

Student Work Experience  
Environmental Health and Safety Management (EHSM) Department  
Career Technical Education  
Cuyamaca College

*This document shall serve as a recommendation to employers for having a successful work experience for students. The document does not serve as a requirement and in no way directs the employer or student for purpose of employment.*

**1) Purpose**

Student work experience is a fundamental tool which enriches the value of student education and understanding of the workplace. Our in-class based curriculum prepares students for field work in EHSM. To tie all their knowledge together, students are expected to complete work experience for a minimum of 75 paid hours or 60 unpaid hours per unit, prior to earning a certificate of achievement or associate's degree.

**2) Employer's Role**

As a potential employer to students exiting the Environmental Management or Occupational Safety and Health program, we hope to facilitate an experience which benefits the employer and student concurrently. The work experience should help employers identify potential long term candidates to train for specific workplace practices and expectations. Students should receive training in relative experience to develop skills for practical use in industry. Just as in permanent positions, students should be selected from a group of potential candidates with a resume and/or interview with new employers.

Once a student is hired for work, whether as a volunteer or paid, they are considered regular employees and employers are responsible for all local, state and federal requirements. Cuyamaca College does not satisfy any requirements for employers but can only assist in job placement. Below is a list of recommendations for the employer prior to the student beginning work:

- Ensure appropriate office space and equipment (telephone, computer, etc.) are available. Have essential items for the student's assignments and day-to-day activities available.
- Arrange with the responsible administrative party for any of the following that may be needed:
  - Identification badge
  - Building/parking/office access keys
  - E-mail account
  - Parking permits
  - Computer passwords and access information
  - Other training, especially related to computer policies, interaction with clients, confidentiality issues.
  - If necessary provide assistance/recommendations for the student for lodging for the duration of any out of area work.
  - Be sure that co-workers understand the purpose of the work experience and general scope of activities in which he/she will be involved.

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### **3) Mentor's Role**

Students are more inclined to excel in the workplace with a single mentor. It is important they have a point of contact to ask questions, manage them during work hours and provide feedback for any related work or professional encounters. A mentor should be an employee with a long and positive work history with the employer. Although students may possess high-level skills, they may lack on-the-job work experience and require guidance and direction from their mentors. This is a work experience program and students ARE NOT there to supplement personnel shortages, but to gain knowledge on various environmental or occupational health and safety areas. Below is a list of responsibilities the mentor would have:

- Coordinate with the student to ensure that the work experience meets all academic requirements.
- Oversee the student's work activities.
- Be positive and supportive
- Be fair, considerate, honest, trustworthy and cooperative when dealing with working with student
- Offer advice and assistance.
- Be available to give feedback to the student
- Assist the student in following policies and practices.
- Ensure the student works the total required hours to satisfy the work experience requirement at Cuyamaca College.
- Review and approve time sheets and complete the evaluation of student performance form. The mentor should be available to advise the student throughout the work experience period to ensure achievement of goals and satisfactory work experience is provided.

### **4) Student's Role**

Students are expected to act professional and have integrity at all times. As in a regular employment capacity, communication with your employer is important to provide the best service. Below is a list of responsibilities and characteristics expected of the student:

- Clearly identify start/end dates and determine your work schedule with your worksite supervisor
- Familiarize yourself with and adhere to organizational arrangements, policies, procedures and functions
- Maintain confidentiality of work-related personnel and projects
- Understand what constitutes a permissible work absence and whom to notify if absent
- Report to your faculty coordinator changes in work schedule, supervision or problems at your site
- Remain drug and alcohol-free, and avoid use of controlled substances
- Act in a professional and ethical manner. For example:

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- dress in an appropriate manner follow through on commitments
- do not conduct personal business during work hours
- be prompt when reporting to work and with completing assignments
- give your work your best effort
- Be positive and supportive
- Keep an open mind; avoid jumping to conclusions; develop informed opinions
- Be observant; note how employees organize their ideas and respond to and ask questions
- Be fair, considerate, honest, trustworthy and cooperative when dealing with co-workers and clients/customers
- Assert yourself and your ideas in an appropriate and tactful manner
- Seek feedback from your supervisor(s), accept suggestions for corrective changes in behavior and attempt to improve your performance
- Accept constructive criticism and continuously strive to improve and to grow professionally
- Enhance your professional effectiveness by improving skills and acquiring new knowledge

#### **5) Hiring Process**

Students should provide a resume and interview like in a normal candidate selection process. An outline of required skills, number of hours expected per week, work location(s) and expected duties should be provided to the student during the application process. Our department can facilitate the notification to students either by a pre-approved rotation or on an individual notification plan. The department can assist with the collection of resumes and/or applications and assist with the logistical components. Selection of students should be the sole decision of the employer with only recommendations made at the request of the employer or student. It should be expected to start the hiring process at least one month prior to a start date to ensure student and employer have enough time to prepare.

