Work-Integrated Learning Service Learning Guide

2023-2024

NOVA SCOTIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Nova Scotia Community College

Nova Scotia

CONTENTS

ABOUT THIS MANUAL

Related Manuals

- WIL Student Guide
- WIL Faculty Guide
- WIL Employer Guide

How to Access and Use this manual

This manual is available in the following formats:

- **Online web-book**. You can read this manual online on a computer or mobile device.
- **PDF**. You can download in two different PDF formats.
  - Digital PDF – optimized for digital use, reading on a computer or tablet.
  - Print PDF – optimized for printing.
- **eBook**. Download the EPUB file.
  - Most tablets and eReaders (including iPad and Kobo) and smartphones (including iPhone and Android) can read eBook files in EPUB format.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Mika Francis, Social Services Student

Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) is located in Mi'kma'ki, the unceded territory and traditional homeland of the Mi'kmaq Nation. Our relationship is based on a series of peace and friendship treaties between the Mi'kmaq Nation and the Crown, dating back to 1725. As Treaty beneficiaries, we recognize that we are all Treaty People.

As an employer or community partner, we recognize and respect that each of you may work, play, and live on ancestral, unceded and traditional homelands lands of the Indigenous, First Nation, Innu, or Inuit Peoples outside of the Mi'kmaq Nation, and we acknowledge that our activities are not limited to NSCC physical locations.

Central to the values of NSCC and the Department of Career and Employment Services, is the inalienable belief that everyone should be free from discrimination and inequality, and we recognize the uniqueness of everyone's differences, lived experiences and self-identification. Work-Integrated Learning is a safe space where you should expect to be treated with the respect, integrity, and fairness. This applies equally to students, employers/community partners, co-workers, vendors, and clients. and WIL practitioners (faculty and staff).

African Nova Scotian recognition

NSCC recognizes the African Nova Scotians as a distinct group who arrived here 400 years ago. From that time on, they have contributed to the infrastructure and economic wealth of the towns and cities they helped to build, but from which they could not benefit.

We honour and offer gratitude to those ancestors of African descent who came before us to this land.

NSCC VISION, MISSION, VALUES

At NSCC our vision, mission, promise, and values fill us with purpose, guide our work and drive us forward. We realize our vision and mission through our strategic plan, which focuses on the following key areas:

- Student success
- Community impact
- Organizational excellence
- Academic quality

We demonstrate our commitment to our values with leadership from Human Rights, Equity and Inclusion, our international partnerships, and our sustainability practices.

VISION

Transforming Nova Scotia one learner at a time.

MISSION

Building Nova Scotia's economy and quality of life through education and innovation.

PROMISE

To empower those who strive to know more, do more, be more.

VALUES

Accessibility

We commit to opening pathways and providing equitable opportunities for students to engage fully in our programs and services.

Diversity

We are intentional in our efforts to build diversity as a core strength. We recognize diversity of knowledge, worldview and experience as an asset and a key driver of success in advancing innovation, creativity, and excellence.

Employee success

We believe that engaged people make the difference in our environment of continuous learning. Teamwork and creativity are encouraged, and innovation is expected to ensure the success of our students and our organization.

Inclusion

We are committed to creating a culture of genuine inclusion that is free from discrimination and harassment and where our students, employees, and the communities we serve are treated with fairness, dignity and respect.

Innovation

We believe there is always a better way. We find it by inspiring curiosity, openness, and creativity in the pursuit of excellence.

Public accountability

We work with integrity in every area of the College and believe we must be fundamentally accountable for the public's trust in all that we do.

Safety

We're dedicated to ensuring the health and safety of our students and employees. We're committed to working collaboratively to foster a culture of safety and improving safety practices across the organization.

Student success

We empower students through applied learning, services and supports to propel them on their way to career success and fulfilment.

Sustainability

We commit to the continuous development of the social, economic, cultural, and environmental sustainability of the College and our communities.

INTRODUCTION

Service Learning involves hands-on learning that combines active community service with instruction and reflection. This helps students develop a sense of responsibility and strengthens communities. It enriches learning, promotes civic engagement, and aids personal and professional growth. Additionally, Service Learning contributes to community development in Nova Scotia. Through Service Learning, students become more connected to their communities and recognize their role in the province's growth. Effective Service Learning relies on strong community relationships. Many faculty members have established ties with community partners through various experiences. These partners become co-educators, preparing NSCC students for diverse sectors. Our graduate profile encompasses value like civic responsibility, social consciousness, and leadership. Service Learning helps shape graduates who are skilled in their fields and dedicated to the betterment of their campus, college, community and province.

