

**REHABILITATION SCIENCE (RS)  
GRADUATE HANDBOOK  
2019-2020**

**HAMILTON, ON**

**SEPTEMBER 2019**

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## WELCOME

Welcome to the Graduate Program in Rehabilitation Science at McMaster University. We are pleased that you have chosen this program for furthering your education. You have made an excellent choice. McMaster University is internationally renowned, has faculty that are leaders in the rehabilitation field, and offers an innovative curriculum that is open to diverse areas of research and practice. We are internationally recognized as innovators, with problem-based learning and evidence-based practice being our hallmark features. Our leadership in research, education and clinical practice, indicates our commitment to excellence and scholarship in these three (3) areas. This leadership is empirically supported by a 2014 publication in *Physiotherapy Canada* evaluating the scientific impact of physical and occupational therapy faculty across Canada (through use of H-index bibliometrics) where McMaster faculty in the School of Rehabilitation Science placed first. The expertise of our faculty and their commitment to graduate training is the foundation of the excellence of our training program.

Upon completion of the Graduate Program in Rehabilitation Science (RS), you should expect the following:

1. To understand the theoretical foundations of rehabilitation science;
2. To have methodological skills in the design, analysis, and critical appraisal of health research;
3. To understand and deal with barriers to moving rehabilitation science research into practice;
4. To have enhanced critical reasoning skills and apply these to a variety of clinical, research, or policy issues;
5. To have enhanced skills in scientific writing and other forms of scholarly communication including knowledge translation;
6. To have developed and written academic papers and resources that contribute to the body of rehabilitation science knowledge; and,
7. To be prepared to assume leadership positions in clinical practice, research, academia, innovation, and/or policy positions.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information that students will need while studying at McMaster University. We hope that you find the handbook useful and if you have any suggestions for additions, please pass those on to the Assistant Dean of the Graduate Program in Rehabilitation Science ([Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#)), through the [RS Administrative Staff](#).

Please note that this handbook is a supplement to the information published in the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) Calendar. You should always check information in the SGS Graduate Calendar as it is **your ultimate source for information on general aspects of graduate studies, university regulations pertaining to graduate school, information on university funding opportunities, degree requirements, course information, and faculty listings**. Should there be any discrepancies between the RS Graduate Program Handbook and the [SGS Calendar](#), the information located in the [SGS Calendar](#) supersedes that information found in this guide. The [SGS Calendar](#) is located on the McMaster University website at <http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/index.php>.

The calendar also has a very useful and intuitive mobile version, so please do take a look.

Mobile version:

<http://m.academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/index.php?theme#home>

We aim to avoid duplicating information in this handbook that should be obtained from the [SGS Calendar](#). Rather, this handbook provides information that is more specific to the RS Graduate Program

### RS Graduate Program Contact Information:

Assistant Dean (RS)	Julie Richardson	905-525-9140 ext. 27811	<a href="mailto:jrichard@mcmaster.ca">jrichard@mcmaster.ca</a>
RS Program Manager	Michelle Benjamin	905-525-9140 ext. 27831	<a href="mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca">rsgrad@mcmaster.ca</a> <a href="mailto:benjamin@mcmaster.ca">benjamin@mcmaster.ca</a>
RS Program Assistant	Cindy Permejo	905-525-9140 ext. 26378	<a href="mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca">rsgrad@mcmaster.ca</a> <a href="mailto:permejcr@mcmaster.ca">permejcr@mcmaster.ca</a>
RS Administrative Assistant	Parveen Malli	905-525-9140 ext. 22868	<a href="mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca">rsgrad@mcmaster.ca</a> <a href="mailto:mallip@mcmaster.ca">mallip@mcmaster.ca</a>

Please note that the [rsgrad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca) email is shared between Michelle Benjamin, Cindy Permejo and Parveen Malli. To contact the RS Administrative Staff, please send an email to [rsgrad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca)

## I. HISTORY OF THE REHABILITATION SCIENCE GRADUATE PROGRAMS

The McMaster Thesis-based Master of Science degree was established in 2000 to meet the needs of rehabilitation therapy professionals who, after being in practice, wished to pursue advanced training in research. The curriculum emphasized theory, research design, statistics, and substantive content coursework, along with a research-based thesis. Over time, this program has retained the structure of the curriculum, but has integrated new research themes and course options reflecting the diverse research interests of the faculty. The program evolved to include a broad range of students with varied interests and backgrounds reflecting the diversity of rehabilitation science and its principles. Students take this program for personal development and often transition into clinical specialization, leadership roles, or continue research training in a PhD program.

The PhD program was added in 2003 to meet the increasing need for academics trained at the PhD level. The most pressing need at that time was to provide training for faculty positions within RS or related disciplines. Over time, the roles taken up following PhD training have expanded to include clinician-scientists, leadership positions, policy-makers, inventors/innovators in business, knowledge brokers, and many other roles related to rehabilitation science. The creation of the PhD program was greatly facilitated by a CIHR Training Program Grant of \$1.8 million (*Rehabilitation Research Training Program – Developing and Using Rehabilitation Research Evidence to Enhance Quality of Life*) awarded in 2002 that was instrumental in funding the first six (6) cohorts of students. The innovative aspects of the PhD program were the emphasis on knowledge translation (the first program to offer a graduate course on this topic) and a comprehensive examination that emphasized experiential learning in academic scholarship with deliverable outputs through a

portfolio. These unique features and an emphasis on excellence in clinically relevant research are core values of the current PhD program.

The Course-based Master of Science degree was developed in 2004 to meet the needs of clinicians working in rehabilitation science who wished to pursue academic training that could be applied in clinical practice. The program emphasized recent advances in rehabilitation therapy including evidence-based practice, outcome evaluation, and advanced clinical reasoning. The program was designed as a part-time, distance program so that clinicians could work and apply knowledge in practice while obtaining their MSc degree. Over time the program expanded to include learners from diverse professions, and more educational options including research training and specialized clinical content.

The McMaster Rehabilitation Science Dual Degree option offered a new opportunity in 2017-2018, which allows students to obtain the established Master of Science in Occupational Therapy (OT) and Doctor of Philosophy in Rehabilitation Science (RS) OR the Master of Science in Physiotherapy (PT) and Doctor of Philosophy in Rehabilitation Science (RS) offered within the School of Rehabilitation Science (SRS) in 5 years. The Dual Degree option will provide integrated scholarship training and professional development and streamlined time efficiency. Completing the two degrees, an OT or PT professional degree and Ph.D. concurrently rather than sequentially will develop clinician scientists who have an understanding of the issues facing the professions, the potential contributions they can make and research expertise to undertake these roles.

### **RS Graduate Program Assistant and Associate Deans**

The RS Graduate Program resides within the School of Rehabilitation Science (SRS), established in 1989. The leadership for the program was originally entitled Program Coordinator and later, as the program developed, was designated as an Assistant Dean Position. The previous people holding these roles were:

- |                 |                           |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| 1. 2000-2003    | Paul Stratford            |
| 2. 2003-2005    | Jean Wessel               |
| 3. 2005-2010    | Seanne Wilkins            |
| 4. 2010-2014    | Joy MacDermid             |
| 5. 2015-2015    | Julie Richardson (Acting) |
| 6. 2015-2016    | Norma J. MacIntyre        |
| 7. 2016-current | Julie Richardson          |

## **II. OFFICE OF THE ASSOCIATE DEAN OF GRADUATE STUDIES (FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES (FHS))**

The RS Graduate Program operates within the School of Rehabilitation Science (SRS) in the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) at McMaster University as a component of the FHS Graduate Programs. Graduate Studies in the FHS are under the jurisdiction of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) and are administered by the Graduate Policy and Curriculum Council (GPCC) under the auspices of the SGS, as described in the current [SGS Calendar](#).

The Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) is located in HSC 4N4.

## Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS)

Dr. Steve Hanna

([adeanhsc@mcmaster.ca](mailto:adeanhsc@mcmaster.ca))

ext. 21609

### Administration:

George Bijelic, Manager

([gbijel@mcmaster.ca](mailto:gbijel@mcmaster.ca))

ext. 22735

Sherri Keene, Graduate Program Associate (on leave)

([keenes@mcmaster.ca](mailto:keenes@mcmaster.ca))

ext. 21609

Anthony Notenboom, Graduate Program Associate

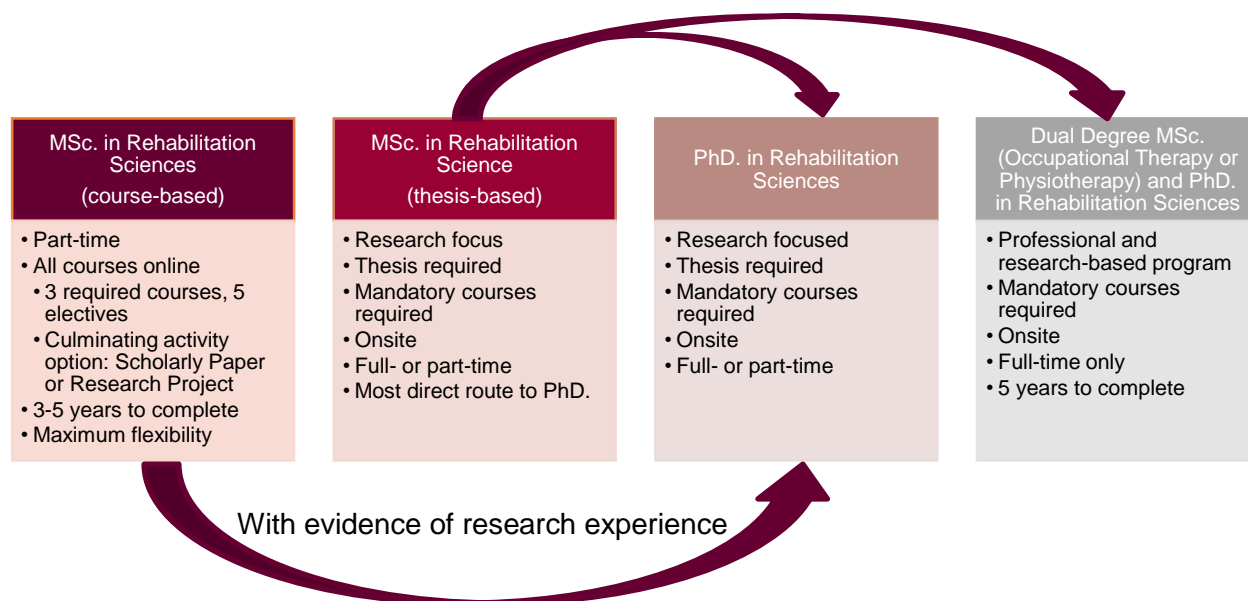
([notenbaw@mcmaster.ca](mailto:notenbaw@mcmaster.ca))

ext. 21609

## III. SCHOOL OF REHABILITATION SCIENCE (SRS)

SRS presently offers four (4) programs:

1. MSc (Occupational Therapy) entry level, professional program for occupational therapists;
2. MSc (Physiotherapy) entry level, professional program for physiotherapists;
3. MSc (Speech Language Pathology) entry level, professional program for speech language pathologists;
4. RS, which includes a PhD program, MSc program with a Thesis option and a Masters Course-based option, and a MSc/PhD option and,
5. Master of Health Management Program (in collaboration with the DeGroote School of Business), which is a course-based program for part-time students.



The School is located in the Institute of Applied Health Sciences (IAHS) building on the McMaster campus. The School currently has over 390 students, 25 full or part-time faculty members, and over 100 clinical faculty and professional associates. Additional information



on the School, its faculty, and their research activities can be found on the SRS website at <http://www.srs-mcmaster.ca/>

The purpose of the RS Graduate Program is to educate rehabilitation scientists who will contribute high quality research that informs rehabilitation therapy practice. Persons who are naturally aligned with Rehabilitation Scientists include physical therapists, occupational therapists, and other rehabilitative disciplines. The program also accepts students from other backgrounds whose interests align with rehabilitation science. Rehabilitation can be defined as a treatment or process that facilitates the process of recovery from injury, illness, or disease to as normal a condition as possible; or, more broadly as the restoration of someone to a useful place in society. The RS Graduate Program expects students to be able to define how their work contributes to advancing RS.

## IV. GENERAL INFORMATION

### 1. Student ID

Please refer to <https://registrar.mcmaster.ca/services/id-cards/> for information how to obtain your student ID card. If you will be conducting your research in the hospital, you will also need a hospital photo ID.

### 2. McMaster Email

The McMaster University student email system is the primary means by which the university communicates with individual students. Information related to records, registration, and university issues is sent to student email. It is every student's individual responsibility to check their McMaster University student email regularly to ensure important information is received. If you require assistance with your student email, please contact the [Technology Service Desk](#) at ext. 24357 (2-HELP). Students in the RS program **must communicate** with the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#), the RS Administrative Staff **through McMaster email rather than personal emails.**

### 3. Work Space/Mail

RS graduate students who are **full-time and on-time** will have work space available in the IAHS and should contact the [RS Administrative Staff](#), who will provide you with the key pad code for the room. A \$10.00 deposit is required from each student, and is refundable when you leave the program. Mail for on-campus students is delivered to the RS graduate student mailbox in the School of Rehabilitation Science main office IAHS 403 and is then picked up by graduate students for delivery to the shared mailbox in the graduate student room (IAHS 308). The RS Administrative Assistant also checks the student mailbox in IAHS 403. Should mail arrive for an on-campus student, the RS Administrative Assistant will notify the student via email.

### 4. Parking

Applications for a parking permit are available online at <http://parking.mcmaster.ca/>. The Parking Office is located in the ET Clarke Centre Room 102. For general parking inquiries, please contact parking services at [parking@mcmaster.ca](mailto:parking@mcmaster.ca)

### 5. Where to Go for Help

The [SGS Calendar](#) is posted annually with the most up-to-date information and should be the first place in your search for information since it is the official version of the

policies and procedures. However, it is common for students to need help finding or interpreting this information. It is advisable to direct your concern to the appropriate person to get your answer as quickly and efficiently as possible. Faculty and support staff, within the different levels (School, Faculty, and University), have different roles. While staff across the different offices communicate with each other to optimize coordination, you will get your answers more efficiently if you learn who to contact for different issues. It is advisable to ensure that you have checked University policy when making decisions.

Here are some guidelines to follow when you require assistance:

For administrative details within the SRS (booking meetings with the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#), internal procedures and student records, sign-out of internal thesis exemplar and example comprehensive portfolios, submitting forms, study space, online safety training, course registration, drop and add course, and TA, etc.), contact the RS Administrative Staff at [rsgrad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca)

For samples of thesis papers, please visit MacSphere at <https://macsphere.mcmaster.ca/>

For financial matters (e.g., TAs), University policies and procedures, please contact the [RS Program Manager at rsgrad@mcmaster.ca](#).

To book a room and/or AV equipment and set-up, contact [rsrooms@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsrooms@mcmaster.ca).

Students are asked to provide the following details when booking a room:

- Meeting name and contact person.
- How many people are planning to participate in the class/meeting.
- The type of room required (classroom/AV/conference).
- Length of the booking (please remember set-up time and take-down time).
- If a specific room is needed, please include room number.

Students will receive a confirmation email when a room has been confirmed. Should you need to cancel the room, immediately contact [rsrooms@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsrooms@mcmaster.ca).

If you require the teaching key to access the teaching station, please inform the RS Administrative Staff. Students are expected to set up for their own meeting. This includes setting up the AV station. Instructions on how to access and use the teaching station is available in each classroom.

For access to information on academic accommodations/supports, or student counseling for academic or personal challenges, please see [Appendix 1](#).

For information about your registration, tuition payments, student cards, or general graduate student policies, contact the [School of Graduate Studies](#) in Gilmour Hall, room 212, or extension 23679.

Your thesis supervisor or your faculty advisor (in the MSc thesis or course-based option or PhD) is the first person to approach with academic concerns about your training program or any other issues that are affecting your graduate studies. She or he carry the overall responsibility for overseeing all aspects of your degree work. It is your

responsibility to ensure that you are in regular contact with your supervisor to fully inform them of your concerns and progress. Students are responsible for arranging these regular meetings.

If either you or your supervisor want information or support in handling a specific academic issue, it is appropriate to consult with the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#). It is often appropriate to consult with the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#) about internal processes, program expectations/opportunities, facilitators/barriers to completion of your training program, concerns/clarification about policies and procedures, etc. To arrange an in-person, telephone, Skype or Zoom meeting with the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#) contact the [RS Administrative Staff](#) at [rsgad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsgad@mcmaster.ca).

For all aspects of MSc oral defences and scheduling of Comprehensive Examinations, administrative matters, including completion of forms such as Leave of Absence (LOA), Education Plans, Change of Status, etc., please contact the RS Administrative Staff at [rsgad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsgad@mcmaster.ca).

For questions related to PhD thesis oral defences, please contact the PhD Thesis Coordinator in the [School of Graduate Studies](#), Gilmour Hall, room 212, by email at [gthesis@mcmaster.ca](mailto:gthesis@mcmaster.ca) or at ext. 23680.

## 6. Full-time and Part-time Status

Students in thesis-based programs of the RS Graduate Program may be registered as either full-time or part-time students. Students in the online program are considered part-time students. Students make decisions about registration while considering the commitments and opportunities that are associated with either type of registration. Full-time students are expected to complete the program more quickly, be more available for on-campus/program responsibilities, and are eligible for scholarship/funding opportunities that are not open to part-time students. Part-time status is preferred by students who have work or other obligations that preclude full-time training. Part-time students are not eligible for most scholarships, they have extended timelines for completion and are not expected to be on campus to the same extent as their full-time counterparts. In some cases, part-time students apply for major awards and transfer into full-time status if successful. Students who transition from full-time to part-time are advised to consult the program and graduate handbook about the financial implications. Students are expected to meet program milestones on timelines commensurate with either full- or part-time status. Milestone expectations take into consideration the difference in time commitment (see Student Tracking Sheet for MSc and PhD – [Appendix 10 and Appendix 11](#)). For the academic timeline, please see [Appendix 14](#).

**THE DESCRIPTION OF FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME STATUS** (Excerpt from the [SGS Calendar](#), Section [2.5 Enrollment](#), [2.5.3 McMaster University Regulations for Full and Part-time Status](#)).

### Provincial Definitions of Full or Part-time Status

Under the regulations of the Government of Ontario, a full-time graduate student must:

- a) Be pursuing his/her studies as a full-time occupation;
- b) Identify him/herself as a full-time graduate student;
- c) Be designated by the University as a full-time graduate student;

- d) Be geographically available and visit the campus regularly. Without forfeiting full-time status, a graduate student, while still under supervision, may be absent from the university (e.g., visiting libraries, doing field work, attending a graduate course at another institution, etc.) provided that, if any such period of absence exceeds four (4) weeks in any one term, written evidence shall be available in the SGS Office to the effect that the absence has the approval of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) and the Dean of Graduate Studies; and,
- e) Be considered to be a full-time graduate student by his/her supervisor or equivalent (designated by the University).

In addition, Government regulations place, “a ten-hour limit on university-related employment and encourage(s) full-time students to limit time spent on employment inside or outside the University.”

**McMaster University’s Regulations for Full and Part-time Studies: [SGS Calendar, Section 2.5.3](#)** The SGS recognizes three (3) academic terms for purposes of interpreting the rule limiting employment with the University to ten hours per week on average. Fall (September through December); Winter (January through April); and, Spring/Summer (May through August). These are deemed to have 16, 17 and 18 weeks, respectively. The ten-hour limit includes work as a Teaching Assistant (TA) at McMaster.

