



**HEALTH
SCIENCES**

Rehabilitation Science Graduate Programs

2022-2023

PROGRAM HANDBOOK

Doctor of Philosophy in Rehabilitation Science

Master of Science in Rehabilitation Science

School of Rehabilitation Science, Faculty of Health Sciences,

McMaster University, 2022

We recognize and acknowledge that students, staff, and faculty of McMaster University meet and learn on the traditional territories of the Mississauga and Haudenosaunee nations, and within the lands protected by the "Dish With One Spoon" wampum, an agreement to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes.

Social and Racial Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Statement for School of Rehabilitation Science

Systemic racism and oppression are inherent to Canadian tertiary education institutions, healthcare institutions, and any institutions rooted in colonization and in which significant power differentials exist. Racism (including anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism), homophobia, transphobia, islamophobia, ableism and other forms of human rights-based inequities and oppression exist within McMaster and the School of Rehabilitation Science program. For example, the School of Rehabilitation Science lacks racial and ethnic diversity among faculty and Indigenous and Black students are significantly underrepresented in programs. The School of Rehabilitation Science has not historically addressed the systemic racism and inequities in healthcare in its curriculum and has not created an inclusive environment for all students, faculty, staff and members of the broader community.

We at the School of Rehabilitation Science, are committed to learning, listening and creating safe and inclusive spaces to engage Indigenous, Black, racialized and equity-deserving students, staff, faculty and members of the community. Our goal is to develop programs that center indigenous sovereignty, racial justice and human rights to create healthcare professionals, leaders, educators and researchers to advance equity, quality and safety for all members of our community. For example, the School of Rehabilitation Science is committed to embedding anti-racism, anti-oppression and the recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in curriculum and training. We are committed to increasing the racial and intersectional diversity of staff, faculty, and students. We are also committed to promoting anti-racist and anti-oppressive behavior and culturally safer and inclusive learning environments and relationships.

We at the School of Rehabilitation Science, recognize that this commitment will be an ongoing effort, requiring learning, unlearning, intentional action and shift in mindset by all members of the community. We commit to monitoring and reporting our progress annually.

Commitment to Equity, Inclusion and Diversity

As educators within the McMaster RS Program, we are committed to establishing a learning environment that is free from harassment and discrimination on any basis, including race, religion, ability, and gender.

We have reviewed the McMaster University Statement on Building an Inclusive Community with a Shared Purpose and will foster a culture that respects the human rights, integrity, and dignity of all.

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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. McMaster University is internationally renowned as innovators, has faculty who are leaders in the rehabilitation field, and offers an innovative curriculum that is open to diverse areas of research and practice with problem-based learning and evidence-based practice being our hallmark features. Our leadership and commitment to excellence and scholarship in research, education, and clinical practice was empirically supported by a 2014 publication in *Physiotherapy Canada* that reported that McMaster had the greatest scientific impact (evidenced by the highest H-index bibliometrics) among physical and occupational therapy faculty across Canada. 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 Program Handbook is designed for students enrolled in the Rehabilitation Science Program at McMaster University. It outlines specific academic regulations and general information related to the Program.

This Program Handbook is a supplement to the information published in the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) Calendar, the ultimate source for information on general aspects of graduate studies. Students are responsible for being familiar with the information in this Program Handbook, the Graduate Calendar, and the University Senate Policies and Procedure Statements.

Should there be any discrepancies between the RS Graduate Program Handbook and the SGS Calendar, the information in the SGS Calendar supersedes the information found in this guide.

Students are encouraged to examine the SGS Calendar for information about:

- University regulations pertaining to graduate school;
- Information on university funding opportunities;
- Degree programs (including degree requirements);
- Graduate fees and financial assistance;
- Fellowship, scholarship, bursaries and other awards;
- University governing bodies;
- Student appeals;
- Course information;
- Faculty listings.

RS GRADUATE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION TEAM

The primary contact for the RS program is via email at rsgrad@mcmaster.ca.

Assistant Dean (RS)	Dr. Ada Tang	IAHS 437	atang@mcmaster.ca 289-426-5762
RS Program Manager	Vanessa Killinger	IAHS 402/B	mhmrs@mcmaster.ca killingerv@mcmaster.ca
RS Program Coordinator	Cindy Ma	IAHS 402/B	rsgrad@mcmaster.ca permejcr@mcmaster.ca
RS Course-Based Coordinator	Shami Dhillon	IAHS 428	rsgrad@mcmaster.ca sdhill@mcmaster.ca
RS Administrative Assistant	Natalie Whiting	IAHS 403	rsgrad@mcmaster.ca whitingn@mcmaster.ca
RS Course-Based OMPT Coordinator	Anita Gross	N/A	agross@mcmaster.ca

SCHOOL OF REHABILITATION SCIENCE (SRS)

The School of Rehabilitation Science (SRS) was established in 1989. SRS presently offers the following programs:

- **MSc (Occupational Therapy)** entry level, professional program for occupational therapists;
- **MSc (Physiotherapy)** entry level, professional program for physiotherapists;
- **MSc (Speech Language Pathology)** entry level, professional program for speech language pathologists;
- **Rehabilitation Science Programs**, which includes a PhD program, MSc program with a Thesis option or Course-based option (including Orthopedic Manual Physiotherapy Specialization), and a MSc (OT)/PhD or MSc (PT)/PhD dual degree option; and,
- **Master of Health Management Program** (in collaboration with the DeGroote School of Business), a part-time, course-based program

SRS is in the Institute of Applied Health Sciences (IAHS) building on the McMaster campus. Information on the School, its faculty, and their research activities can be found on the SRS website at <https://healthsci.mcmaster.ca/srs-rehabsci>

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Students within the Rehabilitation Science graduate program are expected to uphold the program's support principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion. To review the policies and support services, visit McMaster's Equity and Inclusion office: <https://equity.mcmaster.ca/>

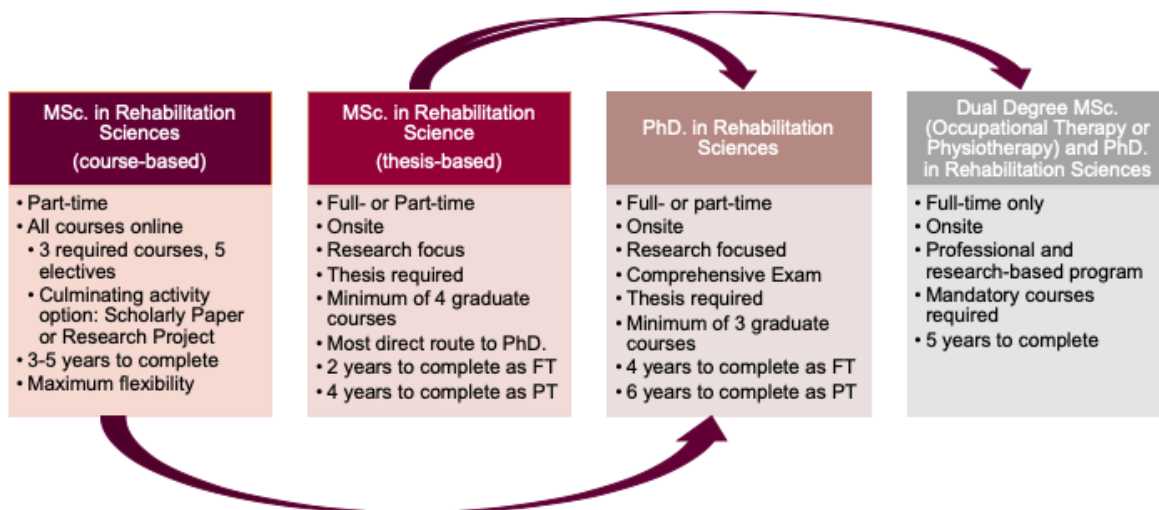
THE REHABILITATION SCIENCE (RS) GRADUATE PROGRAMS

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 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 programs within the RS Graduate programs, and how they are linked, is depicted in the figure and described in detail below



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 within the School. Students are NOT required to specify a field or to limit their work within these areas.

