

# GENERAL REGULATIONS

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The School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs (SGSPA) is committed to upholding the values of equity and diversity and the principles of fairness and inclusiveness. Our policies, regulations and practices are developed and implemented to achieve educational equity. Please contact the SGSPA with any questions.

## Additional Language Requirements

Some departments/programs may require students, particularly those in doctoral<sup>1</sup> programs, to obtain a reading knowledge of one or two languages other than English, in which there may be a significant amount of reference material related to the chosen field of graduate study. This requirement must be fulfilled to the satisfaction of the Department/Program at least one year prior to submission of the student's thesis. A statement from the Head of the Department/Program (or delegate) that the language requirement has been completed must be sent to the SGSPA.

## Annual Progress Reports

To be in good academic standing, a student registered in a degree program<sup>2</sup> in the SGSPA must make continuous, satisfactory progress toward the completion of the degree, as well as comply with the General Regulations of the SGSPA, all departmental/program requirements governing that degree program, and any and all applicable university regulations.

In research-based graduate programs, progress is facilitated through the completion and submission of an Annual Progress Report, and for doctoral students it is a requirement of the Queen's University Quality Assurance Processes.

All PhD students are required to submit an Annual Progress Report and graduate departments/programs are required to have a process to provide written feedback to each student. Every PhD student is responsible for submitting a written report at least once per year to the supervisor, and/or if applicable the supervisory committee, detailing his or her progress since the last report, and the plan/objectives for the next year. The supervisor and/or supervisory committee provide feedback on the student's progress and comment as to whether the proposed plan/objectives are reasonable and compatible with timely degree completion. This is also an opportunity to outline how any unanticipated delays in progress can be addressed. The student must be given the opportunity to respond to the supervisor's and/or supervisory committee's comments, and all parties must sign the report prior to its submission to the Graduate Coordinator (or delegate) by the annual deadline established by the department/program. If no deadline exists, this report

shall be filed with the department/program by the last working day in June each year.

The Doctor of Science (DSc) degree program has different requirements and guidelines for the Progress Report. Students are advised to consult with the program for more information.

Departments/programs can use the standardized SGSPA Annual Progress Report, or their own Annual Progress Report provided that it includes at a minimum the material called for on the SGSPA Annual Progress report.

Annual completion and submission of a Progress Report for research Master's<sup>3</sup> students is recommended.

<sup>1</sup> In this section of the SGSPA calendar unless otherwise specified, the term 'doctoral' refers to both the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree and the Doctor of Science (DSc) degree. The DSc is offered only by the Rehabilitation and Health Sciences (RHL) program.

<sup>2</sup> "degree program" encompasses all degree programs, joint degree programs, combined degree programs, collaborative degree programs, co-tutelle degree arrangements, graduate diploma programs and professional graduate level programs under the administration of the SGSPA.

<sup>3</sup> In this section of the SGSPA calendar, research Master's degrees are those Master's degree programs that require completion and successful defence of a thesis, currently designated by the course number 899.

## Appeal of an Assigned Grade in a Graduate Course

This policy applies to any student who is dissatisfied with an assigned grade in a graduate course, for any grade that is a **passing** grade in that course. To appeal a **failed** grade in a graduate course, students must follow the procedure below, *Appeal Against Academic Decision*.

Any student who is dissatisfied with an assigned grade in a graduate course can discuss the matter with the course instructor ("the Instructor"), who can review the grade assigned and respond to the student informally. However, students could also request a more formal appeal of an assigned grade in a graduate course.

For a formal appeal of an assigned grade in a graduate course (when the grade is not a failed grade), students must follow department/program procedures, if department/program procedures exist.



For any department/program with no department/program procedure to appeal a grade in a graduate course, a graduate student who wishes to make such an appeal shall follow these steps:

1. The student will submit a Letter of Appeal to the Instructor, who will review the work in question. This Letter of Appeal to the Instructor must be submitted within two weeks after the date the grade was made available to the student. The Instructor must provide a written decision to the student within two weeks after the student's Letter of Appeal is received.
2. If the Instructor agrees to change the grade, a change of grade form shall be processed. If the Instructor confirms the original grade, and the student wishes to appeal the Instructor's decision, within two weeks after the date of the Instructor's decision, the student must submit a Letter of Appeal to the Associate Dean of the SGSPA ("the Associate Dean"), requesting a review of the grade.<sup>1</sup> The Letter of Appeal must state clearly the student's grounds for the grade change.
3. The Associate Dean will forward the Letter of Appeal to the Department/Program Head or Graduate Coordinator ("the Head or Graduate Coordinator"), who will conduct a review of the grade.<sup>2</sup>
4. The Head or Graduate Coordinator will provide the Instructor, the student and the Associate Dean with written reasons for the grade decision resulting from their review, within two weeks after receiving the Letter of Appeal from the Associate Dean. The grade decision resulting from the review by the Head or Graduate Coordinator shall be recorded as the official grade, irrespective of whether it is identical to, higher than, or lower than, the original grade.

As an academic decision, the decision can be further appealed only on the basis of a specific procedural error(s) made in the department/program grade review procedures, or based on extenuating circumstances. Such appeal must be made to the Academic Appeal Board of the SGSPA within 2 weeks after receiving the written result of the review, using the process set out in Steps 4 and 5 in the Regulation titled *Appeals Against Academic Decisions*.

- <sup>1</sup> In the event that the Associate Dean is the Instructor of the course, the Letter of Appeal is to be submitted to an alternate Associate Dean of the SGSPA.
- <sup>2</sup> If either the Head or Coordinator are the Instructor of the course, the person who is not the Instructor is responsible for this step.

## Deadlines

The deadlines in *Appeal of an Assigned Grade in a Graduate Course #1 and/or #2* above can be extended if, upon written application by the requesting party (the student or the respondent), a satisfactory reason is provided for the delay and there is no prejudice to the other party.

## Failed Grade for the Thesis

The *Appeal of an Assigned Grade in a Graduate Course* procedures do not apply when a failing grade (F) has been received on courses numbered 899 (Master's Thesis) or 999 (Doctoral Thesis). To appeal a failing grade (F) of a graduate thesis, the student must follow the Appeal of Thesis Examination Committee Decision, set out in the Regulation titled *Appeals Against Academic Decisions*.

## Appeal Against Academic Decisions General

Academic problems sometimes arise because of misunderstandings that can be resolved by informal discussion. The general approach of the University is to encourage the speedy resolution of academic problems informally and through the normal administrative routes, i.e., through discussion with coordinators of graduate studies and department/program heads, before pursuing formal appeal processes. If a graduate student is concerned about academic problems, it is wise to first seek advice and support from a supervisor, colleague or University Advisor. If this informal approach to the resolution of academic problems does not lead to a resolution, then the student may formally appeal any academic decision. Academic decisions may be appealed on procedural grounds and/or on the basis of extenuating circumstances.

## Normal Steps in the Formal Appeal Procedures

Step 1: If a student wishes to formally appeal an academic decision, the appeal must first be submitted in writing to the instructor or body whose decision is being questioned. The student must ensure that the instructor or body is aware of all the facts which the student believes should bear upon the reconsideration of the decision. This appeal must be submitted to the instructor or body whose decision is being questioned within two weeks after receipt of the decision. The instructor or body to whom the student has appealed shall respond in writing to the student within two weeks of receiving the student's appeal.

If the student is reluctant to approach the instructor or body personally, the student may seek the assistance of a University Advisor, the Student Advisors of the Society for Graduate and Professional Students, or other university

advisor to do so on the student's behalf. A student may contact the Office of the University Ombudsperson for information about student rights and responsibilities and guidance on policy and procedure by visiting their website at [www.queensu.ca/ombuds](http://www.queensu.ca/ombuds) (<http://www.queensu.ca/ombuds/>), or by e-mail at [ombuds@queensu.ca](mailto:ombuds@queensu.ca).

Step 2: If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of Step 1 and wants to further appeal the academic decision, an appeal must be submitted in writing to the department/program Head or Coordinator of Graduate Studies who will immediately inform the department/program Head. This appeal must be submitted to the Head or Coordinator of Graduate Studies within two weeks after receipt of the decision under Step 1. The Head must respond in writing to the appeal within two weeks after receiving the appeal.

Step 3: If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of Step 2 and wants to further appeal the academic decision, an appeal must be submitted in writing to an Associate Dean of the SGSPA within two weeks after receiving the written response from the Head or Coordinator of Graduate Studies under Step 2. The Associate Dean will meet with the student within two weeks after receiving the student's appeal. The Associate Dean must provide a written response within two weeks after the meeting with the student.

In the event that an Associate Dean of the SGSPA has provided advice and feedback to any party to the appeal prior to the student contacting them under Step 3, the appeal shall be turned over to an alternate Associate Dean of the SGSPA.

Step 4: If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of Step 3 and wants to further appeal the academic decision, the student must, within two weeks after receiving the written response of the Associate Dean of the SGSPA under Step 3, or after receiving the written decision following the review of an assigned grade in a graduate course, as the case may be, ask the Secretary of the SGSPA Academic Appeal Board (AAB) to convene the AAB to hear the appeal. The student must submit a written statement of appeal within one week after submission of the request to convene the AAB, to the Secretary of the AAB (see below). The student's written statement of appeal must include copies of any written decisions received under Steps 1, 2 and/or 3 above. The Head of the Department/Program or delegate is given the opportunity to provide a response to the student's statement of appeal (see below).

Academic decisions may be appealed to the AAB on procedural grounds and/or on the basis of extenuating circumstances. Course marks or Examination Committee decisions cannot be overturned; however alternative actions

(including the possibility of further exams) may be ordered by the AAB.

Students who appeal to the AAB should be aware that material submitted by the student in support of the appeal will be distributed to other parties participating in the appeal. Those individuals may include the course instructor ("Instructor"), the department or program's coordinator of graduate studies ("Coordinator") and the head of the department/program ("Head").

Step 5: The Secretary of the AAB shall distribute the student's appeal materials and the written statement of response to the members of the AAB. Within one week after receiving all appeal materials, the Board shall convene to review the written material.

Upon the review of the written material, the AAB may determine that it does not have jurisdiction over the substantive matter of the appeal, and that the appeal cannot proceed any further before the AAB. If this is the decision, the Chair of the AAB shall inform the student of the decision and the reasons for the decision and will advise the student of the next avenue of appeal or consideration. If the AAB determines that it has jurisdiction over the substantive matter of the appeal, it will call for a meeting of all parties (see below) to hear the appeal.

### **The Student's Written Statement of Appeal**

The student's written statement of appeal must clearly address;

1. the policies and procedures of the graduate program/ department and/or the SGSPA and/or Queen's University that the student alleges were not followed, and/or
2. any extenuating circumstances that were beyond the student's control that impacted the student's academic performance contributing to the academic decision under appeal.

Any extenuating circumstance referred to in the student's written statement of appeal must be substantiated with appropriate supporting documentation.

If extenuating circumstances relate to a medical incident or condition, supporting documentation (such as a doctor's note) must be provided as part of the student's written statement of appeal.

If the student's written statement of appeal contains argument(s) or information about extenuating circumstances that were not presented in the prior step (Step 3), the AAB will remit the matter for reconsideration of the Associate Dean of the SGSPA.



