

Student Staff Experience Guide

A partnership between Human Resources and the Student Success Centre

Program Goals

This program aims to provide recommended onboarding and professional development opportunities that help your students: (1) gain on-the-job experience at McMaster, (2) clarify their career path, (3) refine their learning goals, (4) develop specific competencies and (5) build a network within the institution.

Recommended Onboarding for Student Staff

The onboarding plan for student staff is a pre-planned structured document that serves as a two-week (or more) schedule for your new hire. There are several stakeholders involved in a new hire's onboarding, which means the onboarding plan ensures accountability and participation by confirming who is responsible for each meeting/discussion in the plan. Scheduling ahead is pivotal, particularly in our virtual environment where casual 'pop-ins' are no longer. It's not just about scheduling – it also shows our new employee that we have thoughtfully and purposefully planned out their first few weeks with the intent to make their experience memorable and fulfilling. This structured plan will set your student hire up for success.

Throughout your recruitment process - start to map out your student onboarding plan by identifying the following six elements as key steps to designing an onboarding plan:

1. Identify key stakeholders that your student hire will be working with, partnering with and/or supporting
2. Identify key training
3. Identify key leaders for your new hire to meet
4. Identify frequent one on one sessions (direct Supervisor/Manager) to establish expectations and subsequently, ensure your new student hire is set up for success
5. Identify helpful resources, links, templates and/or documents
6. Identify an onboarding buddy

Professional Development and Experiential Learning for Student Staff

Student Staff Professional Development Certificate Course

McMaster Work Program and other on-campus work placements are great ways to combine work and university education. This combination, sometimes called work-integrated learning (WIL), can integrate academic studies with experiences in workplace settings. WIL includes the development of learning objectives and outcomes related to employability, agency, knowledge, skill development and lifelong learning.

You can have your student staff enrolled in this self-directed experiential learning and professional development course to enhance their summer work experience. They will develop learning goals, discover ways to be professional and effective in their roles, identify connections between academic and employability skills, and reflect on their achievements. Participants will receive a certificate of completion after they finish the course.

The course is accessible on Avenue to Learn: [Student Staff Professional Development Certificate](#).

Student Staff Development Conference

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This conference, which takes place during work hours, is an opportunity for all McMaster student staff to connect and explore ways to grow their professional development at the university. Your students can expect an impactful and interactive in-person experience.

Desired learning outcomes for your students:

- Developing lifelong employability skills
- Fostering a sense of community among peers and colleagues
- Considering McMaster as a potential employer after graduation
- Preparation to enter the workplace with confidence after graduation

This year, the conference will take place in late July. We will announce more information and registration details closer to the event date. Open to all student staff across campus and is free for departments to sign up their students.

Calls to Action

Please share this information with your student staff and we ask that you recommend that they participate in the program. It will enhance their summer experience and contribute to further success on the job.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Stephanie Cognigni scognig@mcmaster.ca.

When creating your onboarding plan for your new student hire, planning ahead is critical and we recommend utilizing the tools and resources available at <https://hr.mcmaster.ca/managers/onboarding-offboarding/> with this planning.

If you have any questions, about onboarding your student staff please connect with your HR representative.