Your co-op work term is designed to give you practical exposure to and experience in the discipline that you are studying. For Psychology students, the work term will allow development in the following crucial areas:

- general workplace practices
- your area of specialization
- transferable and/or soft skills

1. OBJECTIVES OF THE WORK REPORT

The work term report is designed for students to blend what you learn in school with “real world” experience. In the creation of your work term report, it is important that you consider the following factors:

- The work term report is built into your work experience
- The work term report ensures that you are “thinking” about what you are learning, not just “doing” your work.
- The work term report becomes more purposeful when the report is a value-added document for your employer. Not only can your report be utilized by your employer, but you also then have an opportunity to hone your professional and workplace writing abilities. **However, the work term report should not just be a report written as a component of your responsibilities at work; there needs to be additional “research included”.** For example, let’s say your job was at the university pre-school and your report is a guide for parents concerning separation anxiety in young children, you could supplement the information you provide in a booklet for the parents, with an appendix that summarizes the psychology research literature on separation anxiety.
- The work term report will allow for you to build your professional portfolio. You will receive feedback on it from your faculty advisor using an electronic template. If you would like more detailed feedback, please contact your advisor by e-mail and make an appointment to review the paper.

2. EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS

Examples of projects that students have worked on include:

- Manual for other co-op students coming to work for this organization, along with background on how effective training manuals should be developed.
- A review of the literature of generational differences in the workplace with reference to the current place of employment
- A manual for parents on separation anxiety in pre-schoolers and review of the relevant psychology literature
A review of developmental disabilities with reference to the employment context in a group home
- Therapeutic and other benefits of day camp
- How sales agent personality influences sales performance
- Criminal profiling: research, theory and practice

You can write about almost any topic provided you relate the content to your academic studies. If, for example, your report is to focus on a training manual for new staff, then you might consider discussing traits and skills that are important in this sector of the business, important qualifications for the job, how this segment of the industry relates to other segments, what features need to be incorporated into training manuals to make them effective documents etc. Please note that you report is not a diary of your activities during your work term.

3. APPROACH TO WORK REPORT DEVELOPMENT

a. **Determine your work term report topic.** Approach your employer. Have you seen potential projects that you might be able to get involved in? Does your employer have any projects, reports, surveys, etc. that it would find useful to have completed that were not part of the original work for the term?

b. **Decide on the intended audience.** Who are you writing for? Your employer, future students, users of your material, or your co-op faculty advisor? This will govern the style you use in writing your report.

c. **Add the Academic Component.**
Your work term report must have an academic or research component. This involves searching to see research that has previously been done that is related to your project. Depending on your topic, you may use the University of Guelph Library website, Google Scholar, various text books and/or specific information you have learned in courses. Published references (8 minimum) should be used for the **background** of your project. Your references should not all be online references. Ideally, they should be no older than 2000, unless they are classic references.

i. **Access to University of Guelph Library Resources.** To assist with your work term report, you can access the Library’s electronic resources (databases, electronic books, etc.) from off-campus. Click on the “Off-campus Log in” link from the Library’s home page (http://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/) and sign in using your central ID and password. Key business literature databases (e.g. ABI/INFORM, Business Source Complete) can be found under the “Journal articles” link.

ii. **Using other University Libraries.** Most academic libraries are committed to the Canadian University Reciprocal Borrowing Agreement which allows students to check out books directly from another university library. Within Ontario you should be able to check out books from other university libraries with your University of Guelph student card. There are some exceptions to this agreement: most notably, the University of Toronto does not lend to undergraduates from other institutions. Complete details can be found at: http://www.coppul.ca/rb/rbhow.html

iii. **Getting Research Help.** If you need help with researching your work term report, the Library provides many avenues for assistance. You can chat, instant message, email, phone or visit with a librarian. For complete contact information visit: http://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/assistance/ask_us/..

d. **Contact your Faculty Advisor.** Once you have a topic in mind, contact Dr. Peter Hausdorf, your Faculty Advisor (phausdor@uoguelph.ca , (519) 824-4120 x53976). In your e-mail, please indicate your co-op
work term employer, your position and your primary responsibilities. Describe your ideas for your work report and whether it is an interim or final report (see section on 4 or 8 month reports below). Dr. Hausdorf will contact you with specific suggestions or refinements to your topic.