NSCC 's vision is to offer each student a chance for community engagement. This experience hones critical thinking, leadership, ethics, social awareness, and civic duty. This experiences hones critical thinking, leadership, ethics, social awareness and civic duty. As such, Service Learning is a core outcome in all NSCC programs.

CHECKLIST

The following checklist outlines the required procedures to be completed prior to, during and following the completion of a Service Learning project.

Preparing for Service Learning

Faculty to provide orientation to Service Learning to students and/or community partners (if needed)

- Develop a Service Learning project(s)
- Develop an assessment and evaluation plan
- Ensure the following forms are complete:
    - Work Integrated Learning Agreement
    - Assessment & Evaluation Plan (optional)
- Obtain necessary permits if required (e.g. building permits)

During the Service Learning

- Student should complete a Service Learning Log
- Schedule check-in's with faculty, students and community partners
- Promote Reflective Learning
- In case of accident/incident ensure reporting process is followed
- Ensure the following forms are complete:
  - Orientation & Community Partner Site Review – Group Service Learning Projects
  - Service Learning Log (optional)
  - Accident/Incident Report (if required)

Following the Service Learning

- Faculty will evaluate the learning
- Celebrate and share the results of the project

USER GUIDELINES

Faculty responsibilities

- Cultivate connections with community partners and identify suitable opportunities for the program
- Align Service Learning projects with program and course goals
- Provide students with comprehensive information on Service Learning
- Help students in recognizing the connection between service and learning
- Assist in creating learning plans and establishing agreements with community partners
- Prioritize risk management and safety considerations
- Provide guidance and support throughout the Service Learning project
- Assess and evaluate learning outcomes
- Celebrate the achievements gained through portfolio learning experiences
- Ensure all Service Learning forms are completed

Community Partners

- Share pertinent information about the organization's service requirements with NSCC
- Collaboratively design service learning projects that both address real community need and meet stated learning goals and objectives for the students

- Assist with orientation and/or training to prepare students for active involvement, and to supervise and support students during their projects
- Provide student(s) with ongoing feedback and assessment throughout their projects
- Collaborate as a co-educator; such as participating in classroom presentations on relevant topics at the invitation of Faculty member
- Work with the Faculty and student(s) to fulfill all necessary service learning forms

Students

- Prepare for Service Learning activity by attending and participating in any orientation sessions provided by your Faculty and your Community Partner.
- Intentionally take on the dual role of student and service provider.
- Expect to participate in activities that prepare you for this role (theory, site visit, risk management planning, meeting with Community Partners, writing your learning goals, etc.).
- Actively engage in service delivery in the community.
- Reflect upon the meaning of the experience to you personally, intellectually, and with respect to citizenship.
- Accept the responsibilities inherent in community engagement, including responsible behaviour, and respectful relationship building.
- Work with your Faculty and Community Partner to complete all service learning forms.
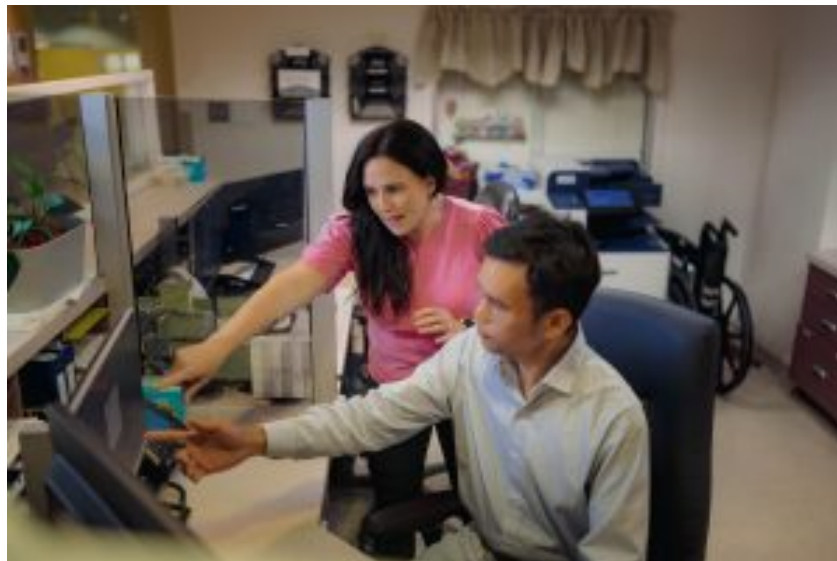
SERVICE LEARNING PROCEDURES

Service Learning procedures have been separated into three sections:

1. Preparing for Service Learning
2. During the Service Learning
3. Following the Service Learning

Each section outlines the procedures that should take place during each period.