The statement must include specific and relevant details of the procedural matter and/or extenuating circumstances pertaining to the appeal. The statement must also outline what the student seeks as a remedy from the AAB.

The AAB may decide not to consider the appeal if the student's appeal materials are incomplete or illegible. If the decision is that the student's appeal materials are incomplete or illegible the Chair of the AAB, or the Secretary on the Chair's behalf, will notify the student. If the student corrects the appeal materials within two weeks after the date of receipt of this notice from the Chair and resubmits the statement to the Secretary of the AAB, then the appeal proceedings will resume.

### **The Written Statement of Response**

The Head of the Department/Program shall be given the opportunity to respond in writing to the student's appeal. The opportunity to respond in writing could also be delegated to another department/program member, such as the Graduate Coordinator, or, the faculty member responsible for the academic decision under appeal.

The Secretary of the AAB will provide the Head (or delegate) with a copy of all appeal materials submitted by the student. The Head (or delegate) shall have two weeks after the date of receipt of these materials to submit a written statement of response to the Secretary of the AAB. Copies of all documents relevant to the matter or matters of the appeal that are in the possession or control of the Head (or delegate) shall be included in the written statement of response.

The written statement of response shall address the specific matters outlined in the student's written statement of appeal, and/or any and all procedures that are relevant to the matter under appeal. The written statement of response shall not include information that is irrelevant to the academic decision under appeal.

If no written statement of response is submitted by the deadline, the process will continue without this input.

### **Deadlines**

On behalf of the AAB, the Secretary in consultation with the Chair may extend any time limit if, upon written application by the requesting party (the student or the respondent), a satisfactory reason is provided for the delay and there is no prejudice to the other party.

### **Documents**

Each party to the appeal is entitled to and shall receive every document that the Academic Appeal Board receives from the other party or parties to the appeal. All appeal materials

will be treated confidentially, returned to and stored with the Secretary of the AAB, separate from the student's academic file.

### **The Meeting of All Parties**

The AAB shall, within two weeks after their initial review, hold a meeting of all parties to the appeal. Under normal circumstances, it is anticipated that the appeal can be heard in its entirety at this meeting and that the AAB shall issue its decision within a further two weeks after the date of this meeting.

At the meeting of all parties, the student may be accompanied by a University Advisor or other support person. Although a student has the right to the assistance of a legal representative, such counsel is not usually desirable or necessary at this stage of the appeal procedure. The intent is to provide a fair hearing in an atmosphere of relative informality. The student must notify the Secretary of the AAB at least one week prior to the meeting if the student is to be assisted by a legal representative.

At the meeting of all parties, the student and the respondent or respondents are expected to present their cases, in brief oral statements. Each party will also be given the opportunity to respond to the other party's oral statement. Then, members of the AAB may ask questions of the parties to the appeal, and/or seek clarification of matters pertaining to the appeal. Then each party will be invited to make a closing statement. After closing statements the meeting of all parties shall end.

The written statements of appeal and response shall comprise the written documentation under consideration at the meeting of all parties. The Chair may exclude any document that is not included in the written statements of appeal and response.

At the meeting of all parties, the Chair may reasonably limit oral statements or discussions when satisfied that the relevant matter of the appeal has been fully and fairly covered, or if the statements or discussions are irrelevant.

If any party to the appeal fails to attend the meeting of all parties when it is scheduled, the meeting can still proceed. Alternatively, the Academic Appeal Board, with the consent of all parties, may hear the submission of the parties in separate meetings.

### **Disposition of Appeals**

After hearing from all parties, the AAB may make one or more of the following decisions:

1. Uphold the Appeal: If the AAB upholds the student's appeal in whole or in part, it shall refer the matter back to the department/program or body concerned with specific instructions regarding the academic decision under the appeal. The department/program shall report back to the AAB on the implementation of the instructions. The AAB shall retain jurisdiction over the appeal pending receipt of the report from the department/program.
2. Deny the Appeal: If the AAB denies the appeal, it shall dismiss the appeal with written reason(s). The decision of the AAB may be appealed only to the University Student Appeal Board (USAB) under the Student Academic Appeal Policy (SAAP) (<https://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/policies/senate/student-academic-appeals-policy/#B>). See the Rules of Procedure (<https://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/rules-procedure-usab-0/>) for USAB.
3. Make Recommendations on Policy, Procedures and Principle to the SGSPA: If the AAB, through hearing an appeal, identifies matters of policy, procedure or principle that have broad implications for the SGSPA, it should draw these to the attention of the Dean of the SGSPA.

No penalty or requirement to withdraw shall be put into effect until the student affected has either exhausted all channels of appeal or has allowed the time for appeal to lapse. Exceptions will be considered if an academic unit determines that the interests of third parties may be prejudiced by the continued enrolment of a student in a course or program. The unit may decide that, pending an appeal from an adverse academic decision, the student should not be permitted to continue in the course or program, or may be precluded from progressing to the next academic stage.

See the Senate Academic Appeal Policy, Section D, # 33 and 34 (<https://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/policies/senate/student-academic-appeals-policy/#D>).

### Structure of the Academic Appeal Board

For every appeal, the AAB shall be comprised of the Chair, who shall be a faculty member, another faculty member, and a graduate student. At least one faculty member and the graduate student shall be from the same general domain as the appellant, but no member shall be from the same graduate department or program as the appellant.

The Director of Admissions and Student Services of the SGSPA shall serve as the Secretary of the AAB.

Faculty members serving on the AAB shall be nominated by Faculty Graduate Councils or Committees.

Student representatives on the AAB shall be nominated by Faculty Graduate Councils or Committees or by the Society for Graduate and Professional Students.

Faculty members on the AAB will be elected/appointed for two-year terms, and student members in the AAB will be elected/appointed for one-year terms. Both terms normally commence as of July 1 and are renewable.

From the faculty members nominated by the Faculty Graduate Councils or Committees, the SGSPA will appoint, for a two-year term, one faculty member to act as Chair and another to act as an alternate Chair (in the event of a conflict-of-interest situation or a multiplicity of hearings).

### Roles and Responsibility of the Academic Appeal Board

Members of the AAB are members of the academic community of Queen's University, and as such will uphold the applicable policies and regulations of Queen's University. Parties to an appeal are required to abide by the university's policies and regulations.

The Chair of the AAB shall be responsible for ensuring that all procedures in this regulation are followed fairly and appropriately. The Secretary of the AAB shall be responsible for all administrative activities of the Board, such as but not limited to, scheduling all required meetings, distributing all documents for the appeal, including the final report of the AAB, and corresponding with all parties about the appeal process.

### Appeal of Thesis Examination Committee Decision

If the appeal is concerned with the decision of a Thesis Examination Committee ("Committee"), the appeal shall be made in writing to the Dean of the SGSPA or, if the Dean was a member of the Committee, to an Associate Dean of the SGSPA who was not a member of the Committee. The appeal must be made in writing and must be submitted to the Dean (or Associate Dean, as the case may be) within two weeks after the date of examination. If the person appealed to is unable to resolve the problem within two weeks and the student wishes to appeal the decision of the Committee, the student must within one further week submit a written request to the Secretary of the AAB of the SGSPA to convene the AAB to hear the appeal.

The student's written request must contain the student's statement of appeal, outlining clearly the student's ground for appeal and must include copies of all documents upon which the student intends to rely in the appeal.



The Secretary of the AAB will provide a copy of the student's appeal materials to the respondent. The respondent shall have two weeks after the date of receipt to submit a written statement of response to the Secretary of the AAB, which shall address the specific matter(s) outlined in the student's written statement of appeal and/or any and all procedures that are relevant to the matter under appeal and which shall also include copies of all documents relevant to the matter(s) under appeal that are in the possession or control of the respondent.

The appeal procedure will then continue as described in Step 5 above (see **Normal Steps in the Appeal Procedures**). The AAB may make one or more of the dispositions as described in the **Disposition of Appeals** section above.

No penalty or requirement to withdraw shall be put into effect until the student affected has either exhausted all channels of appeal or has allowed the time for appeal to lapse. Exceptions will be considered if an academic unit determines that the interests of third parties may be prejudiced by the continued enrolment of a student in a course or program. The unit may decide that, pending an appeal from an adverse academic decision, the student should not be permitted to continue in the course or program, or may be precluded from progressing to the next academic stage. See the Section titled Effective Date of Sanction, Penalty or Requirement to Withdraw, and related Commentary, in the Senate Policy on Student Appeals, Rights & Discipline.

## Completion of Programs

Graduate students are considered to have completed all requirements for the degree when all academic requirements have been met, and when all due fees have been paid. Specifically, for thesis or research students (all Doctoral level students, and those Master's students registered in 899), a student is considered complete when one electronic copy of the thesis, in PDF format revised as recommended by the Thesis Examining Committee and finally approved by the supervisor/committee, is submitted to the SGSPA.

Exceptions to submission of an electronic copy of the thesis will be made by the SGSPA on a case-by-case basis. If it is decided that no electronic copy can be submitted, at least one paper copy revised as recommended by the Thesis Examining Committee and finally approved by the supervisor/committee must be submitted to the SGSPA in fulfillment of degree requirements.

At the time of submission for completion of degree requirements the student may also submit up to two unbound paper copies of the thesis. The paper copy or

copies will be bound by the SGSPA. The bound copy or copies will be returned to the student and to the thesis supervisor.

All courses taken by the student must appear with a mark on the student's academic record (transcript), along with all other requirements pertinent to the degree (language, comprehensive examination, etc.). Normally, the transcript notes the completion of these other requirements upon submission of the thesis for examination.

Tuition fees will be charged up to the date of receipt of the final approved copy of the thesis.

For non-research Masters students (those completing a Master's degree through course work, project, essay or report routes), or for Graduate Diploma students, a student is considered complete upon submission by the Department/Program to the School of the applicable Program Completion form. This form details the student's program of study, the marks received, and the examination and acceptance of a project, essay or report, if required. The form is signed by the Head of the Department/Program (or delegate).

All courses taken by the student must also appear with a mark on the student's academic record (transcript), along with all other requirements pertinent to the degree. Tuition fees will be charged up to the date of receipt of the applicable Program Completion form.

A student who completes a program in the middle of a term is normally eligible for a partial refund in fees. See the General Regulation Refund of Fees.

## Comprehensive/Qualifying Examination Requirement

### General Purpose

The purpose of the comprehensive/qualifying examination is:

- to assess the ability of students to communicate their knowledge and understanding of their discipline or area of study, and
- to evaluate students' grasp of the current state of the knowledge in their intended research area including relevant methodologies and approaches.

In many units the comprehensive/qualifying examination also serves to assess the feasibility of the student's research proposal in terms of scope, originality and achievability.

Students who pass the comprehensive/qualifying examination have adequately demonstrated their preparedness to undertake their thesis research.

All departments/programs must have written documentation relating to the details of the format, structure, timing and

evaluation of the comprehensive/qualifying examination readily available to students and faculty members in the unit. Students entering doctoral programs should consult the documentation in the early phases of their program so that they can plan their progression through the program accordingly. If, following a review of the department/program written document concerning the comprehensive/qualifying examination process, the student still has questions, they should be addressed to the Coordinator of Graduate Studies.