- **Best Practice and Knowledge Translation:** Developing, evaluating, and applying skills in evidence-based practice and strategies to implement best practices.
- **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.
- **Functional Health with Aging or Chronic Disease:** Research that focuses on keeping people healthy and functionally independent despite increasing age or chronic disease.
- **Neuromusculoskeletal Function and Mobility:** Research that focuses on understanding and optimizing neuromusculoskeletal function and mobility as a vital aspect of overall health.
- **Work Ability and Participation:** Research that focuses on creating and maintaining safe, healthy, productive work, and participation in valued life roles.
- **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.

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, following PhD training graduate have taken roles which include clinician-scientists, leadership positions, policymakers, 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 provides students with advantages through integrated scholarship training and professional development and streamlined time efficiency. Completing the two degrees, an OT or PT professional degree and PhD concurrently rather than sequentially will develop clinician scientists who understand the issues facing the professions, the potential contributions they can make and research expertise to undertake these roles.

RS GRADUATE PROGRAM ASSISTANT DEANS

We would like to thank the previous individuals who served in the leadership position for the program:

2000-2003	Paul Stratford
2003-2005	Jean Wessel
2005-2010	Seanne Wilkins
2010-2014	Joy MacDermid
2015-2015	Julie Richardson (Acting)
2015-2016	Norma J. MacIntyre
2016-2021	Julie Richardson

OFFICE OF THE ASSOCIATE DEAN OF GRADUATE STUDIES (FHS)

The RS Graduate Program operates as a component of the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) Graduate Programs at McMaster University.

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 in HSC 4N4.

Dr. Steve Hanna	Vice Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences and Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences)	adeanhsc@mcmaster.ca Ext. 21609
George Bijelic	Manager	gbijel@mcmaster.ca HSC-4H4 x22735
Sherri Keene	Graduate Program Associate	fhsgrad@mcmaster.ca keenes@mcmaster.ca HSC-4H4 x24445

GENERAL STUDENT INFORMATION

1. McMaster Student ID

The McMaster Student ID (MacID) identifies McMaster University students and permits access to services on campus. New students will require a Student ID card. The ID card will display the student number, name, photo and contains an encoded magnetic strip. Students You can use their Student ID card to obtain a variety of university services.

For information, visit <https://registrar.mcmaster.ca/services/student-card/>.

If students will be conducting research in the hospital, a hospital photo ID will also be required. Students should speak with their Supervisor about this.

2. McMaster Email

The McMaster University student email system is the primary means by which the university communicates with individual students. As per the McMaster SGS Graduate Calendar, *it is the student's responsibility to use the University provided email address or maintain a valid forwarding email address*. Regularly check the official University communications channels. Official University communications are considered received if sent by postal mail, by fax, or by e-mail to the student's designated primary e-mail account via their @mcmaster.ca alias.

Students in the RS program must communicate with the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#) and the RS Administrative Staff through McMaster email rather than personal emails.

Please note that when a student is no longer actively enrolled in classes, their email will expire the next January 31st.

Please contact the [University Technology Service Desk](#) for assistance at <https://uts.mcmaster.ca/contact-us/>

3. Mosaic <https://mosaic.mcmaster.ca/>

The Mosaic platform allows McMaster students to monitor, access, and edit their personal and course information. The MOSAIC Student Center hosts all student information such as grades, payment information, transcript ordering, course enrollment and more.

4. Avenue to Learn <https://avenue.mcmaster.ca/>

Avenue to Learn (A2L) is McMaster University's online course management system.

Within Avenue to Learn, the **RS Student Resources Course Shell** contains resources that students will find useful throughout the course of their studies, such as:

- Copy of this Handbook
- Copies of presentation slides from seminars
- Information about scholarship competitions
- Student health wellness resources

Students are also added in the **SRS Anti-racism, anti Black and anti-oppression (ARABAO) Resources** course shell.

For courses, access is provided to all registered students in a course once the course is activated. Course instructors aim to activate course shells for their course at least 1-week prior to the start date of the class. Students missing a course shell on Avenue to Learn can contact rsgrad@mcmaster.ca.

5. Student Offices (Workspace)

Desk spaces at the Graduate Student Office (IAHS 308) are available to RS graduate students on a first come first serve basis. The RS program will communicate the door code to RS students at the beginning of the year. This code is not to be shared with anyone except RS students. It is under the student's discretion if they leave their items unattended.

6. Room and AV Equipment Bookings

To book a room and/or AV equipment, contact rsgrad@mcmaster.ca with the following information:

- Meeting name and contact person
- Meeting date
- Meeting start and end time (please remember set-up time and take-down time)
- Number of people attending the meeting
- Type of room required (classroom/AV/conference)
- Other equipment needed, such as teaching station key (more information below), remote presentation clicker, teleconference, etc.
- If a specific room is needed, please include room number

Students will receive a confirmation email when a room has been confirmed. Students are expected to set up for their own meeting, including AV set up.

Should the room no longer be needed, please contact rsgrad@mcmaster.ca immediately to cancel the booking

Some rooms (mostly classrooms, but some meeting rooms) have a locked “AV teaching station”. If the student requires the teaching key to access the AV teaching station, please inform the RS Administrative Staff. Instructions on how to access and use the teaching station are available in each classroom. Students must return the teaching key and other borrowed items to the front desk of IAHS 403 immediately after each meeting, and request for borrowed items to be placed in the RS Program Coordinator’s mailbox.

7. Convocation

There are two convocation ceremonies in an academic year: Fall convocation (November) and Spring/Summer convocation (May).

The RS Program sends out information via email to students about upcoming convocations. Students are asked to complete a form to self-identify that they are completing their degree requirements and are intending to participate in the next convocation ceremony.

Convocation is handled by the Office of the Registrar. For more information:

<https://registrar.mcmaster.ca/grad/details/>

8. Transcripts

Official transcripts may be ordered through student accounts within Mosaic. For more information: <https://registrar.mcmaster.ca/services/transcripts/>

Students can download an unofficial transcript in Mosaic and running an academic advisement report.

9. Enrollment and Graduate Letters

Students may obtain a letter verifying their proof of student data such as status, course enrollment, graduation date, degree program and more. These letters can be downloaded from Mosaic. For more information: <https://registrar.mcmaster.ca/services/>

10. Where to Go For Help

The **[SGS Calendar](#)** contains all official policies and procedures. The SGS Calendar is posted annually and should be the first place in your search for graduate studies information. The SGS Calendar also provides information on student resources on the General information page.

The RS Program Handbook contains information specific to the RS program. Contact rsggrad@mcmaster.ca for RS-related questions, such as defenses, comprehensive exams,

supervisory committee meetings, booking meetings, grades, TAs, education plan, course enrollment, program policies and procedures, etc.

Students may also connect with the **Registrar's Office Student Services** (e.g. tuition payments) or the **School of Graduate Studies** (e.g. enrollment letters, graduate student policies) via the chat function on their website.

The **thesis supervisor** (thesis-based students) or **faculty advisor** (course-based students) is the first person to approach with academic concerns about the student's training program or any other issues that are affecting graduate studies. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they are in regular contact with the supervisor to fully inform them of concerns and progress.

If either the student or supervisor want **information or support in handling a specific academic issue**, it is appropriate to consult with the Assistant Dean (RS). This may include consultation about internal processes such as program expectations/ opportunities, facilitators/barriers to completing the training program, concerns / clarification about policies and procedures.

11. Full Time and Part Time Status

SGS Calendar: Section [2.5 Enrollment](#), [2.5.2 Definition of Full- and Part-time Status](#), [2.5.3 McMaster University Regulations for Full and Part-time Status](#).

Students in **thesis-based programs** may be registered as either full-time or part-time students. Students in the **course-based program** enter as part-time students. Students make decisions about registration while considering the commitments and opportunities that are associated with either type of registration.

Full Time

Full-time students are expected to complete the program more quickly and be more available for on-campus/program responsibilities. Full-time students are also eligible for scholarship/funding opportunities that are not open to part-time students.

Part Time

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.

Transition from Full Time to Part Time

Students who transition **from full-time to part-time** are advised to consult the program, their supervisory committee, and the SGS Calendar about the financial implications. Transitions from full-time to part-time do not provide students any more time to complete their program and will continue to be charged tuition fees at a full-time level. Changing student status from full-time to part-time will affect a student's scholarship funding, OSAP, and student visa statuses.

Students who transition **from part-time to full-time** will also need to consult with the program. This transition will result in a student being charged full-time fees. If the student decides to return to part-time studies again, the tuition fees will continue to be charged at a full-time level.