Preparing for Service Learning

Identifying a Campus, College, or Community Partner

NSCC establishes connections with community partners through various avenues. On occasions, Community Partners approach NSCC with specific needs that align with the program objectives. Alternatively, NSCC actively finds potential partners within the community whose needs match program goals. In both scenarios, the essence of "service" in Service Learning originates from campus, college, or a student.

Faculty members are encouraged to engage community partners in conversations aimed at clarifying their requirements. When feasible, inviting partners to address the class directly can enhance understanding and collaboration. This open dialogue facilitates the seamless integration of community needs into the Service Learning framework.

Consider the following questions when developing a Service Learning project:

- Does the project align with program or course-level outcomes?
- Does the community partner possess a minimum of $2 million in General Liability Insurance Coverage?
- Are the benefits shared equally between learning and service?
- Are we confident that the service being provided by students does not take away employment from local contractors or compete with local businesses or organizations?
- Is the project location appropriate?
- Have we devised an authentic assessment and learning evaluation strategy ?
- Is there a budget for expenses such as materials, tools etc.?
- Does the project encourage cross-program or cross-school collaboration?
- Have all participating Faculty and students participated in the planning process?

Orientations to Service Learning

It is important that Community Partners understand the difference between Service Learning, volunteering, and other forms of work-integrated learning. Providing an orientation for Community Partners is an important step in developing and designing successful learning projects. Service Learning should always strive to create a balance between benefits to students and benefits to the community organization.

Faculty are expected to provide students with an orientation to Service Learning. An important part of this session should be to define Service Learning as a teaching and learning method. Service Learning should provide students with a sense of what the "product" or "service" of their work will be. Service can include a number of activities, but what is important is that the students are doing something that is within their scope of practice, skills, competencies and knowledge base.

The development of a learning plan is an important way to engage students in identifying their own learning goals in addition to program and course outcomes. Faculty design the components of the learning plan that they would like students to prepare. Some suggestions include: task lists; orientation; literature review;

meetings; project updates; presentations; budget and costs; outcomes; evaluations; distributions and finding; and risk.

Student & Graduate Employment Site

Utilize NSCC's job board as an effective platform to promote service learning opportunities. Organizations can list these roles on NSCC's Student & Graduate Employment Site, categorizing them under "Job Type: Service Learning."

During the Service Learning

Once the project is underway, there are several ways that students can be supported in in carrying out their Service Learning plan:

- Supervise, support, and monitor the student(s)
- Encourage regular reflections, blogging, email, social media posts, or through MS Teams
- Check-in either virtually, on campus, or in the community
- Use community partner as co-educator in/outside classroom

Although a plan for assessment and evaluation was developed at the beginning of the project, now is the time to implement those tools and provide opportunities for meaningful reflection. This is the part of the Service Learning experience where students make important portfolio connections between what they have done and seen with who they are as potential employees, citizens, team members and students.

Faculty support their students to:

- Develop critical thinking process, analyze concepts. Faculty might need to provide theory on critical thinking or practice in class.
- Connect experience to theory – invite students to share their learning during class discussions.

Faculty can assist this experience by:

- Posing reflective questions, asking students to explore systemic causes of problems they have seen during their project (i.e., poverty, poor policies, lack of funding).
- Giving students opportunities to putting facts, ideas, experiences together to derive new meaning and understanding (learning circles, group meetings, de-briefings).

These activities contribute to Portfolio Learning:

- Guide the students towards articulation of who they were before the service, and who they have become as a result of the experience. How has it changed them, or not?
- What strengths and challenges have they identified about themselves? Can they turn this into a professional and/or personal development plan for themselves?