If the student is to be employed at the University other than as a TA or invigilator, the SGS should be informed in writing of the nature of the employment, and the approval of the supervisor and the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) is required. The approval of the SGS is required if the student is to be hired for University teaching. If students wish to perform more work for the University than set out in the calendar (average 10 hours/week) then they **must** follow the associated guidelines around overload work (**[Section 2.5.4: Employment Regulations](#)**)

Please do not hesitate to contact the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) (HSC 4H4) if you have any questions on these matters.

## 7. Financial Support of Students

### **[SGS Calendar, Section 5.2: Financial Assistance](#)**

Teaching assistantships, supervisor support, and scholarships are the typical sources of funding for graduate students.

The RS Graduate Program does not guarantee Teaching Assistantships (TAs) for all students. Each year, the program reviews the program needs and resources to determine the number of TAs that can be offered. At present, the program typically offers half-TAs (equivalent to 133 hours [including three (3) hours of training] of employment). Full-time thesis students can receive a maximum of two (2) years of TA support at the MSc level and four (4) years at the PhD level, depending on availability. TA awards and conditions of employment are regulated by the [SGS](#) and [CUPE Local 3906](#). Students **may only apply for TAs as they enter the MSc or PhD programs**. Once students give up their TA option, the university is not obligated to re-instate it. If the student wishes to decline a TA that was intended to comprise a component of their minimum funding package (required for full-time PhD students only), then they may need to document this source of income.

Major scholarship awards may have their own demands or limitations on hours worked or on total remuneration. Certain students may choose to work in a professional capacity for 10 hours per week rather than accept a TA position, in which case they forfeit this source of income. Students are not required to provide documentation of employment outside of the university. The university does not monitor off-campus employment. Supervisors will become concerned if student employment interferes with their ability to participate in training activities or progress in a timely manner. The supervisory committee evaluates the student's ongoing academic progress.

### **External and Internal Awards**

All students must provide a copy of any external funding (personal awards and research funding) to the [RS Administrative Staff](#). Funding packages may be altered based on the amount of external funding obtained.

**External Awards:** A number of external awards are available from numerous agencies. There are very few awards available to part-time students. Notices regarding external awards are provided by the [SGS](#) and the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#) where possible. Students are encouraged to discuss opportunities for funding, and external awards in particular, with their supervisor prior to starting training and at regular intervals. Please be advised that many major awards have recently undergone substantial changes in terms of eligibility, adjudication and administration. Therefore, students are advised to regularly check the most recent information from [SGS](#) with respect to current funding guidelines.

Many students apply for [Canadian Institute for Health Research](#) (CIHR) PhD awards starting in the fall of their entry into the program. While this is a competitive funding source, a number of RS trainees have been successful. Students can apply to more than one (1) agency for training awards and should pursue multiple funding sources. Funding organizations all have different restrictions about eligibility that may include issues on citizenship, type of training, length in the program, and research focus. Students should check eligibility before starting an application or asking for support letters. The [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#) typically offers a session on preparing training applications each fall. Students should attend this session and any grantmanship training sessions offered. Please see [Appendix 2](#) regarding how to optimize the support letter.

**NOTE:** Given their highly competitive nature, a strong research and training plan, a history of publication, strong mentorship/supervision and high academic averages are needed to be successful in federal funding competitions. These same factors are often considered by other funding agencies and by McMaster University when special competitions or awards are adjudicated.

### **Internal Awards (McMaster University Awards and External Awards Administered by the University)**

There are a number of scholarships that are internal or that the university is involved in ranking, including federal government awards such as: [CIHR](#), [SSHRC](#) and [NSERC](#) Master's awards. The Scholarship Committee of [Graduate Council](#) ranks applications for internal awards using the criteria noted above. A complete list of awards and application criteria is available from the [Awards & Funding](#) section of the [SGS](#) website.

Scholarship funds may be provided directly from the SRS as part of funding packages. These are determined annually based on availability of funding and multiple factors.

**Only full-time students are eligible for internal awards.** In some cases, part-time students have applied for major awards and, if successful, transitioned to full-time status. In other cases, full-time status is required to apply. It is important to check eligibility carefully when applying for awards.

### **Financial Statement**

Before the beginning of the academic year, a letter with details of the financial support for the coming academic year is sent to each student (with a copy to the supervisor) and kept on file. The details will include any external or internal awards, TA support, and any contribution from the Supervisor's grant(s). A revised letter is required if this package changes, such as when a new award is received. Please ensure that your funding letter is correct as your pay will be based on the description of your funding as outlined in that letter.

## **8. Student Pay**

All aspects of payments to graduate students (including income tax receipts) are handled by [SGS](#) in Gilmour Hall, room 212 (Dina Lopresti, ext. 23686 and Lorna Thomas, ext. 24258). Address changes **must be** completed in [Mosaic](#). Inquiries about payments, etc. should be directed to this office, not to Financial Services. You must provide a Social Insurance Number (SIN), as soon as possible for payroll.

**NOTE: Your student number is also your employee number.** When asked for your employee number on documents pertaining to payments, please provide your student number.

Students who are receiving scholarships can enter their banking information in [Mosaic](#). Please enter this information carefully. Students who are receiving research scholarships and/or have a TA must complete an [Employee Contact & Deposit Information Form](#). This means that if you are receiving a scholarship, research scholarship and have a TA you will need to provide your banking information in **two (2)** places - [Mosaic](#) and complete the [Employee Contact & Deposit Information Form](#) and hand it in to GH 212.

Scholarships will be paid directly by direct deposit to your bank account. If you haven't entered banking information in Campus Solutions, then a cheque will be mailed to the mailing address that is provided in the "Contact Information" section. Please ensure that the correct mailing address is listed on MOSAIC. These monies are not taxed. TAs will be paid bi-weekly in the term that they work, and these payments are processed through Human Resources.

**Vacation pay is included in the TA's monthly wages.** (Please refer to **Article 19.01** in the Collective Agreement between CUPE and McMaster University). You will not receive a lump sum payment at the end of the year. Please visit CUPE's website at <http://cupe3906.org/tas-unit-1/collective-agreement/>

### **Other Deductions:**

- a) **Taxes:** The University is required by law to deduct Unemployment Insurance and Canada Pension premiums on all employment income (e.g., TA payments). Federal Income Tax will be assessed on all income (including scholarships and



bursaries). You may obtain a Tax Exemption Return (form TD 1) at <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/businesses/topics/payroll/set-up-new-employee/filing-form-td1.html> if you have additional exemptions (e.g., you are supporting a spouse in Canada), which will change the rate at which you are taxed. Please return completed forms to the SGS Office (Gilmour Hall, room 212).

- b) If you are receiving a Teaching Assistantship (TA) or a Research Assistantship (RA) in lieu of a TA, you are a member of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 3906, Unit 1. Union dues will be deducted in each month in which you receive TA/RA monies.
- c) **Dental Plan:** An Employee in Classification A (CUPE Unit 1) who is contracted to work at least 130 hours for the academic year, September 1, 2019 to August 31, 2020, will have Dental Plan premiums. For more information on the Dental Plan premium for a single coverage and family coverage, please visit <http://cupe3906.org/>. Provisions for opting-out of the Dental Plan or for obtaining family coverage are covered in two (2) separate documents. Also, see the [SGS Calendar](https://academiccalendars.mcmaster.ca/index.php) at <https://academiccalendars.mcmaster.ca/index.php>, **Section 5** Financial Matters, **Section 5.1** Fees for Graduate Students. The CUPE 3906 office is located in the basement of Kenneth Taylor Hall, room B111.
- d) **Bookstore Accounts:** If you have an outstanding Bookstore account, you may wish to have all or part of it deducted from your monthly cheque. You can also set up an ongoing Bookstore deduction for a fixed amount (e.g., \$25.00 per month). You will be charged interest on the unpaid balance. Please submit your request in writing (including your student number) to Dina Lopresti in the SGS office, Gilmour Hall, room 212. For more information regarding the Campus Store, please visit <https://campusstore.mcmaster.ca/>

**Please note:** All outstanding account balances (i.e., bookstore, library and parking fines, etc.) at the end of December, April and July will be deducted from the next month's pay.

**Direct Deposit:** Student payroll will be made by Direct Bank Deposit. AN EMPLOYEE DEPOSIT INFORMATION application form must be completed and a VOIDED cheque must be attached. You may obtain an *Employee Deposit Information Form* from <https://graduate.mcmaster.ca/resources> or from the SGS Office, Gilmour Hall, room 212.

## 9. Petitions for Special Consideration

### SGS Calendar Section 2.5.9

The University wishes to assist students with legitimate difficulties. It also has the responsibility to ensure that degree, program and course requirements are met in a manner that is equitable to all students. Students may petition the office of the Associate Dean of the School of Graduate Studies for special consideration when there are compelling medical, personal or family reasons to justify an exception to University regulations. The appropriate form may be found on the School of Graduate Studies website. The student's supervisor and [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#) are normally required to provide their input on the student's statement in the petition. Supporting documentation will be required but will not ensure approval of the petition. The authority to grant petitions lies with the School of Graduate Studies and is discretionary. It is imperative that

students make every effort to meet the originally scheduled course requirements and it is a student's responsibility to write examinations as scheduled.

### **10. Absences from campus/training including Vacation**

#### **SGS Calendar, Section 2.5, LOA and Parenting Leave Policy, Section 2.5.7**

Full-time students are expected to be working full time on their studies and/or research activities. Part-time students who do not have set expectations for time on campus must maintain progress in their program of study that is judged to be acceptable by the program or their supervisory committee.

Full-time students are entitled to take vacation (2 weeks/year) and the timing of this must be discussed with their supervisor.

**LOA time may be used if needed to discontinue studies to focus on other aspects of life, but the leave must conform to University regulations/procedures to avoid problems with registration.** It is important to use a LOA where appropriate, as students may be deemed as failing to progress during times where health or personal issues limit their ability to participate in their training program if such permissions are not in place. **The regulations are outlined in Section 2.5.7 of the SGS Calendar.**

#### **Reasons for LOA – SGS Calendar, Section 2.5.7**

Students may require leaves for parental, health, or personal reasons. Please refer to the SGS Calendar, Section 2.5.7 for information about different types of LOA.

If you plan on taking a LOA related to family responsibilities, such as pregnancy and child rearing, please use the *Parental Leave* form located at:

[https://gs.mcmaster.ca/sites/default/files/resources/parenting\\_leave\\_june\\_2018\\_june\\_2018.pdf](https://gs.mcmaster.ca/sites/default/files/resources/parenting_leave_june_2018_june_2018.pdf)

If you are requesting a LOA for health or personal circumstances, please fill out a *Petition for Special Consideration* form entitled, ***Petitions for Special Consideration to the Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study*** located at:

<https://gs.mcmaster.ca/resources>

**NOTE:** you will require a physician's note for processing of a medical leave request. It is important to discuss with your supervisor whether you will have periods of absence from McMaster University or your program activities. The form entitled, *Request to be Full-time Off-Campus* is available at:

[https://gs.mcmaster.ca/sites/default/files/resources/full\\_time\\_off\\_campus\\_request\\_form\\_-\\_revised\\_july\\_2017.pdf](https://gs.mcmaster.ca/sites/default/files/resources/full_time_off_campus_request_form_-_revised_july_2017.pdf)

If you are requesting an LOA, you must discuss your intent with your supervisor, Assistant Dean of Rehabilitation Science, and the RS Administrative Staff.

In cases of unauthorized absence, the student will have to apply for re-admission. The Graduate Admissions and Study Committee will rule on each request on a case-by-case basis. No guarantee of re-admission or of renewal of financial arrangements can be made.



## CONTINUATION OF SCHOLARSHIP FUNDING DURING GRADUATE STUDENT PARENTAL LEAVE FROM STUDIES (See *Section 2.5.7* of the [SGS Calendar](#))

Whether funding is continued during a LOA depends on the nature of the leave, the source of funding and any associated agency regulations and University rules. Please consult the agency for specific information about their policies. University policies about scholarship funding are found in **Section 8** of the [SGS Calendar](#). Policies around TAs would be in the *CUPE Collective Agreement* (<http://cupe3906.org/tas-unit-1/collective-agreement/>).

### V. MSc THESIS PROGRAM See [SGS Calendar](#), *Section 3.3*

Students must comply with the SGS and the FHS Graduate Program regulations, successfully complete the required courses, and complete and defend a research thesis. Additional courses may be required of a student by his/her Supervisory Committee or the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS). Courses should be selected by the student in consultation with the Supervisory Committee.

Full-time students should normally take two (2) years (6 terms) to complete the program. For part-time students, the expected duration of the program is three (3) years (9 terms). Please see **Appendix 14** for the academic timeline.

### MINIMUM COURSE REQUIREMENTS

All MSc students must take a minimum of four (4) courses:

1. Theory course: REHAB 700\*, *The Development, Evaluation and Utilization of Theories in Rehabilitation*
2. An approved substantive course, e.g., REHAB 702, REHAB 703, REHAB 704, REHAB 716, or REHAB 725\*
3. An approved research methods course either quantitative or qualitative, e.g., REHAB 707\* \*772 NURS/HRM 745
4. An approved data analysis course either quantitative or qualitative, e.g., REHAB 714\* RS758

The student's Supervisory Committee may require students to take additional courses. Students may choose additional courses, which may be taken once approved by the student's Supervisory Committee.

In addition to the above four courses, all new students are required to take the following courses in their first month of study. Students who do not pass SGS 101 or 201 by December 31st will have Fs applied to the outstanding courses and an SGS Enrolment Hold applied to their records. You can take these courses by registering for them via Mosaic and completing them via the following links:

1. **SGS 101: *Academic Research Integrity and Ethics*** (an online module take by all graduate students – completed on Avenue-to-Learn at <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>).

2. **SGS 201:** Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) (an online module taken by all graduate students – <http://www.mcmaster.ca/accessibility/>)

See **SGS Calendar**, **Section 2.6.5** for more information regarding these online modules.

Students enrolled in the MSc thesis option program must complete a research thesis on an approved rehabilitation science issue and defend the thesis at a final oral examination (please see *Guidelines for Thesis Proposal* found on page 18).

**Course schedules** are posted on the A2L, under RS Graduate Student Resources.

***As well as completing the course work and thesis associated with the MSc and PhD degrees students are also required to complete certain milestones. Milestones are considered to be specific training events such as RS Skills sessions and attending SRS Research Rounds which you will need in your academic life and attendance and completion of these mark progression along a developmental timeline. If students are not in compliance with their milestones they will not be considered for Scholarships and Awards.***

***An example Student Timeframe template for students to record milestones of their MSc training plan is included in Appendix 10.***

## **RESEARCH ROUNDS, RS SKILLS SERIES & SEMINARS**

The SRS has a series of research rounds, skills series, and seminars given by rehabilitation scientists, current students, and guest lecturers. Regular attendance at these events is a milestone of your program, and **is expected** for all students. Failure to attend could result in a “marginal” or “unsatisfactory” grade on your supervisory committee meeting report.

Students must communicate intended absence from the RS Skills Series, Research Rounds, and/or Senior Student Seminar by email to the RS Administrative Staff at [rsgrad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca).

### **RS Skills Series:**

- Normally occurs from 1:00PM – 3:00PM on the second Wednesday of every month
- *Full-time students must attend 80%, and part-time students must attend 60% of all RS Skills sessions*

### **Research Rounds:**

- Normally occurs from 9:00AM – 10:00AM on the second Wednesday of every month
- *Full-time students must attend 80%, and part-time students must attend 60% of all Research Rounds.*

### **Senior Student Seminars:**

- Normally occurs from 1:00PM – 3:00PM on the third Wednesday of every month

## MSc(RS) THESIS

Students must conduct research under the supervision of a Supervisor and Supervisory Committee. The topic of research will depend on the interests of the student and the expertise of the Supervisor. Students will prepare and defend a research proposal, conduct the research, prepare a written thesis, and defend the research thesis at a final oral examination.

### GUIDELINES FOR THESIS PROPOSAL

A thesis proposal is a written plan that the student prepares to outline the thesis research. Thesis proposals should be brief, concrete, and focused. The purpose of the proposal is to set out a plan for the thesis research and for writing the thesis. The proposal also functions as a contract between the student and the committee. A concrete thesis proposal, once approved, should eliminate the possibility of later conflict over the scope and nature of the thesis.

There is no single required format for the thesis proposal. Students are advised to discuss with their Supervisor the form that the proposal should take to ensure that it meets student and committee expectations. There are (2) basic approaches used.

1. **Traditional style proposal:** In the traditional style of **thesis proposal**, the student writes a detailed background literature and methods. This background literature component often forms the preliminary version of the first chapter of the thesis. Such documents are typically 10 - 15 double-spaced pages. This format may be a single description of the thesis research; or, outline a series of manuscripts if these are distinguishable when the work is proposed.
2. **Brief format:** Some research is suited towards a brief proposal where the student briefly outlines the key issues in the background literature, a proposed series of manuscripts and related methods. Such documents are typically 3 - 5 double-spaced pages.

Students are advised to discuss the nature of their research, the nature of the proposal, the potential for manuscripts within the manuscript style thesis, and how the proposal will be presented to the committee with their supervisor. Typically, the thesis proposal is discussed in detail at least at one Supervisory Committee meeting. Students present the thesis proposal using either the written proposal and/or a PowerPoint presentation to their committee. Discussion with the committee may result in changes to the thesis plan.

While the specific format of thesis proposals can vary, the basic principles to be considered include the following elements:

- A clear introductory statement of the problem to be addressed in the research. The rationale for proposing the particular research must be stated.
- A brief, critical review of the relevant theoretical and empirical literature in the specific area of the thesis. The student should discuss the format and extent of the literature review needed with their Supervisor. The options include the preliminary review formatted for a thesis introduction or a brief synopsis of the key background papers to state the current research gap being addressed and the rationale for the planned research. In either case, the student is responsible to ensure that the work proposed will address a current gap in knowledge.

- A statement of the problem and specific research questions to be addressed should be stated.
- A brief description of the research methods that will be used. This section should include the nature of the study participants, (inclusion/exclusion criteria, ethics, sampling methods) tools/scales, test protocols, interview plan, analyses should be explained and referenced where appropriate. It is important to keep the data collection plan realistic and within the means of the student.
- Research “instruments”, such as questionnaires or interview schedules, may be appended as appendices to the proposal.
- A tentative schedule of work, indicating when each part of the thesis is to be completed. Be realistic.
- It must be clear if the student intends to adopt justification for the choice of a traditional integrated or a “sandwich” or “manuscript” format for the thesis. The format and content must be approved by the Supervisory Committee.

The following appendices are provided in case students find them useful in preparation of thesis proposal and manuscript styles theses. These formats are not required and may be customized as needed.

- See [Appendix 3](#): *Potential outline for MSc Thesis Proposal Manuscript Style*

## TRANSFER PROCEDURE FROM MSc TO PhD

(see [SGS Calendar, Section 2.1.3](#))

Eligible students enrolled in the MSc thesis- or course-based options in the RS Graduate Program can apply to transfer to the PhD (RS) program after completing four courses required for the MSc (RS) program, attaining an overall average of A- and demonstrating adequate research potential as determined by the student’s Supervisory Committee or, in the case of the course-based MSc (RS) student, proposed Supervisor. **The course requirements to transfer are the same in both the MSc (RS) thesis-based or course-based options.** Students may consider transferring after they have successfully completed a minimum of three (3) MSc (RS) courses, one of which must include a research methods or statistics course.