12. Maximum Numbers of Hours Students Can Work

McMaster University regulations state that the maximum number of hours that full-time graduate students can work on campus is **10 hours/week to a maximum of 505 hours in an academic year; this includes but is not limited to work as a Teaching Assistant at McMaster**. It is the responsibility of the graduate student to make sure that any work above the teaching assistant duties falls within the guidelines set out by the university and [the union \(CUPE 3906\)](#). Students who exceed the limit are asked to drop to part-time status, to stop working, or reduce their hours of work.

Refer to [SGS Calendar](#) Section 2.5.3 McMaster University's Regulation for Full- and Part-time status and Section 2.5.4 Employment Regulations for more information.

In addition, the 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.

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; 17 weeks);
- Winter (January through April, 17 weeks); and,
- Spring/Summer (May through August, 18 weeks).

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 ([SGS Calendar Section 2.5.4: Employment Regulations](#))

Major scholarship awards may have their own demands or limitations on hours worked or on total remuneration. 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.

13. Student Requests - Petition

[SGS Calendar](#): Section 2.5.9 Appeals and Petitions for Special Consideration

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.

Forms can be found on the School of Graduate Studies website: <https://gs.mcmaster.ca/current-students/forms-and-policies-for-graduate-students-staff-and-faculty/>

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 may be required but will not guarantee 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.

14. 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.

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

Leave of Absence (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.

There are 4 types of LOAs:

1. Medical or disability leave;
2. Parenting leave;
3. Compassionate or personal leave; or,
4. No course available leave

The timing or duration of the LOA may have an impact on the funding provided to the student. An LOA also impacts a student's term count and tuition. An LOA should ideally start and end at the beginning or the end of a term. If a student takes an LOA for the duration of a term, they will not be charged tuition and corresponding term will not be counted toward their time in the program. If the student takes a mid-term leave, they will be charged for the month of tuition that they were in the program. Terms will be counted as follows:

- 1-2 months off = term counted
- 3-4 months off = term not counted

Information about LOAs can be found in the Section 2.5.7 of the SGS Graduate Calendar.

Forms can be found on the SGS website: <https://gs.mcmaster.ca/current-students/forms-and-policies-for-graduate-students-staff-and-faculty/>

If the student is requesting a LOA, they must discuss their intent with their supervisor, Assistant Dean (RS), and the RS Program Coordinator. It is important that the student and supervisor discuss whether the student will have periods of absence from McMaster University or from program activities. 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.

If the student is requesting a medical LOA, a physician's note is required.

If the student plans on taking a LOA related to family responsibilities, such as pregnancy and child rearing, please use the Parental Leave form. In the case of a Parenting Leave Form, it is essential that a medical note or Adoption form is attached to the request.

If the student is requesting a LOA for health or personal circumstances, please fill out the Petitions for Special Consideration to the Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study form.

Full-time students are obligated to be on-campus, except for vacation periods (see Section 2.5.8 of SGS Calendar) or authorized off-campus status, for all three terms of the university year. Other than vacation, for absences of more than one week, approval in writing from the supervisor is required. For absences of more than two weeks, the approval from the Assistant Dean (RS) is also needed. For absences of four weeks or more, this Request to Be Full Time Off Campus (FTOC) form needs to be completed and approved. In cases of unauthorized absence, the student will have to petition for readmission. The appropriate Faculty Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study will rule on each request. There is no guarantee of readmission or of renewal of financial arrangements. Permission to be full-time off campus will not be given for a period longer than ONE YEAR.

Continuation of Scholarship Funding During Graduate Student Parental Leave (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/>).

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Funding for students enrolled full-time in a thesis-based program will normally be provided financial support for the nominal duration of the program. Funding may comprise of funds including departmental scholarships/awards, research scholarship support, and possibly employment (e.g. teaching assistant).

➤ Student Services - Office of the Registrar

The Office of the Registrar provides support and information related to financial aid as well as awards, and fees.

Office of the Registrar
Gilmour Hall (GH) 108
<https://registrar.mcmaster.ca/>
Contact via online chat on website

➤ **Teaching Assistantships**

The RS Graduate Program does not guarantee Teaching Assistantships (TAships) for all students. Each year, the program reviews the needs of SRS 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-ship, the university is not obligated to reinstate it.

➤ **Bursaries, Scholarships, and Travel Awards**

The School of Graduate Studies provides a list of funding opportunities offered to graduate students at McMaster University.

Students who apply to General Bursaries in Mosaic through AwardSpring will be automatically considered for donor bursaries and donor academic grants offered through the SGSs, provided that the student meets the award/scholarship criteria. For more information:

<https://registrar.mcmaster.ca/aid-awards/scholarships-and-bursaries/>

➤ **External and Internal Scholarship Awards**

All students must provide a copy of any external funding (personal awards and research funding) to the **RS Administrative Staff** rsgrad@mcmaster.ca. This information is important for the program to track and report student successes. Funding packages may be altered based on the amount of external funding obtained.

Information regarding internal and external scholarship opportunities will be circulated via email by RS staff and posted to the RS Student Resources course shell on Avenue to Learn. Students are also encouraged to refer to the Graduate Studies page on Scholarships.

External Awards: Several external awards are available from numerous agencies though most target full-time students. There are very few awards available to part-time students. *Students are encouraged to discuss opportunities for funding and awards with their supervisor prior to starting training and at regular intervals.*

Students can apply to more than one (1) agency and should pursue multiple funding sources. **Start early.** Read all instructions and check eligibility carefully before starting an application or asking for support letters. Funding organizations all have different restrictions about eligibility that may include issues on citizenship, type of training, length in program, and research focus.

There are resources available to support students when applying for scholarships and awards, such as award information sessions through SGS and the RS program. Take advantage of these. *Please also see [Appendix 2](#) regarding how to optimize the support letter.*

NOTE: Many students apply for the highly-competitive [Canadian Institute for Health Research](#) (CIHR) Canada Graduate Scholarships Doctoral (CGS-D) or Masters (CGS-M) awards. 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): A number of scholarships are internal awards (e.g. internal to SRS, FHS, or McMaster), or involve internal rankings by the university, including federal government awards such as: [CIHR](#), [SSHRC](#) and [NSERC](#) awards. For federal awards, SGS allocates a quota of students for the RS program to put forward to the University competition. Thus, RS students submit applications to the RS program to be first reviewed by the Assistant Dean. Selected applications are then forwarded to the SGS Scholarship Committee, who rank applications using the criteria noted above and select top-ranked applications to move forward to the national competition. A complete list of awards and application criteria is available from the [Scholarships webpage](#) of the [SGS](#) website.

It is important to check eligibility carefully when applying for awards.

Remember to provide a copy of any external funding (personal awards and research funding) to rsggrad@mcmaster.ca

Internal Awards

- **Ontario Graduate Scholarship** (OGS) - This is available to full-time, domestic MSc and PhD students. Value: \$15,000 over three terms
- **Ontario Graduate Fellowship** (OGF) - This is available to full-time, domestic doctoral students. Value: \$12,000 over three terms

- **Jean Crowe Scholarship** - This is available to doctoral students within SRS in the field of Physiotherapy who have completed at least 1 year of their doctoral studies (full time or part time). Value: \$5,000
- **Ian and Shirley Rowe Scholarship in Rehabilitation Science** - This award is available to first year doctoral students (full time or part time) who reflect a commitment in the field of childhood disability research.
- **Dr. Patty Solomon Graduate Scholarship** - This is available to graduate students enrolled in thesis based MSc or PhD programs who demonstrated academic excellence. Preference will be given to international students. Students can apply for this award through AwardSpring in Mosaic.

➤ **Student Pay**

All aspects of payments to graduate students (including income tax receipts) are handled by the Budget and Financial Analysts in [SGS](mailto:gradpay@mcmaster.ca) (gradpay@mcmaster.ca)

Inquiries about payments should be directed to this office, not to Financial Services. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that their contact information is up-to-date. Address changes **must be** completed in Mosaic. Students must provide a Social Insurance Number (SIN) as soon as possible for payroll. To do this, log in to MOSAIC > Update SIN tile or check that the personal information entered is correct. For more information:

<https://registrar.mcmaster.ca/services/social-insurance-number-sin/>

Financial Statement (Payment News Alert)

At the beginning of the term, Graduate Studies communicates by email with the amounts of financial support that the student will receive for the academic year (e.g., TA/RA), including the date and amount of the financial support. For any questions or concerns related to this communication, please contact rsgrad@mcmaster.ca.

