



## UBC MA ENGLISH CO-OP PILOT - PROGRAM GUIDE 2023/2024

### Why MA English Co-op

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Program goals:

- to give graduate students well-paid, relevant work experience integrated during the academic program
- to ease the transition into the workforce after completion of their degrees; and
- to provide insight and experience into alternative careers for graduate students who may choose not to work in academia after graduation.

Co-op programs give students the opportunity to:

- explore various career options and gain substantial career experience to put on their resumes
- enrich academic learning with workplace experience
- develop their professional skills and network
- apply to positions that require students to be in a co-op program (such as federal government jobs)
- finance their degrees with relevant, paid work

### What is Co-op?

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Co-operative Education is an internationally-recognized and formally accredited learning program in which students have the opportunity to combine work experience with their academic training through pre-employment training, career coaching, and interesting, relevant workplace experiences. The University and employers co-operate to provide students with an opportunity to learn in a workplace setting by alternating practical, paid work experience in various fields of interest with their academic studies.

The English MA Co-op Pilot Program offers students the chance to work in a full-time, paid position for 4 months. Students become regular employees in the professional workplace, and are expected to complete assigned work and participate generally in workplace activities with other employees. Co-op students get in-depth exposure to a particular workplace, as well as to a range of tasks related generally to their field of study.

### How the MA English Co-op Program Works

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The English MA Co-op option is being offered as a pilot initiative in 2023/24 to students in the first year of their MA program.

Students who are accepted into the co-op program in Fall 2023 will start applying for work terms in the January 2024 semester, and will be eligible for full-time co-op work from May to August 2024.

Students go through a competitive hiring process to secure co-op positions, with support from co-op staff. MA co-op students have access to a database of postings primarily available to UBC Arts students, choose which positions to apply for, and submit applications via the Co-op Office. MA students are also supported in seeking their own co-op experiences with employers of their choosing.

For each co-op work term you secure, you will be registered into a MA co-op course that appears on your transcript as a 3-credit non-academic (i.e., credits that do not count towards your degree program) Arts Studies course. International students will need to apply for a special co-op work permit that is separate from your study visa and permits you to work full-time during a co-op work term.

### Co-op Work Terms

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Work terms are a minimum of 420 hours in length. Most employers will hire students for 12–16 weeks. Students in the English MA Co-op Program will normally complete one co-op work term.



## Types of Work to Expect

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Employers hire UBC English co-op students based on their specialized skills and potential career interests. UBC English MA students can expect to work in areas such as:

- Communications and marketing
- Research & analysis
- Writing, editing, & social media
- Web design & content development
- Event planning & management

The MA English Co-op Education Manager works closely with employers locally and nationally to develop challenging, career-related co-op positions in the non-profit, government (federal/ provincial/municipal), and private business sectors.

### Employers who hire both international & domestic students:

- Municipal government departments
- Provincial government departments
- Non-profit organizations
- Private sector companies

### Employers who hire Canadian citizens & permanent residents only:

- Federal government ministries and departments
- Federally funded programs
- Organizations receiving federal grants such as Young Canada Works and Canada Summer Jobs

## Typical Wage Structure for MA English Co-op

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- Wages can vary greatly depending on the sector. For example, some non-profits pay less than government positions. Wages are based on current labour market realities and are up to the employer to determine. MA co-op positions typically pay \$20–\$30/hour depending on the employer and sector—a 14-week work term at 37.5 hours/week at \$25 is \$13,125.

## Program Requirements

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- Complete six hours of **pre-employment training** on resumes, non-academic cover letters, interview skills, and other aspects of career development, in December 2023 and January 2024 (exact dates for training are to be determined)
- Complete a **mandatory application review and mock interview** with the Co-op Education Manager.
- During the work term, complete **professional development assignments**, participate in a co-op **site visit**, and complete a **work term self-evaluation** of the experience
- For international students: enroll in a special information session on how to apply for a co-op work permit that allows co-op students to work legally in Canada while on a co-op work term

## Fees Associated with Co-op (subject to change based on Senate guidelines)

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There is a **one-time Administration and Career Advising fee of \$272.00** due when students are accepted into the program. This fee covers pre-employment training for graduate co-op students by UBC co-op employers, alumni, and senior students, unlimited access to co-op staff for one-on-one advising, access to UBC MA English co-op resources for their co-op job search and after graduation, and access to all MA English co-op job postings. **Please note that this fee does not guarantee students a co-op position.**

While on work terms, MA English co-op students continue to pay their regular graduate tuition and student fees to UBC that allows them to be registered in a 3-credit non-academic Arts Studies co-op course (ASTU 501, 502, or 503) that appears on the student's transcript, keeps their full-time student status with the University, and gives them access to student benefits and resources. A portion of this fee is returned to the Co-op Office and helps to cover the costs of co-op



staff to market the program and secure jobs, participate in site visits, and review and evaluate students' co-op learning projects and evaluations at the end of work terms.

### Students on Scholarship while in the Program

Co-op status does not affect renewable scholarships. Renewable scholarship payments normally span a two-year period; however, for co-op students, the payments extend over a longer period to accommodate work terms. However, we recommend checking the details of your specific scholarship before joining the program. For further information about scholarship and student loan information, please contact the Awards & Financial Aid Office or visit <http://students.ubc.ca/enrolment/finances>.

**Please note that MA English students with SSHRC funding will have their grants paused while on a co-op work term.**

### Other Considerations

The numbers and types of jobs posted for co-op students reflect the job market at the time. As Metro Vancouver is not a big enough market to offer the range of experiences that graduate students want, co-op staff market the program to employers across Canada to ensure an appropriate range of positions for each work term. As a result, students who are able to relocate to take jobs will have more opportunities.

Employers vet the applications, choose which students to shortlist, and select the candidate to interview and hire. Students should expect to apply for several jobs before securing a work term. As a result, participating in the co-op program will require them to spend time putting together multiple applications during the search term when they are applying for jobs.

While the Arts Co-op Office works to ensure there is an appropriate range and number of co-op jobs to meet the needs of available students, **acceptance into the Co-op Program does not guarantee a co-op position**. Experience shows that the most successful students are those who take advantage of pre-employment training and one-on-one advising with co-op staff and are open to investing time applying for a wide range of jobs.

### Application Procedures and Evaluation

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**Applications for admission to the MA English Co-op Program for 2023/24 are due by 4 pm on Friday, September 29, 2023.**

Details on how to apply are on the Graduate Applications Canvas course: <https://canvas.ubc.ca/enroll/63NY7W>

For more information, visit us at <http://www.artscoop.ubc.ca> or contact the MA English Co-op Education Manager, Jane Devine Mejia [jane.devine@ubc.ca](mailto:jane.devine@ubc.ca)