The objectives of the transfer procedure are:

- a) To assess the progress of the student toward the MSc (RS) degree;
- b) To assess the potential of the candidate to carry out independent, original research; and,
- c) To consider the suitability of the candidate for direct admission to the PhD (RS) program.

The following procedure is to be used by the planned Supervisor and current Supervisory Committee of a thesis-based MSc (RS) student OR by the planned Supervisor in cases where a course-based MSc (RS) student is applying to transfer to the PhD (RS) program without completion of the MSc degree.

### PROCEDURE FOR TRANSFER

Students are required to secure a PhD Supervisor before they can transfer. Students in the thesis-based option may continue with their current Supervisor, or transfer to a new

Supervisor. Students in the course-based option must identify an appropriate PhD (RS) Supervisor and complete the transfer process under their guidance.

The process is initiated by the planned PhD Supervisor, at the request of the student. The student must have a minimum overall average of A- on their MSc (RS) courses to transfer. Normally, these courses should be completed in the first year in the MSc curriculum and the transfer process is normally initiated after eight (8) months (2 terms) and before 18 months of study. In the case of part-time students, the transfer window will be extended to 16 and 36 months respectively. The supervisor and the student should meet with the RS Assistant Dean to review the transfer process and discuss the student's eligibility to transfer.

The process is officially initiated when the student and planned Supervisor complete the **REQUEST TO TRANSFER FROM MSC TO PHD PROGRAM IN REHABILITATION SCIENCE (RS)** form (available on A2L) and submit it to the [RS Administrative Staff](#). This notification normally takes place **two (2) months prior** to the date of the expected transfer meeting. The time, date, and place of the Transfer Meeting will be arranged by the Office of the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#). **Transfers become effective only on the following dates: September 1<sup>st</sup>, January 1<sup>st</sup> and May 1<sup>st</sup>.** See Appendix 12 of this handbook for the procedures.

To be considered for transfer, the student must write and submit a **Transfer Meeting Report**. The Transfer Meeting Report will consist of a brief description of the reasons for the request to transfer from the MSc to the PhD program, including a proposal of PhD research. The student's planned PhD Supervisor must provide a detailed letter describing the student's suitability for study at the PhD level, the Supervisor's ability to support the student and his/her research, and the planned area of research to the Transfer Meeting Evaluation Committee. **There needs to be a funding plan in place for \$21,300/year for the remaining years for students who transfer to be full time students, which should be documented by the proposed supervisor in the supporting letter.** The letter should be part of the transfer Meeting Report forwarded to the Transfer Committee.

The written documentation (report and letter) is submitted to the [RS Administrative Staff](#) for distribution to each member of the Transfer Meeting Evaluation Committee at least **two (2) weeks prior** to the scheduled date of the Transfer Meeting.

The Transfer Meeting Report will consist of three (3) components written in a brief document (5 pages double-spaced):

- a. A brief description of the reasons for requesting to transfer from the MSc to the PhD program.
- b. A statement of progress containing a description of the coursework and research work accomplished by the student in his/her MSc (RS) Program.
- c. A summary of the area of PhD research that will be undertaken; or, how the MSc work will progress to the PhD level.

The Transfer Meeting Report will be defended to the Transfer Meeting Evaluation Committee through a brief presentation and responses to questions focusing on research progress to date and the proposed PhD thesis plan.

The **Transfer Meeting Evaluation Committee** is composed of:

1. The student's planned PhD Supervisor will be present but not have a vote;
2. One (1) RS graduate faculty member, appointed by the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#)

3. One (1) member of the RS Admissions Committee who is independent from the student's committee; and,
4. The Assistant Dean (RS) or his/her delegate, who will chair the meeting.

The RS graduate faculty member, the RS Admissions committee member and the Assistant Dean (RS) or delegate all provide a vote on whether the student should be approved to transfer.

In the event that the Assistant Dean (RS) is also the planned Supervisor of the student requesting the transfer, the Assistant Dean (RS) will delegate the Chair role of the student's Transfer Meeting Evaluation Committee to one of the following:

1. Chair of the MSc and PhD Thesis-based Admissions Committee;
2. Chair of the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee; or,
3. Another RS Faculty Member.

The Transfer Meeting Evaluation Committee, after independent consideration of the Supervisor's letter of recommendation and the student's Transfer Meeting Report, will attend the Transfer Meeting. The student will be expected to present their progress to date and proposed training plan. A maximum of one (1½) hours will be allowed for the Transfer Meeting. Following a brief presentation of the Transfer Meeting Report by the student and a round of questioning, the Chair will invite the Committee to evaluate the student's written and oral performance and recommend one (1) of the following options to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (HS):

1. The student is granted permission to transfer directly to the PhD (RS) program, without completion of the MSc (RS) degree. (This recommendation will require a unanimous committee vote).
2. The student is granted admission to the PhD (RS) program, conditional on successful completion of the MSc (RS) degree. (This decision may be made by a majority committee vote).
3. The student is invited to complete the MSc (RS) and admission to the PhD (RS) Program is not granted at this time. (This decision may be made by a majority committee vote).

The Chair of the Transfer Meeting Evaluation Committee will convey the Committee's decision to the student orally and in writing with a brief explanation of the reason, if the transfer is not approved. The Assistant Dean (RS) will complete the **Request for Change in a Graduate Student's Status** form (<https://graduate.mcmaster.ca/resources>) which will be forwarded to the SGS. The final copy of the transfer documents will be also provided to the RS Administrative Staff to be kept in the student's file.

## VI. PhD PROGRAM (see SGS Calendar, Section 4)

PhD students must comply with the SGS regulations and successfully complete at least three (3) graduate half courses at the 700 level, which are the minimum course requirements, as well as, complete a Comprehensive Examination and defend a research thesis. Additional courses may be required of a student by his/her Supervisory Committee or may be selected by the student in consultation with the Supervisory Committee.

Full-time students should normally take four (4) years (12 terms) to complete the program. For part-time students, the expected duration of the program is six (6) years (18 terms).



## MINIMUM COURSE REQUIREMENTS

For course descriptions, please refer to the Course Listings website:

<http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=20&navoid=3567>

The Supervisor and Supervisory Committee provide guidance to ensure that courses and supplemental training activities help the student to attain the scope and depth of knowledge and skills in methods and content required for the associated degree. Students select courses with the following **minimum** considerations:

### The required PhD (RS) courses include:

1. Theory course: REHAB 700\*, *The Development, Evaluation and Utilization of Theories in Rehabilitation*
2. An approved substantive course, e.g., REHAB 702, REHAB 703, REHAB 704, REHAB 716, or REHAB 718\*<sup>n</sup> approved research methods course either quantitative or qualitative, e.g., REHAB 707\* \*772 NURS/HRM 745
3. An approved data analysis course either quantitative or qualitative, e.g., REHAB 714\* RS717 RS758
4. 725 Effective Knowledge Transfer for Rehabilitation Scientists (3 credits);

The student's Supervisory Committee may require students to take additional courses. PhD (RS) students are expected to have previously completed MSc level training in research methods, data analysis, and theory. PhD (RS) students should expect to take advanced research and methods courses commensurate with being an independent in their area of research. Many PhD (RS) students have not taken introductory research design and methods during MSc level training, or if they have, these courses have not covered the methods in the same depth as the RS courses. These RS courses are often taken in first year. Most will take additional courses in research methods/analysis to obtain higher level skills. If a course on the theory of science relevant to rehabilitation science has not been completed at the MSc level, students will be required to complete REHAB 700.

**Course schedules** are posted on Avenue to Learn in the RS Graduate Student Resources course.

***An example Student Timeframe template for students to record milestones of their PhD training plan is included in [Appendix 11](#).***

In addition to the above four courses, all new students are required to take the following courses in their first month of study. Students who do not pass SGS 101 or 201 by December 31st will have Fs applied to the outstanding courses and an SGS Enrolment Hold applied to their records. You can take these courses by registering for them via Mosaic and completing them via the following links:

1. SGS 101: *Academic Research Integrity and Ethics* (an online module take by all graduate students – completed on Avenue to Learn at <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>).
2. SGS 201: *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* (an online module taken by all graduate students – <http://accessibility.mcmaster.ca>).

See **SGS Calendar**, **Section 2.6.5** for more information regarding these online modules.

## RESEARCH ROUNDS, RS SKILLS SERIES & SEMINARS

The SRS has a series of seminars given by rehabilitation scientists, current students, and guest lecturers. Regular attendance at these seminars is a milestone of your program, and **is expected** for all students. Failure to attend could result in a “marginal” or “unsatisfactory” grade on your supervisory committee meeting report. ***If students are not in compliance with their milestones they will not be considered for Scholarships and Awards.*** Student absence from the RS Skills Series, Research Rounds, and Senior Student Seminar must be communicated to the **RS Administrative Staff** at [rsgrad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca).

### RS Skills Series:

- Normally occurs from 1:00PM – 3:00PM on the second Wednesday of every month
- *Full-time students must attend 80%, and part-time students must attend 60% of all RS Skills sessions*

### Research Rounds:

- Normally occurs from 9:00AM – 10:00AM on the second Wednesday of every month
- *Full-time students must attend 80%, and part-time students must attend 60% of all Research Rounds.*

### Senior Student Seminars:

- Normally occurs from 1:00PM – 3:00PM on the third Wednesday of every month

## COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

See **SGS Calendar**, **Section 4.3**

Comprehensive Examination information specific to the RS Graduate Program is in **Appendix 5** of this handbook.

Information provided to Comprehensive Examiners about their role as an examiner is in **Appendix 6** of this handbook.

## PhD(RS) THESIS

See **SGS Calendar**, **Section 4.4**

All students must complete and defend a thesis according to regulations outlined by the SGS (**SGS Calendar**, **Section 4.4**) under the supervision of a Supervisor and Supervisory Committee. The topic of research will depend on the interests of the student and the expertise of the Supervisor. Students will prepare and defend a research proposal, conduct the research, prepare a written thesis demonstrating an original contribution to rehabilitation science and defend the research thesis at a final oral examination. A Supervisory



Committee determines when a candidate is ready to write the thesis and ascertain whether the quality is satisfactory. The Committee will document permission to defend in the Committee Report. When this happens the student contacts the SGS Thesis Coordinator ([gthesis@mcmaster.ca](mailto:gthesis@mcmaster.ca)).

**Students need to have at least one paper from their thesis published or accepted for publication in a peer reviewed journal prior to their thesis defense.**

### **GUIDELINES FOR THESIS PROPOSAL**

A thesis proposal is a written plan that the student prepares to outline the thesis research. Thesis proposals should be brief, concrete, and focused. The purpose of the proposal is to set out a plan for the thesis research and for writing the thesis. The proposal also functions as a contract between the student and the committee. A concrete thesis proposal, once approved, should eliminate the possibility of later conflict over the scope and nature of the thesis.

There is no single required format for the thesis proposal. Students are advised to discuss with their Supervisor the form that the proposal should take to ensure that it meets student and committee expectations. There are (2) basic approaches used.

1. Thesis proposal: The student writes a detailed background literature and methods. This background literature component often forms the preliminary version of the first chapter of the thesis. Such documents are typically 10 - 15 double-spaced pages. This format may be a single description of the thesis research; or, outline a series of manuscripts if these are distinguishable when the work is proposed.

Students are advised to discuss the nature of their research, the nature of the proposal, the potential for manuscripts within the manuscript style thesis, and how the proposal will be presented to the committee with their supervisor. Typically, the thesis proposal is discussed in detail at least at one Supervisory Committee meeting. Students often present the thesis proposal using either a written proposal and/or a PowerPoint presentation to communicate with their committee. Discussion with the advisory committee may result in changes to the thesis plan.

While the specific format of thesis proposals can vary, the basic principles to be considered include the following elements:

- A clear introductory statement of the problem to be researched. The reason for proposing the particular research must be stated. **Note:** For doctoral work, the research problem for the thesis must represent an original contribution to the discipline of rehabilitation science; the nature of this contribution should be made clear in this introductory section of the proposal.
- A brief, critical review of the relevant theoretical and empirical literature in the specific area of the thesis. The student should discuss the format and extent of the literature review needed with their Supervisor. The options include the preliminary review formatted for a thesis introduction or a brief synopsis of the key background papers to state the current research gap being addressed and the rationale for the planned research. In either case, the student is responsible to ensure that the work proposed will address a current gap in knowledge.
- A statement of the problem and specific research questions to be addressed should be stated.

- A brief description of the research methods that will be used. This section should include the nature of the study participants, (inclusion/exclusion criteria, ethics, sampling methods) tools/scales, test protocols, interview plan, analyses should be explained and referenced where appropriate. It is important to keep the data collection plan realistic and within the means of the student.
- Research “instruments”, such as questionnaires or interview schedules, may be appended to the proposal.
- A tentative schedule of work, indicating when each part of the thesis is to be completed. Be realistic.
- It must be clear if the student intends to adopt justification for the choice of a traditional integrated or a “sandwich or manuscript” format for the thesis. The format and content must be approved by the Supervisory Committee.

### **AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION IN REHABILITATION SCIENCES**

SRS has designated areas of training specialization that reflect concentrated areas of focus within the school. These fields are areas of strength in terms of faculty expertise, research resources/infrastructure and curriculum developed. Students are NOT required to specify a field or to limit their work within these areas.

1. **Best Practice and Knowledge Translation:** Developing, evaluating and applying skills in evidence-based practice and strategies to implement best practices.
2. **Childhood Disability (and Participation):** *CanChild* Centre for Childhood Disability Research is a research and educational centre whose research is focused on improving the lives of children and youth with disabilities and their families. Founded in 1989, *CanChild* is a world leader in the field of childhood disability.
3. **Functional Health with Aging or Chronic Disease:** Research that focuses on keeping people healthy and functionally independent despite increasing age or chronic disease.
4. **Neuromusculoskeletal Function and Mobility:** Research that focuses on understanding and optimizing neuromusculoskeletal function and mobility as a vital aspect of overall health.
5. **Work Ability and Participation:** Research that focuses on creating and maintaining safe, healthy, productive work, and participation in valued life roles.
6. **Orthopaedic Musculoskeletal-Manipulative Physiotherapy (OMPT):** Specialty training that advances knowledge, clinical reasoning, manual therapy skills, evidence-based practice and research experience in keeping with national and international standards for clinical specialization.

## **VII. MSc COURSE-BASED (ONLINE) OPTION**

See [SGS Calendar, Section 3.2](#)

Students must comply with the SGS and the FHS Graduate Program regulations. The non-thesis course-based (online) option is offered on a part-time basis (one course per term). Courses are available on-line, by distance education through the SRS at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario.

Students are expected to complete the program with a time period, usually 3-4 years, which reflects reasonable progress based on their other commitments, affording as much flexibility as needed. **If the program is taken at an accelerated part-time pace, it can be finished in 24 months. Although not typical, a full-time student could complete the required eight (8) ½ credit courses in one-year. Requests for a change in a part-time student's status to full-time must be initiated by contacting the [RS Administrative Staff](#).**

## MINIMUM COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**Course schedules** are posted on Avenue to Learn in the RS Graduate Student Resources course.

### MSc Course-based Option – Required Courses

A student must complete a total of eight (8) 3.0 credit courses.

1. Two (2) courses are **mandatory**: REHAB 705 and REHAB 706.
2. Students are also required to take three (3) additional electives, which are offered through the program or have been approved by the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#). Online electives include REHAB 702, REHAB 708, REHAB 710, REHAB 770, REHAB 771, REHAB 772, REHAB 773, REHAB 774 and REHAB 775 if they are able to be onsite at McMaster University and REHAB 704 dependent upon the availability of faculty. **Students can also take up to two (2) electives at other universities offering online or onsite courses with prior written permission of the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#).**

**There are three (3) options for completing your final two courses – You may choose ONE of these options:**

1. **REHAB 730:** The Scholarly Paper (1-full course over 2 terms): The Scholarly Paper is designed for course-based MSc students to demonstrate, in writing, their ability to integrate ideas that reflect current knowledge in areas of rehabilitation practice, education, research, and/or policy. A student will identify a topic, and in consultation with a faculty advisor with expertise in the area, develop a proposal that is individualized to the student's area of interest. The student will then develop the paper under the guidance of the faculty advisor. The paper must be 25 to 30 pages, doubled-spaced, excluding references and appendices. The paper does not involve the collection or analysis of primary data or the conduct of research with subjects. It is a scholarly paper, not a thesis. See [Appendix 13](#) for REHAB 730 procedures.
2. **REHAB 735:** Rehabilitation Research Project (1-full course over 3 terms [Sept start]): The Rehabilitation Research Project is a full course, which is completed over three (3) academic terms. Students wishing to take this course need to have completed Research Methods RS773 as a prerequisite.
3. Two (2) additional electives (half courses) can be completed.

*OMPT and Prosthetics and Orthotics (P&O) concurrent learners are encouraged to follow a specific course pathway.*

## COMPLETING REQUIREMENTS AND GRADUATION

Course-based students must communicate with the [RS Administrative Staff](#) once they have completed their course requirements. The [RS Administrative Staff](#) will verify that students have satisfactorily completed their required coursework before submitting the required paperwork to SGS, at which point their academic record will be formally assessed by the SGS for graduation. Students should check their record via Mosaic, and once their record has been marked as complete by SGS they can register to attend convocation.

**NOTE:** Students who have completed their final course requirements in the winter term will attend November convocation. Students who have completed their final course requirements in the summer or fall terms can attend either May or November convocation.

## VIII. RS COURSE INFORMATION

### REQUIRED COURSES FOR ALL GRADUATE STUDENTS

**ALL** Graduate Students, including part-time students, are required to take the following courses in their first month of study. Students who do not pass SGS 101 or 201 by September 30<sup>th</sup> will have Fs applied to the outstanding courses and an SGS Enrolment Hold applied to their records. You can take these courses by registering for them via Mosaic and completing them via the following links:

1. **SGS 101:** *Academic Research Integrity and Ethics* (an online module take by all graduate students – completed on Avenue-to-Learn at <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>.)
2. **SGS 201:** Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) (an online module taken by all graduate students – <http://www.mcmaster.ca/accessibility/>)

See [SGS Calendar](#), [Section 2.6.5](#) for more information regarding these online modules.

### RS COURSES IN THESIS-BASED PROGRAM 2019-2020

For course descriptions, please refer to the Course Listings website:  
<http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=25&navoid=4662>

An online version of the courses being offered by the RS Graduate Program can be found on A2L (RS Graduate Student Resources).

Course	Instructor	Offered
<b>REHAB 700</b> The Development, Evaluation and Utilization of Theories in Rehabilitation	Dr. E. Durocher	Winter 2020
<b>REHAB 704</b> Independent Study in Rehabilitation Science	SRS Faculty Advisor	All terms**

Course	Instructor	Offered
<b>REHAB 707</b> Research Methods in Rehabilitation Science	Dr. J. Richardson	Fall 2019
<b>REHAB 714</b> Statistical Methods in Rehabilitation Science	Dr. L Macedo	Fall 2019
<b>REHAB 716</b> The Role of Rehabilitation Chronic Disease Management	Dr. J. Richardson	Fall 2019
<b>REHAB 717</b> Special Topics in Statistical Methods for Rehabilitation Science	Dr. A. Kuspinar	Winter 2020
<b>REHAB 718</b> Mobility Across Adult Life Course; A Rehabilitation Perspective	Dr A. Tang	Not offered in 2019
<b>REHAB 719</b> Measurement of Outcomes in Rehabilitation Science	Dr. Ayse Kuspinar	Winter 2021
<b>REHAB 720</b> Measurement and Evaluation of Quality of Life in Rehabilitation	Independent Study (Faculty Advisor Required)	All terms**
<b>REHAB 722</b> International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF): Theory and Use	Dr. JW. Gorter (TBC)	Winter 2021
<b>REHAB 725</b> Effective Knowledge Transfer for Rehabilitation Scientists	Dr. T. Packham	Spring/Summer 2020
<b>NUR/HRM 745</b> Qualitative Research Methods ( <i>RS limited to 3 seats only, additional space is likely available</i> )	S. Jack/N. Carter	Winter 2020
<b>REHAB 758</b> Qualitative Research Methods for Analysing and Interpreting Data	S. Moll	Fall 2020
<b>REHAB 772</b> Introduction to Qualitative Research	Dr. A. Buettgen	Fall 2019 (Online)

\*\* Courses can be taken any term because they are independent study courses, but require a supervisor. Students may not audit courses.

