

Know your options for your first co-op work term

There are lots of ways to [find your first co-op experience!](#)

WaterlooWorks (WW) job boards – All boards are equally valuable; explore broadly!

- **Full-Cycle Service:** Pre-approved for co-op and follows the [co-op hiring cycle](#).
- **Employer–Student Direct:** Pre-approved for co-op but follows employer timelines.
- **Contract, Part-Time & Volunteer:** Includes roles that may count as credit through an AOJ.
- **‘External Job Boards’ menu in WaterlooWorks:** roles that may count as credit through AOJ.

Arrange your own job (AOJ) – Want to find something outside WaterlooWorks?

- Review the [‘Tips for talking to employers about hiring and supporting the cost of a co-op student’](#) and download the [‘Letter of introduction’](#) to explain the benefits of hiring a student.
- Consider using [JADA](#) (Job Aggregator Digital Assistant). [Unpaid roles](#) may still count!
- Got a job offer? Submit it for approval through the [AOJ process](#) and talk to your Co-op Advisor

Standard vs. flexible work terms – First Work Term = lots of flexibility!

- To get a co-op designation, you need at least 3 [Standard work terms](#) that meet co-op criteria
- Your remaining work terms can be [Flexible work terms](#) e.g. WE Accelerate, short term roles, and part-time positions. Check the [co-op requirements](#) for your program.

WE Accelerate & E Co-op – Alternative co-op work term options

- [Waterloo Experience \(WE\) Accelerate:](#) Designed for 1st work term students! Build skills and earn a flexible co-op credit. Tip: Opt in first — you can always opt out later.
- [Enterprise Co-op \(E Co-op\):](#) Start your own venture and earn a standard co-op credit

What if I still don’t find a job? – Don’t panic – there’s support and flexibility built in!

- Co-op programs typically allow one buffer term — meaning you can graduate with one fewer completed work term than your prescribed sequence. Use the term to build skills or volunteer.

We’re here to help! Talk to your [Co-op Advisor](#) about your options or meet with a [Career Advisor](#) about résumé, job search, and interview support.