
SEP PROGRAM

The Student Employment Program (SEP) at VCUarts Qatar offers on-campus jobs for students who wish to kick start their career early while at university. The program is designed to introduce the students to the professional workplace environment, offering a wide range of employment opportunities in the fields of research, teaching, technology, and others.

POSITION REQUEST

Requests and Renewals

All requests *must* be submitted by the direct supervisor to whom the student employee reports, or by the Director/Chair of the department. Requests on behalf of other supervisors *will not* be considered. Types of requests are as follows:

- **New position request:** fill out the Position Description Form.
- **Renew position request:** send an email to SEP coordinator requesting renewal.

Types of Positions

- **Academic Position: QR 55/hr**
High level of responsibility assisting in special or complex projects and working independently, and may be asked to work on weekends or cover evening shifts often. Tasks may include:
 - Assisting in teaching; creating lesson plans, preparing class material, and grading.
 - Assisting in research; analytical skills and writing proficiency.
 - Monitoring a facility with little supervision.
 - Mentoring students on their projects.
- **Non-Academic Position: QR 45/hr**
Completing simple tasks and providing general support. Tasks may include:
 - Entering data
 - Assisting in events
 - Monitoring front desk
 - Sourcing information

THE AWARD MODEL

Award Confirmations

Requests will be reviewed and a confirmation email will be sent by the SEP coordinator confirming number of hours and openings approved for the position(s) for each semester in the form of an award. When allocating funds for SEP positions, Fall is considered a 12-week semester, while Spring a 16-week semester. The award model facilitates the following:

- Each student employee gets an award for the number of hours they can work in that position during the semester.
- The award hours may be distributed for each opening as you see fit. In other words, students are not limited to a certain number of hours per week, as long as they do not exceed a total of 20 hours per week in all positions they have under this program.
- The award must be used by the end of each semester. Unused hours will not be carried over to next semester nor can they be redistributed to other employees.

Contracts & Award Hours

- **Working Hours:** Student employees *must not* exceed the total number of hours awarded for their position, nor work more than 20 hours a week in all positions they have under the program.
- **Award Timeline:** Fall & Spring semesters: from first day of classes to the last day of finals week.

SEP POSITIONS TOOL

SEP positions will be posted on the new SEP Positions tool on the VCUarts Qatar Intranet:

- Students can apply for jobs and the supervisors will receive an email notification with the applicant's CV. Check your Spam folder frequently as these system-generated emails could end up there.
- Supervisors who wish not to advertise their SEP positions on the tool, for the purpose of conducting their own search or continuing with their returning student employees, may email me requesting to hide the position on the tool.

HIRING PROCEDURE & ELIGIBILITY

- Supervisors must inform the SEP coordinator of the student name and email once the decision to hire is made, in order to link the new hire to the position.
- Supervisors who wish to renew their current student employees may request from the SEP coordinator to link them to the job directly.
- A student employee's employment process is completed once the student submits the completed and signed Confidentiality Agreement Form.

To be considered eligible for the Student Employment Program, students must meet the following criteria:

- Maintain 2.0 GPA and above.
- Be a full-time student at VCUarts Qatar or one of EC's Campuses.
- Freshmen must complete at least one semester at the university before applying.
- Must not be a Community Development Advisor (CDA) at EC Residence Halls.
- The SEP is intended for VCUQ students only. It's possible to hire a non VCUQ-student only if the experience or qualifications required are not available within the VCUQ job applicants. A written justification must be provided.

SEP TIMESHEET TOOL

A student employee must enter the hours through the 'SEP Timesheet' tool on the VCUarts Qatar Intranet, and ensure the timesheet is approved by the supervisor by 11:59 no later than the last day of the month.

In order to get paid in timely manner, a student employee must have the correct bank account information. Failure to do so may delay the payment for a whole month. It may take up to two weeks to deposit the payments to the student employee's bank account.