## RS COURSES IN COURSE-BASED PROGRAM 2019-2020

For course descriptions, please refer to the Course Listings website:

<http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=25&navoid=4662>

Course	Offered
REHAB 702 Participation and Community Living	Spring/Summer 2020
REHAB 703 Selected Topics in Rehabilitation Science	All terms**
REHAB 704 Independent Study in Rehabilitation Science	All terms**
REHAB 705 Evaluating Sources of Evidence*	Fall 2019
REHAB 706 Measurement in Rehabilitation*	Winter 2020
REHAB 708 Clinical Reasoning and Decision-Making*	Spring/Summer 2020
REHAB 710 Facilitating Learning in Rehabilitation Contexts	Fall 2019
REHAB 715 Advanced Orthopaedic Manipulative Physiotherapy (OMPT) Specialization	Fall 2020
REHAB 730 Scholarly Paper	Full Course (2 terms) Fall 2019-Winter 2020; Winter 2020- Spring/Summer 2020
HLTHMGT 732 Strategic Writing for Health Care Professionals (limited seating)	Winter 2020
REHAB 735 Rehabilitation Research Project	Full Course (3 terms) Fall 2019 Spring/Summer 2020
REHAB 770 Leadership in Rehabilitation	Fall 2019
REHAB 771 Work, Organization and Health	Winter 2020
REHAB 772 Introduction to Qualitative Research	Fall 2019 and Spring 2020
REHAB 773 Knowledge Translation in Rehabilitation Practice	Winter 2020
REHAB 774 Quantitative Research Methods	Spring/Summer 2020

\* These are required courses for the course-based MSc degree

\*\* Courses can be taken any term because they are independent study courses, but require a Supervisor.

### COURSE SELECTION

We recommend that students take their required core courses for their degree as soon as possible during their program of study. Students should speak with their Supervisor and later with their Supervisory Committee members to select an appropriate coursework.

**For the thesis-based program, the course of study must be documented on an *Education Plan* form (A2L – RS Graduate Student Resources) and submitted to the Assistant Dean (RS) who will forward it to the SGS within three (3) to four (4) months of beginning the program.** The Supervisory Committee or the Associate Dean of

Graduate Studies (FHS) may recommend a more extensive course of study than the minimum course requirement for certain students if this is deemed necessary. All deadlines for course selection and changes are in the [SGS Calendar](#).

Students register for their courses on Mosaic. In some courses it is necessary to contact the Course Coordinator to obtain approval to take the course before registration can be completed. If you require approval to take a course, please email the Assistant Dean of Rehabilitation Science and copy the course instructor and the [RS Administrative Staff](#) in the email. If granted permission, the [RS Administrative Staff](#) will provide access for the student to enroll into the course on MOSAIC. Students may take courses in other departments or universities but need to be aware that there may be limitations to consider and must investigate this when planning coursework. Courses taken at other universities have relevant policies and procedures at both McMaster and visiting institution. If you require assistance, please contact the [RS Administrative Staff](#).

**For each of the three (3) academic terms (Fall, Winter, and Spring/Summer), there is a deadline date for registration and changes (delete and add) in graduate course selection. Students who wish to drop a course after the deadline must seek permission to do so. The deadline for adding and dropping courses is located in the 2019-2020 [SGS Calendar \(Sessional Dates\)](#). It is the student's responsibility to initiate and follow through on the completion of the "Drop and Add" feature on Mosaic. A graduate student who informs the course instructor that he/she is adding or dropping the course is NOT sufficient. It is NOT the instructor's responsibility to inform the SGS about students who have dropped in or out of his/her course(s).**

## **COURSE OUTLINES**

Course Coordinators are responsible for providing students with a written course outline at the outset of the course which can be found on Avenue to Learn. The outline will specify the following: the content and duration of the course; the nature and timing of course assignments; the method of assessment that will be used to evaluate the students' work; and, any penalties that may be assessed for lateness. In the selected topics courses concerned with the study of topics at the leading edge of research (e.g., REHAB 704), it is difficult to accurately predict the content and direction of the course. Therefore, a Course Coordinator is allowed some flexibility to shift the focus of the course as research and other interests dictate but, in this respect, the Course Coordinator is also responsible for keeping the graduate students informed (in writing if necessary) of any changes as the course progresses. **The Course Coordinator will not alter the amount of work expected, or the schedule of assignments and due dates, or the procedures for evaluation, from what is specified in the original course outlines.**

## **ILLNESS OR UNAVOIDABLE ABSENCE DURING COURSE-WORK**

If a student is ill or legitimately absent (e.g., for personal or family reasons) prior to an examination or course deadline, this must be brought to the attention of the Course Coordinator as early as possible, so that the examination or deadline can be deferred at the Course Coordinator's discretion. Excuses made after the fact are not acceptable. Students may be requested to submit medical or other types of documentation.



## **COURSE ASSESSMENT BY THE STUDENT**

For each course, the [RS Administrative Staff](#) will provide each student with a link to a course evaluation on Survey Monkey, which should be completed by the student. The student may remain anonymous on the assessment form if he/she wishes; the RS Curriculum Committee is interested in the information provided by the student in order to initiate improvements before the course is given again.

The Rehabilitation Science Program values student's thoughts on what elements of the course went well and what needs improvement.

## **COURSE GRADING**

1. The minimum pass grade for all graduate level courses is B-.
2. Course Coordinators must be prepared to use the full range of grades from F or B- to A+.
3. The grades of "A" and "A+" are reserved for exceptional levels of achievement by students who, by definition, cannot represent more than a small minority of the graduate student population or of the students registered in our courses.
4. Course Coordinators will be responsible for ensuring that faculty who contribute to their courses follow the above approach in grading students.

For more information about how to view grades, GPAs, and GPA calculation, please visit <https://registrar.mcmaster.ca/exams-grades/grades/#tab-1>

## **INCOMPLETE ASSIGNMENTS**

See [SGS Calendar, Section 2.6.4](#)

Under exceptional circumstances, a Course Coordinator may approve an extension for a student for the completion of work in a course and assign an incomplete grade (INC). This extension is usually for a few weeks. A student who receives this permission must complete the work as soon as possible, and in any case early enough to allow the Course Coordinator to report the final grade by the date specified in the [SGS Calendar \(Sessional Dates\)](#). If the "INC" grade is not cleared by the deadline, a failing grade will automatically be recorded.

## **COURSE FAILURE**

See [SGS Calendar, Section 2.6.4](#)

A student who fails to obtain at least a B- grade in a course that is to count towards their degree requirements is normally asked to withdraw from the Graduate Program. In some cases, the student's Supervisory Committee may recommend to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) that, because of certain circumstances, the student should: a) take an alternative course; or, b) repeat the course. Such a recommendation should be made in writing to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) within one month of the student's grade being announced, outlining the possible reasons for the failure. The Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) will make a decision on the recommendation on



behalf of the Faculty Graduate Admission and Study Committee.

**Information on Student Appeal Procedures can be accessed in the [SGS Calendar](#), Section [6.3](#).**

**For Term and Deadline Dates, Course Registration Dates and Dates to drop or add-dates, please see the Sessional Dates document provided in the [SGS Calendar/Sessional Dates](#)**  
<https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=37&navoid=7560>

## **DEADLINES FOR COURSE CANCELLATIONS**

Course Coordinators are responsible for cancellation of graduate courses where needed. This should be done in writing, as a formal request sent to the Chair of the RS Curriculum Committee during the week following course registration.

1. FALL: First week of September
2. WINTER: First week of January
3. SPRING/SUMMER: Last week of April

## **IX. ORIENTATION SESSIONS**

**“SGS Graduate Orientation Week”** is scheduled from September 3 to 19, 2019. In addition, the Health Sciences Library sessions **are strongly recommended** for all new students. Please note that the listed location and times are subject to changes.

For the **MSc Course-based students**, a self-directed **online orientation** will be available on August 26, 2019 on Avenue to Learn. The [RS Administrative Staff](#), will provide detailed information in August.

Date	Time	Event	Location
Tue Sept 3, 2019	9:00 am to 10:00 am	RS TA Orientation	IAHS 201
	10:00 am to 11:00 am	New Student RS Graduate Orientation	IAHS 201
	11:00 am to 12:00pm	Photos	Outdoors (Meet at IAHS 201)
	12:00 pm to 2:00 pm	Welcome Luncheon BBQ & Ice Breaker Activities	IAHS 201
	2:00 pm to 4:00 pm	Graduate Student Resource Fair	CIBC Hall (MUSC, Third Floor)
Wed Sept. 4, 2019	9:00 am to 12:00 pm	McPherson Teaching and Learning Forum	CIBC Hall (MUSC, Third Floor)
Thurs Sept 5, 2019	10:30 am to 12:00 pm	Graduate Research Rounds	Mills Library, Second Floor Learning Commons
	2:00 pm to 5:00 pm	Welcome for New Graduate Student and Clubfest *Registration required*	The Phoenix
	2:00 pm to 4:30 pm	Scavenger Hunt	Meet at the Phoenix
Sat Sept. 7, 2019	4:00 pm – 6:00 pm	Family Picnic for Graduate Students and Postdocs	Churchill Park Clubhouse
Tues Sept 10, 2019	5:00 pm – 8:00 pm	International Student Board Game Night	CIBC Hall (MUSC, Third Floor)
Thurs Sept 12, 2019	3:30 pm – 5:30 pm	Planting Roots	Great Hall, University Club
Friday Sep 13, 2019	2:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Graduate Student Association (GSA) Barbecue	The Phoenix

Check the **SGS News and Events page** for further details at <https://gs.mcmaster.ca/news-events/upcoming-events>.

## REQUIRED HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING

Students who have previously received WHMIS and Fire Safety Training **must update** this training if it is more than one (1) year old. Please visit <http://fhs.mcmaster.ca/safetyoffice/> for more information.

**All TAs must complete the following online training:**  
Slips, Trips and Falls  
Ergonomics

Asbestos Awareness  
Office WHMIS  
Fire Safety

Please visit <http://fhs.mcmaster.ca/safetyoffice/> to complete the training. Training can be completed online *via* online training portal at <http://cfl.mcmaster.ca/eohss/>. Further information regarding TA training will be presented at the TA Orientation on September 4, 2019 from 9:00 am to 10:00 am. All TA training will be completed at the September 3, 2019 TA Orientation, 9:00 am to 10:00 am.

All completed tests should be submitted to the [RS Administrative Staff](#), who will keep a copy in your student file and then submit it to the Environmental & Occupational Health Support Services (EOHSS) office.

Safety training requirements are based on the hazards that are encountered as part of the job. Supervisors are responsible for determining the training of those individuals under their supervision. The training matrix outlines the requirements of the institution. Training requirements are different for office and lab settings, since the hazards that are encountered are different. See the training matrices at <http://www.workingatmcmaster.ca/eohss/training/matrix/>.

FHS requires additional training, which asks individuals to maintain annual updates for WHMIS and Fire. This is a requirement of the Healthcare Regulations and since many staff and students are in healthcare facilities, we ask that they maintain their updates. Other legislative requirements require annual updates as well.

You are also encouraged to review RMM 300 regarding the safety training program at McMaster. It may help to clarify training requirements:  
<http://www.workingatmcmaster.ca/med/document/RMM-300-Health-and-Safety-Training-Program-1-36.pdf>.

Please **register** in person for “**Introduction to Medline Searching**” at the information desk in the Health Sciences Library (HSC 2B) during the month of **SEPTEMBER**.

## **X. RESEARCH METHODS SEMINAR**

The following one-day Seminar is usually offered during the period of **September to December**:

*RESEARCH LITERATURE IN THE CLINICAL HEALTH SCIENCES: FINDING THE RIGHT STUFF* organized by Neera Bhatnagar (ext. 23775, [bhatnag@mcmaster.ca](mailto:bhatnag@mcmaster.ca)).

**No assessment of student performance will be made and no course credit given.** Students will be notified by email of upcoming seminars at which time they will be given instructions on how to register by the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS), HSC 4H4

## **XI. SUPERVISION AND THE SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE in the MSc and PhD THESIS PROGRAM See [SGS Calendar](#), [Section 2.7](#)**

Each graduate student in the thesis-based MSc or PhD RS Program will be supervised by a **Supervisor** who is an approved member of the Graduate Faculty in the RS Graduate Program. The Supervisor, assisted by a **Supervisory Committee**, will provide leadership and guidance to the student throughout the time that the student is registered in the RS Graduate Program.

## 1. First Meeting and Education Plan

It is the Supervisor's responsibility to select a Supervisory Committee to ensure that this committee meets with the student within a maximum of **six (6)** months from the time that the student first registers in the program. **For both MSc (RS) and PhD (RS) students, the committee consists of the Supervisor, who will chair the committee, and at least two other members of approved McMaster Graduate Faculty.**

Typically, at least one (1) additional member in addition to the supervisor comes from RS Faculty, although exceptions can be made. Faculty from McMaster who have graduate status in other departments may be approved to sit on supervisory committees in RS. Contact the [RS Administrative Staff](#) to inquire if specific faculty members from other departments are approved to sit on RS supervisory committees.

Members who do not have a graduate status appointment at McMaster may be invited to join the Supervisory Committee (as an optional fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) member) at the discretion of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS). **The appointment of fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) members, who are not faculty members of McMaster University, requires written permission of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) and they must hold graduate status at another university.** In requesting such an appointment, supervisor and student will be expected to outline the unique contributions of this fourth member. Along with the external member's curriculum vitae, the outline of unique contributions, explanation of how the external is available to the student, and the current composition of the student's committee must be sent to the RS Assistant Dean through the [RS Administrative Staff](#) in writing. Please note that an external committee member must have a graduate status at another university. If approved within the program, the RS Assistant Dean will send a letter to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) requesting for the addition of the fourth member. Committee members should be considered with respect to knowledge and experience related to the thesis research undertaken by the student.

Please note that external members cannot be added to a student's supervisory committee without the written permission of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS).

Once a committee is selected, the Supervisor will inform the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#) of these potential committee members. Before the first meeting of the Supervisory Committee, the Supervisor will provide both the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) and the Assistant Dean (RS) with an *Education Plan* for the student (see the *Education Plan* form under General Forms on A2L under RS Graduate Resources). The *Education Plan* will name the chosen Supervisory Committee members, summarize the student's thesis topic, identify the graduate courses to be taken by the student and provide the date of the first Supervisory Committee meeting. If this *Education Plan* includes a research topic, which can only be undertaken off campus, then all necessary letters of approval (ethics approval, access to data, laboratories, etc.) from the intended

site of research must be sent to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) who will approve (or not) the student to be full-time off campus to the extent required for the proposed research. In the event of any change in the *Education Plan*, the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) and the Assistant Dean (RS) should be informed by the Supervisor. In order to complete this document on time, there are occasions where supervisory committee membership may not be determined because the thesis research question is still under construction.

## 2. Supervisory Committee Meetings

The Assistant Dean (RS) must be given the option of attending the first (1<sup>st</sup>) Supervisory Committee meeting as a non-voting observer to get to know the student and to address any concerns from the committee or student about the planned training program. The Assistant Dean (RS) may not attend if there are scheduling conflicts or if the Committee is comprised of senior supervisors. The Assistant Dean (RS) is willing to attend any supervisory committee meeting at the request of a student or members of the Supervisory Committee. After the first meeting, each student is expected to meet with his/her Supervisory Committee regularly (usually once every six months) unless the Committee believes that more frequent meetings are necessary. If the student is having academic problems or difficulties with the research project, a meeting can be called immediately by either the Supervisor or the student.

**Note:** It is **mandatory** that **at least one (1)** Supervisory Committee meeting occur each academic year. Annual Supervisory Committee meetings are expected to occur by November 1 to allow administrative tracking. It is the student's responsibility to schedule the date with their Supervisory Committee, book the room and necessary equipment, and ensure that all paperwork is delivered to the RS Administrative Staff following each meeting.

Supervisory Committee Meetings are required for every Academic Year, with a November 1<sup>st</sup> deadline of the following Calendar Year applicable to that Academic Year.

For example: 2019-2020 Academic Year. The student can have a meeting anytime between 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019 and 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and count this towards the 2019-2020 requirement.

Once completed, the next meeting is not needed until during the following Academic Year.

For example: 2019-2020 Academic Year, If the student has a meeting in April 2019 then the next meeting is required during the 2020-2021 Academic Year, anytime between 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 and 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

### New Admits

All newly admitted students must have a committee meeting within that Academic Year.

- A student starting in the Fall term has a deadline of the following November.e.g. September 2019 admit, deadline November 2020.
- A student starting in the Winter term has a deadline of that November. E.g. January 2020 admit, deadline November 2020.
- A student starting in the Spring/Summer term has a deadline of that November. E.g. May 2020 admit, deadline November 2020.

### 3. Supervisory Committee Reports

The purpose of the Supervisory Committee meeting is for the student to be supported in their training through feedback, advice, and an approved plan for continuation of studies. The purpose of the Supervisory Committee meeting is also for the Committee to evaluate the performance of the student to determine that they are on track with their milestones, making sufficient progress, and their work is meeting expectations in terms of quality. Students should be aware of this dual role and ensure that they present their progress clearly to their Committee, and request whatever input is required to have a clear plan of next steps. Please note that the **Master's students must complete the Supervisory Committee Report form accompanied by the Student Tracking Form. PhD students must complete the Supervisory Committee Report online. To initiate a PhD Supervisory Committee report online, please send an email to [rsgrad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca)** The paper copy of the supervisory committee report is only accepted at a Master's level and not at a PhD level.

Both the Supervisor and student should ensure that Supervisory Committee meetings take place and are officially recorded by completing a *Supervisory Committee Report* form, as well as a *Student Tracking Form*. Both of these forms are located on A2L under RS Graduate Resources. The ***Student Tracking Form*** is an ongoing record of whether students have met milestones and is meant to support the student in meeting milestones and to be reviewed by the Supervisory Committee to evaluate the extent to which students are progressing according to expected timelines.

The **original not a copy of the completed *Supervisory Committee Report* form**, accompanied by the *Student Tracking Form*, must be signed by the Assistant Dean (RS) and sent to the SGS after each meeting. Please submit the original report to the [RS Administrative Staff](#), who will forward the report to the SGS after confirmation of signatures. Students should keep a copy for their files and a copy will go in the student file.

On the report, each committee member must indicate whether the progress made by the student in course work and thesis research has been “excellent”, “satisfactory”, “marginal”, or “unsatisfactory”.