## General Guidelines

The general format of the comprehensive/qualifying examination should be consistent for all doctoral students registered in a particular program. Programs may require more than one format and/or provide students the option of more than one format. Programs may require that all students complete one or more specific elements (or components) or provide students the option of selecting one or more elements based on individual student's academic needs and interests in exploring how their disciplinary knowledge and skills may be applied in various contexts. See the Table below for examples of common formats and elements.

Given the importance of the comprehensive/qualifying examination in determining students' preparedness to conduct their research, it is important that the timing of the examination is such that students are able to fully engage in research as early as possible and progress toward timely degree completion.

All departments/programs require doctoral students to take this examination, but not all departments/programs require master's students to take it.

The comprehensive/qualifying examination is to be held within the first two years of registration in the PhD program<sup>1</sup>. Some departments/program require the comprehensive/qualifying examination to be held at an earlier point in the PhD program. Students must follow the timeline established by their department/program for this degree requirement.

The table below\* explains common formats of comprehensive/qualifying examinations at Queen's and examples of elements or components that could be required of the student. Departments may require that all students complete specific elements in one or more formats or they may permit the student, normally in consultation with his or her supervisor, to select specific elements and/or formats based on academic needs, research interests and target audience(s). Please refer to the documentation about the Comprehensive/Qualifying Examination in your unit.

\* Many elements listed in association with this format could serve as the basis for a chapter in the thesis.

<sup>1</sup> A change to the prescribed timing for completion of the comprehensive/qualifying examination may be part of a formal academic accommodation arrangement between a graduate student and the university. In those cases, the timing for completion of the comprehensive/qualifying examination will be determined on a case by case basis. For information, see the policy Accommodation of Graduate Studies with Disabilities (<https://webpublish.queensu.ca/sgs/admission-and-registration/>).

## The Comprehensive/Qualifying Examination Committee

The Comprehensive/Qualifying Examination Committee for the doctoral student may consist of:

- The Head of the department/program (or delegate) - Chairperson
- The Supervisor and/or Supervisory Committee
- Other members of the department/program as selected by the Head of the department/program
- A community/industry/external expert

The Comprehensive/Qualifying Examining Committee for the master's student is similarly constituted. Other members of the department/program may be invited as observers.

The result of the examination shall be determined by the committee and, if favourable, recorded for submission to the SGSPA.

If the result is not favourable, the committee may elect either to re-examine or to recommend to the SGSPA that the student be required to withdraw (refer to section **Withdrawal on Academic Grounds**).

## Conflict of Interest

Fairness or objectivity may be compromised, or be seen to be compromised, if academic evaluation is conducted, even in part, by someone with whom there is a close personal tie (for example, family member, partner in an intimate relationship, or housemate). Where such a tie exists between student and evaluator, the parties involved have a responsibility to declare a potential conflict of interest, normally to the Department/Program Head or Dean, who shall assist, without prejudice, in arranging evaluation by alternative means. (For the purposes of this regulation, evaluators are understood to include professors, supervisors, lecturers, tutors, markers, teaching assistants, lab demonstrators, and members of thesis or comprehensive examination committees.)



## Course Work Requirements

### General

Courses offered by graduate departments/programs may be full course (two terms in length) or half-course (one term in length). Some graduate programs have graduate course modules that are offered for part of one term. In most cases a full course is equal to three lecture hours per week per term for 2 terms, and a half course is equal to three hours per week for 1 term. Course descriptions are given in the department/program calendar entry.

The code number of each course normally consists of four letters and three digits. The letters show the alpha code of the Department and the first digit the course level. Undergraduate courses are numbered in levels 1-4, whereas graduate courses are numbered 8 and 9, e.g., the course BIOL 300 Ecology is a course offered by the Department of Biology at third year undergraduate level and MATH 812 Topics In Number Theory is a course offered by the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at the graduate level.

Students must register for all courses that they plan to take in a particular session. This should be done at registration or soon after, but not later than the deadlines set out in the Sessional Dates for the academic session.

### Registration

Any changes in courses must be approved and recorded on an academic change form (see Change of Registration).

### Notes

1. Prerequisite courses taken by qualifying or preparatory students cannot be credited to the main program.
  2. A graduate course that is offered jointly with an undergraduate course cannot be taken for credit by any student who previously obtained credit for the undergraduate course.
- a. **Primary Courses:** The courses required for a student's approved program of study are designated as primary. The number and type of courses depend upon the degree program for which the student is registered, the field of study, and the departmental requirements. Courses offered are normally graduate courses (800 and 900 series). However, some Graduate Departments/Programs may offer advanced undergraduate courses with additional work and a proviso for a higher standing to be obtained.

In the primary courses the student must attain a minimum grade of B- (B minus)

b. **Failure of a primary course:** In cases when a student does not achieve B-in a primary course, the Head or Graduate Coordinator of the Graduate Department/Program may recommend to the Faculty Graduate Council/Committee that the student:

1. repeat the examination (or equivalent) within one year after the original examination (or equivalent), or
2. repeat the course, or
3. take a substitute course. If approved, a student may take another course approved by the Faculty Graduate Council/Committee to allow them the opportunity to complete the degree requirements.

If such a recommendation is not made or, if made, is not approved by the Faculty Graduate Council/Committee, any student who fails to obtain the required standing in any primary course shall be required to withdraw.

Graduate Departments/Programs may also recommend that a student be required to withdraw due to the failure of a primary course (see Withdrawal on Academic Grounds).

The failed course and grade will not normally be removed from the transcript.

c. **Secondary Courses:** Courses additional to the student's approved program are designated as secondary. These may be taken only with the permission of the Department and the instructor. In a secondary course, a standing of less than B- may be acceptable; however, the mark will be entered on the student's transcript.

d. **Course Auditing:** Students registered in a graduate degree program may audit graduate or undergraduate courses, provided they obtain the permission of the Department/Program and the instructor. Some undergraduate faculties have restrictions on what courses may be audit. Consult the Academic Calendar of the relevant undergraduate faculty for details.

e. **Undergraduate Student Enrolment in Graduate Courses:** Outstanding undergraduate students may be permitted to take graduate courses under the following conditions:

- i. enrolment of undergraduates in graduate courses needs the approval of the instructor and the Chair of Undergraduate Studies in their Department/Program of concentration and the SGSPA;
- ii. permission to enroll in a graduate course as part of an undergraduate program is only available to fourth year students whom the department/program deems outstanding (generally taken to mean first class standing);



- iii. upon the recommendation of the Graduate Department/Program to the Faculty Graduate Council/Committee, and with the agreement of the SGSPA, graduate courses taken by an undergraduate student may be applied as credit towards a subsequent graduate degree, provided that those graduate course credits have not been credited towards any other degree of any kind; however see iv. below;
- iv. A graduate course or courses taken by an undergraduate student may be applied as credit towards both the undergraduate degree and the subsequent graduate degree, as part of an approved combined Bachelor's/Master's degree program;
- v. registration of an undergraduate in a graduate course which is **not** part of an undergraduate program or an approved combined Bachelor's/Master's degree program must take place through the SGSPA. The registration must be as a special student and meet the conditions set out in the SGSPA calendar. Fees for graduate courses taken as a special student will be assessed in addition to undergraduate fees. See Admission and Registration, Special Student.

#### f. Graduate Student Enrolment in Undergraduate

**Courses:** Students registered in the SGSPA at Queen's who hold an undergraduate degree from Queen's may seek the permission of the Faculty of Arts and Science to enroll in undergraduate Arts and Science courses as post-degree students not on a degree program. Because of enrolment pressures, such students are restricted to online courses offered through Continuing and Distance Studies. These undergraduate courses will **not** be credited towards the graduate degree requirements.

Students registered in the SGSPA at Queen's who do not hold an undergraduate degree from Queen's and who want to enroll in undergraduate Arts and Science courses, must apply for admission to the Faculty of Arts and Science to register as post-degree students not on a degree program. Because of enrolment pressures, such students are restricted to online courses offered through Continuing and Distance Studies. These undergraduate courses will **not** be credited towards the graduate degree requirements.

Students registered in the SGSPA at Queen's who wish to take a course(s) in the Faculty of Arts and Science as part of their registration as a graduate student must have permission of both the SGSPA and the Associate Dean (Studies) of the Faculty of Arts and Science. Because of enrolment pressures, such students are restricted to online courses offered through Continuing and Distance Studies. Students registered in the SGSPA at Queen's who wish to take an undergraduate course(s) from Queen's University faculties other than the

Faculty of Arts and Science, should consult the undergraduate faculty office to see if this is possible. These undergraduate courses would not normally be counted towards the graduate degree requirements.

#### g. Queen's University Senate Policy on Transfer of Course

**Credits:** Queen's University subscribes to the General Policy on the Transfer of Course Credits, as adopted by the Council of Ontario Universities. Acceptance of transfer credits among Ontario universities shall be based on the recognition that, while learning experiences may differ in a variety of ways, their substance may be essentially equivalent in terms of their content and rigour. Insofar as possible, acceptance of transfer should allow for the maximum recognition of previous learning experience in university-level courses. Subject to:

1. admission, and
2. degree, grade and program requirements,

any courses offered for credit by one Ontario university shall be accepted for credit by another Ontario university when there is an essential equivalency in course content. For further information pertaining to the policy of the transfer of courses credits for graduate students contact the SGSPA.

#### h. Queen's University Senate Policy on Student Access

**to Final Examination Papers:** Final examination question papers are normally to be made available within six months of writing to students for reference purposes. The relevant Faculty or School may grant exemptions from the policy for particular examination question papers. Final examination question papers administered through the Examinations Office that are not exempted from the policy should be released to the Library. Definitions: Final examination paper: means the final examination question paper in a course and the graded answer paper written by the student which, by Senate policy, must be retained for a period of 12 months. Appeal refers to the procedure by which any student may formally appeal a final grade in accordance with the established appeal procedure (re-read procedure) of the Faculty or School offering the course.

**Access:** Informal Access: Instructors may informally review the final examination paper with a student who requests it and are encouraged to do so. However access may not be granted before the final marks are released.

**Formal Access:** As a part of the process of appeal, and upon request, the student will obtain access by a method determined by the Department/Program or School. This may be either supervised access to, or a copy of, the final examination paper as well as all other material submitted by,



but not returned to, the student and for which a mark has been assigned.

i. **Queen's University Senate Language Policy:** Normally examinations and assignments are to be submitted in English, except where a Faculty Board has approved an alternative practice or where a special agreement has been entered into between an instructor and a student, with the approval of the Department/Program Head, for submission of work in a language other than English.

j. **Religious Observance and Examinations:** A student who discovers that an exam scheduled by the Exams office at the same hour as a religious observance, should report the conflict to the exams office in Gordon Hall as soon as possible. Individual arrangements are made for each student.