4. FORMAT OF THE WORK TERM REPORT

- **Cover page.** Include your name, student ID number, your employer, the title of your report and the term during which you worked for your employer (Summer 2008, etc.). If your report is for 2 semesters, please identify is as such (e.g. Summer and Fall 2008).
- **Introductory letter.** Your letter should be addressed to your Faculty Advisor. Include in your letter: information regarding where you worked, your position title, your main responsibilities/projects, the topic of your report, and finally acknowledge the employer for his/her assistance during your placement.
- **Table of Contents.**
- **Summary.**
- **The report.**
- **References.**
- **Employer evaluation.** If available at the time of submission, attach your employer’s comments on your report: [http://www.coop.uoguelph.ca/forms/Work_Report_Evaluation.pdf](http://www.coop.uoguelph.ca/forms/Work_Report_Evaluation.pdf)
- The grading sheet which will be used to evaluate your report is attached in Appendix 1. Please note that this is a generic form used by Co-operative Education. There will be sections under “Structure” that do not apply to Psychology co-op work term reports. Please proceed with the sections laid out above.

Are you planning to work eight months for one employer?

- **Students who work for one employer for eight months have a choice.** Are you going to produce a draft and final report or two separate reports? If you plan to produce two separate work term reports, one for each term (i.e. – Summer 2008, Fall 2008), proceed with all regular deadlines.

- **The eight month work term report.** If you plan to produce one report for the eight month block, you will still be required to submit a draft on the date you would normally be submitting a 4-month report. For example, Summer work term reports are due 5 class days into the Fall term. Your draft is due 10 class days into the Fall term. You may wish to follow up on your draft to get feedback for the final report; if so, please contact your Faculty Advisor no sooner than 4 weeks after you have submitted it. Your final report will be due 5 class days into the Winter term. Both your draft and your final report will be graded separately. It is expected that the 8 month report is more detailed and intensive than a standard 4 month report.

- **Your draft report.** Your draft is expected to be at least 4-6 pages in length. It is to be well thought out and demonstrate that you have been working on the report throughout the first four months of your term. You should include information regarding where you worked, your position title, your main responsibilities/projects and the topic of your report. Indicate the progress that you have made on your work term report, including a summary of the research already completed to date and how you see this report coming together. The academic component (see 3b) and references should be included.

5. MISCELLANEOUS

- Generally the final report is no fewer than 15-25 pages in length.
• Any e-mail correspondence to Dr. Hausdorf should include the word Co-op in the subject line. This will help your faculty advisor to identify your e-mail more quickly and respond to you more efficiently. If you have not heard back from her within one week, please resend your email. Your original message may have gone into “cyberspace”!
• If you need to speak directly with Dr. Hausdorf, please indicate where he can reach you and when. This, again, will be helpful when he is trying to return your call. Please indicate the nature of your call in your message.
• Please ensure that you keep an electronic copy and a hard copy of your work term report until you have received a grade.

6. DEADLINES . . . WHAT GOES WHERE AND WHEN

Following your work term, please ensure that co-op requirements are submitted to the appropriate location.

Due second class day following the work term
To be completed online.

• Work Term Performance Evaluation
  Completed online by your supervisor, and can be viewed in your RG profile

• Learning Goals - Reflection
  Completed online by student

Due fifth class day following the work term
To Dr. Peter Hausdorf – preferably as an e-mail attachment.

• Work term report

• Optional- Work Term Report
  Employer comments completed by your supervisor