The supervisory committee evaluates the number, quality and timeliness (meeting milestones, substantive progress at each meeting) of the student's coursework and research activities when evaluating progress. **If a “marginal” or “unsatisfactory” grade is given by any one member, another committee meeting must be held within three (3) months to re-assess the student's progress.** The student must schedule a meeting with the Assistant Dean immediately. Contact [RS Administrative Staff](#) to book this meeting. The Assistant Dean (RS) may be invited to attend this meeting (as a non-voting member) at the invitation of either the student or the Supervisor. If an “unsatisfactory” or “marginal” rating is given by all committee members, the Supervisor will confer with the Assistant Dean (RS) and/or the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) to decide the course of action to take. **The student will normally be recommended to withdraw from the program if ratings are marginal or unsatisfactory at two (2) consecutive Supervisory Committee meetings.**



### **PhD Supervisory Committee Meeting Report**

For a PhD student, the Supervisory Committee Report is completed online. Paper copy of the committee report will not be accepted. The report must be initiated online by the [RS Administrative Staff](#). If a PhD student is planning to hold a committee meeting, an email must be sent to the [RS Administrative Staff](#) for the online report to be initiated. The student will receive an email of their initiated report. It is the student's responsibility to review the process of completing the PhD Supervisory Committee Report found on Avenue to Learn Student Resources. Questions regarding the process of completing an online supervisory committee report should be directed to the [RS Administrative Staff](#).

The student asks the Supervisor for permission to write the thesis. This request is considered formally at a Supervisory Committee meeting, usually after the student has summarized the research that he/she has done to meet the objectives for the thesis work. The committee must agree unanimously with the request. "Permission to write" indicates that the student has essentially completed the data collection for the research work. The permission is noted on the Supervisory Committee Report. Students should clarify if they will be asking for feedback on the entire thesis or components and clarify expectations of committee members about the nature and timing of feedback. Students must also ensure that a permission to defend form is completed when the thesis is completed and has been approved by their committee. This form can be found under RS resources in A2L.

#### **4. Supervisor's Absence**

If the Supervisor leaves the University temporarily, is on extended research leave, or is required by the University to perform other duties which prevent effective supervision, the Supervisor and the Assistant Dean (RS) must make formal arrangements for an interim Supervisor (usually another Supervisory Committee member) with approval of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS). An interim supervisor is typically a core faculty member from the School of Rehabilitation Science. Where no such person exists or is able to assume supervisory duties from the student's committee, the program may appoint an interim supervisor. The student, Supervisory Committee members and the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) will be notified in writing about the interim supervisor.

If the Supervisor leaves the University permanently, the Supervisor is expected to arrange, with the cooperation of the student, the Assistant Dean (RS) and Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS), to transfer the supervisory duties permanently to another member of graduate faculty. This is typically a School of Rehabilitation Science core faculty member who is a current Supervisory Committee member.

In the event of pending retirement, the Supervisor will nominate to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) a graduate faculty member who is willing to accept formal responsibility for the supervision of the student. Emeritus faculty may continue *de facto* supervision of their existing students. In special cases, for example early retirees, Emeritus faculty may be permitted to accept new students or supervise their MSc student who transfers to the PhD(RS) Program, but only after approval of an *Application*

for *Post-Retirement Supervision of a Graduate Student* by the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS), the Dean of FHS, and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

## 5. Appeal Procedures/Student Grievance

See [SGS Calendar, Section 6.3](#)

Generally, if a graduate student is having a disagreement with another person(s) to the extent that present or intended studies/research are upset or interrupted, the student should seek advice from the Supervisor. **If the conflict directly involves the Supervisor, and open discussion has not resolved the issue, the student should consult the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#).** In cases where there is conflict between student and Supervisor, a meeting of the Supervisory Committee may be called **by either the Supervisor, Assistant Dean (RS) or the student.** In such cases the Assistant Dean (RS) should be present. If no satisfactory resolution is gained by this process, the Assistant Dean (RS) and Supervisor may consult with the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) who will recommend an appropriate course of action.

## 6. Change of Supervisor

See [SGS Calendar, Section 2.7](#)

It is possible, with mutual agreement, to change supervisors or the membership of a Supervisory Committee before the filing of the *Education Plan*. Supervisors cannot tell students that they will discontinue their supervision. However, students who do not progress may be required to leave the program if the supervisory committee determines their progress is not satisfactory and the program recommends their withdrawal.

The supervisory relationship can be altered by mutual agreement if the student's research topic changes substantially, the relationship is not meeting the student's needs or there is a breakdown in the supervisor/student relationship that is unresolvable using the processes outlined above. A request in writing to change the supervisor may be made by the student to the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#) and to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) who considers the request and the recommendation from the program. If a student has concerns about their supervision within the program, she/he should consult the Assistant Dean (RS). Changes to supervisor should be noted on the next *Supervisory Committee Meeting* form. Changes to the Supervisory Committee (advisors) do not require this approval process and can be made by documenting the change on the next *Supervisory Committee Meeting* form.

The [RS Administrative Staff](#) must be notified of any changes in the composition of a student's supervisory committee. The failure to notify the [RS Administrative Staff](#) may result in incorrect listing of supervisory committee on MOSAIC.

## 7. Withdrawal from the Program

Students who wish to withdraw for personal reasons are required to submit a "Change in Status" form, which requires signatures from the Supervisor, the Associate Dean of SRS and the Associate Dean (FHS) Graduate Studies. The form is available on the SGS website at <https://graduate.mcmaster.ca/resources>.

## XII. MSc THESIS REQUIREMENTS AND DEFENCE

See [SGS Calendar, Section 3](#)



All students should consult the booklet, **GUIDE FOR THE PREPARATION OF MASTER'S AND DOCTORAL THESIS**, published by the SGS (GH 212). (See **Section 2.8** of the [SGS Calendar](#))

The thesis may be submitted in the traditional format or a “sandwich” format whereby the thesis is constructed around a number of manuscripts. The program encourages the manuscript format as it facilitates students’ success in publication and provides experience in the publication process expected of academics.

Many examples of successfully-defended thesis of this type are available for inspection in the Health Sciences Library and on MacSphere (digital database of completed thesis) <https://macsphere.mcmaster.ca/>. Students must seek approval from the Supervisory Committee for the chosen format. A copy of the detailed regulations regarding the use of the above format is available from the SGS office (GH 212) or may be obtained from the SGS website at <https://graduate.mcmaster.ca/masters-degree-thesis>. See **Appendix 9** of this handbook for the SRS Departmental Standards for the Manuscript Style Thesis.

The procedure for MSc thesis preparation is as follows:

1. The student asks the Supervisor for permission to write the thesis. This request is considered formally at a Supervisory Committee meeting, usually after the student has summarized the research that he/she has done to meet the objectives for the thesis work. The committee must agree unanimously with the request. **“Permission to write”** indicates that the student has essentially completed the data collection for the research work. **The permission is noted on the Supervisory Committee Report.** Students should clarify if they will be asking for feedback on the entire thesis or components and clarify expectations of committee members about the nature and timing of feedback.
2. A first complete draft of the thesis or thesis component should be submitted to the Supervisor for feedback and constructive comments. After revisions are completed and the Supervisor approves that the draft thesis is ready for committee review, a complete version is given to each Supervisory Committee member for his/her comments. The Supervisor/Committee may approve sections of the thesis, but must also see a complete version of the entire thesis for approval before the student can move forwards to the defence.
3. When suitable revisions have been made, the student submits a completed **MSc Thesis Approval to Defend** form available on A2L (RS Graduate Resources) to the [RS Administrative Staff](#) a minimum of four (4) weeks before the expected date of the defence. **Please note that all members of the Supervisory Committee must have approved the thesis by signing this form before the oral defense can be arranged.** The student then distributes a copy of the thesis to all examiners, including an External Examiner, at least three (3) weeks before the defense. The external examiner is selected by the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#), usually from a list of three (3) candidates suggested by the student and the Supervisor. **The external examiner must be a member of Graduate Faculty from McMaster University and should not have collaborated on a research project with the Supervisor within the last 6 years.**
4. **The Master’s thesis defense is organized by the [RS Administrative Staff](#).** The Examination Committee consists of four (4) graduate faculty members: The student’s Supervisor (attendance is mandatory but they can join remotely if necessary); two (2)

members of the student's Supervisory Committee; and an External Examiner. The names for an External Examiner are submitted on the Approval to Defend form, and will be reviewed by the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#). The [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#) will ask the [RS Administrative Staff](#) to contact the approved External Examiner and book the Chair. Students should not make contact with the External Examiner prior to their defence, with the exception of the requirement to submit the thesis to the External Examiner three (3) weeks prior to the defence.

5. The defense will be open to the FHS community. The Examination Chair will ask all persons except the Examination Committee to leave the room in order to discuss the format of the Examination and the responsibilities of the examiners. The Examination will consist of an oral presentation (15-20 minutes) of the thesis given by the student, followed by a series of questions asked by the members of the Examination Committee in turn. All examiners are expected to ask at least one (1) relevant question. Typically, two (2) rounds of questioning is conducted and the defense should be completed within two (2) hours.

At the end of the defense, the Examination Committee will consider their decision in a closed session. The Examination Chair does not normally have voting privileges. The majority rules in case of a split vote but if there is a "tie" then the Chair must vote to break the "tie". Please refer to the [SGS Calendar \(Section 3.3\)](#) for information on what will happen should there be two or more negative or abstaining votes, with at least one of these votes being from a member of the supervisory committee. The Examination Chair will then call the student into the room and convey the Committee's decision. When the student has made any corrections and revisions suggested by the examiners to the satisfaction of the Supervisor and Examination Committee, the student needs to follow the instructions on the SGS website to submit the final version (<https://graduate.mcmaster.ca/masters-degree-thesis>).

### **XIII. PhD THESIS REQUIREMENTS AND DEFENCE**

For PhD students, the thesis may either take the traditional form or a "sandwich" form (review Section XII on MSc Thesis of this handbook). For information, please see **Sections 2.8 and 4.4** of the [SGS Calendar](#).

See [Appendix 9](#) of this handbook for the **SRS Departmental Standards for the Manuscript Style Thesis**. See [Appendix 11](#) of this handbook for the **PhD Student Tracking Sheet**.

The student submits a completed **Thesis Approval to Defend** form available on A2L (RS Graduate Resources) to the RS Administrative Assistant a minimum of four (4) weeks before the expected date of the defence. Any questions regarding the process or coordination of the thesis defence can be directed to the RS Administrative Staff. [PhD Defence Process \(Expedited/Accelerated Defense Process\)](#)

Alternative to the classic process, a new accelerated PhD defence process has been introduced by the School of Graduate Studies in effort to provide a more agile process for students and supervisors. Please note that the classic process continues to be available for those who prefer to use it and can be invoked through the existing online system. However, point 11 applies regardless of which process is used. This new process is still being

programmed in the online system. However, it can be invoked manually by the following the steps below:

1. Student initiates the defence process in Mosaic
2. Supervisor indicates that they'd like to use the new defence process by e-mailing [gthesis@mcmaster.ca](mailto:gthesis@mcmaster.ca) and copying their Department Chair.
3. After consulting with the Supervisory Committee, the Primary Supervisor nominates a potential external examiner who is at arm's length from the student, committee, and department
4. The Examiner's name and affiliation is emailed to the Department Chair for approval. (This process will later be moved to an online website.)
5. When approved, the Primary Supervisor is notified via email by the Department Chair they may now invite the examiner.
6. Primary Supervisor invites examiner personally and asks her/him to participate in the defence and requests that the report be sent to Graduate Studies at least two weeks prior to the scheduled date of the defence. At this time, the external examiner is given the date and time of the defence which has already been confirmed by the Supervisory Committee and candidate. (Reports may only be sent to Graduate Studies. Examiners must not send their reports directly to the department or supervisory committee.)
7. Supervisor lets Graduate Studies know via email when an examiner accepts an invitation and informs Graduate Studies at [gthesis@mcmaster.ca](mailto:gthesis@mcmaster.ca) of the name of the examiner and their contact information.
8. Supervisor informs Graduate Studies at [gthesis@mcmaster.ca](mailto:gthesis@mcmaster.ca) of the date and time of the defence
9. If available, the supervisor provides the name of the defence Chair and the location of the defence to Graduate Studies. Ideally, chairs should come from outside the supervisor's department. If not available, Graduate Studies will assist the supervisor in securing a chair and room.
10. Graduate Studies sends the thesis and details to the examiner and waits for the report to be returned to [gthesis@mcmaster.ca](mailto:gthesis@mcmaster.ca)
11. When the examiner returns a report to Graduate Studies an Academic Services Officer will distribute it to the supervisory committee. External examiners may not provide their reports directly to the committee. Supervisors should share the External examiner's report with defending students at least two weeks before the defence date\*. Students are not to communicate with the external examiner for any reason prior to the defence.
12. Graduate Studies confirms the oral examination with the student and committee.
13. The student defends their thesis.

\* If the external examiner report cannot be shared with the student at least two weeks before defending for any reason, the student must be asked if they give their consent to proceed with the previously established defence date. In such cases, there should be an email from the student clearly confirming that even though they have not received the external examiner report one week before the defence date, they are still ok with proceeding with the original defence date. This consent e-mail should be forwarded to [gthesis@mcmaster.ca](mailto:gthesis@mcmaster.ca). If the student does not agree to proceed with the same date, a new defence date should be established at least one week from when the student received the external examiner report.

## **XIV. REVIEW OF ACADEMIC DECISIONS**

### **Review of Course Grades**

1. A student who wishes to question a grade received in a graduate course should request, **in writing**, a review of the grade by the Course Coordinator.
2. If not satisfied with this result, the student can request, **in writing**, a review of the grade by the Assistant Dean (RS). A written decision will be sent to the student.
3. If the student is not satisfied with this result, he/she can submit a Formal Inquiry request to the School of Graduate Studies as outlined in the *Student Appeal Procedures* available from the University Secretariat, Gilmour Hall, room 210.
4. The final level of appeal is to the Senate Board on Student Appeals or the appropriate Faculty Committee in cases involving substantive academic judgment.

### **Withdrawal on Academic Grounds**

A student who wishes to contest a recommendation by the SGS that he/she withdraw on academic grounds should follow the procedures to do so as outlined in the *Student Appeal Procedures*. The document outlining these procedures is available from the Senate Office.

### **XV. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY** **See SGS Calendar, Section 6.1**

Academic integrity is a serious issue and students are advised to become familiar with the expectations for proper conduct of their research, appropriate referencing and acknowledgment of the work of others, appropriate collaboration, plagiarism (including self-plagiarism), etc.

Students are responsible for maintaining academic integrity as outline in the SGS Calendar, Section 6.1. Included in that is research integrity, which the university holds a separate policy on that matter that can be viewed at <https://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

The RS Program wants to ensure that students are given opportunities to write with academic integrity, and to learn through this process. The Program will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. As such, the course folder for “assignments” will be pre-set to automatically provide an originality check using Turnitin.com. Students will be able to view the results of the originality check and will be allowed to submit more than one version of their paper if they wish (as long as all submissions are in advance of the due date). Note that only the final submission will be graded.

### **XVI. FEEDBACK AND EXIT INTERVIEWS**

The program regularly consults with students to understand their needs and experiences. One mechanism for trainee feedback is a monthly student meeting where students coordinate their concerns and liaise with the Assistant Dean (RS) to address issues. The RS Program also conducts surveys or focus groups on occasion. When the RS Program is being evaluated additional internal and external evaluations may be conducted. The

program values student feedback and endeavors to act upon issues raised. Student feedback has been valuable in the ongoing development of the program and resulted in changes in infrastructure, courses, comprehensive processes, etc.

Students leaving the RS graduate program may be asked to complete, or may request, an Exit Interview with the Assistant Dean (RS). The contents of the Exit Interview form are confidential and will be seen only by the Assistant Dean (RS). The purpose of this interview will be to obtain the graduate's perspective of strengths, gaps, and potential areas of development for the RS Program. The interview may also be used to collect information on the student's career plans and organize administrative tasks like returning program keys and documenting future contact information.

The RS Assistant Dean also meets with students on a monthly basis at a lunchtime meeting every second wed of the month (the same day as RS skills and Rounds). This is an opportunity for students to raise any general concerns they have and for the RS Dean to communicate any new developments within the university that may affect their training. Students are expected to attend these lunchtime sessions. The RS Assistant Dean also meets 4 times a year with the Dual Option students to ensure they are progressing within this training pathway.

## **APPENDIX 1: STUDENT RESOURCE CONTACTS**

### **Student Accessibility Services Information**

#### **STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES**

Student Accessibility Services offers various supports for students with disabilities. They work with full-time and part-time students. SAS provides or assists with academic and disability-related needs, including:

- Program Coordinator
- Learning Strategies
- Assistive Technologies
- Academic Accommodations for Courses
- Test and Exam Administration
- Note-taking Program
- SAS Events

For further information: <http://sas.mcmaster.ca/>

#### **STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE**

The Student Success Centre acts as a central resource for academic support providing services for students that will increase their confidence and improve their skills necessary for success at the university.

They offer support services in the areas of:

- Academic and life skills development
- Writing support services
- Education planning
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Tutoring services

For further information visit <http://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/>. The School of Graduate Studies offers Skills Training that help build your skills for success. For more information, please visit: <https://gs.mcmaster.ca/skills-opportunities/skills-training>

#### **STUDENT WELLNESS CENTRE**

The Student Wellness Centre provides a broad range of health services for graduate students. As per the GSA vote in April 2016, graduate students seeking counselling for the first time will not have access to counselling services, effective May 1, 2016.

For further information, visit <http://wellness.mcmaster.ca/>

## **APPENDIX 2: REFERENCE LETTER INFORMATION**

### **What information do my referees/sponsors need to write good reference letters?**

Letters of Support (LOS) are critical for training applications and are a common request. It requires substantial time to write a strong supporting letter. Letters that reflect this effort are more likely to help your case and distinguish you from other applicants. You can help your referees/sponsors write more engaging letters by giving each of them information that supports your application.

A cover note should include:

- Information on call and deadlines (including links); but **DO NOT** expect the person writing the letter to determine the agency priorities – make these clear so they can best position their information.
- A clear indication of when the letter is due, to whom it should be addressed, to whom it should be delivered and how it should be submitted.
- What unique perspective the letter should offer (since you may choose people for their different perspectives, make it clear if there are things you assume they are uniquely positioned to comment on). This will avoid “duplicate letters”.
- Your updated CV.
- What you would like emphasized in each letter.
- Any other **SPECIFIC** information (accomplishments, roles, skills) that is relevant, especially things not evident on your CV.
- Unofficial transcripts or summarize your academic record.
- A draft summary, if possible, of what your application will propose (OR offer to send when ready).
- Open and close your note with thanks and acknowledgement that the letter writer’s time is valuable and that this letter is important to your professional future.

When asking a person to write a letter for you, you should check what support they need to complete the task. Some people may ask you to draft sections, which ultimately they will revise but it might help them be more efficient.

If there is a hard copy Recommendation Form, make it easy for the letter writer to complete forms in a timely manner by completing the following:

- Applicant information typed in.
- Referee/Sponsor’s name, title, contact information (telephone, fax, address, etc.) typed, if you can.
- Addressed envelopes to send letters and forms directly to the appropriate contact.

**Please show respect for your referee/sponsor’s effort on your behalf by putting effort into your request.**



## **APPENDIX 3: MSC THESIS PROPOSAL – OPTIONAL OUTLINE FOR MANUSCRIPT STYLE THESIS**

### **MSc Thesis Proposal Components**

#### **My Research Focus**

Insert two-three (2-3) sentences describing the central theme of your work, *i.e.*, content area. This can be broad or narrow but describe what theme unites the work, if more than one (1) manuscript is developed.