## Degrees

Departments/Programs in the SGSPA offer programs of study leading to the following graduate degrees and graduate diplomas:

- Doctor of Philosophy
  - Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)
- Doctor of Science
  - Doctor of Science in Rehabilitation and Health Leadership (D.Sc.)
- Master's Degree
  - Master of Applied Science (M.A.Sc.)
  - Master of Art Conservation (M.A.C.)
  - Master of Arts (M.A.)
  - Master of Arts (Arts Leadership) (MAAL)
  - Master of Earth and Energy Resources Leadership (MEERL)
  - Master of Education (M.Ed.)
  - Master of Engineering (M.Eng.)
  - Master of Environmental Studies (M.E.S.)
  - Master of Health Professions Education (M.H.P.E.)
  - Master of Industrial Relations (M.I.R.)
  - Master of Laws (LL.M.)
  - Master of Nursing (Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioner) (M.N. [PHCNP])
  - Master of Nursing Science (M.N.Sc.)
  - Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.)
  - Master of Public Administration (M.P.A.)
  - Master of Public Health (M.P.H)
  - Master of Science (M.Sc.)
  - Master of Science (Aging and Health) (M.Sc. [A.H.])
  - Master of Science (Healthcare Quality) (M.Sc. [H.Q.]
- Master of Science in Occupational Therapy (M.Sc. [O.T.])
- Master of Science in Physical Therapy (M.Sc. [P.T.])
- Master of Urban and Regional Planning (M.PL.)
- Professional Master's Degree
  - Professional Master in Biomedical Informatics (MBI)
  - Professional Master of Education (PME)
  - Professional Master of Medical Sciences (MMSc)
- Graduate Diploma
  - Arts Management Graduate Diploma (AMGD)
  - Graduate Diploma in Aging and Health (GDAH)
  - Graduate Diploma in Biomedical Informatics (GDipBI)
  - Graduate Diploma in Immigration and Citizenship Law (GDICL)
  - Graduate Diploma in Legal Services Management (GDLSM)
  - Graduate Diploma in Medical Sciences (GDMSc)
  - Graduate Diploma in Pharmaceutical & Healthcare Management and Innovation (GDPHMI)
  - Graduate Diploma in Professional Inquiry (GDPI)
  - Graduate Diploma in Risk Policy and Regulation (RPRD)
  - Graduate Diploma in Social Performance Management in the Extractive Industries (GDSPMEI)
  - Graduate Diploma in Water and Human Health (GD WHH)
  - Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioner Diploma (DPHCNP)

Some departments/programs cooperate to offer collaborative master's programs requiring study in two different but related fields. Students who wish to undertake such programs should contact the Head or Graduate Coordinator of the applicable Department/Program.

Further information concerning the Departments/Programs and the programs of study which they offer may be found in the chapter on them.

### Notes

1. The Smith School of Business administers all Master of Business Administration degrees and other graduate level credentials.
2. The Faculty of Medicine administers all postgraduate training programs which are offered by medical departments to Doctors of Medicine who wish to prepare for the fellowship examinations set by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.
3. The M.Phil. is offered by the Department of English Language and Literature only.

## Electronic Information Security Policy Framework

The computing and network systems at Queen's University are intended to support teaching, research and administrative purposes and to enhance the broader learning environment. All Queen's computer users should be aware that they have access to valuable and sensitive resources, and that their computing and network practices can adversely affect others. Users should also understand that the Queen's University Electronic Information Security Policy Framework applies fully to the use of all personal computers and other devices while they are connected to the Queen's network.

Students are responsible for making themselves fully aware of the complete Senate policy called Electronic Information Security Policy Framework, and all related policies and documents, available from the website: <http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/policies/senate/electronic-information-security-policy-framework> (<https://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/policies/senate/electronic-information-security-policy-framework/>).

Alleged violations of the Electronic Information Security Policy Framework shall be dealt with as outlined in the framework document and/or related policies and documents.

## Extension of Time Limits

Effective for students admitted September 1, 2013 and all subsequent years:

An extension of the standard time limit for completion of a PhD degree program to five years, or for completion of a DSc program to four years, may be made by a Department/Program based on a discipline-related rationale and a plan to support students in progressing toward completion. Such a decision must be communicated to students via the Graduate Handbook or website and to the SGSPA. Otherwise Departments/Programs will grant a one year extension to graduate students in good standing and who can demonstrate how they will progress toward degree completion within an additional year (3 terms) beyond the standard timeframe of 1 year (3 terms) or 2 years (6 terms) for a Master's, 3 years (9 terms) for a DSc, and 4 years (12 terms) for a PhD. The Department/Program must inform the SGSPA of extensions granted prior to the end of term 4 or 7 (1 or 2 year Master's programs), term 10 (DSc) or term 13 (PhD).

Requests for an extension beyond term 6 of a one year Master's program, term 9 of a two year Master's program, term 12 of a DSc program, or term 15 of a PhD program, must be submitted to the SGSPA on a Time Limit Extension Request Form before the end of term 6 or 9 of a Master's program, before term 12 of a DSc program, or before term 15 of a PhD

program. A request will be considered for approval if there is satisfactory evidence of progress (e.g. drafts of chapters) or extenuating circumstances that could be personal or research-related and which have significantly delayed the student's progress. Such requests must be supported by the Department/Program and be accompanied by the supervisor's assessment of the student's progress and a plan for completion within 12 months (3 terms). PhD students must append a copy of their end of year 4 progress report and their end of year 5 progress report.

For information about the DSc progress report requirement for extensions, students are advised to consult with the DSc program.

Subsequent extension requests may be approved under extenuating circumstances (personal or research related).

### Notes:

1. Terms in which a student's registration status is inactive are not counted when calculating the overall time registered in the program.
2. The decision in response to an extension request is an Academic Decision. If denied, the student will be informed of the reasons in writing and advised that they may appeal the decision under the policy Appeal Against Academic Decisions.
3. An extension of the prescribed time limits for completion of the degree program may be part of a formal academic accommodation arrangement between a graduate student and the university. In those cases, extensions beyond the second extension, will be considered on a case by case basis. For information, see the policy Accommodation of Graduate Studies with Disabilities.

Effective for students admitted before September 1, 2013:

Extensions of the prescribed time limits for completion of a degree program may be granted in some cases. An extension will only be granted for valid, documented reasons, to graduate students whose academic record is otherwise satisfactory and who can clearly demonstrate how they will fulfill program requirements within a stated period of time not to exceed 12 months. A Time Limit Extension Request form must be completed by the student in consultation with the supervisor and submitted to the Graduate Coordinator of the Department/Program. If the Department/Program supports the request, it must then be referred to the SGSPA for approval at least one month prior to the beginning of the term of the proposed extension.

Any request for an extension must be supported by a written explanation from the supervisor, who must provide a detailed assessment of the student's progress and the student's



plans for timely completion of the outstanding program requirements within the stated period of time.

Requests for a second extension are not normally approved, but will be considered for approval if extenuating circumstances have delayed the student's progress.

Requests for a second extension for a stated period of time not to exceed 12 months, must be made using the same Request form and must include the supervisor's support and assessment as above. A request for a second extension will not be considered nor approved unless details are provided that outline all progress made since the last time limit extension was granted.

Subsequent extension requests (past a second extension) will not normally be approved.

**Note:** An extension of the prescribed time limits for completion of the degree program may be part of a formal academic accommodation arrangement between a graduate student and the university. In those cases, extensions beyond the second extension, will be considered on a case by case basis. For information, see the policy Accommodation of Graduate Studies with Disabilities.

## Intellectual Property, Research and Patents

Intellectual property is defined as any result of intellectual or artistic activity that can be owned by a person. Specifically, this includes inventions, publications, computer software, works of art, industrial and artistic designs, as well as other creations that can be protected under patent, copyright, or trademark laws.

Members of the University include members of faculty, staff and student body, while employed by, affiliated with, or registered at Queen's University.

With respect to intellectual property, graduate students are governed by the policies outlined in the Senate document on intellectual property. This document can be viewed on the University Secretariat website (<http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/policies/senate/intellectual-property/>).

Graduate students with questions about intellectual property, research and patents could also seek the advice of Queen's University Office of Partnerships and Innovation (OPI) (<https://www.queensu.ca/partnershipsandinnovation/>).

## Off-Campus Study

Subject to the residency requirement of the Department/Program, students registered in a master's or a doctoral program at Queen's University may be permitted to study at

another approved university, institution, library or laboratory under the conditions listed below. Full-time off-campus registration must be recommended by the Department/Program via submission of the Request for Full Time Study Off Campus form. The request must be approved by the SGSPA. Students with Full time off campus status are responsible for registering their off campus activities through Queen's University Off-Campus Activity Safety Policy On-line Planning Tool (OCASP 2.0) and must go through the on-line pre-departure orientation.

- a. If a graduate student wishes to take a graduate course at another university in Ontario, such study may be carried out under the Ontario Universities Visiting Graduate Student Plan. This plan allows a graduate student of an Ontario university to take graduate courses at another Ontario university while remaining registered at the home university. The plan allows the student to bypass the usual application for admission procedures to the host university and facilitates transfer of course credits to the home university. The student pays fees to the home university and is classed as 'visiting graduate student' at the host university, to which no fees are paid. The student must make application for study under this Plan by completion of a special application form which is available at departmental /program offices or from the SGSPA. Students may not audit courses under this plan nor enroll in any courses which are not to be credited towards their degree program. The student must be registered at Queen's as full-time off-campus.
- b. If a graduate student registered in a graduate program at Queen's University wishes to study at another approved university or academic institution outside Ontario, the student might be required to enroll as a full-time student at the other university or institution, and pay the fees required by that university. Full-time off-campus status must be requested, granted and maintained at Queen's University during the period spent at the other university or institution. An exemption from Queen's University graduate program tuition fees for that period may be granted. Granting a tuition waiver under this regulation is normally agreed to only once during a student's graduate program. The full time tuition and/or mandatory fees assessed by the other institution must be approximately equal to the full time graduate program tuition assessed at Queen's for the same period of time, for a waiver of Queen's tuition to be granted. See the General Regulation Full-Time, a.
- c. If a student wishes to study at a library, laboratory or institution outside Queen's University, full-time off-campus registration at Queen's must be maintained and normal tuition fees must be paid to Queen's University, less any obligatory fees charged by the library, laboratory

or institution in question. The student will conduct such study under the continued supervision of the Queen's department/program. Full-time off-campus status must be requested and granted. See the General Regulation Full-Time, a.

## Requirements for Degree Programs

The minimum requirements for the various degree programs are listed below. Departments/programs which have requirements in addition to these minimal specify them in their particular departmental/program calendar entry, and/or in other departmental/program documents.

### Master's Degree Programs

The requirements for the master's program, as set out by the graduate department or program, must be completed satisfactorily within the specified time limit after initial registration in the program. It should be noted that the specified time to completion is a time LIMIT and is not indicative of normal program duration.

The specified time to completion of graduate programs falls under this regulation: Time Limits for Completion of Programs.

Master's students registering in a full-time program must pay full-time fees for the duration of their program. The only exception is when personal family or health circumstances prevent continuation as a full-time student.

There are master's programs that are designed to be part-time programs. They are in Education (Part-time M.Ed.) and Policy Studies (Professional MPA and Professional MIR). The requirements and variations in admission standards are described in detail in the calendar sections for these programs.

Departments/programs may recommend acceptance of students specifically as part-time students throughout their program. Before acceptance, the Department/Program will provide to the SGSPA a detailed program of study proposal for each student lasting for not less than six terms of active study. The part-time student will normally register for no more than one half course, or its equivalent, per term. See the general regulation Part time.

