**Supervising Remotely:
A checklist for preparing, onboarding, and supervising**

When working remotely, effective onboarding and supervision processes become even more important for both the student and the supervisor. They increase the student’s sense of belonging in a new learning environment, reduce the time it takes for them to reach desired productivity levels, and improve their overall learning and performance.

We encourage you to tailor this document to make it as useful as possible for you and your team.

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| **Before First Day of Work** | **Date Completed** |
| Send a warm introductory email with point-of-contact and first-day plan, being sure to acknowledge COVID-19 |  |
| Send general info about your organization, office, policies, and regulations; include information about COVID-19 response |  |
| Send any administrative paperwork that can be completed in advance |  |
| Set-up email and organization accounts |  |
| Provide workspace expectations (e.g., wi-fi, bandwidth, phone) and what you will be providing (e.g., hardware, software, office supplies, reimbursement for wi-fi overages); arrange for delivery or safe pick-up |  |
| Develop a training plan and schedule for first few weeks, modifying existing onboarding and training procedures to make them remote |  |
| Send email to your team announcing arrival of new student and distribute orientation plan to relevant team members |  |
| Ask the student if they have other questions that they would like to have covered before they start |  |

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| **During First Day of Work** | **Date Completed** |
| Welcome student by video, allow time for questions, getting acquainted |  |
| Reinforce team culture, introduce student to staff by video, making sure to identify who to go to for support on key topics, have casual conversations |  |
| Consider having team members book video coffee breaks with the student; ensure student is now included (as appropriate) in team activities |  |
| Explain your team’s overall approach to working remotely; ask them if they have worked remotely before and what strategies they have used that they have found effective |  |
| Discuss health and safety hazards and resources in the context of working remotely. You can use this [home office SOP](https://safety.queensu.ca/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.ehswww/files/files/General%20Safety/SOP%20Home%20Office%20-%202020-03-26%20Version.pdf) (Standard Operating Procedure) and this [home office safety checklist](https://safety.queensu.ca/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.ehswww/files/files/General%20Safety/home-office-safety-checklist.pdf) that is specific to working remotely from home.   |  |
| Discuss your personal communication preferences and office communication norms, including if quick questions can be asked by chat; get to know their communication and learning style and preferences |  |
| Review expectations for hours of work, schedule, pay schedule, overtime policy, vacation planning, time tracking procedures, all in the context of working remotely & COVID-19 |  |
| Discuss procedures for scheduling time off and unexpected absences |  |
| Review departmental policies for cell phone, personal calls, social media and personal computing  |  |
| Computer and tech orientation (log-ins, password, networks, email, voicemail) |  |
| Allow the student the opportunity to share any responsibilities they have outside of work due to COVID-19 (e.g., childcare, eldercare); review accommodation policies; discuss any required accommodations |  |
| Discuss organizational goals and/or priorities for Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity |  |
| Have the student complete any outstanding forms (if signatures are required suggest a free scanner app like TinyScanner or allow them to take a photo of their signed document since they may not have access to a scanner) |  |
| Review employee resources and supports (e.g., employee resource groups, health and wellness services, [student employment during COVID-19 page](https://careers.queensu.ca/students/student-and-new-graduate-employment-support-during-covid-19)) |  |
| Provide general organization/sector orientation materials to be reviewed, and consider providing an overview yourself |  |
| Ask the student if there is anything that you haven’t covered that they have questions about |  |
| Recommend that the student register for a Working Remotely webinar with the EL Hub |  |

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| **During First Two Weeks** | **Date Completed** |
| Consider checking in with your student at the beginning and end of each day for the first two weeks, encouraging them to keep a running list of questions, list of what they have accomplished, and their plans for the following day |  |
| Schedule introductory meeting with supervisor to review job description, responsibilities, competencies and expectations, frequency and modality of future meetings, how to receive questions and how often student can expect to receive feedback |  |
| Ask the student to fill in part 1 of the [EL WrapAround Reflection Form](https://www.queensu.ca/experientiallearninghub/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.qelhwww/files/files/EL%20WrapAround%20Learning%20Reflection%20Form%20-%20Expanded%20EL%282%29.pdf) to set learning goals, meet with them to discuss it, and encourage them to register for the corresponding workshop on MyCareer |  |
| Provide the training plan and schedule, which could include a checklist for them to follow; consider opportunities for networking and ensure these are intentionally planned in lieu of organic connections |  |
| Encourage the student to seek resources and support for working remotely (e.g., [this tipsheet](https://www.cewilcanada.ca/_Library/COVID_19/FINALStudent_tips_for_working_at_home_-_CEWIL_Canada.pdf)) |  |
| Review requirements for performance appraisals and timelines for updates and other communications |  |
| Arrange for any company and/or department specific training (e.g. computer software training) |  |
| Ensure site-specific health and safety training is complete |  |
| Review team meeting protocols and expectations  |  |
| Schedule 1:1 meetings on an ongoing basis, ideally by video, to provide ongoing and consistent feedback |  |
| Provide a structured workplan for the student or develop one with them to ensure expectations are clear, with clear deliverables and timelines, include several projects or tasks to ensure the student remains productive if one is delayed |  |
| Ask student for feedback about their first two weeks, including what strategies they have found effective for working remotely, and whether they have found any challenges that they have not yet shared with you. Ask them specifically about how their relationships with the rest of the team are developing and assess whether this is progressing well or needs attention. |  |