#### **Key Background Knowledge**

Summarize the key background knowledge in this area which summarizes the key literature that informs the foundational work in your research area and the gaps you plan to address (maximum two (2) pages). If there are relevant systematic reviews, include a synopsis. This may include the key headings that will be used for a more detailed literature review that will become the introductory chapter in your thesis.

#### **Paper #1** (maximum one (1) page)

##### **Objectives:**

Insert 1-2 objectives that research will address.

##### **Methods:**

Specify basic methods that will be employed.

##### **Subjects/Recruitment Plan:**

Specify the type of subjects and how they will be obtained, if applicable.

##### **Test/Procedures:**

Specify the basic procedures that will be performed. Reference the reliability of approach, if possible.

##### **Analysis:**

State the basic analysis approach that will be used to answer objectives.

#### **Paper #2** (maximum one (1) page) **NOTE:** Some Master's thesis may only have one (1) manuscript)

##### **Objectives:**

Insert 1-2 objectives that research will address.

##### **Methods:**

Specify basic methods that will be employed.

##### **Subjects/Recruitment Plan:**

Specify the type of subjects and how they will be obtained, if applicable.

##### **Test/Procedures:**

Specify how the basic procedure will be performed. Reference the reliability of approach, if possible.

**Analysis:**

State the basic analysis approach that will be used to answer objectives.

**Timeline:**

Specify landmarks for completion of thesis elements. Include where applicable milestones like ethics submission, data collection start/completion, data analysis completed, and first draft submitted to Committee for each manuscript.

**References:**

Provide key references.

## APPENDIX 4: PhD THESIS PROPOSAL – OPTIONAL OUTLINE FOR MANUSCRIPT STYLE THESIS

### PhD Thesis Proposal Components

#### PhD Thesis Proposal Template: Manuscript Style Thesis

##### **My Research Focus**

Insert 2-3 sentences describing the central theme of your work, *i.e.*, content area. This can be broad or narrow but describe what theme or issue unites the four (4) papers listed below.

##### **Key Background Knowledge**

Summarize the key background knowledge in this area which summarizes the key literature that informs the foundational work in your research area and the gaps you plan to address. If there are relevant systematic reviews, include a synopsis. If a theoretical framework has been identified, explain how it will inform the thesis. This section might include key headings that will be used for a more detailed literature review that will become the introductory chapter in your thesis. This section can be completed with two (2) pages of content; or, in consultation with your Supervisor contain the more detailed literature review that will be closer to thesis-ready. Regardless of which option is undertaken, the introductory chapter of your thesis will need enhancement as the project evolves and the thesis is finalized. This section should end with a statement of how the thesis work will be divided into manuscripts (minimum of three (3)).

##### **Paper #1** (maximum one (1) page)

###### **Objectives:**

Insert 1-2 objectives that research will address.

###### **Methods:**

Specify anticipated methods that will be employed.

###### **Subjects/Recruitment Plan:**

Specify the type of subjects and how they will be obtained, if applicable.

###### **Test/Procedures:**

Specify the basic procedures that will be performed. Reference reliability of approach, if possible.

###### **Analysis:**

State the basic analysis approach that will be used to answer objectives.

##### **Paper #2** (maximum one (1) page)

###### **Objectives:**

Insert 1-2 objectives that research will address.

###### **Methods:**

Specify basic methods that will be employed.

###### **Subjects/Recruitment Plan:**

Specify the type of subjects and how they will be obtained, if applicable.

**Test/Procedures:**

Specify how the basic procedure will be performed. Reference the reliability of approach, if possible.

**Analysis:**

State the basic analysis approach that will be used to answer objectives.

**Paper #3** (maximum one (1) Page)

**Objectives:**

Insert 1-2 objectives that research will address.

**Methods:**

Specify basic methods that will be employed.

**Subjects/Recruitment Plan:**

Specify the type of subjects and how they will be obtained, if applicable.

**Test/Procedures:**

Specify how the basic procedure will be performed. Reference the reliability of approach, if possible.

**Analysis:**

State the basic analysis approach that will be used to answer objectives.

**Paper #4** (maximum one (1) page)

**Objectives:**

Insert 1-2 objectives that research will address.

**Methods:**

Specify basic methods that will be employed.

**Subjects/Recruitment Plan:**

Specify the type of subjects and how they will be obtained, if applicable.

**Test/Procedures:**

Specify how the basic procedure will be performed. Reference the reliability of approach, if possible.

**Analysis:**

State the basic analysis approach that will be used to answer objectives.

**Timeline:**

Specify landmarks for completion of thesis elements. Include where applicable milestones like ethics submission, data collection start/completion, data analysis completed, first draft submitted to Committee for each manuscript.

<b>Component</b>	<b>Ethics</b>	<b>Data Collection Start</b>	<b>Data Complete</b>	<b>Analysis Complete</b>	<b>Draft to Committee</b>	<b>Revision Returned by Committee</b>	<b>Revisions Complete</b>
<b>Chapter 1 - Lit Review</b>							
<b>Paper 1</b>							
<b>Paper 2</b>							
<b>Paper 3</b>							
<b>Paper 4</b>							
<b>Final Chapter</b>							

**References:**  
Provide key references.

## APPENDIX 5: COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION OVERVIEW

### OVERVIEW

All Ph.D. candidates at McMaster are expected to acquire, during the course of their studies, a comprehensive knowledge of the discipline or sub-discipline to which their field of research belongs. The Comprehensive Examination is designed to test students for this breadth of knowledge and the ability to integrate ideas.

Students are expected to successfully complete the Comprehensive Examination process by the timelines indicated below, starting from the date of admission to the PhD program.

	Submit Portfolio to Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee	Complete Comprehensive Oral Examination
Full Time Students	12 Months	20 Months
Part Time Students	20 Months	28 Months

The Comprehensive Examination process includes the submission and oral defence of a Portfolio as described below.

### PURPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

The purpose of the Comprehensive Examination is for students to gain competency and demonstrate a breadth of knowledge and skills that are required to fulfill future roles as Rehabilitation Scientists. Students are expected to demonstrate their competency in areas that extend beyond their thesis work, including the ability to:

- Critically appraise and synthesize concepts and research literature in areas that are distinct from their thesis topic.
- Produce written and oral communications that meet scientific standards for peer-reviewed publication and presentation.
- Produce a funding application that meets scientific standards for peer-reviewed grant funding.
- Develop effective strategies to move rehabilitation research into practice through knowledge translation or educational initiatives.

### CONTENT OF PORTFOLIO

The Portfolio must include the following scholarly materials:

1. **A Scholarly Paper Ready for Submission to a Peer Reviewed Journal:** This paper may consist of a theoretical/conceptual paper or a primary/secondary research study. The scholarly paper must demonstrate that the student has extended their knowledge base beyond their thesis work. **This paper must be distinct from the thesis with respect to content/topic area, (i.e. involving a distinct population, intervention and outcome(s), as applicable) and also utilize different methods.** Students will explain how their proposed paper is distinct from their thesis research in their comprehensive proposal. The standard that will be applied by the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee when approving the proposed work is that if a proposed paper could be a viable manuscript within the thesis, then it does not meet the independence requirements.
2. **An operating grant proposal** of 10-12 single-spaced pages ready for submission to an appropriate agency that conducts peer review. The research grant may request funding for

the thesis research, or may request operating funds for a different project. Personal awards do not fulfill this criterion. The grant should follow grant agency guidelines, but must include:

- A review of the literature and rationale for the study.
- A detailed description of the research questions, methods and analysis.
- A section that outlines a knowledge translation component for the research proposal
- The roles and qualifications of the research team.
- A budget explaining how funds will be used, including a justification.
- Key outcome measures as appendices.
- It may but does NOT need to include appendices like support letters, pilot data, publications etc.

## **DISTINCTION OF THE PORTFOLIO FROM OTHER ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTS**

The Comprehensive Proposal meets the learning needs of the student and supplements the knowledge and skills obtained through thesis research. **It is important that work presented for credit in the Comprehensive Portfolio does not duplicate work that has, or will provide academic credit including from previous academic endeavors, current thesis research or coursework.** Comprehensive components, including the scholarly paper, can extend or build on course assignments, but this distinction must be clarified in the portfolio. For example, enhancement and substantial revision of a course paper may be proposed for the comprehensive scholarly paper. The scholarly paper is the opportunity to extend beyond the thesis. The Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee adjudicates whether it is sufficiently distinct. A paper that uses a different target population, topic and methods from the student's thesis research would be considered sufficiently distinct. Where there is overlap on any of these, the student must explain the distinction between their scholarly paper and thesis research for this adjudication to be completed.

The grant proposal component may propose part, or all, of the thesis work, but must comply with the restrictions/format of the granting agency. To maintain consistency across examinations, students are required to submit a 10-12 page single-spaced grant application.

## **PORTFOLIO PROPOSAL PLANNING**

The Portfolio Proposal will be developed by the student in consultation with the Supervisory Committee. It is expected that students, with support and guidance from their Supervisor and Supervisory Committee, will begin working on the Portfolio upon admission to the program. Students should discuss their Comprehensive Plan with their Supervisory Committee within the first eight (8) months (full-time students) or fourteen (14) months (part-time students) in the program, usually at the first committee meeting. Students may work with a mentor other than their Supervisor or Supervisory Committee members during any of the elements of the comprehensive components. However, the comprehensive plan and how it will be mentored and completed must be discussed with the Supervisory Committee. If a mentor is recruited to help with a component of the Comprehensive work who is not appointed within RS, then the student must keep their Supervisor involved to ensure departmental standards are met.

Students are expected to obtain approval for their Comprehensive Portfolio Plan from the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee within the first **twelve (12) months** (full-time students) or **twenty (20) months** (part-time students) in the program. Students have up to six (6) months (full-time students) or eight (8) months (part-time students) to complete their comprehensive component if it is approved within the aforementioned timelines, but it is the final completion date that is considered the important milestone.



The Portfolio Plan **can be up to** eight (8) single-spaced pages (total length excluding references and appendices). Plans over eight (8) pages will be returned to students for editing. Students who submit brief proposals with insufficient detail will have their portfolio plans returned for further development. The plan **must include** the following:

- a. A brief overview of the intended doctoral thesis research (including chapter titles if known) and a brief summary of the three components of the proposed portfolio.
- b. A list of completed or ongoing courses including titles of the assignments.
- c. An explanation that addresses any potential overlap between proposed portfolio components and thesis or coursework.
- d. A description of each component of the proposed portfolio (Scholarly Paper and the Operating Grant Proposal). Suggested guidelines for each component description include:
  - **Topic:** Provide a title and list of the Purpose(s) or Research Question(s) that will be addressed by the component.
  - **Learning Objective:** A brief description of expected learning outcomes.
  - **Plan:** A description of the proposed approach/methods.
  - **Outcomes:** State the product to be delivered when the task is completed.
    - For the scholarly paper this will require identification of a target Journal.
    - For the grant application the target agency, type of funding call, and research design/approach, and knowledge translation plan will need to be specified.
  - **Feasibility issues:** Potential feasibility concerns that might be barriers to successful, timely completion of the comprehensive portfolio and management of these concerns should be briefly addressed.

Required appendices:

- For the paper: A copy of the target journal's instruction to authors.
- For the grant: The posted grant call and grant guidelines.

### **Portfolio Plan Submission Process**

After receiving feedback from their Supervisory Committee, the student submits their Portfolio Plan to the Chair of the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee. The Oversight Committee meets on a monthly basis and will review Portfolio Plans received within two (2) weeks of the next scheduled meeting. Portfolios received less than two (2) weeks prior to the next scheduled meeting will be held for review at the following month's meeting. Students therefore need to allow for 2-6 weeks before receiving feedback from the Oversight Committee. The Portfolio Plan is reviewed by the Oversight Committee to ensure that the content is complete and congruent with the comprehensive examination requirements. Portfolio Plans that fail to follow the guidelines will be returned for proper formatting.

### **Committee Responsibilities Related to the Proposal Development**

The student's Supervisor and Supervisory Committee are responsible for facilitating the student's development of their Portfolio Plan. The Supervisory Committee provides feedback to the student during completion of the tasks and may facilitate additional mentorship on

specific tasks, if needed.

The Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee has the main responsibility for ensuring the work proposed and conducted complies with program and university policies around the comprehensive process. The Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee reviews the proposed scope of work and provides feedback to the student about whether they have defined an appropriate scope of work that meets the expected requirements of the comprehensive examination. The Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee makes decisions about the two (2) criteria listed below. If these two (2) criteria are not met, the student will be required to submit a revised plan.

1. The scope of the work proposed is consistent with objectives of the Comprehensive Process to demonstrate breadth of knowledge and skills.
  - a. The tasks outlined are distinct from other work for which the student is receiving academic credit.
  - b. The scholarly paper topic is distinct from the thesis.
2. There are no apparent critical flaws in the proposed work (e.g., ethical violations).

The Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee does not judge whether optimal methods have been selected based on the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee may make suggestions with respect to feasibility or quality in an advisory capacity. If these are provided, students may choose to submit a revised Comprehensive Portfolio Plan since this document outlines the expectations of what must be completed for the Comprehensive Examination. Where a revised portfolio is submitted, it is reviewed by the Chair of the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee who will finalize the revised proposal. The final approved Comprehensive Portfolio Plan contains the tasks that the student must complete and defend at the comprehensive examination.

### **Student Responsibilities in Completion of the Comprehensive Portfolio**

The Student is responsible for:

- Adhering to this and all other McMaster policies; and consulting procedural supporting documents in the RS Graduate Handbook.
- Developing a Comprehensive Plan and obtaining Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee approval by twelve (12) months (full-time students) or twenty (20) months (part-time students).
- Conducting independent work and seeking feedback during task completion.
- Notifying the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee if a need arises for substantive changes to the approved plan
  - It is anticipated that as the work is executed decisions will need to be made to refine the work, or accommodate for unexpected occurrences (like difficulty with recruitment, data issues, equipment failures, etc.). These do not require contact with the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee, but can be explained when writing the portfolio. Major changes, such as changing the topic of a component or substantial changes in the scope of work, do require an updated approval from the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee.
- Maintaining regular communication with their supervisory committee on progress of the approved tasks including at least one committee meeting to discuss the comprehensive components; and providing draft documents to the committee and/or mentors for feedback.
- Completion of the tasks on time and as approved.
- Providing a final complete version of the Comprehensive Portfolio to their Supervisory Committee.

- Submitting a completed portfolio to the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee according to criteria described in this policy.
- Defending the Comprehensive Portfolio on time.

### **Approval Process of the Completed Portfolio for Examination**

It is expected that at least two (2) members of the Supervisory Committee will provide feedback on each component of the Comprehensive Portfolio as they are developed.

Timeline of events after the Supervisory Committee has reviewed the student's completed Comprehensive Portfolio:

#### **Step 1**

After receiving feedback from their Supervisory Committee, the student submits their completed Portfolio to the Chair of the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee (CEOC). The completed Portfolio is reviewed by the Chair of the Oversight Committee (within 2 weeks) to ensure that the content is complete and congruent with the plan submitted and grants approval to move forward with the defence. Portfolios that fail to follow the guidelines will be returned for proper formatting. Students are required to submit a one-page description of deviations from the initial plan. The CEOC provides feedback on plans up to two (2) weeks after the meeting is held. The student will receive the feedback by email from the Chair of the CEOC. The student is expected to discuss the received feedback with their supervisor.

#### **Step 2**

When the student is ready for examination (within the timelines outlined), they will, in consultation with their Supervisor and Supervisory Committee members, prepare the *Approval to Submit Portfolio* form (available on AvenueToLearn). The student will submit a version of completed Portfolio, along with the *Checklist for Approval of Completed Portfolio* and signed *Approval to Submit Portfolio* form by email to the Chair of the CEOC and CC the Supervisor and [RS Administrative Staff](#). The form must include possible dates for the examination and 3 potential External Examiners. The recommended timeframe: 18 months from the time you start the program.

*The External Examiner is expected to have knowledge about RS and be independent from the work being conducted by the student. They can be drawn from faculty within the SRS or external to it, as long as they are independent from the student and the Supervisor. Specifically, the proposed External Examiners should not have collaborated on a research project with the Supervisor within the last 6 years.*

*The proposed dates should be held by the student's Supervisory Committee including their Supervisor.*

#### **Step 3**

The Chair of the Oversight Committee (CEOC) will confirm eligibility of the proposed External Examiners and ask the [RS Administrative Staff](#) to confirm their availability. The [RS](#)

Administrative Staff confirms the availability of the external, committee members, and arranges a chair for the exam. The room to hold the examination is booked by the RS Administrative Staff. Confirmation of the Comprehensive Exam will be forwarded to the Supervisor, Chair of the CEOC, student, Supervisory Committee, and the external examiner by the RS Administrative Staff.

*The Chair must be a current member of the CEOC. In the event a current CEOC member is unavailable, former members will be contacted.*

#### Step 4

Once the Examination Committee has been determined, the RS Administrative Staff will email the Comprehensive Examination Process Document (Appendix 6 in the RS Graduate Program Handbook) to the Examination Committee and confirm the logistics of the examination (date, time, location). The CEC will consist of:

- Two (2) members from the student's Supervisory Committee
- A Chair (selected from the Comprehensive Exam Oversight Committee)
- An External Examiner

*The student's Supervisor will attend the exam but does not vote*

The student provides all members of the Examination Committee and the RS Administrative Staff with a copy of the Portfolio a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to the examination date.

- The approved Comprehensive Plan including the appendices
- A description of deviations from the original Comprehensive Plan - with an explanation for the change (one (1) page maximum)
- A one (1) page reflective summary on how the comprehensive tasks contributed to their development as a Rehabilitation Scientist/Educator; and, if indicated, next steps in development.
- Curriculum vitae

**NOTE:** Blackout dates for examination include the month of August, and two (2) weeks before the December break. The comprehensive examination oversight committee (CEOC) meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month, except for the month of August.

#### **THE COMPREHENSIVE PORTFOLIO EXAMINATION PROCESS**

The Comprehensive Examination is an open defence. The presentation is open to observers; but only the Examination Committee can ask questions. The deliberations of the Examination Committee will be confidential (the Thesis Supervisor and the Assistant Dean are invited to attend the deliberations). The feedback to the candidate will be performed by the examiners with only the candidate, the candidate's Thesis Supervisor, the Assistant Dean of Rehabilitation Science, and the Examination Committee present.

The examination should be completed within two (2) hours. The student will outline the content of the two (2) components of the Portfolio in an oral presentation, and indicate how these projects have contributed to his or her development as a Rehabilitation Scientist. In addition,

the student will describe the potential impact of their work on rehabilitation practice/policy/research.

The presentation will be 15 - 20 minutes (students will be stopped by the Chair after 20 minutes). Following the presentation, the student will respond to questions from the three (3) examiners. The Comprehensive Examination Committee will consist of two (2) members from the student's Supervisory Committee, a member from the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee (who Chairs the examination), and an External Examiner. The External Examiner is expected to have knowledge about RS and be independent from the work being conducted by the student. This examiner may be drawn from faculty within the School of Rehabilitation Science (SRS) or external to it, **as long as they are independent from the Supervisor and the student being examined.** Specifically, the proposed External Examiners should not have collaborated on a research project with the Supervisor within the last 5 years. Examiners will evaluate the student on the criteria outlined below. The Thesis Supervisor will not be a member of the Examination Committee but can attend as a silent observer. This will allow the Supervisor to provide appropriate feedback to the student about their performance and future development.

