

## The Professional Skills Development Program (PSDP)

**Land Acknowledgement:** *We acknowledge that Memorial University's campuses are situated in the traditional territories of diverse Indigenous groups, including the island of Ktaqmkuk, the ancestral homelands of the Beothuk and Mi'kmaq peoples. We acknowledge with respect the diverse histories and cultures of the Beothuk, Mi'kmaq, Innu, and Inuit of this province. For more information on our commitment to learning, healing, decolonization, and indigenization, visit the [Office of Indigenous Affairs](#) and/or the [Indigenous Student Resource Centre \(ISRC\)](#).*

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**Overview:** The Professional Skills Development Program (PSDP) is a free, 6-week program for international students wishing to develop and enhance the requisite skills and knowledge needed to obtain meaningful professional employment in Canada. By completing this program, students can expect to develop core competencies in **professionalism, critical thinking, self-awareness, cultural sensitivity, and communications**. *Note: This is a non-academic program worth zero credit hours. Upon completion of deliverables, students will receive a certificate and will have the option to add the PSDP to [Memorial's Online Record of Experience \(MORE\)](#).*

**Term:** Fall 2024 (Workshop Dates: Thursdays, September 19<sup>th</sup> to October 31<sup>st</sup> inclusive)

**Dates & Times:** [See page 7 for specific dates](#), workshops run from 12:15PM to 1:45PM

**Locations:** The Landing (UC-3015), University Centre – 3rd floor (1 Arctic Avenue)

**Facilitator:** Ema Shiroma-Chao, International Student Career Advisor (ISCA)

**Contact Email:** For individual inquiries, please send an email to [emas@mun.ca](mailto:emas@mun.ca) (Note: Do not use Brightspace to send messages as the inbox on that platform is not monitored). Please provide 2-3 business days for a response. General communications will be posted through Brightspace.

**Eligibility:** You must be a **current** international student in order to participate in this program. If you have previously participated in a funded PSDP placement and have yet to attend the workshop sessions and/or complete all the requirements, it is **mandatory** for you to do so in order to receive an official certificate of completion and have the experience added to [MORE](#).

- If you have previously completed a paid placement with the PSDP and are no longer a current student, **please [contact the ISCA](#) for next steps.**

**Certificate Distribution:** Upon successful completion of all requirements of the program, a certificate will be sent to your MUN email address. A paper copy will also be made available.

## Program Requirements:

In order to receive the certificate of completion, you are required to:

1. **Attend all workshop sessions** (see *Section I: Attendance*)
2. **Complete all *Workshop Reflections*** (ie. listed under “quizzes” on Brightspace - see *Section II: Workshop Reflections*)
3. **Complete all *Deliverables*** (see *Section III: Deliverables*)

### Section I: Attendance

Due to the hands-on nature of this program, **attendance at all workshops is mandatory.** In addition to helping participants build connections, the purpose of this requirement is to promote active engagement with the curriculum, encourage collaborative learning and intercultural understanding, and to give students an opportunity to practice communication skills and professionalism. There will be a sign-in sheet at each workshop to prove your presence at each session. **You will be considered absent if you do not sign this sheet.**

In order to receive the certificate of completion, no more than 1 absence from the workshop sessions will be permitted. If you have missed a session or *will* miss a session, please **inform the ISCA within 24 hours of the session occurring.** It may still be necessary to make up for the session by completing an extra assignment based on the missed workshop content. Please note that a session will also be considered missed if it is noted that you are absent from it for more than 20 minutes. If there are any extenuating circumstances regarding your attendance, please notify the ISCA to see if alternative arrangements can be made.

### Section II: Workshop Reflections

The ***Workshop Reflections*** represent the *curricular component* of the PSDP. Found under “Quizzes” on the Brightspace platform, the purpose of these assignments is to give you the time and space to independently activate your critical thinking skills, synthesize the information presented in the workshops, and engage in your own learning.

