

# BEL Student Work Experience Program (SWEP) Guide

This guide provides information how to apply for SWEP, details of the recruitment tasks students will complete in the program and an overview of the placement process.

## What is SWEP?

The Student Work Experience Program (SWEP) is an extracurricular program run by BEL Careers and Employability that provides students in UQ's Faculty of Business, Economics and Law (BEL) with opportunities:

- to participate in a structured **recruitment process** like those used by many private businesses; and
- if successful, gain an unpaid **work experience** placement during the semester break.

Students participating in SWEP gain valuable practical recruitment and work experience that will give them a real advantage when entering the job market.

## Who is SWEP for?

SWEP engages students in the type of **recruitment tasks** that are commonly used by many Australian companies. Students will become familiar with the recruitment process and develop the understanding and confidence they need when entering the job market as interns or graduate candidates. SWEP will allow them to learn and develop in a safe environment.

The SWEP industry placements are generally **entry-level**, aimed to provide students with initial workplace experience and skills development, making the program particularly suitable for students with little or no prior industry experience. Placements will take place in Brisbane and the surrounding areas at businesses of varying sizes and brand recognition.

Students who already have considerable industry experience from work, prior internships or work experience placements, can still participate in the SWEP recruitment process and receive tailored feedback to be better prepared for future job applications. Final-year students are also encouraged to consider one of the [BEL Work-integrated Learning \(WIL\) courses](#) for alternative opportunities to gain industry experience.

## Eligibility criteria

SWEP is open to **domestic and international** BEL students, at both **undergraduate and postgraduate** levels. To be eligible to apply for SWEP, students must:

- be currently enrolled in a **UQ BEL** (single or dual) degree program;
- **not** be in their **final semester** at UQ; and
- if in an undergraduate program, **not** be in their **first semester**.

There are no minimum GPA requirements to apply to SWEP.

Students may participate in SWEP a maximum of two times. If a student has previously participated in SWEP, they can apply again only if they meet the above eligibility criteria and:

- have not already completed a SWEP work experience placement, i.e., they only participated in the recruitment process component of the program; and
- have not turned down a SWEP placement that was offered to them.



# Application Process

The SWEP application and recruitment process consists of multiple recruitment tasks that students complete over a period of six to eight weeks during the semester.

## Applying for SWEP

Applications for SWEP commonly open two weeks before the start of the semester and close at the end of Week 3. Students should visit the [SWEP website](#) for up-to-date application dates.

Before submitting their application, students should read this **Program Guide** as well as the information on the [SWEP website](#). It is also recommended that students attend a [SWEP Information Session](#) during the application period, which will outline the program process and participation requirements in further detail.

To apply, students must simply complete the [SWEP Application Form](#) on StudentHub.

After applying, all SWEP applicants will be invited to attend a **SWEP Launch** in Week 4, at which further information will be provided on the recruitment tasks, how these will be assessed and how work experience placements will be facilitated.

## SWEP recruitment process

The SWEP recruitment process consists of multiple **recruitment tasks** that students will complete during the semester. The tasks are varied and designed for students to build confidence and skills for when they enter the real labour market. Students will be assessed on their performance in these tasks and will receive **feedback** both individually as well as in a group Debrief Session.

The tasks will be released in stages and students can complete them in their own time but must meet set deadlines.

Like a real recruitment process, if students miss a deadline or do not complete a task, they will be withdrawn from the program.

Students will complete the following recruitment tasks in SWEP:

- write an application **cover letter**
- improve their **resume** with VMock – an advanced AI smart resume checker
- complete online **pre-assessment testing**
- respond to questions in a recorded **video interview**
- complete a **virtual internship** and communicate the value of this experience.

Note that all SWEP recruitment tasks are **administered online**, i.e., students can participate in the recruitment process component of the program even if they are interstate or overseas.

The graph below provides approximate times for the release and due dates of the recruitment tasks. These times are indicative only and students are advised to check all program communications to be aware of when each task is due.

As these recruitment tasks are designed to mirror a real-life recruitment process, BEL Careers and Employability staff cannot assist students with their application or the individual tasks. Students are encouraged to utilise the resources available on the [BEL Careers and Employability website](#), such as the [Employability Essentials modules](#), and attend a SWEP Information Session for more details.