In cases where a student, seeking initial acceptance into a master's program as a part-time student, intends to complete the program with a registration pattern including one or more subsequent terms of full-time registration, the Department/Program must, before acceptance, provide a detailed program proposal for approval of the SGSPA.

See Transfers from full-time to part-time status.

### Master's Degrees Patterns (for all departments/programs except those in Engineering and Applied Science)

#### Pattern I

- a. Courses: Two session-length or four term-length graduate courses. Selection of courses is subject to departmental/program approval. The student must obtain satisfactory standings in the courses (see Course Work Requirements).
- b. Research and Thesis: The student must prepare a satisfactory thesis and successfully defend it (see General Regulations Research and Thesis).

**Note:** In some departments/programs the make-up of a program may differ from the above (e.g. more coursework and a shorter thesis).

#### Pattern II

- a. Courses: Four session-length or eight term-length graduate courses. Selection of courses is subject to departmental approval. The student must obtain satisfactory standings in the courses (see Course Work Requirements).
- b. Project or Essay: A project with report or a master's essay prepared under direction. In either case, the work may be submitted to an examining committee for approval. In some departments/programs the student may be required to defend the report before an examining board.

#### Pattern III

- a. Courses: A minimum of four session-length or eight term-length graduate courses. Some Master's programs require more than four session length or eight term length graduate courses. Selection of courses is subject to departmental/program approval. The student must obtain satisfactory standings in the courses (see Course Work Requirements).
- b. Other requirements (if any): Some departments/programs have requirements in addition to courses, as outlined by the Department/Program.

### Master's Degrees Patterns (for all departments/programs in Engineering and Applied Science)

#### 1. Research Master's Degree -M.A.Sc. (Master of Applied Science)<sup>1</sup>:

- a. Courses: A minimum of four term-length graduate courses (or approved equivalent). Some departments/programs require more than four term-length graduate courses (or approved equivalent) to complete this pattern. Selection of courses is subject to departmental/program, and in some



instances, SGSPA, approval. The student must obtain satisfactory standings in the courses (see Course Work Requirements).

- b. Research and Thesis: The student must prepare a satisfactory thesis and successfully defend it (see General Regulations Research and Thesis).
- c. Other requirements (if any): Some departments/programs have additional requirements, as outlined by the Department/Program.

## 2. Coursework Master's Degree (M.Eng.):

- a. Courses: A minimum of eight term-length graduate courses (or approved equivalent). Some departments/programs require more than eight term-length graduate courses (or approved equivalent) to complete this pattern. Selection of courses is subject to departmental/program, and in some instances, SGSPA, approval. The student must obtain satisfactory standings in the courses (see Course Work Requirements).
- b. Project: A project prepared under direction. In some departments the student may be required to defend the project before an examining board.

In some departments the make-up of a program may differ from a + b above (e.g. 9 term courses and no project).

<sup>1</sup> Students who choose the Research Master's Degree pattern in the departments in Engineering and Applied Science, enrol in and receive the degree of Master of Applied Science (M.A.Sc.).

**Other requirements (if any):** Some departments/programs have additional requirements, as outlined by the Department/Program.

Note: Students who choose the Coursework Master's Degree pattern in the departments/programs in Engineering and Applied Science, enrol in and receive the degree of Master of Engineering (M.Eng.).

Not all departments offer the Coursework Master's Degree pattern.

## Doctoral Degree Programs

The requirements of doctoral programs, as set out by the graduate department or program, must be completed satisfactorily within the specified time limit after initial registration in the program. It should be noted that the specified time to completion is a time LIMIT and is not indicative of normal program duration.

The specified time to completion of graduate programs falls under this regulation: Time Limits for Completion of Programs.

Departments/Programs offer only one pattern of study for the doctoral degree in which research is the major requirement.

The requirements of doctoral programs are:

- a. Courses The number of courses prescribed depends on the student's background in relation to the chosen field of study and on the departmental /program requirements. (See Course Work Requirements.)
- b. Research and Thesis The research and thesis will normally take up at least two-thirds of the student's full-time study requirement. The student must pursue original academic concepts in the field of study and be able to defend the subsequent presentation of them in the thesis, and at an oral thesis examination. (See General Regulations Research and Thesis).
- c. Comprehensive/Qualifying Examination All doctoral students must meet the requirements for the Comprehensive/Qualifying Examination in their department /program during the course of their studies. See Comprehensive/Qualifying Examination Requirement.
- d. Language Some departments/programs may require the student to obtain a reading knowledge in one or two languages other than English. This requirement must be fulfilled one year before submitting the thesis. See Additional Language Requirement.
- e. Registration status Doctoral students registering in a full-time program must pay full-time fees for the duration of their program. The only exception is when personal family or health circumstances prevent continuation as a full-time student.

Departments/programs may recommend acceptance of students specifically as part-time students throughout their doctoral program. Before acceptance, the Department/Program will recommend, for approval by the SGSPA, a detailed program of study proposal for each student lasting for not less than six terms of active study. The part-time student will normally register for no more than one half course, or its equivalent, per term. See the general regulation Part time.

For information on transfers from full-time to part-time status see Transfers from Full-time to Part-time status.

## Research

In most graduate degree programs students must carry out research for their thesis or project as directed by the

appointed supervisor. For a master's program, the research must be of high scholarly standard; for a doctoral program, it must be original and should further existing knowledge of the subject.

Selection of the subjects upon which the research and thesis will be based is made by the student in consultation with his/her supervisor or committee.

Most research should be done within the facilities of the Department/Program and Queen's University, but in circumstances where these are inadequate or where the work must be done in the field, students may apply through the Department/Program to the SGSPA for permission to do their research outside the university. This will be granted only if the SGSPA has assurance, in writing, from the student's supervisor/committee that:

1. the student will be doing the research personally, as directed by the supervisor, and
2. the supervisor/committee will have access to and knowledge of the field operation, outside laboratory, or library to direct the student.

This change of research venue is requested via the Full Time Off Campus regulation and procedures.

## Residence Requirements

To become fully involved in a field of study and to be satisfactorily in contact with members of the Department/Program and students in the field, it is necessary to be studying on a full-time basis and be full-time on-campus for some part of the degree program. This is known as being "in residence". While the SGSPA has no formal requirements for length of residence, departments/programs may impose such requirements, if they are appropriate to the program of study.

Full-time off-campus registration must still be approved as specified in the regulation Full-Time.

Students admitted to a degree program on a part-time basis are responsible for maintaining close contact with faculty members and students in their field of study. They will normally be expected to take at least one, one-term course in two of the three terms per year in every year until the course requirements have been met.

## Structure of Graduate Degree Programs

A student's program of study is structured based on a set of requirements laid down for the degree by the departments/programs and the SGSPA.

## Master's Programs

The basic patterns of requirements for master's degrees are:

### Program Pattern I

Advanced courses plus research and thesis

### Other Patterns for Master's Degrees

For Master's degrees only, some departments/programs offer alternative patterns of program requirements:

### Program Pattern II

Advanced courses plus project and report, or plus master's essay(s).

### Program Pattern III

Advanced coursework.

A master's degree taken according to one of the alternative patterns represents an equivalent standard of academic achievement to that of the same degree taken according to Pattern I.

The program of study depends on the student's academic background, field of study, and the department/program requirements for the degree. It is drawn up by the student's supervisor and submitted to the SGSPA for approval according to its procedures. The program is then entered into the student's record. This should be done early in the initial term of registration.

Once a student's field of study has been determined, a supervisor or supervisory committee with expertise in that field is appointed by the Head of the Department/Program or the department/program committee on graduate studies according to the procedures of the home department/program.

## Doctoral Programs

See Requirements for Degree Programs for details on the standard structure and requirements of Doctoral programs. The requirements of doctoral programs, as set out by the graduate department or program, must be completed satisfactorily within the specified time limit after initial registration in the program. It should be noted that the specified time to completion is a time LIMIT and is not indicative of normal program duration.

## Thesis

### General

The thesis is a major requirement of most graduate degree programs and must be expressed in a satisfactory literary form consistent with the discipline concerned and display a scholarly approach to the subject and a thorough knowledge of it.



The thesis must be defended in an oral thesis examination. Parts of the thesis may be prepared in a form suitable for separate publication, but overall it must comprise a coherent account of a unified research project rather than a collection of loosely connected studies. Publication or acceptance for publication of research results prior to presentation of the thesis in no way supersedes the University's judgment of the work at a thesis examination. A critical review of previous work related to the subject and a concluding summation of the contribution made in the thesis to scholarship in the chosen field must be included in the thesis.

The master's thesis should demonstrate that the candidate is capable of original and independent work; that of a doctoral student must be original and be of such value as to merit publication.

Further guidance on the specific requirements of the department/program with respect to the thesis may be obtained from the student's supervisor. Many departments/programs require their students to submit a thesis proposal for approval before the student begins work on it. A student engaged in research for a thesis must register it as a course, Master's Thesis 899 or Doctoral Thesis 999.

All graduate students working on a thesis must register for each term until they have completed the requirements for their degree program. Please note that requirements are considered complete when one electronic copy of the thesis, in PDF format revised as recommended by the Thesis Examining Committee and finally approved by the supervisor/committee, is submitted to the SGSPA, via the online "E-thesis" submission process.

Exceptions to submission of an electronic copy of the thesis will be made by the SGSPA on a case-by-case basis. If it is decided that no electronic copy can be submitted, at least one paper copy revised as recommended by the Thesis Examining Committee and finally approved by the supervisor/committee must be submitted to the SGSPA in fulfillment of degree requirements.

At the time of submission for completion of degree requirements the student may also submit up to two unbound paper copies of the thesis. The paper copy or copies will be bound by the SGSPA. The bound copy or copies will be returned to the student and to the thesis supervisor.

### Thesis Format

The thesis must conform to one of the two formats described in the document, General Forms of Theses ([http://www.queensu.ca/sgs/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca/sgswww/files/files/Students-thesis%20completion/SGS\\_General\\_Forms\\_of\\_Theses\\_%20March%202017.pdf](http://www.queensu.ca/sgs/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca/sgswww/files/files/Students-thesis%20completion/SGS_General_Forms_of_Theses_%20March%202017.pdf)), which may be obtained from the website of the SGSPA,

under Thesis Formatting & Other Resources (<http://www.queensu.ca/sgs/thesis-formatting-other-resources/>).

### Membership of all Thesis Examining Committees

Normally, with the exceptions of the "external" examiner and in some cases, the "additional" examiner on, a doctoral candidate's thesis examining committee (see below), thesis examining committees shall comprise Queen's University faculty who are members of the SGSPA. The online calendar of the SGSPA contains the most up-to-date listing of faculty members of the School. The appointment of thesis examining committee members who are NOT members of the School must be approved in advance by the Dean of the SGSPA (or delegate).

### Attendance at the Oral Thesis Examination

For the purpose of this Regulation: "Queen's community" includes all faculty, staff, and students of the University; "Visitor" means anyone who is not a member of the Queen's community; and "Supervisor" means the faculty member (or members) designated as the supervisor(s) at the time of the oral thesis examination.

