiences in which students role-play complex performances in interactive environments that simulate intense work environments.
- 4.4. **Performance:** Experiences in which students interpret composed or improvised pieces to an audience through artistic means.
- 4.5. **Capstone:** A culminating academic performance as defined in Policy 1.1.17.

5. Co-curricular Learning Experiences

- 5.1. College-sanctioned activities that permit student self-evaluation and would otherwise be considered work-integrated learning or enterprise learning experiences except that they are not evaluated by an employer or the College.

Policy

6. All programs of instruction leading to an Ontario College Certificate, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, and Graduate Certificate, and Applied Degree offered by St. Clair College will include at least one experiential learning experience.
7. The capacity to deliver experiential learning experiences will differ for each academic program. However, when planning experiential learning experiences, preference to the type of experience should be given in the following order:
 - i. work-integrated learning experiences
 - ii. enterprise learning experiences
 - iii. co-curricular learning experiences.
8. Exemptions to the experiential learning experience requirement are granted as follows:
 - 8.1. All programs whose purpose is to prepare students for further study are exempt;
 - 8.2. Programs whose third-party accrediting requirements conflict with this policy may be exempted by the Vice President, Academic upon consultation with program faculty, Program Chair, and the Centre for Academic Excellence;

- 8.3. Programs with unique objectives, processes, or delivery characteristics which conflict with this policy may be extraordinarily exempted by the Vice President, Academic upon consultation with program faculty, Program Chair, and the Centre for Academic Excellence;
9. Experiential learning experiences are reviewed by faculty at a minimum through the cyclical review process, or more frequently at the direction of the Program Chair, to ensure an acceptable level of graduate performance of VLOs, EESs, and other anticipated goals of the learning experience.

10. Degree Level Experiential Learning

- 10.1. Students in degree programs are required to complete a paid work placement as part of their studies.
 - 10.2. This work placement may be unpaid if authorized by the Post-secondary Education Quality Assessment Board and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.
 - 10.3. This work term is generally a block placement of 14 consecutive weeks of full-time activity (420 hours), but may, with the permission of the Post-secondary Education Quality Assessment Board and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, be divided into smaller components.
 - 10.4. The learning outcomes of the Work-Integrated learning must conform to the specific approved learning outcomes of the relevant degree program of study.
 - 10.5. In addition to the mandatory work placement (14 weeks or 420 hours) a degree may contain other work-integrated learning opportunities as courses in the degree level program of studies.
11. For work-integration learning activities:
- 11.1. student supervision is the responsibility of the employer or community partner;
 - 11.2. the College will monitor the work-integrated learning experience through contact with the employer via email, telephone and/or formal site visits;
 - 11.3. with the exception of apprenticeship, all forms of work-integrated learning will involve some sort of student reflection and self-assessment and will typically include employer feedback;
 - 11.4. a course information sheet or information sheet for the work-integrated learning experience module will be provided to the student and the employer/placement agency;
 - 11.5. the course information sheet must include the following where applicable:
 - i. **Definition:** definition of the type of work-integrated learning in which the student will be engaged;

- ii. **Eligibility:** identify the minimum eligibility for enrollment in the work-integrated learning module. This will include a listing of all required course(s) and/or grade point average, as prescribe the program;
- iii. **Preparatory Requirements:** description of all the preparatory requirements for enrollment in the work-integrated learning module, for example, Police Clearances, immunizations, etc. Please note any work-integrated learning may be subject to a variety of contractual obligations as established by the employer/placement agency;
- iv. **Learning Outcomes:** define the learning expectations of the work-integrated learning module;
- v. **Method of Evaluation:** describe all methods of evaluation for successful completion of the work-integrated learning module; f) **Grading:** identify the letter grade or symbol achievable. Most common achievement is Pass/Fail;
- vi. **Credit Weighting:** identify the appropriate credit weighting for the work integrated learning experience;

12. Substitution of Enterprise Learning Experience for Placement Experience

- 12.1 While the College recognizes the positive impact placement with an employer has on students and employers, an insufficient number of placement opportunities may require the College to substitute an enterprise learning experience, such as a capstone course, for placement. Other types of WIL (i.e. Clinical, Co-op/internship) are ineligible for replacement by an enterprise learning experience.
- 12.2 Placement requirements for degree programs are not eligible for replacement by an enterprise learning experience.
- 12.3 Programs with enrollments exceeding the number of available placements may establish an eligibility requirement for participation in placement. The establishment of such an eligibility requirement for any academic program shall be approved by the Vice President, Academic.
- 12.4 To establish an eligibility requirement for participation in placement, the Academic Chair of the program will forward a request (application in Appendix A) to the Centre for Academic Excellence (CAE), which will validate the request. The CAE will then forward the Application to the Office of the Vice President, Academic for approval. The approved application will be filed in the CAE
- 12.5 Placement and placement substitution courses are recorded tracked in the Program Chart.

- 12.6 Students not meeting eligibility requirements for placement will be enrolled in an enterprise learning experience. The preferred experience is a capstone course or simulation.
- 12.7 Students not meeting eligibility requirements for placement who obtain their own placement opportunity may participate in that placement provided the placement position is reviewed and approved by the program's Placement Coordinator.
- 12.8 Students who meet eligibility requirements for placement may choose to enroll in the substitute enterprise learning activity instead of placement.

12.9 Eligibility Requirements

12.9.1 When establishing eligibility requirements, the preferred methods of placing students with an employer are (in order of preference):

- Employer interviews
- Application/interview process (College conducted)
- Application, minimum cumulative GPA (weighted score)
- Minimum cumulative GPA

12.8.2 When a minimum cumulative GPA value is used as a single determinate or as part of a weighted score to determine eligibility for placement, the cumulative GPA value may change from year-to-year depending on enrollment levels and the number of available placements.

12.8.3 The existence of a placement eligibility requirement will be communicated to potential students prior to enrolment in a program. When a minimum cumulative GPA value is used as a single determinate, the value must be established and communicated to students one academic year prior to their expected enrollment in a placement course.

12.8.4 Once approved by the Vice President, Academic, the method of determining placement eligibility cannot be changed for a current cohort of students.

12.9 Requirements of Substitute Activity

12.9.1 The preferred substitute activity for placement is a capstone course or simulation course.

12.9.2 A course intended to substitute for placement must contain one or both of the following attributes:

- Discipline themed projects in which students can participate in authentic practices and apply an integrated skill set needed in real life.

- Experiences in which students role-play complex performances in interactive environments that simulate discipline themed work environments.

12.9.3 A course intended to substitute for placement shall:

- Contain a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) final grade;
- Use projects, assignments, presentations, and/or simulations as the primary course learning activities;
- Omit tests, quizzes, and exams from the grading scheme;
- Include essential employability skills (EES) as a major component of student assessment (i.e. not less than 50% of the assessment);
- Include student reflection on the learning experience within the grading scheme.

Appendix A

Application for Placement Substitution Course

School:		Date:
Program:		
Course Code/Name of Placement Course:	Total Hours of Placement currently offered:	
Proposed Name of Substitute Course:		
Total Hours for Substitute Course:	Breakdown of Hours of Substitute Course (Teacher contact : independent study):	
Describe the proposed eligibility requirement to participate in the placement course:		
Please describe the rationale for selecting the above method of determining eligibility:		
Approval Signatures:		
Academic Chair:	_____	Date: _____
ED CAE:	_____	Date: _____
Vice President, Academic	_____	Date: _____