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 also complete and submit an [Employee Contact & Deposit Information Form to GH 212](#) with banking information. This is in addition to banking information provided in [Mosaic](#).

Scholarships will be paid directly by direct deposit to the student's bank account and may be provided in a form of e-transfer. These monies are not taxed. TAs will be paid bi-weekly in the term worked; these payments are processed through Human Resources.

Please refer the School of Graduate Studies Scholarship/Payment schedule:

<https://gs.mcmaster.ca/scholarship-payment-schedules/>

Vacation pay is included in the TA's monthly wages, not as a lump sum payment at the end of the year. Please refer to **Article 19.01** in the Collective Agreement between CUPE and McMaster University and the website of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) 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 including TA payments. Federal Income Tax will be assessed on all income including scholarships and bursaries. Students 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 they have additional exemptions (*e.g.*, supporting a spouse in Canada), which will change the rate at which they are taxed. Please return completed forms to the SGS Office (Gilmour Hall, room 212).
- b) **CUPE dues:** Students receiving a Teaching Assistantship (TA) or a Research Assistantship (RA) in lieu of a TA are members of CUPE, Local 3906, Unit 1. Union dues will be deducted in each month in which the student receives 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 to August 31 will have Dental Plan premiums.
Provisions for opting out of the Dental Plan or for obtaining family coverage are covered in [SGS Calendar Section 5](#) Financial Matters, **Section 5.1** Fees for Graduate Students. For more information on the Dental Plan premium for a single coverage and family coverage, please visit <http://cupe3906.org/>. The CUPE 3906 office is in Kenneth Taylor Hall, room B111.
- d) **Student Charge Accounts:** Students with an outstanding student charge account may wish to have all or part of it deducted from their monthly cheque. For more information: <https://campusstore.mcmaster.ca/information/student-charge-accounts.html#2>
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. Students may obtain an *Employee Deposit Information Form* from <https://graduate.mcmaster.ca/resources> or from the SGS Office, Gilmour Hall, room 212.

STUDENT ORIENTATION

➤ Thesis Based Student Orientation

Information regarding **SGS Graduate Orientation Week** for the academic year 2022-2023 will be communicated to the students. Please also visit the Student Success Center website for more information regarding Welcome Week schedule: <https://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/welcome-week/>

The RS Orientation Day will be held in person on August 31, 2022, from 9:30 - 10:30 AM in IAHS 201.

In addition, the Health Sciences Library guides, tutorials, and workshops **are strongly recommended** for all new students. An example of a guide & tutorial is the library's "All Online Tutorials" which provides a step-by-step video and strategies for using the library's most popular resources. For more information, please visit the [Health Sciences Library website](#) or contact them at hslib@mcmaster.ca.

➤ Course Based Student Orientation

The RS Course-Based Program will hold a synchronous, virtual orientation 1 week prior to the start of classes. Date TBC.

Additionally, a self-directed **online orientation** will be available through Avenue to Learn 1 week prior to the start of the program. The [RS Administrative Staff will](#) provide detailed information in August on how to access the orientation course shell. This orientation has been effective in enhancing student comfort and learning in an online system. Even if students are accustomed to this style of learning, the content information will help students become familiar with navigating Avenue to Learn. Students are expected to complete this orientation prior to their first class.

➤ Teaching Assistant Orientation

Teaching Assistant Orientation will be held in person on August 31, 2022 from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm in IAHS 201. The orientation is mandatory for all returning and new TAs.

Required Health and Safety Training

McMaster's Health and Safety Training is designed to provide mandatory and site-specific training for all employees, grad students, volunteers, and visitors working at the University. 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 [here](#).

Self-registration is available through the self-service functionality in through Mosaic for training courses offered by Environmental & Occupational Health Support Services (EOHSS), the Faculty of Health Sciences Safety Office (FHS Safety Office), the Biosafety Office, and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Office. The training materials are available in Avenue to Learn 1 business day after registering in Mosaic.

Please visit <http://fhs.mcmaster.ca/safetyoffice/> for more information.

All TAs must complete the following online training through EOHSS:

Training	Frequency
Anti-Oppression	Once
TA Rights and Responsibilities	Once
Fire Safety/FHS Fire Safety	Every 3 years
Health & Safety Orientation	Once
Violence and Harassment Presentation	Every 3 years
Slips, Trips, and Falls	Every 5 years
WHMIS	Every 5 years
Ergonomics	Every 5 years
Asbestos Awareness	Every 5 years

At the start of the academic year, TAs should provide the program with proof of training through Mosaic self-service, students can access their own training summary (instructions can be found in the Human Resources Services website.)

Students are also encouraged to review Risk Management Manual (RMM) 300 which may help to clarify training requirements: https://hr.mcmaster.ca/employees/health_safety_well-being/our-safety/risk-management-manuals-rmms/

Teaching Assistantship Forms

TAs must complete the following paperwork with their TA Contact and return these to the respective Program Coordinators listed in the TA letter:

- [TA Hours of Work Form](#)
- [Job Hazard Analysis Summary](#)
- TA Template for Supplement Form for Hours of Work

The forms will be communicated to Teaching Assistants and are available in the RS Graduate Student Resources course shell.

The Program Coordinators will confirm the hours on the forms match with the hours of work assigned, have the forms reviewed by the appropriate Assistant Dean, and save a copy of these files for their records. A copy of the signed, finalized version of the TA forms will also be sent to the RS Program Manager at mhmrs@mcmaster.ca.

The RS program will do a final check of the forms before it is sent to CUPE and EOHSS.

THESIS BASED STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

➤ Education Plan

An *Education Plan* must be submitted to the [Rehabilitation Science Program](#) to rsggrad@mcmaster.ca **within 4 months of entering the program**. The Education Plan will be reviewed by the Assistant Dean (RS).

Deadline to submit Education Plan:

- September Admissions – Education Plan is due by end of December
- January Admissions – Education Plan is due by end of April

The Education Plan will name the Supervisory Committee members, summarize the student's thesis topic, identify the graduate courses to be taken and provide the date of the first Supervisory Committee meeting. Please see Section XIII *Supervision and Supervisory Committee* for more information.

If this Education Plan includes a research topic that can only be undertaken off campus, all necessary letters of approval (research ethics, access to data, laboratories, etc.) for full-time activities from the intended site of research must first be approved by the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS).

The Education Plan form is available on Avenue to Learn RS Graduate Student Resources

➤ **Supervisory Committee Meetings**

Every graduate student must have a supervisory committee and a supervisory committee meeting every academic year. SGS requires at least 1 PhD supervisor committee each year, but the RS program highly recommends that students meet with their committee every 6 months.

Refer to Graduate Calendar Section 1.2.4 The Supervisory Committee or Supervisor for more information on roles and responsibilities, and Section XIII of the RS program handbook for more information about Supervisory Committee Meetings and Reports.

Students and supervisors are encouraged to refer to the SGS website on Graduate Supervision to access the document “Getting the Supervisory Relationship Off to a Good Start”:

<https://gs.mcmaster.ca/current-students/resources/graduate-supervision/#tab-content-graduate-students>

➤ **Research Rounds**

Research Rounds are typically held from 9:00AM – 10:00AM on the second Wednesday of every month unless otherwise noted. The presenters alternate between an SRS Faculty or two RS graduate students and are determined by the Assistant Dean and a member of the SRS Research Committee. Students are expected to present their work at rounds at least once if they are a MSc student or twice as a PhD student.

Research Rounds are an opportunity to hear about research taking place across SRS, and to support peers who are presenting. Full-time students are expected to attend 80%, and part-time students are expected to attend 60% of all Research Rounds per academic year. Attendance is taken. Students must communicate intended absence to rsggrad@mcmaster.ca.

➤ **RS Skills Series**

Monthly RS Skill Series are given by RS Skill Series are typically held 1:00PM – 3:00PM on the second Wednesday of every month unless otherwise noted and feature SRS Faculty or invited speakers.