Oral thesis examinations are normally open, meaning that all members of the Queen's community may attend. Visitors may attend an open oral thesis examination at the invitation of both the candidate and the supervisor(s), which must be made at least one week prior to the scheduled date of the oral thesis examination. The Head of the Department/Program must be informed of any visitors who have been invited to the oral thesis examination. Only members of the Examining Committee may ask questions of the candidate, and only members of the Examining Committee may be present during the preliminary and post-examination sessions.

An oral thesis examination may be closed, meaning that only members of the Examining Committee may be present. An oral thesis examination may be closed for justifiable reasons (such reasons may include the need to protect rights to intellectual property or commercial publication, to honour contractual obligations owed to third parties, or for accommodation requirements). A request for a closed oral thesis examination may be made either by the candidate, or by (any of) the candidate's supervisor(s) to an Associate Dean of the SGSPA. In the event that either the supervisor(s) or the candidate does not agree to the request for a closed oral thesis examination, the request may nonetheless be granted, unless the dissenting party provides justifiable reasons for not agreeing to a closed oral thesis examination. The decision to grant or deny the request for a closed oral thesis examination shall be made by an Associate Dean of the SGSPA.



At the time of the oral thesis examination the Chair of the Examining Committee shall have final authority to determine who is eligible to attend the oral examination. Attendance at an open oral thesis examination may be limited due to room capacity.

The Chair of the Examining Committee may ask members of the Queen's community and all visitors to leave the examination after the oral presentation made by the candidate, in cases where a presentation is part of the oral thesis examination processes.

The Chair of the Examining Committee has responsibility for the conduct of the oral thesis examination, and has the discretion to exclude members of the Queen's community, and/or visitors, whose conduct disturbs the oral thesis examination processes.

#### **Outcome Categories of the Oral Thesis Examination**

The outcome of the oral thesis examination is based on the acceptability of both the thesis and the defence of the thesis at the oral thesis examination. The purpose of the oral thesis examination is to ascertain that the student is able to adequately present and defend the thesis and its underlying assumptions, methodology, results and conclusions in a manner consistent with the degree being sought.

At the oral thesis examination, the examining committee will reach one of the 4 outcomes listed below and record it on the "Thesis Examination Results" form. The 4 potential outcome categories are Passed, Passed with Major Revisions, Referred or Failed. The lowest outcome category with two or more votes will result in the decision of the examining committee.

i. Passed: A thesis is passed if it is acceptable in its present form or pending minor revisions, and its defence at the oral thesis examination was satisfactory. A thesis may be passed if no substantive changes are required. Changes in the form of corrections of typographical or grammatical errors, minor modifications to the thesis, editorial revisions to improve clarity and revisions to clarify results, findings or conclusions, or the like, may be recommended with a thesis classified as passed. A list of the required revisions must be provided by the Chair to the student and the supervisor, and the completion of the revisions must be certified to the SGSPA by the thesis supervisor or other designated person.

ii. Passed with Major Revisions: A thesis is passed with major revisions if it is not acceptable in its present form or pending minor revisions but could be acceptable pending major revisions. Major revisions could include, for example, rearticulation and repositioning of research purpose, substantive integration of new literature, major additions or revisions to conceptual framework, methodology, results,

and/or discussion. In cases of portfolio or manuscript theses, a passed with major revision outcome may be assigned if one or more of the manuscripts requires major revisions. A passed with major revisions may not require reevaluation of the written thesis by the whole examining committee. Revisions must be certified to the SGSPA by those whom the examining committee deem responsible for oversight of revisions.

iii. Referred: A thesis is referred if it is unacceptable in its present form and/or requires re-examination by the PhD oral thesis examining committee. For example, a thesis will be referred if it requires substantive changes such as rewriting a chapter, reinterpretation, reanalysis or recalculation of data or findings, or additional research in order to attain acceptable standards of coherence and integrity in argument and presentation. The committee may decide to reconvene the examining committee and hold another oral thesis examination of the revised thesis.

The examining committee may also use the referred category if it determines that the oral thesis examination itself, either separate from or in conjunction with the written thesis, is unsatisfactory. This means that the student did not adequately present and defend the thesis and its underlying assumptions, methodology, results and conclusions in a manner consistent with the degree being sought. In such cases, a second oral thesis examination must be held, and the committee must then return a decision of either "passed" or "failed".

In all cases of referral, the nature of the revisions and/or additional work, and/or the deficiencies associated with the oral thesis examination, must be specified in writing by the Chair to avoid dispute or ambiguity. When outlining the revisions and/or additional work required, and/or the holding of a second oral thesis examination, the Chair must be as specific as possible. These comments will be passed on to the candidate in a letter from the SGSPA as revisions and/or improvements that must be met for the thesis to be reconsidered.

Any outlined revisions in relation to a referred outcome must be certified by the Chair or delegate as having been completed satisfactorily. Usually, this certification is delegated to at least two members of the Committee. In all cases of referral, the examining committee continues to exist until it has agreed that the thesis outcome is either passed or failed. The decision of Passed with Major Revisions is not an option once the thesis and/or oral examination has been placed in the Referred category.

iv Failed: Failure can occur in 2 ways:



1. A thesis is failed if the document is unacceptable to the discipline even with substantive revisions. If the committee returns two or more votes of Failed on the basis of the document, this means that the committee recommends that the student be required to withdraw on academic grounds.
2. Failure may also result from an unacceptable second oral thesis examination, where the student was manifestly unable to adequately present and defend the thesis and its underlying assumptions, methodology, results and conclusions in a manner consistent with the degree being sought. A decision of Failed on the basis of the second oral thesis examination requires agreement by the majority (more than half) of the examining committee.

The student will be notified of the result immediately by the Chair of the committee and the decision confirmed in writing by the SGSPA.

### **Conflict of Interest and Arm's Length Provisions for Examiners**

No member of the examining committee can be in conflict of interest with the candidate. Conflict of interest is defined as a personal or family relationship with the candidate and/or vested interest in the thesis or research for personal or financial gain. Further, the Chair, External Examiner, and at least one other examiner must be 'arms-length' to the candidate (e.g., must not have a prior supervisory relationship, must not have co-authored with or co-presented with the candidate). Provided the conditions above are satisfied, members of a candidate's supervisory committee are eligible to be thesis examining committee members. In addition, please note that external examiners must continue to be arms-length from the supervisor, following the criterion: "The supervisor is arms-length from the external examiner (i.e., does not hold a current grant with nor has published with the external examiner within the past five years)"

### **Completion of Degree Requirements After the Oral Thesis Examination**

The SGSPA will notify the candidate of the successful completion of the degree requirements only after submission to the School by the candidate, of one electronic copy of the thesis, in PDF format, revised as recommended by the Thesis Examining Committee and finally approved by the supervisor/committee. Submission of the electronic copy is done via the "E-thesis" process. Exceptions to submission of an electronic copy of the thesis will be made by the SGSPA on a case-by-case basis. If it is decided that no electronic copy can be submitted, at least one paper copy revised as recommended by the Thesis Examining Committee and finally approved by the supervisor/committee must be submitted to the SGSPA

in fulfillment of degree requirements. Tuition fees will be charged up to and including the month of receipt of the final approved copy of the thesis.

**Archival copy of thesis:** The electronic copy of the final approved thesis copy submitted to the School will ultimately become the archival copy, to be placed in the archives of Theses Canada, Library and Archives Canada, and Queen's University archives. All format and pagination requirements must be met before the SGSPA accept the thesis in fulfillment of degree requirements.

**Paper copies of thesis:** At the time of submission for completion of degree requirements, the student may also submit up to two unbound paper copies of the thesis. The paper copy or copies will be bound by the SGSPA. The bound copy or copies will be returned to the student and to the thesis supervisor. Paper copies submitted for binding must be presented in order of pagination in separate envelopes.

### **Circulation of Theses**

Any graduate student registering in a degree program at Queen's University involving research is advised that as a condition of being awarded the degree the recipient will be required to grant a license of partial copyright to the University and to the Library and Archives Canada for any thesis submitted as part of the degree program.

As soon as the thesis has been accepted in fulfillment of degree requirements by the SGSPA, the thesis is also automatically placed in Queen's University digital repository, QSpace (unless a restriction has been requested; see below). QSpace is the Queen's University Research and Learning Repository. Materials deposited in QSpace are instantly and permanently accessible worldwide through the Internet.

### **Notes**

1. This makes the thesis available for further research only. Publication for commercial purposes remains the sole right of the author.
2. If the thesis is restricted, this is to be indicated at the time of submission of the thesis to QSpace.
3. The terms and conditions of the university's licence agreements are available online as part of the "E-thesis" submission process. The student's signature is collected online. The university's licence agreement form, and all other required forms, are also available from the website of the SGSPA. Students who wish to obtain legal advice concerning their subsequent rights are advised to do so prior to signing the agreements. Signing of the licence agreements is normally done after the content of the thesis has been delineated and the importance of copyright and/or patents is fully understood.

### Request for Restriction of Thesis

The student may, at the time of submitting the thesis for completion of degree requirements, request that the thesis be restricted. If the restriction request is granted then the archival copy of the thesis will not be submitted to QSpace, Library and Archives Canada, or Proquest, and copies of the thesis held by the SGSPA will not be bound, microfilmed, or deposited in any library.

A restriction request will be granted where:

- (a) the student provides justifiable reasons for the request (such reasons may include the need to protect rights to commercial publication, to apply for a patent arising from the research, or to honour contractual obligations owed to third parties); and
- (b) the student's supervisor<sup>1</sup> confirms in writing that he or she assents to the restriction of the thesis.

In the event that the supervisor does not assent to the restriction of the thesis the restriction request may nonetheless be granted, unless the supervisor provides justifiable reasons for withholding his or her assent.

The decision to grant or deny the restriction request shall be made by the Associate Dean of the SGSPA.

If the restriction is granted the duration of the restriction shall be five (5) years, with immediate and automatic release to QSpace, Library and Archives Canada, and Proquest, at the end of the restriction period. Students may release their thesis from restriction earlier than 5 years by informing the SGSPA that the restriction may be lifted.

The author's name, thesis title and thesis abstract (also known as the thesis metadata) shall be available for all restricted theses through the usual online databases throughout the duration of the restriction. Under extraordinary circumstances, a student may contact the Dean of the SGSPA to request restriction of the metadata information for the duration of the thesis restriction. Confirmation must be received from the student's supervisor that he/she agrees to the restriction of the metadata information before the SGSPA will process the metadata information restriction.

<sup>1</sup> The supervisor is the faculty member designated as the supervisor at the time of the oral thesis examination. When a student has more than one supervisor, the supervisor(s) responsible for certifying that any required revisions have been made to the thesis after the oral thesis examination, shall be the supervisor(s) who must confirm agreement to the thesis restriction.

### Absence of Examiners

In the event that a faculty member of an Examination Committee cannot attend the Oral Thesis Examination in person owing to illness or other unexpected absence, one of the following alternate arrangements should be made by the department/program Head/Program Director, or the Graduate Coordinator, or other delegated department/program faculty member:

- Determine if another faculty member can serve on the committee and attend the oral thesis examination at the scheduled meeting time (in the case of the Chair, any internal department/program member, or the internal-external).
- Determine if the examiner who cannot attend in person could participate in the oral thesis examination via teleconference or videoconference or other interactive process (e.g. Teams, Zoom, Skype). If so, these arrangements must be made by the Department/Program.
- If the above two alternative modes of participation are not possible by the examiner, a comprehensive report including questions for the candidate and an indication of which outcome category the examiner would place the thesis in must be provided by that examiner to the Chairperson. The Chairperson will ask another member of the committee to read the report and pose the questions at the oral examination on the missing examiner's behalf.