There are 5 Workshop Reflections to complete, typically due 1 week after the corresponding workshop session takes place. Each reflection requires approximately 45 to 90 minutes to complete, depending on how much effort a student commits to the assignment. Where there are many *Written Response*-type questions presented, quizzes are manually (rather than automatically) graded. **A score of 50% or above is required for a reflection to be considered “complete” for the purposes of the program.** Where a passing grade has not been achieved, students may re-attempt assignments as needed. Every effort is made as time permits to provide individual feedback on reflections through the Brightspace platform.

## **Section III: Deliverables**

The **Deliverables** represent the *experiential component* of the PSDP. The aim of these is to put into practice some of the knowledge and skills you learn about during the program. In order to successfully complete the PSDP and receive your certificate of completion, you will need to:

1. Attend 1 Networking Event
2. Complete 1 Hour of Volunteering
3. Submit your Resume and Cover Letter for review
4. Attend a Mock Interview with a Career Advisor
5. Organize and conduct an Informational Interview

**Students are responsible for independently organizing these opportunities on their own time.** Also note that deliverables completed before the start of the term (September 1<sup>st</sup>) will not be accepted for the purposes of the program. Please see below for details and guidance on how to complete and submit each of these items:

**1) Networking Event:** A Networking Event is an organized gathering for multiple people to engage with one another and build connections, typically with the ultimate goal of creating future business or employment opportunities. These frequently take place both on- and off-campus. Some are posted on the [Student Life Calendar](#).

Examples of networking events would be employer information sessions, student mixers, and public events hosted by faculty/professional/industry associations [e.g. the Faculty of Business Administration, TechNL, the Teaching Assistants' Union of Memorial University of Newfoundland (TAUMUN), Newfoundland and Labrador Oil and Gas Industries Association (NOIA), Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Technology Industries (NATI)].

*The coordinator of the event you attend can sign your Deliverable Form, or you may submit visual proof of your attendance/participation at the event (ie. a clear, on-scene photo or screenshot which includes you).*

**2) Volunteer Experience:** Volunteering is a key part of professional development. It is a great way to build connections and gain experience. Connect with the [Student Volunteer Bureau](#) to learn about volunteering opportunities that might interest you, and/or find opportunities yourself by taking up a role with a student group or researching local community organizations. We highly recommend that you subscribe to the [SVB Weekly](#) for regular updates on volunteer opportunities.

*The volunteer coordinator of the organization you volunteer with can sign your Deliverable Form, or you may submit visual proof of your attendance/participation at the event (ie. a clear, on-scene photo or screenshot which includes you).*

**3) Resume and Cover Letter:** When screening applications, a typical hiring manager looks at a resume for less than 20 seconds. Therefore, it is crucial to have a properly formatted resume that accurately represents your skills and qualifications. As a participant of this program, you must submit a copy of your resume and cover letter for review. Each resume and cover letter needs to be tailored according to a job description of your choice, which you will also upload as an accompanying document. Please keep in mind, a resume is not the same as a CV. For more information, see [here](#) and/or refer to the [Resume/Cover Letter Guide](#).

*Upload your resume, cover letter, and chosen job description to the Assignments Folder on Brightspace. Upload documents as a PDF or Word document, or provide a link to a Google Docs file authorizing any editor (only TAs will access the file through Brightspace).*

**4) Mock Interview:** A mock interview is a practice interview that simulates the real-life interaction between you and a hiring manager. In this environment, you can test your answers to possible questions, practice interviewing strategies, and get feedback on the delivery of your presentation. Use our AI-powered platform, InStage, to complete this deliverable preferably **after** the workshop session on Interviewing (see workshop schedule). Alternatively, if you are a graduate student, you may book an appointment by contacting [xw8080@mun.ca](mailto:xw8080@mun.ca). If you are a Faculty of Business student, you may also schedule a time [here](#). A real interview can also count towards this deliverable.

*If using InStage, attach the interview summary report provided by the platform with your completed Assignment Form. If you have arranged a face-to-face mock interview, the Career Advisor who conducted your mock interview can sign your Deliverable Form, or you can attach an email receipt of a follow-up from your interview.*

*If you choose to use a real interview, you must provide proof of attendance (for example, an email receipt confirming your attendance).*

**5) Informational Interview:** An informational interview is an independently arranged, 1:1 meeting with a contact (preferably a working professional) who can help you learn about a job, career, industry, or particular organization. **An informational interview is NOT a simulation or a mock interview.** You are asking this person questions about *their* work, for the purposes of *gaining information about their job and career path*, presumably because they hold a position or have experience in a role you'd be interested in pursuing yourself.

