

WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING

This procedure is governed by its parent policy. Questions regarding this procedure are to be directed to the identified Procedure Owner.

Category:	A. Academic
Parent Policy:	A21
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Procedure Owner:	Vice President, Academic

Overview:	<p>The Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) Procedure outlines the specific roles, responsibilities, processes and guidelines for administering and facilitating domestic WIL academic experiences at Olds College of Agriculture & Technology (the "College"). These procedures support the Work-Integrated Learning Policy, ensuring that WIL academic experiences are consistently planned, approved and facilitated.</p>
Procedures:	<p>Academic Information</p> <p>This section outlines the typical expectations for WIL across credentials, including Certificates, Post-Diploma Certificates, Diplomas, Applied Degrees and Degree programs. These guidelines aim to ensure a valuable and consistent experience for students, host organizations/employers, and the College, aligning with the learning objectives of each credential.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WIL Course Design and Evaluation For more information regarding WIL course design, student preparation, and examples of student activities, access the WIL Course Design and Evaluation Framework at the link provided. 2. Course Description Courses that include a WIL opportunity will clearly state in their course description: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the type of WIL, • how the student will be directly connected with an industry partner, • what WIL activities will be undertaken. 3. Certificate Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus: Foundational skills, practical application, exposure to industry practices. • Type of Work: Primarily hands-on, task-oriented, supervised practical



work directly related to the certificate's core competencies.

- **Length of Work Term:**
 - **Typical Duration:** 4-8 weeks (full-time equivalent). This term can be structured as an intensive block or spread out over a 4-month term (e.g., 1-2 days per week).
 - **Hours:** Approximately 160-320 hours.
 - **Credits:** 3 credits per WIL course
- **Supervision:** High level of direct supervision from the host organization. Regular check-ins with the assigned faculty instructor.
- **Types of Course Assignments and Deliverables:** Demonstration of practical skill acquisition and reflection on learning.

4. Diploma Programs

- **Focus:** Application of theoretical knowledge, development of specialized skills, problem-solving in practical contexts, and understanding of operational processes.
- **Type of Work:** More specialized tasks requiring the application of knowledge gained in the diploma program. Students are expected to take on more responsibility, contribute to specific projects, and understand the "why" behind the tasks.
- **Length of Work Term:**
 - **Typical Duration:** 8-16 weeks (full-time equivalent). Often structured as a dedicated work term, within a maximum of 4 months (16 weeks).
 - **Hours:** Approximately 320-640 hours.
 - **Credits:** 3 credits per WIL course
- **Supervision:** Moderate level of supervision, with students expected to work more independently on assigned tasks. Regular check-ins with the assigned faculty instructor.
- **Types of Course Assignments and Deliverables:** Analysis of a specific problem or project, demonstration of applied knowledge, and professional communication.

5. Applied Degree and Degree Programs

- **Focus:** Independent research, complex problem-solving, strategic thinking, innovation, leadership potential, integration of interdisciplinary knowledge, and contribution to the host organization's objectives.
- **Type of Work:** Significant responsibilities often involving project management, research, data analysis, development of new strategies, or contributing to higher-level decision-making processes. Students are expected to initiate, plan, execute, and report on projects with minimal supervision, leveraging their comprehensive academic knowledge.
- **Length of Work Term:**
 - **Typical Duration for Degree Programs:** 8-16 weeks (full-time equivalent). Often structured as a dedicated work term, within a maximum of 4 months (16 weeks).

- **Hours:** Approximately 400-640 hours.
- **Credits for Degree Programs:** 3 credits per WIL course
- **Typical Duration for Applied Degree Programs:** 8 months (continuous, or two 4-month terms)
- **Credits for Applied Degree Programs:** 30 credits for an 8-month Directed Field Study work term
- **Supervision:** Low to moderate level of supervision, with students expected to demonstrate significant autonomy and initiative. Regular but less frequent check-ins with the assigned faculty instructor, often focused on project progress and academic mentorship.
- **Types of Course Assignments and Deliverables:** In-depth analysis of the WIL term, original research conducted during the WIL term, and a demonstration of advanced critical thinking, reflection, and professional-level communication.