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| **On an Ongoing Basis** | **Date Completed** |
| As it can be harder to monitor work productivity when working remotely, set up a formal structure for the student to report on their progress with their tasks and projects |  |
| Communicate openly and often, switch to two-way (phone or video) immediately if any confusion or tension arises |  |
| Start the day off with quick morning team meetings including the student to set the tone for the day |  |
| Hold 1:1 meetings on an ongoing basis to provide ongoing and consistent feedback, check in on work progress and their well-being, and maintain a strong connection |  |
| Consider ongoing training needs and opportunities for networking |  |
| Make yourself available throughout the day by phone, email or chat |  |
| Provide meaningful work (either training or substantive work) with increased responsibility; consider smaller, manageable deliverables rather than focusing on big projects and schedule regular communication |  |
| Reinforce team culture, set a positive emotional tone as a leader, foster connection between the student and team members (e.g., video lunches or coffee breaks, sharing something along a theme at staff meetings) |  |
| Have empathy, recognize the student might feel unsure of themselves, lack experience in a professional environment, be feeling anxious, or lack resources; provide ongoing mentorship and support, and share your own process of adapting |  |
| Watch for performance issue warning signs, including missing deadlines or being unavailable for meetings, ensure you respond identifying your concerns, asking about their well-being, and reinforcing expectations |  |
| Manage issues and conflict with extra attention to articulating clear expectations, 1-on-1 check-ins, using two-way communication (ideally with video and more than usual), and considering COVID circumstances |  |
| Ask student for feedback periodically, encouraging ongoing reflection, which boosts learning, productivity, and job satisfaction |  |

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| **During Final Month** | **Date Completed** |
| Provide the process and expectations for exiting (e.g., work priorities, exit report and other documentation, exit interview) |  |
| Review their final report or deliverables early and provide feedback |  |
| Ask the student to fill in part 2 of the [EL WrapAround Reflection Form](https://www.queensu.ca/experientiallearninghub/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.qelhwww/files/files/EL%20WrapAround%20Learning%20Reflection%20Form%20-%20Expanded%20EL%282%29.pdf) to reflect on their goals and skills learned and meet with them to discuss it, encourage them to register for the corresponding workshop on MyCareer |  |
| Using standardized exit interview questions, hold an exit interview to hear about the student’s experience and share final feedback with them |  |
| Ask for input from your team on an e-card or similar token of appreciation to replace a paper card and host a thank you virtual coffee break with your whole team or similar gathering to express gratitude |  |
| Send a thank you email and acknowledgement of their last week or day including the whole team |  |

**Sources**

* Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario. 2016. *A Practical Guide for Work-Integrated Learning.* Queen’s Printer for Ontario.
* Cooper, L., Orrell, J. and Bowden, M. 2010. *Work Integrated Learning: A Guide to Effective Practice.* NY, NY: Routledge.
* McClellan, G.S., Creager, K. and Savoca, M. (2018) A Good Job: Campus Employment as a High-Impact Practice. Sterling, Virginia: Stylus Publishing.
* Tipsheets for [onboarding remotely](https://www.cewilcanada.ca/_Library/COVID_19/FINALTips_for_onboarding_students_remotely_-_CEWIL_Canada.pdf) and [supervising remotely](https://www.cewilcanada.ca/_Library/COVID_19/FINALTips_for_supervising_students_remotely_-_CEWIL_Canada.pdf) from CEWIL Canada

**Additional Resources**

* Queen’s University [COVID-19 information](https://www.queensu.ca/covidinfo/home)
* Queen’s ITS Guide on [Connecting, Collaborating, and Teaching Remotely](https://www.queensu.ca/its/connecting-collaborating-and-teaching-remotely)
* Queen’s Records Management and Privacy Office [Working Remotely Fact Sheet](https://www.queensu.ca/accessandprivacy/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.oapwww/files/files/FactSheet-WorkingRemotely.pdf)
* Queen’s Career Services’ [Student Employment Support during COVID-19](https://careers.queensu.ca/students/student-and-new-graduate-employment-support-during-covid-19)
* Queen’s EL Hub’s [Experiential Learning WrapAround](https://www.queensu.ca/experientiallearninghub/el-wraparound/experiential-learning-wraparound)