You are required to complete 1 informational interview for this program. It may take place in-person, virtually, or on the phone (but not through text, unless a particular accommodation is arranged). For the purposes of expanding your network, informational interviews conducted with PSDP classmates, close friends, or family members will *not* be accepted. Networking platforms which may help you connect with professionals include [10,000 Coffees](#) and [LinkedIn](#). For more information on how to conduct informational interviews, see [this page](#).

*The person you interviewed can sign your Deliverable Form or you may submit visual proof of your attendance/participation (ie. a clear, on-scene photo or screenshot which includes you).*

### Instructions on how to submit deliverables:

**Step 1:** On [Brightspace](#), download the associated Deliverable Form on Brightspace and complete the reflection questions by clicking *Assessment* and then *Assignments*.

**Step 2:** If applicable, ask the appropriate person to sign the form. Alternative proof, such as photos of you at the event, screenshots, and email/ticket receipts may also be accepted.

**Step 3:** Upload the form to the appropriate assignments folder. To access the form, ensure you're using your MUN email account. Then, to create your own copy to edit, click "File" → "Make a copy".

As with reflection assignments, a passing grade of 50% or above is required for each deliverable and feedback will be provided on Brightspace as time permits.

## Communication, Professionalism, and Accommodations

**Communication and Professionalism:** Clear communication and professionalism, key pillars of Memorial University's [Student Success Competencies](#), are expected from all students who participate in the Professional Skills Development Program (PSDP). You are expected to arrive on time for the workshop sessions and adhere to all of the given deadlines provided in this document and/or otherwise specified. Furthermore, you are expected to respond to emails in a timely manner (i.e. within 2-3 business days) and participate in all activities as they relate to the program in a respectful manner.

Please refer to the [Student Code of Conduct](#) to familiarize yourself with expectations as they relate to student behaviour.

**Accommodations:** Memorial University of Newfoundland is committed to fostering equitable and accessible learning environments for all students. We understand that students have competing priorities and may require accommodations in order to complete certain components of the PSDP. Should you experience any difficulties in completing any requirements, please contact the International Student Career Advisor to see if alternative arrangements can be made possible.

Please note that such accommodations are contingent upon clear and timely communications on the student's part. Should a student fail to complete a program requirement without providing a sufficient explanation, they will be presumed to have dropped out of the program. Any student who does decide to drop out of the PSDP should also [notify](#) the International Student Career Advisor.

Outside of the PSDP, students who feel that they may require formal accommodations to address barriers or challenges they are experiencing related to their academic coursework are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services (the Blundon Centre) by emailing [blundon@mun.ca](mailto:blundon@mun.ca) at the earliest opportunity to ensure that required accommodations are provided in a timely manner. Accommodations for students with disabilities are provided in accordance with the Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Policy ([www.mun.ca/policy/site/policy.php?id=239](http://www.mun.ca/policy/site/policy.php?id=239)) and its related procedures.

## Workshop Outline/Important Dates\*

**Time: Thursdays @ 12:15PM – 1:45PM**

**Location: The Landing (UC-3015), University Centre - 3rd floor**

	Date(s)	Activity / Workshop Topic
Session 1	September 19 <sup>th</sup>	Intro to PSDP & Skills Identification
Session 2	September 26 <sup>th</sup>	Resumes (Part 1)
Session 3	October 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Resumes (Part 2) and Cover Letters
Session 4	October 10 <sup>th</sup>	The Modern Day Job Search, Networking, and LinkedIn
Session 5	October 17 <sup>th</sup>	Career Exploration and Interviewing
Session 6	October 24 <sup>th</sup>	Workplace Standards & Intercultural Communication

\*Note: Topics may change subject to schedules.

An additional, optional workshop on **October 31<sup>st</sup>** may also be offered.

**November 11<sup>th</sup> @ 9AM: All remaining Quiz Assignments/Deliverables due!**

Students are encouraged to record the PSDP on [MORE](#) once certificates have been issued.