Administrative Information

1. Roles and Responsibilities

The College **WIL Coordinator** and the **WIL Academic Lead** are responsible for:

- Advising on WIL policy, procedures, regulations, and standards.
- Collaborating with TLCI, the Office of the Registrar, Deans, PCC Chairs, and faculty when developing and reviewing course outlines, competency profiles, assessments, and credit hours.
- Developing resources and promoting best practices.

Before the start of and during the WIL experience, the **WIL Instructor** is responsible for:

- **Preparing Students:** Offer a pre-placement orientation covering liability, insurance, and reporting requirements. Ensure students understand their responsibilities and expectations for the term.
- **Approving the Worksite:** Vet the worksite and the position to confirm it offers a suitable learning environment.
- **Aligning with Learning Outcomes:** Confirm that the WIL activities directly support the program's learning outcomes.
- **Clarifying Roles:** Communicate responsibilities to both students and the host organization.
- **Setting Goals and Expectations:** Approve the student's learning goals and prepare students for all assignments, projects, and assessments.
- **Managing Documentation:** Administer placement agreements and evaluation forms for all involved parties.
- **Monitoring Progress:** Oversee the WIL term by coordinating with the host organization, supervising students, and ensuring regulatory compliance.
- **Assessing Student Performance:** Evaluate WIL assignments and activities with the same rigour as other academic work.
- **Resolving Issues:** Address any conflicts between the host organization's policies and the college's policies, seeking assistance

as needed.

Host Organization/Employer responsibilities will be outlined in the [WIL Employer Handbook](#) provided at the beginning of each WIL experience.

Student rights and responsibilities will be outlined in the [WIL Student Handbook](#) and the course outline provided at the beginning of each WIL experience.

2. Data Management and Risk Mitigation

College software systems will be used to track WIL-related information for data management and risk mitigation purposes. The Office of the Registrar will maintain this information and may share it with other College departments as needed, while adhering to College privacy and security policies and procedures.

The College, the WIL Host Organization/Employer, and the Student must sign a WIL agreement before the WIL starts. The student cannot participate in the WIL experience until all parties have signed the agreement.

The College will provide a standardized Placement Agreement for all programs. The Placement Agreement form will contain the following information:

- **WIL Experience Details:** Define the category, purpose, location, and duration of the WIL term.
- **Roles and Responsibilities:** Clearly state the expectations, roles, and contact information for the student, the host organization, and the college.
- **Supervision and Communication:** Establish a clear supervisory structure and communication principles for all parties involved.
- **Legal and Ethical Agreements:** Include confidentiality, intellectual property, code of conduct, and WCB coverage.
- **Assessment:** Outline the specific assessment requirements for the WIL term.

3. Worker's Compensation Board (WCB) and Other Liability Coverage

A student participating in an approved WIL experience in Alberta, which is required for the student to graduate, is automatically covered by the Government of Alberta's WCB insurance while on the WIL site.

A student participating in an approved WIL experience outside of Alberta, which is required for the student to graduate, may or may not be covered by the Government of Alberta's WCB insurance while on the WIL site. The employer should contact WCB officials in both Alberta and the other jurisdiction to determine whether WCB coverage is available in that jurisdiction.

Refer to the respective province's WCB website for the most up-to-date information available.

It is the student's responsibility to research, obtain, and ensure they have adequate personal liability, health, and travel insurance coverage, as appropriate for their work term location and duties.

4. Resignation, Termination, or Layoff from the WIL Workplace

If a student resigns, is terminated, or is laid off from their WIL experience for any reason, they must report this immediately to the WIL Instructor and provide a complete report documenting the reasons for resignation or termination.

The specific issue will be reviewed by the Instructor in consultation with the Office of the Dean and the Office of the Registrar. Appropriate College policies will be applied to determine the outcome, if needed.

Definitions:

Community and Industry Research & Projects: Projects to engage learners in program-related research conducted primarily in workplaces, including consulting, design, and community-based projects. Learners undertake real-world projects, with host organizations serving as clients and learners acting as service providers. The project must comprise a significant portion of the course.

