

# Information for host employers

## Student Work Experience Program (SWEP)

### The program

SWEP is an extra-curricular program coordinated by BEL Careers and Employability that aims to prepare students from The University of Queensland's Faculty of Business, Economics and Law (BEL) for the 'world of work' by:

1. Engaging them in a structured mock recruitment process based on current industry practices; and
2. Facilitating paid or unpaid work experience placements for eligible students in the semester break.

SWEP runs each semester and is designed to complement students' academic learning through opportunities to gain commercial experience in preparation for their future career.

As a SWEP host, your organisation will provide the student with meaningful pre-professional learning experiences to help build their employability and awareness of potential career pathways.

The program is open to students from all degrees in the BEL faculty.

During the semester, we assess participating students on their performance in a structured series of recruitment tasks. We then match students who have scored well in these tasks with host organisations; SWEP placements usually take place in and around Brisbane over two to four weeks in the following semester break.

### Benefits for the host organisation

The ongoing success of SWEP depends on the active participation of industry. We recognise that hosting a student for meaningful work experience takes time and effort. It is therefore our aim to ensure that participation in SWEP is mutually beneficial to the student and you, the host organisation.

Some of the key benefits of hosting a SWEP student in your organisation include:

- Gaining short-term access to enthusiastic and capable students, including those with specialised skills and knowledge, to help progress projects.
- Benefitting from innovative and diverse students with fresh ideas based on their academic learning.
- Increasing your organisation's brand profile among our student population.
- Guiding and inspiring students as they develop their career aspirations.

For approved SWEP placements that are unpaid, UQ will provide insurance cover for students for up to 30 working days per calendar year. Placements are fully supported by BEL Careers and Employability.

For paid SWEP placements, the host organisation must enter into a valid employment agreement with the student, a copy of which must be provided to UQ.

“Taking on a work experience student has had benefits both for us, the host organisation, and the student. It has been a rewarding experience for my team as we gained new insights from hearing differing views and perspectives, and we were very impressed with the student's professionalism and quality of work on some important short-term research projects. We can strongly recommend partnering with BEL Careers and Employability to unlock similar pathways for graduates and future professionals.”

### Matthew Vagne

Senior Treasury Analyst  
Budget Office, Queensland Treasury



Matthew Vagne and SWEP student Hannah Stevens (Bachelor of Politics, Philosophy and Economics)

“My experience in SWEP has helped me get a greater understanding of how I can be more valuable in the industry and appeal to potential employers. One of the best things about the program is being able to get a sense of what you want to do in your career. You get to know which industries you would like to work in, and you find out which types of jobs best suit you.”

## Nina Huang

Bachelor of Business Management



### How it works

The following are key parameters and expectations of the Student Work Experience Program, designed to ensure placements are beneficial to both students and host organisations.

- SWEP runs in each semester, so students can be hosted in either the winter semester break (usually mid-June to mid-July) or the summer semester break (between mid-November and mid-February).
- The standard duration of SWEP placements is four weeks, with a minimum of two weeks recommended to ensure students benefit from the experience. Placements can be undertaken in a full-time block or on a part-time basis including during the semester (though ideally no more than two days per week), depending on the student's class schedule and availability.
- Students will be matched with host organisations based on their studies, preferred career path and performance during the mock recruitment process. Matching commences in the final weeks of the semester. While we encourage host organisations and students to meet informally before the placement commences, we cannot provide a shortlist of candidates to organisations to select from.
- Students should have the opportunity to observe a range of work while on placement and be assigned to a project (or projects) where they can apply their academic knowledge, familiarise themselves with workplace processes and develop new skills. As a guide, no more than 20% of

the student's time should be spent doing general day-to-day administrative tasks or completing generic office duties.

- It is a requirement that students are appropriately inducted to the host organisation and have a current member of staff as their point of contact who will be regularly available for guidance and support. Students are not expected to work shadow that individual and contact with several staff or teams is encouraged.

The administration of SWEP placements is governed by the *Education (Work Experience) Act 1996 (Qld)*, UQ's policies and procedures and other relevant legislation, such as the *Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)*.

### How to create a successful placement

Making an experience meaningful for the student and worthwhile for the host organisation requires some thoughtful planning. Here are some tips on what to consider before and during a SWEP placement.

- Identify specific assignments or projects for students to work on; students want to be challenged and grow their capabilities, so this may be a perfect opportunity to progress an important piece of work.
- Develop a placement plan, including a roster of workdays and hours, what project(s) the student will be working on and what skills they will acquire; this helps to structure the experience, guide student learning and manage expectations.

- While students require a nominated contact person, consider exposing them to several work areas and encourage them to connect with other staff members and, where appropriate, your clients or stakeholders.
- Help maximise the student's learning experience by providing regular guidance and identifying developmental opportunities that will strengthen and enhance their knowledge and skills.
- Provide feedback. A placement is a valuable learning experience for students and they will benefit from hearing what they did well and where they can improve. You may consider writing them a LinkedIn recommendation or agreeing to be their professional reference.

### How to get involved

If you are interested in hosting a SWEP student on placement, please complete our [Expression of Interest form](#).

For further information on SWEP, please contact [careers@bel.uq.edu.au](mailto:careers@bel.uq.edu.au).

If hosting a student during the semester break does not meet your needs, you may like to consider partnering with us on one of our **Work-integrated Learning (WIL)** offerings. WIL courses are available to BEL students in their final year and are designed to enhance students' employability through the development of practical workplace skills. We offer three opportunities for collaboration: consultancy projects, individual internships and intensive project placements.

To discuss WIL opportunities in more detail, please contact [employability@bel.uq.edu.au](mailto:employability@bel.uq.edu.au).

### Contact us

BEL Careers and Employability

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