Orientation & Job Safety Review

Community partners are required to provide students with an orientation and safety review on the first day the student is onsite. The orientation will assist students with establishing clear objectives, duties, and responsibilities for their service learning, allow them to get acquainted with the worksite (either onsite or remotely), and understand the organization itself. The job safety review is when students will learn about occupational health and safety policies, layout of the worksite, job hazards, etc. to ensure they are aware of safe work practices.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is of upmost importance in maintaining privacy, security, and trust in professional and personal interactions. Students are obliged to maintain confidentiality regarding all information about clients, policies, and work materials they may encounter during their experience. However, sharing general information relevant to the student's educational experience with faculty may be necessary.

Release of Information

During the service learning the faculty and the community partner will need to communicate regarding the student's performance. In accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPOP) and the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA), students may be required to have communications and certain information released to the community partner in order to obtain credit.

Accident/Incident Reporting Process

Prior to a student starting the service learning, it is important to ensure that they know what to do and who to contact if they find themselves in an unsafe or disrespectful working environment. **See the Health & Safety section of this guide more for detail.**

Following the Service Learning

This is the part of the Service Learning experience where students reflect and make important portfolio connections between what they have done and seen with who they are as potential employees, citizens, team members and students.

Evaluate the Learning

Faculty are responsible for formally assess the learning. Self-assessment can contribute, so can input from the community partner, but it is the faculty role to assign a value to this. One important guideline is to evaluate the learning **not the service**. Sometimes service goals are not met, for any number of reasons. That doesn't mean that the student has not met the learning outcome or had a significant learning experience. Keep this in mind when formally evaluating the project.

- Can the student effectively explain how they've fulfilled the course learning outcomes?
- Can the student articulate the impact of the learning on their own views, values, skills, future actions?
- Can the student define what worked and what did not about their approach to service?

Evaluate the Partnership

Now is the time for evaluating not only the learning, but the partnership. It is important to ask the community partner about the experience from their perspective.

- Were their service needs and goals met?
- Was their role suitable?
- Did the students and faculty fulfill their obligations?
- Did the community partner feel like they were partners in learning?

- Was the communication strategy effective?
- Would the community partner participate in service learning again (same project or different)?

Celebrate the Project

There are many ways to celebrate or wrap up a Service Learning project:

- Share details with Career and Employment Services (workexperince@nscc.ca)
- Community presentations of students' work
- Invite Service Learning partners to the campus for presentations
- Host a reception to recognize partners and students
- Share stories of success with the media, other campus colleagues with NSCC's Marketing and Communications Team's support
- Share stories of success on Connect
- Have students develop and present a learning narrative that summarizes the project
- Ensure students send follow-up letter to community partner

HEALTH & SAFETY

Student health and safety is a priority. Safety is a shared responsibility amongst NSCC, the Service Learning partner, and the student. Insurance and risk management practices are of the utmost importance in ensuring the health and safety of our students.

To demonstrate NSCC's due diligence, it is important that a risk assessment is completed, required forms are reviewed and signed, and safety plans are in place. NSCC maintains several insurance policies to protect employees, students, and the community organization. These include errors and omissions, general liability, and student accident insurance should any accidents or incidents occur.

Student Insurance

The following is language from NSCC's Work-Integrated Learning Guides regarding student insurance. The coverage outlined below will extend to service learning experiences. If you have any questions regarding insurance, please email workexperience@nscc.ca .

Most students are automatically enrolled in or covered by existing NSCC insurance plans while engaged in work experience activities. The Student Insurance Program (SIP) Accident insurance protects students in the event of a workplace accident for some expenses not covered by NS Medical Services Insurance Program (MSI).

If the student is from another province in Canada, they have basic coverage provided by the equivalent Medical Services Insurance program from their home province. The same is applicable for students from Nova Scotia who intend to complete their placements in another province. Students should only apply to change their provincial health care if they live in the new province for 183 days of the calendar year.

If a student is a paid employee, they are covered by the industry partner's WCB account while on placement. They are also covered by existing NSCC Insurance plans while engaged in work-integrated learning activities.

NSCC's General Liability insurance protects students and the College in the event that a student causes bodily injury or property damage to a third party while on work experience. Students in Health & Human Services programs are also covered also medical malpractice coverage.

Employer/Community Partner Insurance

In most cases, NSCC requires that service learning partners carry a general liability insurance policy of at least $2 million. This not only protects our students, but also demonstrates that industry/community partners promote safe workplace and risk management practices.

Some community partners may not carry the minimum general liability insurance to guard against risk within their organizations. In these cases, NSCC may allow service learning with these industry partners if the following process is completed.