For a Master's oral thesis examination, one of these appropriate steps can almost always be implemented entirely by the department/program. There may be cases where additional constraints may require the approval of the SGSPA (SGSPA), such as, if it is proposed that a faculty member who is not also a member of the SGSPA serve on the committee so that the examination may proceed as scheduled. For a Doctoral oral thesis examination, any changes to the committee structure or timing of the exam must be approved by the SGSPA.

In the case where none of these alternatives work, or if more than one member of the examination committee is cannot attend due to illness or other unexpected absence or if the student cannot attend due to illness or other unexpected absence, the oral thesis examination must be rescheduled. The examination must be rescheduled without delay and must be held as soon as possible.

### PhD Candidates

**a. Scheduling of the oral thesis examination:** In preparation for the thesis examination, the PhD candidate must submit one copy of the thesis to the SGSPA and one copy of the thesis to each member of the Thesis Examining Committee, including the Chair of the Committee (normally



six for a doctoral program), not later than five weeks (twenty-five working days) before the tentative examination date. The copy submitted to the School must be submitted electronically in PDF format. The copy of the thesis submitted to the School must be accompanied by the form PhD Oral Thesis Examination, duly completed with all details given, and signed by the supervisor(s) and Head of the Department (or delegate). The submission of this form follows the same deadlines as the distribution of the thesis copies, which is not later than five weeks (twenty-five working days) before the tentative examination date.

#### **b. Membership and Convening of Thesis Examining Committees:**

**Membership:** The membership of the Thesis Examining Committee and a brief overview of the role, is as follows:

**Chair:** Responsible for the conduct of the oral thesis examination in alignment with Queen's standards and the SGSPA guidelines. Has the discretion to exclude members of the Queen's community and/or visitors whose conduct disrupts the oral thesis examination processes. Responsible for managing the discussion on the evaluation of the thesis and for recording the outcome of the examination. The Chair is always a non-voting member.

**Head of the Department (or delegate):** Responsible for ensuring that the thesis meets departmental standards. Note: the Head of the Department (or delegate) is required to vote in the evaluation of the thesis, unless the Head of the Department (or delegate) is also the Chair of the examination committee as the Chair is a non-voting member.

**Supervisor(s):** Must be a member of the SGSPA at Queen's University and from the student's department. The supervisor may or may not pose questions during the defence proceedings.

**Examiner:** Must be a member of the SGSPA at Queen's University who may or may not be from the student's department, but who is knowledgeable in the area of the thesis.

**Additional Examiner:** An optional examiner who is a field specialist, a relevant community member, or an additional faculty who is typically a member of the SGSPA at Queen's. If not a member of the SGSPA at Queen's University, the Associate Dean, SGSPA, may give permission for an additional examiner to serve on the Examining Committee, provided that examiner holds relevant expertise to examine the thesis in relation to the field of study.

**Internal/ External Examiner:** A member of the SGSPA at Queen's University and not from the student's department, who is knowledgeable in the area of the thesis. Responsible

for ensuring that the thesis meets Queen's University standards.

**External Examiner:** Must be a recognized expert in the field of research of the thesis. Must be external to the University. The External Examiner ensures that the thesis meets standards consistent with the field of scholarship.

**Convening of Thesis Examining Committees:** PhD candidates' Thesis Examining Committee members are nominated by the Head of the Department and the student's supervisor. The authority for confirming membership of the committee and for confirming the date of the examination lies with the Dean of the SGSPA. Confirmation of these arrangements must be made, in writing, by the SGSPA to the members of the Thesis Examining Committee and to the student.

**c. Examiner's reports:** The thesis electronic report forms are forwarded from the SGSPA to the members of the Thesis Examining Committee. The thesis reports must be submitted, in confidence, to the Chair of the Examining Committee at the SGSPA no later than one week or five working days before the tentative examination date. Each member of the Thesis Examining Committee, in making out the report, should indicate whether the candidate should be permitted to defend the thesis, and should substantiate any criticism with specific references.

**d. Negative reports:** If any two of the examiners' reports recommend that the thesis oral not proceed, the candidate, the supervisor and the Head of Department should be consulted by the Chair of the Examining Committee to see if they wish to proceed with the oral defence. The onus is on the candidate to make the decision to proceed or not. If the candidate agrees that the oral be postponed, the Chair must convey to the candidate, through the supervisor, the nature of the revisions to the thesis that are advised, and the candidate has the right to present the revised thesis at a later date. At the subsequent submission of the thesis, the oral defence must be held.

#### **e. Remote Participation in Oral Thesis Examinations:**

**General:** It is preferred that all examiners and the candidate being examined are physically present at Queen's University for the oral thesis examination. However, in certain circumstances, it is acceptable for the oral thesis examination to be scheduled so that a member or members, or all members, and/or the candidate being examined could participate in the oral thesis examination remotely using some method of videoconference or teleconference or online meeting arrangement (e.g., via Zoom, Teams, etc.). Arrangements for the use of remote access services must be made by the graduate department/program.

#### **f. Remote Participation in the PhD Oral Thesis**

**Examination:** Notification of remote thesis arrangements must be received by the SGSPA when submitting the PhD Oral Thesis Examination form. All examiners, Chair, and/or the candidate connecting remotely must be present for the duration of the examination and if joining via videoconference are advised to keep their cameras on unless it interferes with communication and bandwidth. If the candidate is joining remotely, arrangements should be made to use a waiting room function during closed deliberation sessions of the defence.

Guests are allowed during remote defence if the following protocols are undertaken: the Chair and/or Supervisor is responsible for obtaining everyone on the Committee's permission (most importantly the candidate's permission) to have guests enter the examination, but only for the candidate's presentation (if there is one) and general questioning period. Similar to the in-person procedures, guests may not be present during Committee deliberations. All examiners, the candidate, and guests must verbally agree not to record the examination and not to be in communication with the candidate during the examination (e.g., sending texts, photos, or any messages during the examination). The Chair is responsible for ensuring that guests and the candidate are welcomed at the appropriate times and leave the online examination at the appropriate times. Departments are strongly advised to seek the ITS assistance in setting up remote defences.

#### **Notes**

1. For the regulations on how to proceed with the oral thesis examination if one examiner cannot attend due to sudden illness etc., see Absence of Examiners above.

#### **Master's Candidates**

a. Scheduling of the oral thesis examination: Regulations concerning deadlines and all procedures for the convening of Thesis Examining Committees for all Master's degree candidates were established by the Divisions of the SGSPA and fall under the jurisdiction of the faculty-based Graduate Councils. Students must consult with their home department to determine the administrative procedures they are to follow and the deadlines that must be met. These deadlines and procedures will be strictly enforced by the department.

b. Membership of Thesis Examining Committees: Rules on the membership of Thesis Examining Committees for all Master's degree candidates were established by the Divisions of the SGSPA and fall under the jurisdiction of the faculty-based Graduate Councils. Students must consult with their home department to determine the administrative

procedures they are to follow. These rules will be strictly enforced by the department.

c. Examiner's reports: It is the responsibility of the student's home department to inform members of the examining committee of their procedures and deadlines for any pre-examination reports for Master's oral thesis examinations. These deadlines and procedures will be strictly enforced by the department.

d. Negative reports: If any two of the examiners' reports recommend that the Master's oral thesis examination not proceed, the candidate, the supervisor and the Head of Department should be consulted by the Chairperson of the Examining Committee to see if they wish to proceed with the oral defence. The SGSPA should be immediately notified whenever two or more examiners recommend that the thesis oral not proceed, and should be informed of the status of the scheduled oral thesis examination. The onus is on the candidate to make the decision to proceed or not. If the candidate agrees that the oral be postponed, the Chairperson must convey to the candidate, through the supervisor, the nature of the revisions to the thesis that are advised, and the candidate has the right to present the revised thesis at a later date. The SGSPA should be notified that an oral thesis examination has been postponed due to the submission of two negative reports. At the subsequent submission of the thesis, the oral defence must be held.

e. Certification of outcome of Masters' Oral Thesis Examination: The student's home department is responsible for submitting to the SGSPA the "Thesis Examination Results Form" duly signed at the time of the oral examination by the members of the examining committee, and clearly denoting the outcome category of the thesis (see above) and revisions required to prior to final submission for degree completion. This form must also denote the person or persons responsible for certifying to the SGSPA that all revisions have been completed. This task is normally carried out by the supervisor but could be designated to the supervisor and/or other members of the committee, in some cases.

#### **Time Limits for Completion of Programs**

Effective for students admitted September 1, 2013 and all subsequent years:

Master's programs are designed and approved such that requirements can be completed within one year (3 terms) or two years (6 terms) of initial full-time registration in the program. PhD programs are designed and approved such that requirements can be completed within four years (12



terms) of initial full-time registration in the program. This standard timeframe for PhD programs may not account for discipline-related (for example, required internships, archival research or fieldwork) or individual circumstances that can extend the time to completion. When circumstances are discipline-related, the Department/Program may grant to all PhD students an extension to five years (15 terms), otherwise extensions may be granted to individual students by the Department/Program no later than two weeks prior to the end of term 13 of a PhD program. Extensions for Master's students may be granted by the Department/Program no later than two weeks prior to the end of term 4 or 7 of a one- or two-year Master's program, respectively. All extensions follow the Extension of Time Limits policy.

The Doctor of Science (DSc) degree in the Rehabilitation and Health Leadership (RHL) program is designed and approved such that requirements can be completed within three years (9 terms) of initial full-time registration in the program. The RHL program may grant to all DSc students an extension to four years (12 terms), no later than two weeks prior to the end of term 10 of the DSc. All extensions follow the Extension of Time Limits policy.

**Note:** The academic year is divided into 3 terms: Fall (September-December), Winter (January-April) and Summer (May-August). Each term is 4 months long.

Effective for students admitted prior to September 1, 2013:

The requirements for master's programs must be completed within five years from the time of initial registration in the department/program. The requirements for PhD programs must be completed within seven years from the time of initial registration in the department/program. It should be noted that these specified periods are time LIMITS and are not indicative of normal program duration.

## Withdrawal on Academic Grounds

### Recommending Withdrawal on Academic Grounds

Any academic decision can be appealed by the student under the SGSPA General Regulation Appeals Against Academic Decisions. This regulation (Withdrawal on Academic Grounds) does not apply to the appeal of an academic decision but rather outlines the procedures whereby a graduate department or program recommends that a student be required to withdraw on academic grounds, and the procedures and responsibilities for deciding on the outcome of this recommendation. Note that a recommendation under a., b., or c. below, may be appealed by the student under the SGSPA General Regulation Appeals Against Academic Decisions.

Some Graduate Department/Programs have separate procedures to be followed that would be enacted prior to making a recommendation under the procedures below.