Program Overview	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11
SWEP Launch Event	Active							
Cover Letter	Active	Active						
VMock Smart Resume Checker	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active			
Online Testing		Active	Active					
Video Interview			Active	Active				
Virtual Internship and Reflections				Active	Active	Active	Active	
Results Released								Active

Indicative timeline of SWEP recruitment tasks  
(Note mid-semester break will vary)

# Placements Process

Students who successfully complete all recruitment tasks may qualify for an unpaid work experience placement in the following Semester Break.

## SWEP placements

BEL Careers and Employability staff will assess and score students on each of the recruitment tasks, with results normally released around Week 11 of the semester. The achieved scores will generate an **order of merit**, which will inform the facilitation of industry placements.

There is **no fixed number of placements** available through SWEP. There are inherent limits to the availability of placements in the Brisbane area, subject to changing business requirements and associated workplace constraints. However, each semester BEL Careers and Employability endeavours to identify, source and secure as many placement opportunities as possible.

## Placement process

Placements will in the first instance be facilitated for the top-scoring students from each degree program, while at the same time aiming to achieve an equitable spread of placements across the various BEL programs. The placement process will by necessity also be responsive to business needs and the nature and requirements of the opportunities offered by our industry partners.

Students generally cannot choose a host but are offered a placement by BEL Careers and Employability. Eligible students are welcome to be actively engaged in sourcing a placement but should liaise reliably with BEL Careers and Employability throughout the process.

If a student decides not to take up a placement opportunity offered by BEL Careers and Employability, we will not be able to source alternative or further opportunities for that student, and the declined opportunity will be provided to another student. Students must be available for a four-week work experience placement during the relevant semester break.

“SWEP created an opportunity for me to gain quality experience in an industry I am strongly interested in, without prior industry exposure. Completing this work experience during the first year of my degree has given me a greater understanding of the work I’m doing at university. It also enhanced my employability having real-world experience in a workplace.”

### Mitch Smyth

Bachelor of Advanced Finance and Economics  
SWEP placement at The Brokerage

Placements are typically full-time over four consecutive weeks, however, depending on business requirements and student availability, some placements may continue on a part-time basis during the following semester. It is generally not possible to defer a SWEP placement to a later semester. If a student is not available for a placement during the relevant semester break, they forfeit the opportunity.

SWEP work experience placements are not course requirements, i.e., they are extra-curricular, unlike [work-integrated learning internships](#), which are industry placements for course credit. Unpaid SWEP work experience placements are governed by the *Queensland Education (Work Experience) Act 1996*, UQ’s policies and procedures, and other legislation.

BEL Careers and Employability staff will work with host organisations and students during the placement process to ensure SWEP placements meet applicable legislative and other requirements, and students are covered by UQ’s insurances during their approved placements.



# Placement Information

The program aims to match each student's degree program and career interests with specific placement opportunities, while also encouraging flexibility in evaluating the utility of the experience for professional development.

## Host organisations

Students gain practical skills and experience through placements at various host organisations. Placements typically occur in Brisbane and surrounding areas, and usually require students to physically attend the host organisation's workplace. Recent COVID-19-related physical distancing restrictions have, on occasion, impacted businesses' ability to host students in-person, in which case remote placements (e.g., through working-from-home arrangements) may be facilitated.

Most SWEP placement opportunities are sourced through BEL Careers and Employability's business development and industry engagement efforts.

Our host organisations include:

- small to medium-sized businesses
- government departments or agencies
- not-for-profit organisations and charities

One of the purposes of SWEP is to diversify opportunity and provide access for BEL students to experiences in environments they may not have thought of before or that are less 'crowded' by competition. We typically do not engage organisations such as the following for SWEP:

- 'Big Four' professional services firms
- large (including global) banks, law firms, insurance companies or management consultancies
- small or boutique businesses with few employees
- organisations that already run structured (and often paid) internship or vacation programs.

We always aim to match the host organisation and placement details with each successful student's degree program and career interests. However, specific placement opportunities vary from semester to semester. We therefore encourage students to maintain some flexibility in evaluating the utility of an experience opportunity for their professional development.

For example, an economics student may undertake a broader research and business analysis project to further their research and analysis skills and broaden their networks and industry experience.

## Work experience – what's in it for me?

Work experience is an important part of career planning and professional development. It provides students with practical skills and experience that simply cannot be gained from university lectures or tutorials.

Employers highly value work experience in candidates for graduate roles, as it demonstrates an understanding of how a workplace operates and of specific role tasks and requirements. Being able to show your experience in your resume and job application will help you stand out from your peers in a real-life recruitment process.

[Read more](#) about students who have completed SWEP and the difference their work experience placement has made to their employability and career confidence.

## Contact us:

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