TRAINING STUDENT EMPLOYEES

Supervisors must train, motivate, communicate, guide and evaluate their student employees. In the academic setting, it is often difficult to provide sufficient time or flexibility of schedules to provide an adequate period for training student employees. Supervisors must continue to meet service and production demands; students quickly become immersed in their academic and extracurricular pursuits. However, good personnel practices require that every new worker be oriented to the hiring unit and trained in skills necessary for satisfactory performance.

Orientation

Students are more likely to become enthusiastic and take pride in their work when they understand the role of their department in the total institutional picture. At orientation, the activities of the department are explained; students are informed of the "dos" and "don'ts" of the job - whether their work involves meeting the public, what is the proper attire or behaviour. This is also an opportunity to explain what procedures are to be followed when illness, schoolwork or other reasons keep a student away from daily work assignments.

Demonstrations of Skills and Procedures

Most training occurs on the job with the supervisor demonstrating and describing the correct methods and skills to be utilized. In doing so, we should avoid these common training errors:

- Giving too much information at one time;
- Giving instructions too rapidly;
- Failing to determine the student's level of experience; and
- Not permitting enough opportunity for questions.

Supplementary Materials

While some supervisors are excellent articulators, there is often the danger of overwhelming the student with more information than s/he needs or can retain. A department brochure, fact sheet, or annual report can be given to the student to read, keep and refer to. In addition, handbooks and other volumes which explain skills, procedures and processes necessary to the student's job performance should be available whenever possible.

Student-Supervisor Relationships

The college years are both exciting and trying times for a young person attempting many new things. This excitement and the individual concerns of students are brought daily into the work situation and form the basis of various interpersonal relationships between students and supervisors. Guidance for creating healthy student-supervisor relationships are:

- Develop rapport;
- Maintain impartiality;
- Co-learner with your student workers;
- Show respect; and
- Be flexible

Finally, you must always view each student employee as a total person, not simply as a worker assigned to a task for several hours daily. It is your responsibility to help the student put concerns into proper perspective so that they do not overshadow activities in the workplace.

WORK ETHICS

Ethics

Student employees must demonstrate positive and cooperative attitudes. Ethics is defined as a collection of values and behaviours which people feel are moral; a positive work ethic is the collection of all the values and actions that people feel are appropriate in the workplace.

Core Values

VCUarts Qatar believes in the Core Values of honesty, respect, fairness, compassion and responsibility and incorporates these values in all aspects of instruction and administration. Subscribing to a set of values is essential for individuals in acquiring a high quality of life, a successful career, and a good citizenship. It is also essential for organizations to adopt core values for creating a code of conduct or standards of behaviour expected of individuals serving in or with that entity.

VCUarts Qatar has adopted a set of core values that have become the fiber of the institution:

- *Character*: displays loyalty, honesty, trustworthiness, reliability, dependability, initiative, self-discipline, and self-responsibility.
- *Teamwork*: a team worker, cooperative, assertive, displays a customer service attitude, seeks opportunities for continuous learning, and displays mannerly behaviour.
- *Appearance*: displays appropriate dress, grooming, hygiene, and etiquette.
- *Attitude*: demonstrates a positive attitude, appears self-confident, and has realistic expectations of self.
- *Productivity*: follows safety practices, conserves materials, keeps work area neat, follows directions and procedures.
- *Organizational Skills*: manifests skill in personal management, time management, prioritizing, flexibility, stress management, and dealing with change.
- *Communication*: displays appropriate non-verbal (body language) and verbal skills (tone of voice).
- *Cooperation*: displays leadership, appropriately handles criticism and complaints, demonstrates problem-solving capability, maintains appropriate relationships with supervisors and peers, and follows chain of command.
- *Respect*: Respects the rights of others, deals appropriately with cultural/racial diversity, and does not engage in harassment of any kind. Having a genuine regard for others and showing consideration for others.
- *Honesty*: being truthful and not deceptive or fraudulent, and subscribing to the phrase, "there is no substitute for the truth."
- *Compassion*: understanding the feelings of others and recognizing the effect one's actions will have on others.
- *Fairness*: practicing actions that are just and impartial along with treating people in a consistent manner.
- *Responsibility*: assuming ownership for personal actions and being accountable for one's own behaviour, assigned tasks, duties, and functions. In addition, being responsible means taking action against wrongdoing, and not tolerating those who are who engage in misconduct or exhibit inappropriate behaviour or attitude.
- *Time management*: balance your time between school and work. Keep track of your assignments and meet your deadlines.
- *Confidentiality*: maintain the integrity of confidential or potentially compromising information handed in to you.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Evaluation