Topics in RS Skills are intended to provide students with foundational knowledge about RS program expectations and procedures or general research knowledge. Topics may include: preparing for program advisory committee meetings, RS program comprehensive examinations, project management, ethics application and consent, creating an educational dossier, writing for publications.

Full-time students are expected to attend 80% of all RS Skills Series for the first years in the program, and part-time students are expected to attend 60% in the first 2 years of the program. Attendance is taken at the start of the session. Students must communicate intended absence to rsggrad@mcmaster.ca. The RS program will waive attendance for RS Skills Series if they are not appropriate for the student. For instance, attendance of a MSc student for a PhD Comps skills session will not be taken.

Students beyond the first and second year of their programs are highly encouraged to continue to attend RS Skills sessions, as information may have changed (e.g. revised scholarship guidelines and eligibility) and especially if there is a new presenter.

➤ **Senior Student Seminars**

The RS Senior Student Seminars are intended for upper year students, but all students are welcome to attend. Senior Seminars typically take place from 1:00PM – 3:00PM on the third Wednesday of every month but may vary depending on the availability of the presenter. Senior Seminars may cover methodological discussions including complex statistical analyses or novel study designs, or broader research topics such as mentorship or intersections between race, racism and health research.

➤ **Individual Development Plan**

All thesis-based students will complete an individualized development plan (IDP) **within the first 6 months** of the program and annually thereafter. An IDP activates students' career goals by identifying goals and putting strategies in place to achieve them.

Students are expected to consult with their supervisor to discuss the IDP. Students then meet with the Assistant Dean (RS) to review the completed IDP, typically in the winter term (March) and spring/summer terms (July). Students will submit the completed IDP to rsggrad@mcmaster.ca **at least 1 week in advance of the meeting**. These IDP should be reviewed and updated by the student annually, followed by an annual meeting with the Assistant Dean.

The IDP form is available at https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/documents/training_idp_form-en.pdf and a [video resource is available in the RS Student Resources course shell on Avenue to Learn](#)

➤ **Completing Degree On-Time**

Please see [Appendix 8](#) for the MSc Tracking Sheet and [Appendix 9](#) for the PhD Tracking Sheet for students to record milestones of their training plan.

Please see [Appendix 12](#) for the academic timeline.

The RS Program has committed to keeping students informed on their academic progress through an Academic Progress Letter. The intention of this letter is to help students and supervisors plan academic timelines and thesis activities to ensure that students meet milestones and degree completion on time. The letters will be sent to students in the Spring term, with copy to the Supervisor. The letter identifies the number of terms of study completed (“term counts”), and whether they are on-time, over-time, or out-of-time as follows:

Program	On-time	Over-time	Out-of-time
MSc			
Full-time	6 terms	7-9 terms	>9 terms
Part-time	12 terms	13-15 terms	>15 terms
PhD			
Full-time	12 terms	13-18 terms	>18 terms
Part-time	18 terms	19-24 terms	>24 terms
PhD Dual			
Full-time	15 terms	16-21 terms	>21 terms

The Academic Progress letters will also serve to keep the program informed about any changes to the student’s academic timeline.

➤ **Course Enrollment in All Academic Terms**

To be fully enrolled as a graduate student, all students must enrol in at least one course in all three academic terms. If a student is not taking a course in a term, a placeholder course must be added:

- **SGS 700** For students who pay on a term-by-term basis (Thesis Based Students)
- **SGS 711** For student who pay fees on course-costed basis (Course Based Students)

➤ **Reporting Awards and Publications**

Students are asked to report their awards and publications to the Rehabilitation Science program. This allows the program to keep track of, report, and share student accomplishments within and outside SRS.

➤ **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 outlined 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. McMaster University has two subscriptions for plagiarism software, both available through Avenue to Learn.

- a) **Turnitin** is regularly uses to reveal plagiarism for assignments and other materials submitted for courses.

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.

MSC THESIS PROGRAM

See [SGS Calendar, Section 3.3](#)

The **MSc thesis option** provides training that will develop knowledge, quantitative and qualitative research skills, and critical evaluation skills in Rehabilitation Science. Students study and apply theory, research design and analysis methods both qualitative and quantitative, to a Rehabilitation Science research thesis.

Students must comply with the SGS and the FHS Graduate Program regulations, successfully complete course requirements, and complete and defend a research thesis.

On-time completion for full-time students is two (2) years (6 terms) and three (4) years (12 terms) for part-time students. Please see [Appendix 12](#) for the academic timeline.

MSc Thesis Program Learning Outcomes

1. Apply theory to define and understand a question in rehabilitation science.
2. Define research questions to answer rehabilitation issues.
3. Apply appropriate research designs to address research questions in rehabilitation science.
4. Communicate knowledge within the field of Rehabilitation Science through various platforms (including rounds, conferences, seminars, course discussions, thesis defenses) and to various audiences.
5. Contribute to the advancement of the body of knowledge in Rehabilitation Science through collaborative evidence-based practice.
6. Conduct reviews of rehabilitation literature to synthesize knowledge in Rehabilitation Science.
7. Integrate ethical principles in conducting research and scholarly activities.

Minimum Course Requirements

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

1. REHAB 700 (The Development, Evaluation and Utilization of Theories in Rehabilitation)
2. An approved content course relevant to thesis
e.g., REHAB 704 (Independent Study), REHAB 716 (The Role of Rehabilitation Chronic Disease Management), REHAB 718 (Mobility Across Adult Life Span), REHAB 719 (Measurement of Outcomes in Rehabilitation Science), REHAB 722 (International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health), or REHAB 725 (Effective Knowledge Transfer for Rehabilitation Scientists)
3. An approved research methods course either quantitative or qualitative

e.g. qualitative: NURS/HRM 745 (Qualitative Research Methods), REHAB 772 (Introduction to Qualitative Research)

e.g. quantitative: REHAB 707 (Research Methods in Rehabilitation Science)

4. An approved data analysis course either quantitative or qualitative

e.g. qualitative: REHAB 758 (Qualitative Research Methods for Collecting, Analyzing and Interpreting Data)

e.g. quantitative: REHAB 714 (Statistical Methods in Rehabilitation Science), REHAB 717 (Special Topics in Statistical Methods for Rehabilitation Science)

NOTE: Students are not limited to quantitative or qualitative but may want to pursue training in both

Students may take courses from the RS Course-Based program such as REHAB 702, 703, and 772. See Section XIII for [RS Courses in the Thesis-based Program](#) for more information.

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.

The Supervisory Committee may require students to take additional courses. Students may choose additional courses, which are subject to approval by the Supervisory Committee. Courses are often taken in first year.

In addition, all new students are required to take the following courses **within the first month of admission:**

- **SGS 101:** Academic Research Integrity and Ethics
- **SGS 201:** Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

The courses are completed through Avenue to Learn.

Students who do not pass SGS 101 or 201 by the first month of their studies will receive an F grade in their record. The F grade will be manually removed by SGS once the student successfully completes both SGS 101 and 201. Please note that failure to complete the two required courses will also result in an SGS Enrolment Hold in the student record.

See [SGS Calendar, Section 2.6.5](#) for more information regarding these online modules. For additional information, including enrollment instructions <https://gs.mcmaster.ca/how-to-enrol-in-and-complete-sgs-101-and-201/>

MSc (RS) Thesis

See [SGS Calendar](#): Section 3.3

Students enrolled in the MSc thesis option program must complete a research thesis on an approved rehabilitation science issue. Research is conducted 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. The Supervisory Committee determines when a candidate is ready to write the thesis and ascertains whether the quality is satisfactory. The Committee will document permission to defend in the Committee Report. When students receive permission to defend from the committee, students need to contact the RS Administrative Staff so that the thesis defense can be coordinated.

Instructions for the MSc Thesis Defense can be found on Avenue to Learn and in this handbook Section Masters Thesis Defense Timeline. It is highly encouraged that students communicate their intent to defend to the RS Administrative Staff as soon as possible so that the office is made aware.

NOTE: PhD students should refer to the SGS Calendar for important dates including final date to initiate thesis on Mosaic and final date to file the thesis with Graduate Studies and complete degree requirements.

NOTE: Students planning to participate in the Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 convocation should have all degree requirements completed (including submission of thesis to MacSphere) by September 27, 2022 and March 31, 2023, respectively.

GUIDELINES FOR THESIS PROPOSAL

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

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.