After the examiners complete their questioning and the student and audience have left the room, members of the Examination Committee (except for the Chair) will vote on the performance of the student. The Examination Committee will vote on the written portfolio, the presentation skills, and the oral defense. Both of the two (2) components of the portfolio are equally important in evaluation. If the Portfolio and its defence are considered acceptable to all of the Committee members, the student will receive a "pass". To pass, no negative vote is permitted. If all Committee members agree that the two (2) of the components are "excellent" then the Committee can assign an excellent overall rating to the Comprehensive Examination. Excellent quality for each written component is judged based on standards for a publishable manuscript, and a fundable grant application. An excellent examination rating refers both to the quality of the submitted written work and how it was defended. If the result of the examination is a "fail" (if any members vote "fail"), then the Comprehensive Examination Committee must define whether the written or oral components were unsatisfactory for each of the two (2) components of the portfolio.

The student must be given a second opportunity to take either the entire examination, or those portions on which the failure occurred. The Examination Committee will determine the requirements for the second opportunity including which written components must be re-submitted and which components must be orally defended. The second Comprehensive Examination will preferably be conducted with the same Examination Committee. The same procedures are followed in a repeat examination, with the exception that proceedings are not open and the student only presents or responds to areas identified by the Examination Committee. Only the student, the Supervisor, the Assistant Dean of RS (or the assigned alternate if a conflict arises) and the Examiners are present for the 2<sup>nd</sup> examination. The second examination is decided as a pass/fail based on majority vote. **The repeat examination must be completed within two (2) months.**

Students are provided with feedback from the Examination Committee at the completion of the examination. Usually this will take place by each member of the Committee providing verbal feedback to the student at the end of the defence. The student's Supervisor may take notes to ensure that they are able to clarify or reinforce the feedback with the student at a later date. **Supervisors do not respond to the feedback provided during the examination or advocate for the student.**

## Criteria for Evaluation of the Examination

The purpose of the Comprehensive Examination is for students to demonstrate their ability to synthesize, integrate and apply information. The following are criteria students are expected to demonstrate in their portfolio and/or its oral examination:

- a. The Portfolio document is well-written and organized.
- b. The Portfolio content is of appropriate depth and breadth for the doctoral level and demonstrates the student's advancing knowledge of the chosen topics.
- c. The student is able to critically appraise the literature, synthesize and integrate information, interpret concepts and theories and apply these to their work.
- d. The student can pose a sound research question and design methods to answer it; recognize limitations; and defend his/her decisions.
- e. The student understands knowledge translation and/or educational theory and is able to apply these.
- f. The student is effective with written and oral scientific communication.
- g. The student conveys an understanding of how their work fits within the field of RS.

The Comprehensive Examination is evaluated in three different criteria: Written, Presentation, and Response.

### Pass/Fail Criteria

Written	Presentation	Response
The manuscript should only move forward once the external examiner considers it to be satisfactory.	Organized/Engaging, Clear, Highlighting and Describing Key Research	80 % of Questions must be addressed. Most questions addressed with breadth, depth and understanding.

### Pass with Distinction

Written	Presentation	Response
Publishable research Manuscript and Fundable Grant.	Organized, Engaging Clear, Highlighting and Describing Key Research, Well Articulated.	All Questions addressed. Student should be able to interpret, apply and clearly respond with breadth, depth and understanding.

## **APPENDIX 6: INFORMATION FOR COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINERS**

### **School of Rehabilitation Science (SRS): Information for Comprehensive Examiners**

The SRS appreciates your contribution to the Comprehensive Examination of our trainee. This is an important step in achieving the learning goals of the candidate and an important milestone in our program.

The philosophy of our Comprehensive Portfolio/Examination is to provide trainees with an opportunity to achieve learning goals that complement those acquired during their thesis research and extend their knowledge, methods and skills with an emphasis on the type of academic productivity expected of Rehabilitation Scientists. The Comprehensive Portfolio is based on two specific tasks that must be completed and then defended orally. The two (2) components include: a paper written in the format and quality expected for scientific publication and a grant proposal written in the format and quality expected for submission to a funding agency;

There are four (4) examiners who adjudicate this defence. Two (2) examiners are selected from the student's Advisory Committee, one is from the Comprehensive Oversight Committee and the other is an external examiner. External examiners are recommended to the Comprehensive Oversight Committee by the student's Supervisory Committee based on their knowledge and experience and its relevance to the candidate's work. The Comprehensive Oversight Committee uses these recommendations to select a candidate who can fulfill the duty at the designated period of time. The candidate will be examined on all Comprehensive Portfolio components during an oral exam. The Comprehensive components are completed by the student during the first half of the program and are required for successful progression through the program. The candidate is expected to continue with his/her thesis research during this time, but may not have a fully developed thesis research plan at the time the Comprehensive Portfolio is defended. Comprehensive examiners are encouraged to consider that the student is in the midst of their training (may not have finalized their thesis plan) when formulating their questions and when adjudicating the student responses.

Examiners should be aware that the topics of study chosen by the candidate and approved by the student's Supervisory Committee and the Comprehensive Oversight Committee are expected to extend knowledge and experience beyond the thesis research. The examiners are not expected to evaluate whether these questions/tasks were appropriate since they have been approved by both committees. However, examiners can make judgments about whether the student adequately conducted the work, understands its implications and limitations; and, can appropriately explain and defend the choices made.

The process for the oral examination is modeled after a thesis defence. Full attendance of all examiners is required for the oral examination. Attendance can be in person, or by conferencing (electronic or telephone) if necessary. There will be an appointed Chair of the Comprehensive Examination who will be selected from the Comprehensive Oversight Committee. The Chair of the Comprehensive Examination Committee is usually the person designated to oversee the organization of the Comprehensive Examination, with administrative support. The Chair also chairs the Oral Comprehensive Examination. Typically, there will be two rounds of questions, with the second round being shorter than the first. The candidate is expected to demonstrate expertise in the selected topics and discuss/debate the topics with a level of depth and breadth that are consistent with their background and training. After the



questioning is complete, the candidate will leave the room and the examiners will be asked to provide comments and vote for a pass, fail, or pass with distinction.

The following is information taken from the *Comprehensive Portfolio Policy* approved by SGS for the RS Graduate Program and provides information on the expectations about the examination.

1. The Portfolio will be presented and defended in an open-door meeting.
  - a. The student will outline the content of the two (2) components of the Portfolio, and indicate how these projects have contributed to his or her development as a Rehabilitation Scientist (15-20 minute presentation). In addition, the student will describe the potential impact of their work on rehabilitation practice/policy/research.
  - b. The Comprehensive Examination Committee will consist of two (2) members from the student's Supervisory Committee, a member from the Oversight Committee, and an External Examiner (a content expert or specialist that is external to the student's supervisory committee). Examiners will evaluate the student on the criteria outlined below (see '**Criteria for Evaluation of the Defence**').
  - c. The Supervisor will not be a member of the Comprehensive Examination Committee, but will be encouraged to attend the oral defence.
2. The Chair of the Comprehensive Examination Committee will be the representative from the Oversight Committee.

All members of the Comprehensive Examination Committee (excluding the Chair) will vote on the performance of the student. The Examination Committee will vote on the written portfolio, the presentation skills, and the oral defense (see '**Criteria for Evaluation of the Defence**'). If the Portfolio and its defence are considered acceptable to all of the Committee members, the student will receive a "pass". To pass, no negative vote is permitted and abstentions are not allowed. If all Committee members are in agreement, the outcome could also be a "pass with distinction". A "pass with distinction" should be considered if all components are considered to be of excellent quality (a publishable manuscript, and a fundable grant application).

If the result of the examination is "fail" (any of members vote "fail"), then the Examining Committee must define whether the written or oral components were unsatisfactory for each of the two (2) components of the portfolio. The student must be given a second opportunity to take either the entire examination, or those portions on which the failure occurred. The Comprehensive Examination Committee will determine the requirements for the second opportunity (e.g., Written components to be re-submitted; components to be orally defended) and, conduct the second Comprehensive Examination; preferably with same examining Committee. The repeat examination **should occur within two (2) months**. On the repeat examination, the Committee should make every effort to achieve consensus on the final pass/fail decision. If the Committee cannot agree, the Assistant Dean of RS adjudicates the final decision. This may require that the decision be delayed until the Assistant Dean is able to pursue additional investigation and discuss issues with committee members independently.

11. The student will be provided with feedback from the Comprehensive Examination Committee at the completion of the examination. The student's Supervisor will be invited to attend the feedback session.

## Criteria for Evaluation of the Defence

The purpose of the Comprehensive Examination is for students to demonstrate their ability to synthesize, integrate and apply information. The following are criteria they are expected to meet through the submission of the Portfolio and/or its oral defence:

- a. The Portfolio document is well-written and organized with appropriate development and defence of ideas and actions.
- b. The Portfolio content is of appropriate depth and breadth for the doctoral level and demonstrates the student's advancing knowledge of the chosen topics.
- c. The student will demonstrate advanced knowledge of research methods, particularly those relevant to the components of the exam.
- d. The student is able to critically appraise the literature and synthesize and integrate information, concepts and theories, and apply these to critical thinking in their field.
- e. The student can pose a sound research question and design a study appropriate to answer it; recognize limitations; and, defend his/her decisions.
- f. The student understands knowledge translation and is able to develop a sound knowledge translation plan.
- g. The student effectively communicates verbally.
- h. The student can plan and present information appropriately for the chosen audience.
- i. The student conveys an understanding of how their work fits within the field of RS.

The Comprehensive Examination is evaluated in three different criteria: Written, Presentation, and Response.

### Pass/Fail Criteria

Written	Presentation	Response
The manuscript should only move forward once the external examiner considers it to be satisfactory.	Organized/Engaging, Clear, Highlighting and Describing Key Research	80 % of Questions must be addressed. Most questions addressed with breadth, depth and understanding.

### Pass with Distinction

Written	Presentation	Response
Publishable research Manuscript and Fundable Grant.	Organized, Engaging Clear, Highlighting and Describing Key Research, Well Articulated.	All Questions addressed. Student should be able to interpret, apply and clearly respond with breadth, depth and understanding.

Please feel free to contact either the Assistant Dean of RS or the Chair of the Comprehensive Oversight Committee for further information.

Thank you for this important contribution to training Rehabilitation Scientists at McMaster University.

**APPENDIX 7: AN EXAMPLE TEMPLATE FOR MSc (RS) STUDENTS TO RECORD THE ELEMENTS OF THEIR MSc (RS) TRAINING PLAN**

**RS GRADUATE PROGRAM: Overview of MSc Training Program**

**Candidate:**  
**Student's Name**

**Program Start Date:**  
**Target Completion**

**Date:**  
**Supervisory Committee:**

A minimum annual meeting with the Supervisory Committee is required; the SRS Calendar recommends that a student hold a Supervisory Committee meeting every six (6) months.

Timeline for Key Milestones		Achieved
TASK	DATE	
Entry to Program	September, 2019	
Program Plan (courses, thesis)		
Supervisory Committee Meeting: Approval of Study Plan		
Required Courses Complete		
Thesis Component 1		
Thesis Component 2		
Thesis Written		
Thesis Defence		

**MSc Thesis Program:**

**Overview of thesis plan:**

**Guide to preparation of thesis:**

<https://graduate.mcmaster.ca/masters-degree-thesis>

THESIS THEME		
Title of Projects/Manuscripts	Study Design/Content	Status
1.		
2.		

Methods/Content Development Plan		
Method/Skill	Formal (Courses)	Experiential/Informal

TA/Educator Role Plan		
Skill/Experience	Formal (Course)	Experiential/TA/Informal

**Funding Status**

Full-time

Part-time

**Plan:**

Set

Continuing to pursue

Not need or Eligible

<b>FUNDING</b>			
<b>Source</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Years</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>External funding Agency</b>			
<b>Internal - TA</b>			
<b>Internal - Other</b>			
<b>Supervisor</b>			
<b>Other</b>			

**NOTE: PROGRAM DEADLINES**

Committee Meetings  
 Program Expected Milestones

<b>BRIEF PROGRESS UPDATES</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Current Focus</b>	<b>Status/Progress</b>

<b>TA/Educator Role Plan</b>		
<b>Skill/Experience</b>	<b>Formal (Course)</b>	<b>Experiential/TA/Informal</b>

## APPENDIX 8: AN EXAMPLE TEMPLATE FOR STUDENTS TO RECORD THE ELEMENTS OF THEIR PhD (RS) TRAINING PLAN

### RS Graduate Program: Overview of PhD Training Program

**Candidate:**  
**Student's Name**

**Program Start Date:**  
**Target Completion Date:**

**Supervisory Committee:**

A minimum annual meeting with the Supervisory Committee is required; the SRS Calendar recommends that a student hold a Supervisory Committee meeting every six (6) months.

Timeline for Key Milestones		Achieved
TASK	DATE	
Entry to Program	September, 19	
Funding Application Plan	September, 19	
Program Plan (courses, thesis, and comps)		
Comps Proposal submitted to Supervisor	January, 20	
Supervisory Committee Meeting: Approval of Study Plan		
Comps Committee Approval		
Comps Defence		
Required Courses Complete		
Thesis Component 1		
Thesis Component 2		
Thesis Component 3		
Thesis Component 4		
Thesis Written		
Thesis Defence		

## OVERVIEW OF THESIS PLAN:

Guide to preparation of thesis:

<https://graduate.mcmaster.ca/doctoral-degree>

THESIS THEME		
Title of Projects/Manuscripts	Study Design/Content	Status
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

PROPOSED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN		
TITLE	Study Design/Content	Status
1. Manuscript		
2. Grant		

Methods/Content Development Plan		
Method/Skill	Formal (Courses)	Experiential/Informal



TA/Educator Role Plan		
Skill/Experience	Formal (Course)	Experiential/TA/Informal

Funding Status:       Full-time                       Part-time

Plan:                       Set                       Continuing to pursue       Abandoned/Ineligible

FUNDING			
Source	Amount	Years	Status
External funding Agency			
Internal - TA			
Internal - Other			
Supervisor			
Other			

BRIEF PROGRESS UPDATES		
Date	Current Focus	Status/Progress

## APPENDIX 9: SRS DEPARTMENTAL STANDARDS FOR THE MANUSCRIPT STYLE THESIS

The specific standards for the formatting and content of the manuscript must comply with the University guidelines for thesis preparation and are not described here but in a separate document: <https://gs.mcmaster.ca/resources/guide-preparation-masters-and-doctoral-theses>.

University guidelines supersede department guidelines. For the School of Rehabilitation Science, the following standards have been established to provide guidance and consistency for students preparing a manuscript style thesis:

1. **Choice of Manuscript Style:** Trainees should have an early discussion with their Supervisor and then Advisory Committee about their intentions with respect to thesis style. A manuscript format is often the preferred choice in terms of facilitating future publication of the research work. However, the choice of traditional or manuscript style remains a trainee/committee decision. Students selecting the manuscript format should have early discussions about how the proposed thesis research will be divided into specific manuscripts. It can be useful to document this intention early in the training plan. Students (with committee approval) are free to change the specific manuscripts or thesis style at any stage of thesis development, irrespective of what was initially planned or proposed. The specific manuscripts often change/evolve over the course of the training, but this in itself is part of the training process.
2. **Co-authorship:** A statement of co-authorship is mandatory for thesis manuscripts.
  - a. It is common for thesis manuscripts to have multiple authors. Authorship should be discussed at the first thesis committee meeting, and revisited as the thesis evolves. The statement of authorship must outline the contributions to each manuscript by the candidate and any co-authors. Drafting this statement early in the work to define expectations and revise it as the manuscripts evolve may avoid differences in expectations.
  - b. Advisory Committee members are usually expected to make sufficient contributions to the candidate's project to warrant authorship. However, authorship of Advisory Committee members must comply with existing criteria for scientific authorship and is not automatic. Authorship of Advisory Committee members may vary across manuscripts, depending upon their relative contribution.

### **The International Committee of Medical Editors Criteria for authorship**

(<http://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/defining-the-role-of-authors-and-contributors.html>)

- *Authorship credit should be based on: 1) substantial contributions to conception and design, acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data; 2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and, 3) final approval of the version to be published. Authors should meet conditions 1, 2, and 3.*
- *Acquisition of funding, collection of data, or general supervision of the research group alone does not constitute authorship.*
- *All persons designated as authors should qualify for authorship, and all those who qualify should be listed.*
- *Each author should have participated sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for appropriate portions of the content.*

- c. In certain circumstances, authors who have made substantial contributions to an individual manuscript and who are not part of the thesis community may be included as authors.
- d. In the case of a Master's thesis, the primary author on at least one manuscript must be the candidate, and not a supervisor or other person. In the case of a PhD thesis, there is an expectation that the candidate will be the primary author on all manuscripts-although exceptions may apply as long as the majority of manuscripts in the thesis have the candidate as the first author. In general, the order of authorship in the thesis should be consistent with that for submission to the scientific journal. In exceptional cases, where students fail to submit the work for publication after their thesis defence (providing a reasonable window of time, i.e., six months or longer), then authorship may need to be reordered to consider the contributions to the submitted manuscript.
- e. Manuscripts on which the supervisor or another person is first author may be included in the thesis in exceptional circumstances (e.g. a large complex project on which the supervisor had a primary role and the candidate had a major role). However, the candidate is expected to have made a substantial contribution to each manuscript included. This contribution must be outlined in the "Co-authorship" statement, and this statement must be reviewed and approved by the primary supervisor prior to defence.
- f. Before a manuscript is included in the thesis or submitted for publication, each author listed on the manuscript must approve the submitted version of the manuscript.

### **Thesis Format/Content**

1. **General Introduction/Literature review:** The thesis introduction provides a general introduction to the thesis topic and structure. It also outlines key background knowledge that is fundamental to the overall thesis topic and could not be adequately covered in traditional manuscript introductions. This overview is meant to be a concise and relevant synopsis of the current knowledge foundation to the thesis work at the time that the thesis was developed.
2. **Manuscripts:** Thesis manuscripts may include theoretical, methodological, or empirical papers (qualitative/quantitative research). Brief technical notes are not included in the main thesis, but may exist as supplemental appendices. The number of manuscripts included in this thesis format and their length/breadth is left to the discretion of the candidate and their committee. A common practice is for a Master's thesis to contain 1-2 manuscripts and 3-4 for a PhD; although, the key guiding principle about thesis content relates to the scope and depth of work performed, not the number of manuscripts. Candidates must ensure that the overall thesis complies with the requirements/expectations of the degree.
  - a. Students need to have at least one paper from their thesis published or accepted for publication in a peer reviewed journal prior to their thesis defense.
  - b. The format and quality of manuscripts for the thesis must be considered consistent with publication in a scientific journal.
  - c. Submission/publication of one or more of the manuscripts should be written exactly in the form for submission to a peer-review journal (including references), even if that style varies from chapter to chapter. Each manuscript chapter must start with a cover page that provides the title of the manuscript, a list of authors, and information about where the manuscript is to be sent for publication.
  - d. Additional/supplementary Methods and Results that are not covered in the manuscripts, but are important to the overall thesis presentation, may be added in an Appendix.

3. **Thesis Discussion:** The final chapter consists of a summarizing thesis discussion. It should briefly highlight the main findings of the full thesis, but not repeat material in the manuscript chapters. The intention of the thesis discussion is to integrate information and findings across the individual manuscripts – not to reiterate individual study discussion. This chapter should address how the entire thesis advances knowledge, theory or methods. A discussion of strengths and limitations of the overall thesis should be provided; again, not reiterating the limitations cited for individual studies but a higher level discussion of the strengths and limitations of the overall approach/scope of the research. Brief sections should also highlight Overall Conclusions, Implications for Practice and/or Policy, Recommendations for Implementation and Recommendations for Future Research. These sections should attempt to be concise, but specific, and, relate directly to the findings of the thesis.
4. **Standards for Examination:** The thesis will be examined according to the traditional standards of the department. The defence will include an overall assessment of whether the thesis document is a coherent piece of work. Theses written in the manuscript form will be subject to the policies of the Graduate Student upon examination. The manuscripts contained in the thesis will not be examined based upon a peer-review standard. This means that every individual manuscript in the thesis may not need to achieve publishable quality in order for the thesis to obtain a pass rating. Similarly, the outcome of the thesis defence will not be influenced by a journal's decision to accept or reject the manuscript(s) for publication.