Co-operative Education (Co-op): A program which alternates periods of academic study with periods of work experience in appropriate fields of business, industry, government, or social services. A co-op internship consists of multiple co-op work terms that are completed consecutively. In both models, work terms provide students with experience in a workplace setting related to their field of study. The number of required work terms varies by program; however, the time spent in work terms must be at least 30% of the total time spent on academic study for programs that are longer than 2 years, and 25% of the total time for programs that are 2 years or shorter. The learner completing multiple work terms is usually exposed to the work environment during more than one season of the year.

Course-based Community-Engaged Projects: Smaller projects than the Community and Industry Research & Projects, but still allow students to collaborate with community partners (non-profit organizations, government agencies, local businesses, or community groups) to work on real-world issues or projects. These smaller-scale projects offer students course-based experiential learning opportunities, enabling them to apply their knowledge and skills in practical settings, develop professional competencies, and gain valuable insights into their field of study. The project is part of the overall course activities, contributes to the final grade, and will be described in the course description and/or outline.

Directed Field Study (DFS): A component of an applied degree program that integrates academic learning with practical application at an approved workplace setting. The DFS component of the program involves one 8-month term (or two 4-month terms) in the final year of study. It consists of relevant and supervised full-time work experience, along with the completion of rigorous academic assignments/requirements as outlined in the course outline. Overtime hours do not decrease the length of the DFS. Students are typically remunerated in a DFS. The DFS comprises 30 credits of the total credits required for program completion.

Entrepreneurship: Enables students to utilize resources, space, mentorship, and/or funding to develop early-stage business start-ups and/or advance external ideas that address real-world needs, earning academic credit. A host in this category would be the mentor/s identified in the WIL agreement. An entrepreneurial WIL term may be used in a Directed Field Study.

Field Placements: Placements that offer students intensive, part-time, and/or short-term hands-on practical experience in a setting relevant to their field of study. Field placements may not require the supervision of a registered or licensed professional, and the completion of work hours is not necessary for professional certification. Field placements may be paid or unpaid. Field placements encompass work-integrated educational experiences not covered by other forms, such as co-ops, clinical placements, or internships. The length of the field placement is defined in the WIL Agreement and the course outline.

Internships: Are usually one discipline-specific (typically full-time), supervised, structured, paid, or unpaid work term required for academic credit and/or program completion. The internship may occur in the middle of an academic program or after completing all academic coursework and before graduation. The length of the internship is defined in the WIL Agreement and the course outline.

Mandatory Professional Practicum/Clinical Placement: Placements that involve work experience under the supervision of an experienced registered or licensed professional (e.g., a preceptor) in any discipline that requires practice-based work experience for professional licensure or certification. Practicum placements are generally unpaid, and as the work is done in a supervised setting, students typically do not have their own workload/caseload. This practicum/clinical placement is typically required for academic credit and/or program completion and accreditation.

Work-Integrated Learning (WIL): A model and process of curricular experiential education that formally and intentionally integrates a student's academic studies within a workplace or practice setting, meeting all the criteria listed in the accompanying policy. WIL experiences involve an engaged partnership of at least the College, a host organization/employer (which may be the College itself), and a student. WIL can be integrated at the course or program level, facilitating the development of learning outcomes related to employability, personal agency, and lifelong learning. Depending on the type of placement, the WIL experience may be paid or unpaid. Students are typically considered to have full-time student status during their WIL experience. *(Olds College has adopted this definition based on the Co-Operative Education and Work Integrated Learning Canada (CEWIL) definition and the Alberta Post-Secondary Programs (2020) definition of WIL.)*

Full-Time Active Student: A student who is enrolled in a post-secondary program and is registered in a minimum of 60% of a full course load, or 40% for students with a documented permanent disability. The student must be actively attending classes or participating in required academic activities during the current academic term.

	<p>Full-time Employment: A minimum of 37.5 hours per week, or the industry equivalent, during a scheduled work term.</p> <p>Host Organization/Employer: The external organization or business that provides a workplace setting for the student's WIL experience. The host supports the student's learning by providing supervision, feedback, and opportunities that align with the program outcomes. The College may be the Host Organization/Employer if a department has specifically hired a WIL student for an open job posting.</p>
Related Information:	<p>A21 Work Integrated Learning Policy</p> <p>WIL Course Design and Evaluation Framework</p> <p>WIL Student Handbook (2025/2026)</p> <p>WIL Employer Handbook (2025/2026)</p>
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