There is no single required format for the thesis proposal. Students are advised to discuss the form that the proposal should take with their Supervisor 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. The proposal may be a single description of the thesis research; or, outline a series of manuscripts if these are distinguishable when the work is proposed. Such documents are typically 10 - 15 double-spaced pages.
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.

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.

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.

See [Appendix 3](#): Potential outline for MSc Thesis Proposal Manuscript Style. This appendix is provided in case students find it useful in preparation of thesis proposal and manuscript style theses. These formats are not required and may be customized as needed.

Note: Students need to refer to the important dates listed in the [SGS Calendar](#):
<https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=45&navoid=9140>

Transfer Procedure from MSc to PhD

[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 initiate the transfer* after completing a minimum of 3 MSc (RS) courses, one of which must include a research methods or statistics course, and complete a minimum of 4 courses before transferring.

Please see [Appendix 10](#) for more information about the transfer meeting.

PHD PROGRAM

See [SGS Calendar, Section 4](#)

The **PhD** in Rehabilitation Science provides training to develop rehabilitation scientists who will advance rehabilitation research and transfer new knowledge into practice and policy. This competency-based program educates students in rehabilitation theory, research design and methods, grantsmanship, scientific writing, knowledge exchange and translation, and

teaching/learning strategies. This option includes coursework, a comprehensive portfolio, and a thesis. Graduates will be prepared to take on academic, leadership or research roles.

Students must comply with the SGS and the FHS Graduate Program regulations, successfully complete course requirements, as well as complete a Comprehensive Examination and complete and defend a research thesis.

On-time completion for full-time students is four (4) years (12 terms), and six (6) years (18 terms) for part-time students. Please refer to [Appendix 12](#) for the academic timeline.

PhD Thesis Program Learning Outcomes

1. Prepare and contribute to grant applications that are competitive for funding both career award/fellowship and operating grants where Rehabilitation Science is the focus or a component of these funding initiatives.
2. Design methodology to answer research questions which identify a gap in knowledge and create new knowledge that is relevant to Rehabilitation Science.
3. Implement research methods to answer research questions in the areas of Rehabilitation Science such as: Best practice and knowledge translation; Childhood disability and participation; Functional health with aging or chronic disease; Neuromusculoskeletal function and mobility; Work, ability and participation; and Orthopedics manipulative physical therapy.
4. Defend and discuss their research orally within various platforms/forums which include conferences, rounds, supervisory committee meetings, comprehensive exams and thesis defenses.
5. Present the results of their research in scholarly papers and publish in peer reviewed journals to advance new knowledge and practice in Rehabilitation Science.
6. Translate their research findings for application to different audiences including faculty, clinicians, clients, students and the general public.
7. Implement effective teaching (i.e. teaching assistantship, rounds, presentations) and learning strategies (i.e. peer mentorships) in their area of expertise.
8. Integrate ethical principles in conducting research and scholarly activities.

Minimum Course Requirements

A PhD student must obtain the minimum course requirements that include:

1. REHAB 700 (The Development, Evaluation and Utilization of Theories in Rehabilitation)
2. REHAB 725 Knowledge Exchange and Translation
3. An approved content course relevant to thesis
e.g., REHAB 704 (Independent Study), REHAB 716 (The Role of Rehabilitation Chronic Disease Management), REHAB 718 (Mobility Across Adult Life Span), REHAB 719

(Measurement of Outcomes in Rehabilitation Science), REHAB 722 (International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health),

4. An approved research methods course either quantitative or qualitative
e.g. qualitative: NURS/HRM 745 (Qualitative Research Methods), REHAB 772 (Introduction to Qualitative Research),
e.g. quantitative: REHAB 707 (Research Methods in Rehabilitation Science)

NOTE: Students are not limited to quantitative or qualitative but may want to pursue training in both

5. An approved data analysis course either quantitative or qualitative, *e.g.*, REHAB 714, REHAB 717, REHAB 720, REHAB 758
e.g. qualitative: REHAB 758 (Qualitative Research Methods for Collecting, Analyzing and Interpreting Data)
e.g. quantitative: REHAB 714 (Statistical Methods in Rehabilitation Science), REHAB 717 (Special Topics in Statistical Methods for Rehabilitation Science)

Students may take courses from the RS Course-Based program such as REHAB 702, 703, and 772. See Section XIII for [RS Courses in the Thesis-based Program](#) for more information

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.

The 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. Students may choose additional courses, which are subject to approval by the Supervisory Committee. 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.

In addition, all new students are required to take the following courses within the first month of admission:

- **SGS 101:** *Academic Research Integrity and Ethics*
- **SGS 201:** Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

The courses are completed through Avenue to Learn.

Students who do not pass SGS 101 or 201 by the first month of their studies will receive an F grade in their record. The F grade will be manually removed by SGS once the student successfully completes both SGS 101 and 201. Please note that failure to complete the two required courses will also result in an SGS Enrolment Hold in the student record.

See [SGS Calendar, Section 2.6.5](#) for more information regarding these online modules. Additional information, including enrollment instructions, can be found by visiting <https://gs.mcmaster.ca/how-to-enrol-in-and-complete-sgs-101-and-201/>

Comprehensive Examination

See [SGS Calendar, Section 4.3](#)

PhD students are required to complete and pass the PhD Comprehensive Examination. The Comprehensive Examination will include submission and oral defense of a written portfolio designed to demonstrate breadth of knowledge and skills within their field, extending beyond the thesis topic. The candidate will use critical thinking and analysis to complete two tasks: a scholarly paper and a completed funding proposal.

The Comprehensive Examination will normally begin in the 12th of full-time doctoral-level work at McMaster University, and be completed by the 20th month, with an upper limit of 24 months (20 months and 28 months, respectively with an upper limit of 36 months for part-time students).

[Appendix 5](#) provides detailed information specific to the RS Graduate Program related to the Comprehensive Examination.

[Appendix 6](#) provides information to Comprehensive Examiners about their role as an examiner.

PhD (RS) Thesis

See [SGS Calendar, Section 4.3](#)

All students must complete and defend a thesis according to regulations outlined by the SGS ([SGS Calendar, Section 4.3](#)) 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. The Supervisory Committee determines when a candidate is ready to write the thesis and ascertains whether the quality is satisfactory. The Committee will document permission to defend in the Committee Report. When students

receive permission to defend from the committee, students need to contact the RS Administrative Staff so that the thesis defense can be coordinated.

Instructions for the PhD Thesis Defense can be found on Avenue to Learn and in this handbook [Section XVI](#). It is highly encouraged that students communicate their intent to defend to the RS Administrative Staff as soon as possible so that the office is made aware.

Please note that PhD defenses need to be initiated on Mosaic.

NOTE PhD students should refer to the SGS Calendar for important dates including final date to initiate thesis on Mosaic and final date to file the thesis with Graduate Studies and complete degree requirements.

NOTE PhD students should also note of the blackout periods listed in the SGS Calendar in which PhD defenses cannot be scheduled.

PhD students must have at least one paper from their thesis published or accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal prior to their thesis defense.

NOTE Students planning to participate in the Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 convocation should have all degree requirements completed (including submission of thesis to MacSphere) by September 27, 2022 and March 31, 2023, respectively.

GUIDELINES FOR THESIS PROPOSAL

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

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.

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

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.

See [Appendix 4](#): Potential outline for PhD Thesis Proposal Manuscript Style. This appendix is provided in case students find it useful in preparation of thesis proposal and manuscript style theses. These formats are not required and may be customized as needed.

NOTE: Students need to refer to the important dates listed in the [SGS Calendar](#): <https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=45&navoid=9140>

Cotutelle PhD

Doctoral students can complete a joint degree, or cotutelle, at any eligible institution. A memorandum of understanding signed by the two institutions outlining the agreement about this arrangement. Students completing the cotutelle would be enrolled as doctoral students in the PhD in the Rehabilitation Science program at McMaster, and as external PhD students in the other chosen university. Students who choose to do the cotutelle with McMaster and another university will have members of their committee from both McMaster and another university, with a primary supervisor at each of the universities. Students will be required to submit a cotutelle Letter of Intent to the School of Graduate Studies for approval within the first twelve months of the proposed program and will be assigned a supervisor at the second University. The supervisor at the second university will provide academic support for the duration of the program in conjunction with the supervisor at McMaster. In order to comply with the cotutelle requirements, students will first defend their thesis McMaster and then hold a second defense at the second university.