Evaluation is an on-going process that occurs almost daily. After the student is given initial training, make periodic checks to see that performance is meeting the desired expectations. The long-range goal of student evaluation is not simply to provide a system for grading work. It is designed as an instrument to assist the student in her/his development and to enlarge the dimensions of the work experience. Each unit should determine the frequency and type of evaluation procedure they wish to use. Listed below are general categories that can be used to create an evaluation form for your specific unit.

Quality and Quantity of Work

- Is responsive to deadlines and notifies affected parties when meeting deadlines is not possible;
- Plans and observes work time responsibly;
- Works effectively and efficiently with all co-workers;
- Finishes work with little or no supervision;
- Completes work following specific instructions, policies and procedures;
- Demonstrates high quality standards in all interactions and work assignments; and
- Exercises good judgment and makes appropriate decisions in performance of duties.

Work Characteristics and Attributes

- Presents and promotes a positive image of the institution through business-like conduct, attitude, and appearance;
- Exhibit helpful, friendly, and courteous customer service;
- Shows punctual, reliable and consistent attendance;
- Demonstrates the ability to appreciate and work with a diverse population;
- Acquires proactively and willingly to new skills, tasks and procedures;
- Takes action without being asked, self-starter;
- Accept suggestions and training willingly; takes direction;
- Responds flexibly when needed; and
- Asks questions when needed.

Job Knowledge and Skills

- Respects confidentiality of all student and VCU documents, information, records, etc.;
- Exhibits knowledge of the position, department, and institution mission and goals;
- Follows instructions, directions, policies and procedures of the department;
- Displays the ability to make sound judgments;
- Deals with difficult situations effectively; and
- Demonstrates effective and appropriate written and oral communication skills.

UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE

Work Concerns

Working with people in any job setting frequently presents certain personnel problems. Often, the beginnings of student problems go unnoticed until the matter becomes large, affecting either production or department morale. When counselling by the supervisor has been tried with poor results, contact the VCUarts Qatar Student Employment Coordinator and request assistance.

Unsatisfactory Performance

Student employees who demonstrate either unsatisfactory work performance, attendance or communication must be warned and given time to correct the problem, or be dismissed. *All forms of warnings and terminations must take place in communication with the student and VCUarts Qatar's Student Employment Coordinator.*

Verbal Warning

The student should be told in private explicitly how job requirements are not being met. The supervisor should take steps toward improved communication or instruction enabling the student employee to achieve satisfactory performance.

Written Warning

A period of at least two weeks must be granted after the Verbal Warning for the student employee to improve their performance or attendance at work. If the student's work performance continues to fall below required standards, the student should be informed in writing/email of the unsatisfactory performance. **Supervisor must copy the SEP Coordinator to their email to the student.**

Termination

A period of at least two weeks must be granted after the Written Warning for the student employee to improve their performance at work. If, after at least one written warning, the student's performance has not improved, the student may be then terminated. A termination letter template is available upon request.

Immediate Termination

- Any violation of the university's Code of Ethics or Confidentiality agreement;
- Missing 5 consecutive scheduled working days without notice or valid excuse;
- Poor academic performance such as a large drop of GPA or academic probation;
- Inappropriate use of university's resources such as (but is not limited to) using the Internet to visit adult-rated, explicit sites, or inappropriate use of email, telephones and IT equipment;
- Endangering employees and students: this includes (but is not limited to) violence, vandalism and knowingly endangering other employees by bringing dangerous items, such as weapons, to university. Attending school/work while intoxicated by drugs or alcohol or using drugs or alcohol on campus;
- Endangering the university. This includes-but is not limited to actions that jeopardize the university and its reputation. All forms of theft and crime are included; and
- Sexual, racial, physical, or verbal harassment of a colleague, student or employee.

