



## WORK LEARN| S22



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As a student at the iSchool, I receive a lot of support from my department. They host a job board with various work opportunities throughout Canada, which is constantly being updated. I regularly checked on the job board, looking for the right opportunity for me. I am in both the Library and Information Studies degree as well as the Archival Studies degree, so there were many opportunities that suited my various interests.

In mid-March, there was an influx of job postings, and I applied for quite a few! I was most interested in working at the [Indian Residential School History and Dialogue Centre](#), and was thrilled to have been hired there! I have worked with

various human rights and social justice organizations over the years, and my undergraduate work dealt a lot with Holocaust remembrance and memorialization in particular. While I was eager to engage with memory work in archives, I also wanted to take part in contemporary and ongoing social justice work.

Originally, I had intended to only do the Work Learn position over the summer, but as an international graduate student, I needed to take a course in the summer as well. The class I registered in overlapped with my work schedule, so I explained the situation to my supervisor, and he was happy to adjust our schedule to better fit the course timing. Additionally, my work was hybrid wherein I spent 10 hours a week in the office and 10 hours doing work remotely. This aspect of my position also made it easier to balance the workload, as I could fit that work around my academic schedule. In terms of workload, it was important to plan ahead— when was there a project deadline at work or when was there an event I needed to assist with, and when was my paper due? By plotting out my various due dates and responsibilities, I could make sure everything was accounted for and given the appropriate amount of time to prepare for and complete. The most important thing is to communicate with your supervisor!

In my role as a Research and Engagement Assistant, I learned more than I thought possible at the beginning of my work term. There was an expected increase in knowledge regarding



Residential Schools, as well as the current and lasting impacts it has on Survivors and intergenerational Survivors. However, I also learned how to engage with information institutions, conduct research with archival materials, and assist in events held at the Centre. On a more personal level, I was able to see how I worked best, both individually and within a team. I learned how to conduct research in a much more focused and direct manner; although I wanted to read the contents of all my research documents, I learned how to keep my focus on the specific research scope and to extrapolate the most pertinent information. I was able to bring in my own knowledge and experiences to assume more responsibility, and I felt like a respected and valued member of the larger team.

The advice I would give to someone considering Work Learn would be: Apply! Although the process may seem daunting (I applied to somewhere between 10 and 15 positions before being hired), the outcome is incredible. Being able to apply what I had learned in lectures to a real world environment really helped me absorb the knowledge, and being able to take what I learned in the field to my coursework makes me much more eager to work, as I can see the direct impact of each lesson in the field. Not only have I met incredible coworkers and mentors, but I have also gained many new skills and gained more confidence in my existing abilities. Having this Work Learn experience has made me more motivated in my studies, and has given me direction in my academic focus.