Our department recommends students without EHSM work experience are in their final two semesters of their major courses and a passing grade point average. Students with EHSM work experience are encouraged to apply at any time during their program as long as they possess the knowledge to provide satisfactory work. It is important to our department that we provide quality candidates who can satisfy expectations of the employer. If at any time a student is not providing satisfactory work, it is recommended that the work experience instructor is notified immediately.

#### **6) Hours Required by Semester**

A student must maintain a specific quantity of hours during each semester to satisfy the unit requirement of EHSM 240, Cooperative Work Experience. It is required the employer understand and satisfy these requirements for the student's successful completion of their program. Below is a chart explaining the hour to unit requirement for students. If you are paying the student, refer to the "Required Paid Hours" column and if they are a volunteer refer to the "Required Unpaid Hours" column. Please coordinate with the student to identify which unit load they should enroll in.

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EHSM 240 Unit Load per Semester	Required Paid Hours per Semester	Required Unpaid Hours per Semester	Fall Semester*	Spring Semester*	Summer Semester**
1 Unit Section	75 hours	60 hours	August - December	February - May	June - July
2 Unit Section	150 hours	120 hours			
3 Unit Section	225 hours	180 hours			
4 Unit Section	300 hours	240 hours			

\*Semester runs 17 consecutive weeks with a week-long spring break during the spring semester.

\*\*Summer semesters are 8 weeks long.

### 7) Work Experience Requirements

EHSM 240, Cooperative Work Experience is a state approved course with a specific outline and set of student learning objectives. It is required that the student's work experience adheres to this outline and that the instructor, student and employer work together. Below is a list of requirements and objectives which will serve as a guide to develop a work experience that is beneficial for the employer and student.

The student will:

- 1) Develop two to three specific educational goals to be completed during the semester which will enhance problem solving, critical thinking, and communication skills beyond those experienced during previous employment and required to perform effectively within the EHSM field.
- 2) Attend a 30 minute course orientation and 30 minutes course exit meeting with the instructor to evaluate goals.
- 3) Participate in evaluation process administered by instructor and work supervisor.
- 4) Prepare written report of accomplishments, lessons learned, and how EHSM courses apply to the work environment
- 5) Maintain accurate records and timesheets.
- 6) Function safely and professionally in a typical EHSM workplace environment.
- 7) Identify, select, and apply environmental technology as required on the job.
- 8) Assess future training needs for a career in environmental technology.

The instructor will:

- 1) Meet with student for 30 minutes on campus to review goals and provide course assignments and expectations.
- 2) Meet with employer for one hour to review each student goal develop a training plan which includes implementation processes and procedures and a completion date.
- 3) Meet with the employer for one hour to review the accomplishment of student goals and review training records and timesheets.
- 4) Meet with student for 30 minutes on campus to review work experience. Review written report by student of accomplishments, lessons learned, and how EHSM courses apply to the work environment.

The employer will:

- 1) Meet with the instructor for one hour at the beginning of the semester to create a training plan to incorporate student's professional goals.

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- 2) Meet with the instructor for one hour at the end of the semester to review the training provided to the employee and review and sign timesheets as proof of hours worked.
- 3) Schedule the student for work during hours that won't interrupt the student's ability to attend class.
- 4) Provide students with a safe learning environment with proper training to accomplish tasks and goals.
- 5) Provide student with enough work hours to satisfy the unit requirement as discussed in section 6.
- 6) Adhere to training plan as developed with instructor or contact instructor to discuss changes.
- 7) Contact instructor about any issues which occur during the semester which may affect the students ability to train or be employed by the employer.
- 8) Complete the Evaluation of Student Performance form at the end of the work experience semester, prior to finals week.