The dean of students must be notified in case of immediate termination points a,d,e,f & g take place for further action.

Volunteer student termination

Student employees are allowed to voluntarily end their employment. Students must give at least one week's notice to their supervisor.

SEP TEMPLATES

Subject: SEP Interview - [Position Title]

Dear [Student Name],

Thank you for your interest in the [Position Title] in the [Department Name]. I would like to inform you that your application has been shortlisted for the interview phase, and I would like to meet with you to discuss how your qualifications and skills align with the position/department.

Would you be available to meet on [date, time] ?

Regards,
Sender name

Subject: SEP Offer - [Position Title]

Dear [Student Name],

I would like to inform you that you have been selected for the [Position Title] in the [Department Name]. Your application stood out because you demonstrated [insert reason: the essential skills, the essential qualities, enthusiasm, spirit, competencies, etc.] required for the position.

You will receive an official SEP Employment Confirmation from the Student Employment and Career Services Coordinator, so please make sure to complete the necessary paperwork prior to starting work.

Regards,
Sender name

Subject: SEP Rejection - [Position Title]

Dear [Student Name],

Thank you for your interest in the position of [Position Title] in the [Department name] for which you applied. After reviewing the applications, and discussions within the department, I regret to inform you that your application was not selected for further consideration .

I appreciate the time and effort you invested in your application and I wish you all best.

Regards,
Sender name

Subject: SEP Warning - [Position Title]

CC: suleimannh@vcu.edu

Dear [Student Name],

I am writing to you with regards to the current position you are holding as a [Position Title] as part of VCUarts Qatar's Student Employment Program (SEP).

You have been chosen for this position because you [demonstrated perseverance/creativity/dedication]. Nonetheless, your [commitment, performance, attendance, etc.] to the position has been unsatisfactory recently for the following reasons:

- Failing to show up on time/Providing inadequate notice prior to a shift.
- Failing to complete assigned tasks or meeting deadlines.
- Leaving the facility, front desk, office unattended.

I understand that your priority is to meet academic requirements; however, failing to meet the job expectations may result in terminating your contract if you do not show any improvement. I have previously given you a verbal warning, and this email serves as a formal and final warning with regards to your employment in our department.

If you wish to discuss this matter further, you may contact me or Student Employment and Career Services Coordinator Noor AlOraidi suleimannh@vcu.edu.

Regards,
Sender name

Subject: SEP Termination - [Position Title]

CC: suleimannh@vcu.edu

Dear [Student Name],

I would like to inform you that your position with the [Department Name] at VCUarts Qatar as a [Position Title] will be terminated effective immediately. We sincerely regret this action, and can assure you that we have only done so after considering all alternatives.

The reason[s] for terminating your employment with us is/are as follows [list as necessary]:

- Failing to show up on time for your assigned shifts
- Leaving the facility, front desk, office unattended
- Leaving the workplace messy
- Providing Inadequate or Inaccurate notice prior to a shift
- You are [not working on the required task you are assigned
- Violating facility and safety rules, etc.

Under the circumstances, we will be implementing the following severance arrangements:

- Your employment as [Position Title] will end effective immediately.
- You will be paid any unpaid base salary accruing from the effective date of our last payroll to today.

We thank you for your valued contributions thus far to VCUarts Qatar and advise you to apply for other vacant or future openings that meet your interest and qualifications. Please feel free to contact Student Employment and Career Services Coordinator Noor AlOraidi suleimannh@vcu.edu if you have any questions or concerns regarding your employment with VCUarts Qatar.

Regards,
Sender name

CONTACT INFORMATION

For support, contact Student Employment & Career Services Coordinator
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