

Tuesday, December 9, 2025

Hello colleagues,

We are reaching out to share an important update related to the Work Study program. Last year we communicated that the University budget for the Work Study program has benefited from external funding and carry forward for the past several years. This allowed for more positions to be approved. These funds are no longer available, which means that the Work Study program budget has returned to its original allocation. As a result, in 2025-26 there were significant approval reductions across the program.

Based on the community impact and response to the significant position reductions, the University recently approved a new wage split for the program. Previously, the cost of hiring a Work Study student was distributed at 70% to the program and 30% to the local hiring department.

In 2026-27, hiring a Work Study student will be 50% at the cost of the program and 50% at the cost of the local hiring department. This 50/50 wage split will mitigate further reductions and provide more student opportunities within the available program budget.

Like last year, as you consider the positions you plan to put forward for the 2026-27 (Summer and Fall/Winter), we encourage you to consider the ways in which your position aligns with the [goals of the Work Study program](#).

In terms of preparation for the Summer 2026 session, please see the important timelines and resources below:

- [Job Submission resources](#)
- [Work Study Community Letter & Program FAQ's](#) (Under "For Faculty & Staff")
- Dates for Summer 2026:
 - Supervisor Position Submission Period: January 6 – February 2, 2026 (9 am)
 - Student Application Period: March 30 – May 19, 2026 (9 am)
 - Supervisor Hiring Period: April 13 – June 3, 2025 (11:59 pm)

Sincerely,

Work Study Governance

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated December 2025

What is Work Study?

The Work Study program is the University of Toronto's **largest co-curricular Work Integrated Learning program**, and it is regularly reviewed to incorporate enhancements to better support students, faculty and staff.

The program offers thousands of **paid on-campus work integrated learning** positions annually that provide students with an opportunity to deepen knowledge, strengthen skills, gain direct work experience, and translate their academic learning to career possibilities.

In addition to these opportunities, students receive recognition for their Work Study experience through the Co-Curricular Record (CCR). Work Study opportunities integrate learning and reflection through structured goal setting, ongoing support from the supervisor, access to professional development modules to clarify values and skills, and the program limits the hours a student can work to encourage the balance responsibilities of both studies and work.

The Work Study program has **two sessions each year**: Summer and Fall-Winter.

- Summer: students can work up to 15 hours per week, to a maximum of 100 hours
- Fall-Winter: students can work up to 15 hours per week, to a maximum of 200 hours

Who is eligible?

Student Eligibility: Open to all students

Summer 2026 Course Load:

- Undergraduate students must be enrolled in at least 0.5 FCE (full course equivalent)
- Graduate students must be registered for the Summer session

Fall-Winter 2026-27 Course Load:

- Undergraduate students must be enrolled in at least 2.0 FCE (full course equivalent)
- Graduate students must be registered for the fall and winter sessions

Students do not have to be OSAP eligible to participate in the Work Study program.

Who coordinates the Work Study program?

The program is facilitated through a tri-campus governance structure/partnership. It is jointly sponsored by the Office of the **Vice-Provost, Students**, the Office of the **Vice-Provost, Innovations**

in **Undergraduate Education**, and the Office of the **Vice-Provost, Strategic Enrolment Management**, and the program is **coordinated by the tri-campus career service units**. The University Registrar’s Office (VPSEM) is responsible for managing the Student Financial Aid Reinvestment Fund, which includes a specific budget allocation for the Work Study program.

What is the difference between the two program streams?

The Work Study program has two pathways for engagement:

- The **Work Experience** stream is designed to support students in developing and articulating workplace skills and competencies and in building workplace experience and knowledge. These positions are supervised by staff, faculty or librarians and include opportunities to explore and reflect on how academic studies connect to workplace competencies, and how the Work Study experience translates to career possibilities.
- The **Research Experience** stream is designed to support students in locating and participating in faculty-led research opportunities. These positions provide students with the opportunity to undertake or support a research project under the direction of a faculty member, and involve the application of foundational methodologies and / or theories within a research field. They also include opportunities to explore and reflect on how academic studies connect to workplace competencies, and how the Work Study experience translates to career possibilities.

What is the 2026 Summer Timeline?