## APPENDIX 10: MSc (RS) STUDENT TRACKING FORM

### Rehabilitation Science Graduate Program– MSc Student Progress Tracking Form

*This form is to be completed (or updated) by the student prior to his/her Supervisory Committee meeting and reviewed at the meeting. The student must submit this form with each Committee Report to the RS Administrative Staff.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ McMaster Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Status: FT  or PT  Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Enrollment Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ Program Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
MM YYYY MM YYYY

Activity	Document/Form Required All documents are located on A2L (RS Graduate Student Resources)	Recommended Timing (Note completion date)		Comments (note exceptions or planned next steps)
		Full-time <i>(Insert dates below)</i>	Part-time <i>(Insert dates below)</i>	
<b>Education Plan</b>		3 months (e.g., Nov 30)	6 months (e.g., Feb 28)	
<b>COURSES COMPLETED</b> (indicate course number):		Suggested 12 months	Suggested 20 months	
• REHAB 700 (Theory, if required)				
• Approved Research Methods				
• Approved Data Analysis				
• An additional approved course				
Completion of Course Requirements form handed in to <b>RS Administrative Staff</b>				
<b>SGS 101</b>		3 months (e.g., Nov 30)	6 months (e.g., Feb 28)	
<b>SGS 201</b>		3 months (e.g., Nov 30)	6 months (e.g., Feb 28)	
<b>Regular Research Rounds attendance</b>				
<b>Regular RS Skills attendance</b>				
<b>Regular Senior Student Seminar attendance</b>				
<b>*First Committee Meeting</b> (Assistant Dean (RS) must attend the 1 <sup>st</sup> meeting). Committee approves area of research and training plans.		6 months (e.g., Feb 28)	9 months (e.g., May 30)	
<b>Permission to collect data</b>				
<b>Permission to write thesis</b>				
<b>*Supervisory Committee Meeting</b>		Year 2	Year 2	
<b>Permission to write thesis</b>		18-20 months (e.g., Feb 28 – Apr 30)	24 months (e.g., Aug 31)	
<b>Permission to defend thesis</b>		21-22 months (e.g., May 31 – June 30)	26 months (e.g., Oct 31)	
<b>Thesis Defence</b>		23-24 months (e.g., July 30 – Aug 31)	28–32 months (e.g., Dec 31 – Apr 30)	
Other				

\*Committee Meetings are recommended every six (6) months but must be held **at least yearly**, i.e., one every academic year (September to August). All Committee Meeting Reports must be submitted to the [RS Administrative Staff](#).

***Action Items to be completed by Next Meeting:***

**OTHER PROGRAM ACTIVITIES/ACHIEVEMENTS:**

Scholarships/Training Support Received	Agency	Start Date	End Date	\$ per year

LOA Details	Start Date	End Date	Date Form Rec'd	Date Returned

Research Grants Received	Agency	Start Date	End Date	\$ per year

<b>List Publications:</b>
<b>List Presentations:</b>



## APPENDIX 11: PHD STUDENT TRACKING FORM

### Rehabilitation Science Graduate Program – PhD Student Progress Tracking Form

*This form is to be completed (or updated) by the student prior to his/her Supervisory Committee meeting and reviewed at the meeting. The student must submit this form with each Committee Report to the RS Administrative Staff.*


Name: \_\_\_\_\_ McMaster Email: \_\_\_\_\_


Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Status: FT  or PT  Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Today's Date:     /     /     Program Enrollment Date:     /     /     /     Program Completion Date:     /     /     /    

<b>PROGRAM MILESTONES</b>					
Activity	Document/ Form Required All forms can be found on A2L (RS Graduate Student Resources)	In Progres s 	Recommended Timing (Note completion date)		Comments (note exceptions or planned next steps)
			Full-time (Insert dates below)	Part-time (Insert dates below)	
<b>Education Plan</b>			3 months (e.g., Nov 30)	6 months (e.g., Feb 28)	
<b>COURSES COMPLETED</b> (indicate course number):			Suggested 12 months	Suggested 20 months	
• REHAB 700 (Theory, if required)					
• REHAB 725 (KET)					
• Methods/Analysis courses					
• Content course (content includes knowledge or methods/analysis)					
• Courses recommended or approved by Committee (may occur later)					
<b>SGS 101</b>			3 months (e.g., Nov 30)	6 months (e.g., Feb 28)	
<b>SGS 201</b>			3 months (e.g., Nov 30)	6 months (e.g., Feb 28)	
<b>*First Committee Meeting</b> (Assistant Dean (RS) must attend the 1 <sup>st</sup> meeting). Committee approves area of research and training plans.			6 months (e.g., Feb 28)	9 months (e.g., May 30)	
<b>Regular Research Rounds attendance</b>					
<b>Regular RS Skills attendance</b>					
<b>Regular Senior Student Seminar attendance</b>					
<b>Approval of Comprehensive Topics by Supervisory Committee</b>			6 months (e.g., Feb 28)	9 months (e.g., May 30)	
<b>Plan for Comprehensive Exam Portfolio:</b> Approved by Oversight Committee			12 months	18 months	

<b>PROGRAM MILESTONES</b>					
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Document/ Form Required All forms can be found on A2L (RS Graduate Student Resources)</b>	<b>In Progress</b> 	<b>Recommended Timing</b> (Note completion date)		<b>Comments</b> (note exceptions or planned next steps)
			<b>Full-time</b> <i>(Insert dates below)</i>	<b>Part-time</b> <i>(Insert dates below)</i>	
<b>Comprehensive Exam</b>			18 months	24 months	
<b>Thesis Proposal/Plan:</b> Approved by Supervisory Committee			Recommended maximum of 24 months	Recommended maximum of 36 months	
<b>*Supervisory Committee Meeting</b>			Year 2 (Sept-Aug)	Year 2 (Sept-Aug)	
<b>Ethics Completed</b> (if required)					
<b>Permission to collect data</b>			20-24 months	28-36 months	
<b>*Supervisory Committee Meeting</b>			Year 3 (Sept-Aug)	Year 3 (Sept-Aug)	
<b>Permission to write thesis</b>			24-30 months	36-44 months	
<b>*Supervisory Committee Meeting</b>			Year 4 (Sept-Aug)	Year 4 (Sept-Aug)	
<b>Permission to defend thesis</b>			38-46 months	58-70 months	
<b>Thesis Defence</b>			40-48 months	60-72 months	
Other					
Other					

\*Committee Meetings are recommended every six (6) months but must be held at least yearly, i.e., one every academic year (September to August). All Committee Meeting Reports must be submitted to the [RS Administrative Staff](#).

**Action Items to be completed by Next Meeting:**

**OTHER PROGRAM ACTIVITIES/ACHIEVEMENTS:**

Scholarships/Training Support Received	Agency	Start Date	End Date	\$ per year

LOA Details	Start Date	End Date	Date Form Rec'd	Date Returned

Research Grants Received	Agency	Start Date	End Date	\$ per year

<b>List Publications:</b>
<b>List Presentations:</b>

## APPENDIX 12: TRANSFER PROCEDURE FROM THESIS-BASED MSc TO PhD (RS) PROGRAM

See SGS Calendar, Section 2.1.3

The following procedure is to be used by the Supervisors and Supervisory Committee of a thesis-based MSc (RS) student when recommending review for transfer to the PhD (RS) program without completion of the MSc degree.

The objectives of the transfer procedure are:

- d) To assess the progress of the student toward the MSc degree;
- e) To assess the potential of the candidate to carry out independent, original research; and,
- f) To consider the suitability of the candidate for direct admission to the PhD (RS) program.

### PROCEDURE

1. The process is initiated by the Supervisor and the Supervisory Committee after the student has successfully completed the four (4) required courses:
  - a. **Theory:** REHAB 700 *The Development, Evaluation and Utilization of Theories in Rehabilitation*
  - b. **Substantive:** REHAB 701, REHAB 702, REHAB 703, REHAB 704, REHAB 716, or REHAB 725, or an alternative substantive course approved by the Assistant Dean
  - c. **Research methods:** REHAB 707
  - d. **Data analysis:** REHAB 714

Normally, these should be completed in the first year in the MSc thesis-based curriculum and the transfer process is normally initiated after 12 months and before 18 months of study. In the case of part-time thesis students, the period will be extended to 24 and 36 respectively.

The process begins with a "Transfer from MSc to PhD form" (Avenue to Learn (A2L)): RS Graduate Student Resources) from the student and Supervisor to the Office of the Associate Dean (FHS), stating that the student wishes to transfer from the MSc (RS) program to the PhD (RS) program. This notification normally takes place **three (3) months prior** to the date of the expected transfer. Normally the student and Supervisor will also meet with the Assistant Dean (RS) at this time to discuss the transfer procedure. **Transfers become effective only on the following dates: September 1<sup>st</sup>, January 1<sup>st</sup> and May 1<sup>st</sup>.**

2. The student must have a minimum overall average of A- for the four (4) required courses of the MSc (RS) curriculum.
3. To be considered for transfer, the student must complete a Transfer Proposal to be submitted to each member of the Transfer Committee (in hard copy) one (1) week before the scheduled date of the Transfer meeting. At this time, the student will be expected to have identified a PhD Supervisor and the proposal will be a result of discussions between the student and the proposed supervisor. Students may retain their

MSc (RS) supervisor, or transfer supervision to one of their advisors depending on the circumstances of the supervisor and trainee at the time of transfer

The transfer proposal will consist of three (3) components written in a brief document (4-5 pages double-spaced) and will be presented to the transfer committee:

- a. A description of the reasons for the request to transfer from the MSc to the PhD program.
  - b. A statement of progress containing a description of the coursework and research work accomplished by the student in his/her MSc (RS) Program.
  - c. A brief summary of the area of PhD research that will be undertaken; or, how the MSc work will progress to the PhD level.
4. The student's MSc Supervisor must write a letter of support or provide a verbal statement at the transfer meeting with respect to the progress of the student, and their agreement with the transfer. The Transfer Committee is composed of:
- a. The student's proposed PhD Supervisor;
  - b. Two (2) members of the PhD (RS) Admissions Committee the Assistant Dean (RS);
  - c. One (1) member of the RS Graduate Faculty; and,
  - d. One (1) member who serves as Chair, usually the Assistant Dean (RS) or his/her delegate, who will not have a vote except in the event of a tie.

In the event that the Assistant Dean (RS) is also the proposed Supervisor of the student requesting the transfer, the Assistant Dean (RS) should delegate the role of Chair of the student's Transfer Committee to one of the following RS Graduate Faculty members: 1. Chair of the PhD Admissions Committee; 2. Chair of the Curriculum Committee; or, 3. Chair of the Comprehensive Examination Committee.

5. The student will be expected to present and defend orally the work he/she has accomplished and the future research proposed (as described in the Transfer Report) for the PhD at the Transfer Meeting. A maximum of 1 (one) hours will be allowed for the Transfer Meeting.
6. The time, date, and place of the Transfer Meeting will be arranged by the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS). Once arrangements have been made, the student, the Transfer Committee, and the Assistant Dean (RS) will be notified.
7. After the examination, the Chair will invite the Committee to appraise the oral defence and, following discussion, will decide to recommend one of the following options to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS):
- a. The candidate is allowed to proceed directly to the PhD (RS) program, without completion of the MSc (RS) degree. (This recommendation will require a unanimous committee vote.)
  - b. The candidate is allowed to proceed to the PhD (RS) program, but only after completing the MSc (RS) degree. (This decision may be made by a majority committee vote.)

- c. The candidate is invited to complete the MSc (RS) only, at this time. (This decision may be made by a majority committee vote.)
8. The Chair of the Transfer Committee will convey the Committee's decision to the student orally and in writing with a brief explanation of the reason if the transfer is not approved. The Chair will also complete the "Request for Change in a Graduate Student's Status" form (<https://graduate.mcmaster.ca/resources>), which will be forwarded to the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS).
9. If successful, the student will provide a final corrected copy of the Transfer Report to the [RS Administrative Staff](#), to be kept in the student's file.

**REQUEST TO TRANSFER FROM MSC TO PHD PROGRAM  
IN REHABILITATION SCIENCE (RS)**

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**Student** to complete this section of the form and submit to the [RS Administrative Staff](#)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's name

Brief statement of reasons for transferring from the MSc into the PhD (not more than 100 words)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Provide a brief (not more than 100 words) summary of the area of research (noting if in progress)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

The following is to be completed by the **student's PhD Supervisor**. Please write a short summary of the plans for ensuring the student has the research facilities and funding required to become a full-time PhD student; or if transferring into part-time PhD studies a rationale for why part-time studies are required.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
By signing this form, I am indicating my willingness to supervise the student and my assessment based on observations in their Master's program that they are capable of taking on the demands of the PhD program.

Please indicate the date(s) the transfer should be arranged:

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor's Signature \_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX 13: REHAB 730 THE SCHOLARLY PAPER

Each Course-Based MSc (RS) student has the option to complete a Scholarly Paper (REHAB 730), which demonstrates integrative thinking at a general and abstract level and is designed as an opportunity for Course-Based MSc (RS) students to demonstrate, in writing, their ability to integrate ideas that reflect current knowledge in areas of rehabilitation practice, education, research, and/or policy. A student will identify a topic, and in consultation with a faculty advisor with expertise in the area, develop a proposal that is individualized to the student's area of interest. The student will then develop the paper under the guidance of the faculty advisor. The paper must be 25 to 30 pages double-spaced, excluding references and appendices. The paper does not involve the collection or analysis of primary data or the conduct of research with subjects. It is a scholarly essay, not a thesis.

The Scholarly Paper is a full course, which is completed over two (2) academic terms.

### 1.0 Timing

Under normal circumstances students are expected to begin the Scholarly Paper in the academic term following completion of their course work or during the term that the student is completing the last course, if only taking one (1) course that term. The student should declare any potential conflicting event, which may take place during the Scholarly Paper process so that the faculty advisor and course coordinator can take the time into consideration.

### 2.0 Steps in the Scholarly Paper Process

- 2.1 A faculty advisor will be approved for the Scholarly Paper. The student will arrange an in-person, online, or telephone meeting with his/her faculty advisor to begin exploring possible client-focused, research-focused, health-system, or education-focused topics that are complementary to his/her course work. The topic cannot be one on which the student has previously written a paper or done a substantive presentation (e.g., worth 40% or more of a course grade).
- 2.2 The student will meet as necessary with his/her faculty advisor to discuss topics and prepare a proposal. This proposal becomes the student's contract with the examiners and his/her roadmap for writing the paper.
- 2.3 The student will complete a proposal for the Scholarly Paper (two (2) single-spaced pages exclusive of references). This should consist of:
  - a) A paragraph which provides the rationale for choosing the topic;
  - b) A paragraph which describes the purpose of the paper; and,
  - c) A point-form outline of the main areas of content to be included in the paper. Note that the rationale, purpose and outline headings should be supported with appropriate references.
- 2.4 Once the proposal is submitted, the Course Coordinator will notify the student and advisor of the outcome usually within two (2) weeks.
- 2.5 The student should consult with the faculty advisor during the writing period regarding resources and points of clarification, and the faculty advisor may read drafts of the paper. However, they should not read the final paper or drafts in the two weeks prior to submission.

- 2.6 **By 9:00am EST/EDT** on the day that the Scholarly Paper is due, upload an electronic copy of the Scholarly Paper to the REHAB 730 assignment submission folder on Avenue to Learn.
- 2.7 The paper is evaluated by the faculty advisor and an external evaluator, approved by the course coordinator. The evaluators are sent copies of the *Scholarly Paper Evaluation* Form (see Appendix 2 of the REHAB 730 Scholarly Paper Handbook), the criteria for written assignments and the approved proposal for the paper. The evaluators will review the paper independently and submit a completed evaluation form with a recommended letter grade to the course coordinator within two (2) weeks of receipt of the paper.
- 2.8 Written feedback and a letter grade will be given to the student by the course coordinator. If the paper is deemed unsatisfactory (lower than B-), one (1) rewrite will be allowed (within a four (4) week period) after formal written notification of the unsatisfactory grade to the student is given by the course coordinator. A pass/fail decision will be made and feedback given within one (1) week (with consideration of availability of both evaluators).

The Scholarly Paper, like final papers for courses, is to be written **solely by the student**. It is essential that the student references information appropriately and avoids any suggestion of plagiarism.

## APPENDIX 14: ACADEMIC TIMELINE

Year	Term	Month		MSc		PhD				
				FT	PT	FT	PT			
1	1	1	Sep	Education Plan Due	Education Plan Due	Education Plan Due	Education Plan Due			
		2	Oct							
		3	Nov							
		4	Dec							
	2	2	5	Jan	OVERTIME	OVERTIME	Comps Portfolio	Comps Portfolio		
			6	Feb						
			7	Mar						
			8	Apr						
	3	3	9	May						
			10	Jun						
			11	Jul						
			12	Aug						
2	4	13	Sep	OVERTIME			OVERTIME		Comps Exam	Comps Exam
		14	Oct							
		15	Nov							
		16	Dec							
	5	5	17		Jan					
			18		Feb					
			19		Mar					
			20		Apr					
	6	6	21		May					
			22		Jun					
			23		Jul					
			24		Aug					
3	7	25	Sep	OVERTIME	OVERTIME	Comps Exam	Comps Exam			
		26	Oct							
		27	Nov							
		28	Dec							
	8	8	29			Jan				
			30			Feb				
			31			Mar				
			32			Apr				
	9	9	33			May				
			34			Jun				
			35			Jul				
			36			Aug				
4	10	37	Sep	OVERTIME	OVERTIME	OVERTIME	OVERTIME			

		38	Oct	OUT OF TIME			
		39	Nov				
		40	Dec				
	11	41	Jan				
		42	Feb				
		43	Mar				
		44	Apr				
	12	45	May				
		46	Jun				
		47	Jul				
		48	Aug				
5	13	49	Sep	OVERTIME			
		50	Oct				
		51	Nov				
		52	Dec				
	14	53	Jan				
		54	Feb				
		55	Mar				
		56	Apr				
	15	57	May				
		58	Jun				
		59	Jul				
60		Aug					
6	16	61	Sep	OVERTIME			
		62	Oct				
		63	Nov				
		64	Dec				
	17	65	Jan				
		66	Feb				
		67	Mar				
		68	Apr				
	18	69	May				
		70	Jun				
		71	Jul				
72		Aug					
7	19	73	Sep	OUT OF TIME			
		74	Oct				
		75	Nov				
		76	Dec				
	20	77	Jan				
		78	Feb				

	21	79	Mar	[Grey]	[Grey]	[Grey]	[Yellow]	
		80	Apr					
		81	May					
		82	Jun					
		83	Jul					
		84	Aug					
	8	22	85					Sep
			86					Oct
			87					Nov
			88					Dec
23		89	Jan					
		90	Feb					
		91	Mar					
		92	Apr					
24		93	May					
		94	Jun					
	95	Jul						
	96	Aug						
9	25	97	Sep	[Red]				
		98	Oct					
		99	Nov					
		100	Dec					

OUT OF TIME