More information on McMaster’s cotutelle process can be found in [Section 2.1.5 of the Graduate Calendar](#) and on the [cotutelle website](#) of the School of Graduate Studies.

Dual Degree Option PhD students: Transfer from the RS PhD to the Professional Program (OT/PT)

Students in the dual degree option have the following academic timeline and associated program enrollment:

Year	Program
Year 1	RS PhD
Year 2	RS PhD
Year 3	OT MSc or PT MSc
Year 4	OT MSc or PT MSc
Year 5	RS PhD

The program coordinators will request for an academic plan change for dual degree students as they transfer from one program to another.

NOTE: Students in the dual degree program will need to pass their comprehensive examination before they can enter the professional program.

MSC COURSE BASED (ONLINE) PROGRAM

See [SGS Calendar, Section 3.2](#)

Students must comply with the SGS and the FHS Graduate Program regulations and successfully complete course requirements. The non-thesis course-based (online) option is offered on a part-time basis (minimum one course per term). This program is offered online and will be predominantly asynchronous learning, though courses may have anywhere between 1-3 synchronous virtual sessions.

Students are expected to complete the program within a 3-4 year time period, 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.

MSc Course-Based Program Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate advanced knowledge in rehabilitation science and apply this to rehabilitation issues in clinical practice.
2. Apply critical thinking and appraisal skills when accessing and evaluating rehabilitation research.
3. Contribute to debates and discussions of evidence* that pertains to rehabilitation issues for diverse individuals.
4. Apply evidence-based practice* to resolve issues within clinical practice, focusing on patient-centred care.
5. Conduct scholarship activities that advance knowledge regarding rehabilitation practice.
6. Measure the impact of the clinical decision-making process on improving health outcomes in practice and/or research.
7. Apply learning to develop potential adaptations (solutions) to rapidly changing health and social service systems within local, national, and international contexts.
8. Synthesize and integrate ideas that reflect current knowledge focusing on rehabilitation clinical practice, research, health systems, or education.
9. Assess the depth and breadth of knowledge across current trends in health care (such as knowledge translation, exposure to research methodology, and exploring leadership).

**Evidence based practice = “a systematic approach to clinical problem solving by the integration of best research evidence with clinical expertise and patient values” (Sackett, 1996)*

Minimum Course Requirements

Students in the standard MSc Course-based program must complete a total of eight (8) 3.0 credit courses.

1. Three (3) courses are **mandatory**:
 - a. REHAB 705 (Evaluating Sources of Evidence)
 - b. REHAB 706 (Measurement in Rehabilitation)
 - c. Either REHAB 774 (Quantitative Research Methods) OR REHAB 772 (Introduction to Qualitative Research)

2. Students are required to take three (3) additional half-course **electives**, which are offered through the Course-based program or have been approved by the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#). Online electives include REHAB 702 (Participation and Community Living), REHAB 708 (Clinical Reasoning and Decision Making), REHAB 710 (Facilitating Learning in Rehabilitation), REHAB 770 (Leadership in Rehabilitation), REHAB 771 (Work Organization and Health), REHAB 772 (Introduction to Qualitative Research), REHAB 773 (Knowledge Translation in Rehabilitation Practice), REHAB 774 (Quantitative Research Methods), REHAB 775 (Technological Innovation and Rehabilitation) and REHAB 704 (Independent Study) dependent upon the availability of faculty. Students may take a thesis-based course if they are able to be onsite at McMaster University. **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 \(RS\)](#).**

3. Students have three (3) **options** for completing the final two courses:

Option 1: REHAB 730 The Scholarly Paper (1-full course over 2 terms, September or January start): 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. Students 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 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 11](#) for REHAB 730 procedures.

Option 2: REHAB 735 Rehabilitation Research Project (1-full course over 3 terms, September start only): The Rehabilitation Research Project is designed to allow the students to conduct a small, supervised research project in their area of interest. The project involves the collection or analysis of primary data or the conduct of research with subjects or the secondary analysis of a previously collected database. Students work directly with a faculty mentor with expertise in the area. Deliverables include: 1) Research Proposal, 2) Progress evaluation (evaluated by the supervising faculty member), 3) Scientific Poster presentation, 4) Research Paper prepared for submission to a peer-reviewed journal, and 5) Lay Summary. Students wishing to take REHAB 735 need to have completed Research Methods REHAB774 or REHAB772 as a prerequisite.

Option 3: Two (2) additional electives (half courses). Note: Students who complete Option 3 need to notify rsgrad@mcmaster.ca to change the academic plan from “RESCONLMSC” Scholarly Paper to “RHABCROMSC” Courses only.

See Section XIII for RS Courses in the Course-based Program for more information

MSc Course program students in the Orthopedic Manipulative Manual Physical Therapy stream will follow separate 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 Program sends out a Graduation Information Handout with a form that should be completed by graduating students and submitted to the RS program.

NOTE: Students who complete Option 3 for the final course (completing 2 additional half-course electives) need to ensure that the academic plan changed from “RESCONLMSC” Scholarly Paper to “RHABCROMSC” Courses only in order to be approved for graduation.

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.

RS COURSE INFORMATION

➤ Required Courses for All Graduate Students

McMaster Graduate students are expected to complete two mandatory training courses as part of their degree requirements – SGS 101 and 201. The detailed information can be found in the [SGS Calendar](#):

- **SGS 101:** Academic Research Integrity and Ethics
- **SGS 201:** Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

Students who do not pass SGS 101 or 201 by the first month of their studies will receive an F grade in their record. The F grade will be manually removed by SGS once the student successfully completes both SGS 101 and 201. Please note that failure to complete the two required courses will also result in an SGS Enrolment Hold in the student record.

See [SGS Calendar Section 2.6.5](#) for more information regarding these online modules. For additional information, including enrollment instructions <https://gs.mcmaster.ca/how-to-enroll-in-and-complete-sgs-101-and-201/>

➤ RS Courses in the Thesis Based Program

Please refer to the RS Course Offering sheet, found in the RS Graduate Student Resources course shell, for the listing of courses offered in the 2022-2023 Academic Year. Auditing courses requires Assistant Dean (RS)'s review and approval.

Course	Instructor	Offered
REHAB 700 The Development, Evaluation and Utilization of Theories in Rehabilitation	Dr. E. Durocher	Winter Term
REHAB 704 Independent Study in Rehabilitation Science	SRS Faculty Advisor	All terms*
REHAB 707 Research Methods in Rehabilitation Science	Dr. A. Tang	Fall Term
REHAB 714 Statistical Methods in Rehabilitation Science	Dr. L Macedo	Fall Term

Course	Instructor	Offered
REHAB 716 The Role of Rehabilitation Chronic Disease Management	Dr. J. Richardson	Fall Term Not offered every year
REHAB 717 Special Topics in Statistical Methods for Rehabilitation Science	Prof. P. Stratford	Winter Term
REHAB 718 Mobility Across Adult Life Course; A Rehabilitation Perspective	Dr J. Harris	Winter Term Not offered every year
REHAB 719 Measurement of Outcomes in Rehabilitation Science	Dr. A. Kuspinar	Spring/Summer Term Not offered every year
REHAB 722 International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health: Theory and Use	Dr. P. McPhee	Winter Term Not offered every year
REHAB 725 Effective Knowledge Transfer for Rehabilitation Scientists	Dr. T. Packham	Spring/Summer Term
NUR/HRM 745 Qualitative Research Methods <i>(RS limited to 5 seats only, additional space is likely available)</i>	Dr. S. Jack/Dr. N. Carter	Winter Term
REHAB 758 Qualitative Research Methods for Collecting, Analyzing and Interpreting Data	Dr. S. VanderKaay	Spring/Summer Term

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

➤ **RS Courses in the Course-Based Program**

Course	Instructor	Offered
REHAB 702 Participation and Community Living	A. Costigan	Spring/Summer Term
REHAB 703 Selected Topics in Rehabilitation Science	A. Gross	All terms**
REHAB 704 Independent Study in Rehabilitation Science	Supervisor/Faculty Advisor	All terms**
REHAB 705 Evaluating Sources of Evidence*	L. Santaguida & M. Pryzbek	Fall Term
REHAB 706 Measurement in Rehabilitation*	L. Laakso & J. Vincent	Winter Term
REHAB 708 Clinical Reasoning and Decision-Making	S. Monteiro	Spring/Summer Term