Student and supervising faculty, in conjunction with the industry partner, complete the Service Learning Agreement. The assessment is reviewed by the Academic Chair, who assesses the level of risk. If comfortable with the level of risk, the Academic Chair consults with OHSE to confirm his/her assessment of the risk. If all parties are comfortable with the level of risk, the Academic Chair and supervising faculty sign-off with their approvals.

Exceptions are NOT possible if the service learning takes place in an industrial, construction, healthcare, or aviation setting, or any other setting that would be considered as potentially hazardous or high risk.

For more information, please see the Work-Integrated Learning Insurance Guidelines on College's website.

Risk Management

A vital component of service learning is ensuring that our students are placed in safe environments with proper risk management practices in place.

Faculty are responsible for approving service learning projects and reviewing risk management practices with the community partner. The community partner must be able to describe any safety programs, safe work procedures, and protective measures that are in place to support student health and safety. Career and Employment Services have created several forms and checklists to help guide these conversations to assist students, faculty, and partners identify the types of risks to consider and acknowledge.

Prior to the start of service learning, faculty and students are responsible for completing the Service Learning Agreement (located on Connect) jointly with the community partner. This agreement will help to identify any job hazards and control measures, determine any personal protective equipment that is required, and ensure the community partner has the appropriate liability insurance. The original copy of this completed form must be kept with the Academic Chair.

Accident/Incident Reporting Process

Prior to a student starting their service learning, it is important to ensure that they know what to do and who to contact if they find themselves in an unsafe or disrespectful working environment.

In case of a serious accident or incident requiring ambulance transport, hospitalization, or emergency care, contact the office of NSCC Occupational Health, Safety & Environmental Services **IMMEDIATELY** at 902-491-7233.

If the accident/incident is not serious in nature:

The student must complete the Accident/Incident Report (also found on Connect) and notify their faculty/ academic chair.

Completed accident/incident forms must be submitted to Career and Employment Services by email (WorkExperience@nscc.ca). Career and Employment Services will forward the completed form to the Faculty, Academic Chair, Principal and Occupational Health, Safety & Environmental Services. Upon receipt of the completed Accident/Incident Report, if Faculty/AC and students have yet to connect, faculty will make every effort to contact the injured student. Career and Employment Services will also add a note to the community partner's profile in the Work Experience Portal for faculty to consider when approving work experiences. The Faculty or Academic Chair must submit the online Incident Reporting Form located on Connect.

Safe & Respectful Environment

NSCC is committed to ensuring that all students and employees learn and work in a safe environment, free from discrimination and harassment, and conducive to learning and teaching. NSCC is also committed to ensuring fair and equitable treatment of all members of its community, while maintaining the academic integrity of programs and curriculum, and an academic climate conducive to learning, free from disruptive or inappropriate behaviour.

To learn more about NSCC's commitment to providing safe and respectful work environments, visit NSCC Policies and Procedures

RESOURCES

Guides and forms

Faculty Guides/Forms have been developed to ensure there is a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities.

Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

NSCC policies and procedures applicable to students during a work experience can be found on the College website under Policies and Procedures.

NSCC is committed to taking an active stance regarding the promotion of human rights, equity, and inclusion in our communities on and off campus.

Information on how to seek help if experiencing an unsafe, disrespectful, or harmful workplace environment can also be found on the College website under Policies and Procedures.

- Student Community Standards Policy
- Respectful Community Policy
- Sexual Violence Policy
- Drug and Alcohol Policy

- Insurance Guidelines can be found on our website

LIST OF IMPORTANT FORMS

For your best experience and to allow for your forms to be assessed quickly, when completing these fillable forms, please download the form, open it in the Adobe Acrobat program, complete the form and save a copy with your name, student number and date

To Note: there are different versions of Adobe, and it is always good to ensure you have the latest version on your computer and you may need to download and fill and then print for signature, or you may be able to fill and insert signature and then save.

Here is a quick reference on how to Fill and sign PDF forms using Adobe Acrobat Fill & Sign tool.

Service Learning Forms

Form 1 – Work Integrated Learning Agreement (Work Experience or Service Learning)

Form 1A – Affiliation Agreement

Form 6 – Accident/Incident Report

Form 9 – Service Learning Orientation & Safety GROUP Review

Form 10 – Service Learning Orientation & Safety Review

Form 11 – Service Learning Evaluation Plan

Service Learning Log