Prior to making a recommendation under the procedures below, the faculty member(s), and/or Graduate Coordinator and/or Graduate Department/Program Head, and/or in the case of non-departmentalized faculties or schools, the Associate Dean responsible for the graduate program, shall meet with the student to discuss their academic situation, the possible recommendation of withdrawal, and the grounds for the recommendation. The student may invite a representative to the meeting. If the student intends to be accompanied by legal counsel, he or she must provide at least 48 hours notice to the department/program/faculty attendees who reserves the right to reschedule the meeting if notice is not given. If the student does not wish to attend the meeting, the student can submit a written statement. If the student does not respond to an invitation to attend the meeting, or does not make a written statement, the process will continue without the student's input.

The student shall be informed in writing when the Graduate Department/Program shall be making a recommendation of withdrawal to the Faculty Graduate Council, or, in the case of non-departmentalized faculties or schools, to the SGSPA, and shall be informed of the grounds for the recommendation.

Unsatisfactory academic performance by the student may lead to a recommendation that the student be required to withdraw. There are several circumstances that may lead to this recommendation and, as these differ in certain important respects, the procedures of appeal and review differ. The situations are dealt with separately in the following sections.

a. **Withdrawal due to Failure of a Primary Course:** In cases when a student does not achieve B- (B minus) in a primary course, for graduate programs in the departmentalized faculties, the Head or Graduate Coordinator of the Graduate Department/Program may recommend to the Chair of the Faculty Graduate Council that the student:

1. repeat the examination (or equivalent) within one year after the original examination (or equivalent), or
2. repeat the course, or
3. take a substitute course.

These regulations are also outlined in the SGSPA General Regulation, Course Work Requirements, b.

The student and Graduate Department/Program shall be informed of the decision of the Chair of the Faculty Graduate Council in writing by the SGSPA.

If recommendation i., ii. or iii. is not made or, if made, is not approved by the Chair of the Faculty Graduate Council, any student who fails to obtain the required standing in any primary course shall be required to withdraw. For graduate programs in the departmentalized faculties, the Head or Graduate Coordinator of the Graduate Department/Program shall recommend to the Chair of the Faculty Graduate Council that the student be required to withdraw due to failure of a primary course or courses.

The Faculty Graduate Council, or its duly empowered Chair or Associate Chair, shall examine the case to see that proper procedures were followed, and if this is ascertained, the Chair of the Faculty Graduate Council shall notify the SGSPA, who shall inform the student in writing of the Graduate Department/Program's recommendation and the confirmation of the recommendation by the Faculty Graduate Council. This letter will also inform the student of the relevant appeal procedure under SGSPA General Regulation Appeals Against Academic Decisions and will inform the student of their right to seek advice of the Office of the University Ombudsperson, or a University Dispute Resolution Advisor, or the Society of Graduate and Professional Students' Student Advisors, or to seek independent legal advice.

Review of the Graduate Department/Program recommendation by the Faculty Graduate Council or its duly empowered Chair or Associate Chair, is limited to procedural matters and any extenuating circumstances only and does not entail assessing the academic decision itself.

If the case is evidently straightforward, it may be approved by the Chair/Associate Chair of the Faculty Graduate Council and then must be submitted for approval and action to SGSPA, and also reported back to Faculty Graduate Council. Otherwise, the Graduate Department/Program recommendation will be placed on the agenda for decision by Faculty Graduate Council at its next meeting.

If the Graduate Department/Program recommendation is taken to a meeting of the Faculty Graduate Council, the Chair of the Faculty Graduate Council shall inform the student that he or she may attend the meeting, with or without a representative or advisor, and that he or she is entitled to present the case. If the student intends to be accompanied by legal counsel, he or she must provide at least 48 hours notice to the Chair of the Faculty Graduate Council who reserves the right to reschedule the discussion of the matter to another meeting of the Faculty Graduate Council, if notice is not given. If the student does not wish to attend the meeting of the Faculty Graduate Council, the student can submit a written response to the recommendation, for circulation to the Council and for discussion by the Council at the meeting. If the student does not respond to an invitation to attend the

meeting, or does not make a written submission, the process will continue without the student's input.

All such Faculty Graduate Council decisions are subject to appeal, under the SGSPA General Regulation Appeals Against Academic Decisions. It is the responsibility of the Chair or Associate Chair of Faculty Graduate Council to represent Council and explain the decision to the SGSPA Academic Appeal Board, if/as required.

In the case of non-departmentalized faculties or schools, if recommendation i., ii., or iii. is not made to the SGSPA, the Associate Dean responsible for the graduate program shall recommend to the Graduate Committee that the student be required to withdraw from the program, and the Committee shall decide whether to accept this recommendation or not. The student shall be given fair notice in writing of the recommendation and the grounds upon which it is made. The student may attend the meeting at which the Graduate Committee considers the recommendation, alone or with a representative or advisor if he or she wishes, and has a right to present the case. If the student intends to be accompanied by legal counsel, he or she must provide at least 48 hours notice to the Associate Dean responsible for the graduate program, who reserves the right to reschedule the discussion of the matter to another meeting of the Graduate Committee if notice is not given. If the student does not wish to attend the meeting, the student can submit a written response to the recommendation, for circulation to the Committee and for discussion by the Committee at the meeting. If the student does not respond to an invitation to attend the meeting, or does not make a written submission, the process will continue without the student's input.

Review of the recommendation by the Graduate Committee is limited to procedural matters and any extenuating circumstances and does not entail an assessment of the academic decision itself.

If the Graduate Committee approves the recommendation of the Associate Dean, it shall report the case to the SGSPA, which shall inform the student of the Graduate Committee's decision.

All such Graduate Committee decisions are subject to appeal, under the SGSPA General Regulation Appeals Against Academic Decisions. It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Graduate Committee to represent the Committee and explain the decision to the SGSPA Academic Appeal Board, if/as required.

**b. Withdrawal due to decision of Failure by the Thesis Examining Committee:** The properly constituted Examining Committee of a thesis establishes the academic decision concerning the thesis and its defence. It, therefore, holds



the same position with respect to the thesis as the instructor holds in relation to the marking of an examination or other test in a primary course. The academic decision of the Committee cannot be overturned.

At the oral thesis examination the examining committee will reach a decision of either Passed, Referred or Failed. See the General Regulation Thesis, Outcome categories of the oral thesis examination, for a description of each category.

If the Examining Committee has decided on the "Referred" decision, it may choose to reconvene the examining committee and hold another oral thesis examination of the revised thesis. In cases where the examining committee uses the "Referred" category because it determines that the oral thesis examination itself, either separate from or in conjunction with the written thesis, is unsatisfactory, a second oral thesis examination must be held.

In all cases of referral, the examining committee continues to exist until it has agreed that the thesis outcome is either passed or failed. The second submission of a thesis that was referred requires a final decision of pass or fail by the Examining Committee.

If the Examining Committee considers the student to have failed based on the written thesis or oral defence, the Examining Committee will recommend withdrawal from the program.

Appeal of a decision of the outcome category of Failed is through the SGSPA General Regulation Appeals Against Academic Decisions, Appeal of Thesis Examination Committee Decision.

**Note:** "Thesis" refers to the substantive, terminal research document of any research Master's degree, currently represented by the course number 899, or to the Doctoral Dissertation, the substantive, terminal research document of all Doctoral degrees, currently represented by the course number 999. The appeal of the grade of any Master's Essay, Report, or Project currently represented by the course number 898, falls under the SGSPA General Regulation Appeal of an Assigned Grade in a Graduate Course.

**c. Withdrawal on General Academic Grounds:** In addition to circumstances outlined in sections a. and b., there are other academic circumstances that could lead to a recommendation that the student be required to withdraw. To cite several examples: in the judgment of the supervisor or a supervisory committee the student may be making unsatisfactory progress in research; the student may have failed the comprehensive examination; there may have been marginal performance in seminars; preliminary drafts of chapters of the thesis may reveal an unsatisfactory standard of scholarship; or in the judgment

of the supervisor or a supervisory committee or other Graduate Department/Program academic committee, the student's overall academic performance in coursework is not acceptable. For such cases and for graduate programs in the departmentalized faculties, the Graduate Department/Program shall recommend withdrawal to the Chair of the Faculty Graduate Council and shall inform the student in writing that such a recommendation is being made and the grounds for this recommendation.

The Graduate Department/Program recommendation shall be taken to a meeting of the Faculty Graduate Council. The Chair of the Faculty Graduate Council shall inform the student that he or she may attend the meeting, with or without a representative, and that he or she is entitled to present the case. If the student intends to be accompanied by legal counsel, he or she must provide at least 48 hours notice to the Chair of the Faculty Graduate Council, who reserves the right to reschedule the discussion of the matter to another meeting of the Faculty Graduate Council, if notice is not given. If the student does not wish to attend the meeting of the Faculty Graduate Council, the student can submit a written response to the recommendation, for circulation to the Council/ Committee and for discussion by the Council at the meeting. If the student does not respond to an invitation to attend the meeting, or does not make a written submission, the process will continue without the student's input.

Review of the Graduate Department/Program recommendation by the Faculty Graduate Council is limited to procedural matters and any extenuating circumstances and does not entail an assessment of the academic decision itself.

If the Faculty Graduate Council approves the recommendation of the Graduate Department/Program, the Chair of the Faculty Graduate Council shall report the case to the Dean of the SGSPA who shall notify the student in writing of the recommendation by the Faculty Graduate Council. This letter will also inform the student of the relevant appeal procedure under SGSPA General Regulation Appeals Against Academic Decisions and will inform the student of their right to seek advice of the Office of the University Ombudsperson or a University Dispute Resolution Advisor, or the Society of Graduate and Professional Students' Student Advisors, or to seek independent legal advice.

All such Faculty Graduate Council decisions are subject to appeal, under the SGSPA General Regulation Appeals Against Academic Decisions. It is the responsibility of the Chair or Associate Chair of Faculty Graduate Council to represent Council and explain the decision to the SGSPA Academic Appeal Board, if/as required.



In the case of non-departmentalized faculties or schools, in the case of withdrawal on general academic grounds, the Associate Dean responsible for the graduate program shall recommend to the Graduate Committee that the student be required to withdraw from the program, and the Committee shall decide whether to accept this recommendation or not. The student shall be given fair notice in writing of the recommendation and the grounds upon which it is made. The student may attend the meeting at which the Graduate Committee considers the recommendation, alone or with a representative or advisor if he or she wishes and has the right to present the case. If the student intends to be accompanied by legal counsel, he or she must provide at least 48 hours notice to the Associate Dean responsible for the graduate program, who reserves the right to reschedule the discussion of the matter to another meeting of the Graduate Committee if notice is not given. If the student does not wish to attend the meeting, the student can submit a written response to the recommendation, for circulation to the Committee and for discussion by the Committee at the meeting. If the student does not respond to an invitation to attend the meeting, or does not make a written submission, the process will continue without the student's input.

Review of the recommendation by the Graduate Committee is limited to procedural matters and any extenuating circumstances and does not entail an assessment of the academic decision itself.

If the Graduate Committee approves the recommendation of the Associate Dean, it shall report the case to the SGSPA, which shall inform the student of the Graduate Committee's decision.

All such Graduate Committee decisions are subject to appeal, under the SGSPA General Regulation Appeals Against Academic Decisions. It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Graduate Committee to represent the Committee and explain the decision to the SGSPA Academic Appeal Board, if/ as required.