Submit Work Study Position(s)	January 6, 2026 – February 2, 2026
Position Review Period	February 4, 2026 – March 19, 2026
Position Approval Confirmation	March 19, 2026
Student Application Period	March 30, 2026 – May 19, 2026
Supervisor Hiring Period	April 13, 2026 – June 3, 2026
Letter of Offer & Hiring Deadline	June 3, 2026
Employment Period (start – end)	First day of classes – August 14, 2026

Program budget restabilization: why is there less funding this year?

As communicated last year, the University budget for the Work Study program has benefited from external funding and carry forward for the past several years. This allowed for more positions to be approved. These funds are no longer available, which means that the Work Study program budget has returned to its original allocation. As a result, in 2025-26 there were significant approval reductions across the program and previously approved positions were not guaranteed. This reality continues throughout the 2026-27 program and fiscal year.

Why has the wage split changed?

Based on the community impact and response to the significant position reductions, University Planning and Budget recently approved a new wage split for the program. Previously, the cost of hiring a Work Study student was distributed at 70% to the program and 30% to the local hiring department.

In 2026-27, hiring a Work Study student will be 50% at the cost of the program and 50% at the cost of the local hiring department. This 50/50 wage split will mitigate further reductions and provide more student opportunities within the available program budget.

How many positions will be approved and funded this year?

In 2026-27, the Work Study program is **limited to approximately 3200 vacancies** across both Summer and Fall/Winter sessions. At the new 50/50 wage split, this allows for 600+ more opportunities than in 2025-26.

Are there other ways I can hire students and support students' career and experiential learning?

There are [a range of experiential learning avenues](#) to engage students in advancing your work and fulfilling your project / hiring needs while providing students with meaningful experiential and career learning opportunities. These opportunities may be paid or unpaid and can include working with a student or team of students in a course with an [academic internship](#) or [organization-partnered project](#) component (typically unpaid), as well as hiring a co-op student (paid) for a work-term of 4, 8, 12 or 16-months.

Co-op: To support hiring managers, U of T Co-op has launched an [internal SharePoint site for U of T faculty and staff](#), which provides helpful guidance on the overall process and as well as contact information.

Course-based EL: As the learning objectives of each course are unique, reach out to the [relevant experiential learning office](#) or faculty member within an academic division to determine whether your opportunity might be eligible for a course with an academic internship or organization partnered project component.

Another option is to explore supervising the work of a high school student participating in the SEE U of T program. Please visit wdw.utoronto.ca/seeuoft for more information.

Job review process: how is the job review conducted, and what principles will be used to inform the decision-making process?

The job review process is conducted twice annually, once positions are submitted by the community for each session (Summer and Fall/Winter).

While the job review process is not new, given the budget restabilization, a set of principles were leveraged to ensure equitable distribution of positions per the program budget allocation, including proportional representation by campus enrolment, a divisional balance, and adherence to [work integrated learning framework and Work Study program goals](#).

Work Study positions must not be essential to a unit's core operations. Instead, they should be designed to support student learning and development. While Work Study students can bring valuable contributions to programs and services, units should not rely on them to meet critical operational needs.

How are submissions prioritized in the review process?

There is no priority in the review and approval process for specific programs, departments, or academic divisions, nor for previously approved positions. The program allocation reflects an equitable distribution of positions across the University, including proportional representation by campus enrolment, a divisional balance, and adherence to the [work integrated learning framework and Work Study program goals](#). Unfortunately, given the budget restabilization and program capacity, many worthy positions and valuable opportunities will not be approved.

Can I get details about why my position was not approved?

A high volume of position submissions and our commitment to equitable funding distribution — by campus enrolment, divisional balance, and alignment with [program goals](#) — meant not all requests for 2026-27 could be accommodated. The program budget allocation for 2026-27 can support approximately 3200 vacancies across both summer and fall/winter sessions.

While we cannot provide individual feedback on declined positions, we want to acknowledge and share your concern that many valuable opportunities may not be approved given the current budget constraints. The program remains committed to ensuring a fair and equitable process.

Is it possible to self-fund my Work Study position?

Unfortunately, the program is not currently able to offer a self-funded option for Work Study positions. However, the program's governance partners are continuing to explore future administrative and financial pathways that could help create meaningful student opportunities and support hiring needs across the University.