Course		Offered
REHAB 710 Facilitating Learning in Rehabilitation Contexts	TBD	Fall Term
REHAB 715 Advanced Orthopaedic Manipulative Physiotherapy (OMPT) Specialization	A. Gross	Full Course (2 terms): Fall-Winter Term
REHAB 730 Scholarly Paper	S. Dhillon	Full Course (2 terms): Fall-Winter Term, Winter-Spring/Summer Term
HLTHMGT 732 Strategic Writing for Health Care Professionals (limited seating)	M. Clark	Winter Term
REHAB 735 Rehabilitation Research Project	A. Tang	Full Course (3 terms) Fall-Spring/Summer Terms
REHAB 770 Leadership in Rehabilitation	M. Suddergaard	Fall Term
REHAB 771 Work, Organization and Health	K. Cullen & J. Law	Winter Term
REHAB 772 Introduction to Qualitative Research*	A. Buettgen	Spring Term
REHAB 773 Knowledge Translation in Rehabilitation Practice	A.F. Khalid	Winter Term
REHAB 774 Quantitative Research Methods*	P. McPhee	Spring/Summer Term
REHAB 775 Technological Innovation and Rehabilitation	K. Wise	Fall & Spring/Summer Terms

* These are required courses for the course-based MSc degree (Students can choose either REHAB 772 or REHAB 774)

** 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.

Thesis-based students should speak with their Supervisor and Supervisory Committee members to select an appropriate coursework. Additionally, **the course of study must be documented on an *Education Plan* (A2L – RS Graduate Student Resources) and submitted to the Rehabilitation Science Program at rsggrad@mcmaster.ca for review** by the Assistant Dean (RS).

Students register for their courses on Mosaic. In some courses it is necessary to contact the Course Coordinator/Instructors to obtain approval to take the course before registration can be

completed. If approval is required to take a course, please email the course instructor, with copy to the Assistant Dean of Rehabilitation Science and the [RS Administrative Staff](#). If granted permission, the [RS Administrative Staff](#) will provide access for the student to enroll into the course on Mosaic.

Please note Sessional Dates in the SGS Calendar that specify deadline dates 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.

It is the student's responsibility to initiate and follow through on the completion of the "Drop and Add" feature on Mosaic. Informing the course instructor that they are 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 their course(s).

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. Start early; the process for taking courses in other departments and institutions can take time. For assistance, please contact the [RS Administrative Staff](#).

➤ **Course Outlines**

Course Outlines will be available on Avenue to Learn at the outset of each course, which 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.

➤ **Penalty for late Submission of Evaluative Components**

Unless otherwise negotiated with the instructor, there is a penalty for late assignments of 10% per day or part thereof (including each day of the weekend). When the due date does not specify a time, the assignment must be submitted by 11:59 PM of the stated day.

Extension Guidelines for Assignments in Rehabilitation Science

- Extensions will be granted only in extenuating circumstances as determined by course instructor(s). Poor time management and lack of organization are not valid reasons for an extension.
- Extensions must be requested at least 1 week in advance of the due date. Requests for extensions will not be considered within 48 hours of the deadline except under extenuating circumstances.
- The course instructor(s) and the learner should keep the email documentation of the request and response.
- Medical notes will be required for health-related extensions. If the learner is unwell one or two nights before the assignment is due, the majority of the assignment should already be completed, therefore requiring a very short extension (i.e. 1 day).
- Significant extension requests in course-based program courses will be discussed with the Program Coordinator.

In consideration of principles for universal design for learning, there may be flexibility offered in some due dates. Evaluative components where this may be applied will be outlined in Course Outlines.

For 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). INC grades will be converted to F in the next term according to the SGS deadlines if a grade change has not been submitted.

➤ **Course Assessment by the Student**

For each course, the [RS Administrative Staff](#) will provide each student with a link to a survey that will serve as a course evaluation. The survey is anonymous, and responses will be shared with the Assistant Dean (RS) and the course instructor. The RS Curriculum Committee is

interested in the information provided by the student to initiate improvements before the course is given again.

➤ **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>

➤ **Course Failure**

See *SGS Calendar, Section 2.6.8*

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. The Faculty Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study or the Associate Dean acting on its behalf will request for a departmental recommendation regarding the failing grade.

The following recommendations can be made by the program:

1. Student is required to withdraw
2. Student is allowed to repeat course
3. Student is allowed to replace course

Under exceptional circumstances, a course instructor may approve an extension for the student for the completion of work in a course and assign an Incomplete grade (INC). A student who receives an incomplete grade must complete the work as soon as possible.

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

➤ **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.

- FALL: First week of September

- WINTER: First week of January
- SPRING/SUMMER: Last week of April

SUPERVISION AND THE SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE in the MSc and PhD THESIS PROGRAM

See [SGS Calendar, Section 2.7](#)

➤ **Supervisor and Supervisory Committee**

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, feedback, advice, and guidance to the student throughout the time that the student is registered in the RS Graduate Program. The Supervisory Committee also approves the student's plan for their graduate studies.

Formal Supervisory Committee meetings are held regularly (every ~6 months; annually, at minimum) for the Committee to approve a plan for continuation of studies, 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 ensure that they present their progress clearly to their Committee, and request whatever input is required to have a clear plan of next steps.

It is the Supervisor's responsibility to select a Supervisory Committee, although they may also consult with the student. **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 (4th) member) at the discretion of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS). **The appointment of fourth (4th) 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 in writing to the [RS Administrative Staff for approval by the RS Assistant Dean and](#) the Associate Dean of Graduate

Studies (FHS). 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).

A template letter for request for approval of external members of the Supervisory Committee is available under Education Plan folder in the RS Graduate Student Resources Course shell on Avenue to Learn.

➤ **Education Plan**

Once the supervisory committee is selected, students are to submit the Education Plan to the RS program office within 4 months of registering in the program.

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 review the request for 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 Assistant Dean (RS) should be informed by the Supervisor. 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.

The Education Plan form is available under Education Plan folder in the RS Graduate Student Resources Course shell on Avenue to Learn.

➤ **First Supervisory Committee Meeting**

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

- For **Fall (September) 2022 Admissions**, the first meeting must be completed by 31 March 2023. This would count towards the 2022-2023 meeting requirement
- For **Winter (January) 2023 Admissions**, the first meeting must be completed by 31 July 2023. This would count towards the 2022-2023 meeting requirement
- For **Spring/Summer (May) 2023 Admissions**, the first meeting must be completed by 30 November 2023. This would count towards the 2022-2023 meeting requirement

The Assistant Dean (RS) must be given the option of attending the first (1st) 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.

For PhD students, please send an email to rsgrad@mcmaster.ca with a confirmation of your meeting date to initiate the online PhD Supervisory Committee Report on Mosaic (see below for more details about completing, circulating and submitting the Supervisory Committee Report).

For MSc students, please see below for details about completing, circulating and submitting the Supervisory Committee Report.

➤ **Supervisory Committee Meetings**

After the first meeting, each student is expected to meet with their 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.

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 and book the room or schedule a virtual meeting. If students are booking the meeting in-person, it is expected that the student will have the necessary equipment required (e.g. laptop, HDMI cord, VGA cord, USB, etc.). If there is equipment that the student will need to borrow, the student will need to contact the RS Administrative Staff in advance of the meeting. Any equipment borrowed will need to be returned to the RS Administrative Staff immediately following each meeting. See the General Student Information section of this Handbook for details about Room and AV Equipment Bookings.

Supervisory Committee Meetings are required for every Academic Year, with a **November 1st** deadline of the following Calendar Year applicable to that Academic Year. Once completed, the next meeting is not required until during the following Academic Year. While it is not required, it is still highly encouraged that students meet with their supervisory committee once every 6 months.

➤ **Supervisory Committee Reports**

Both the Supervisor and student should ensure that Supervisory Committee meetings take place and are officially recorded.

MSc Supervisory Committee Report

MSc students must complete the Supervisory Committee Report form for each supervisory committee meeting. It is optional that students also submit the **Student Tracking Form** sheet. The Supervisory Committee Report form and the Student Tracking form are available under Program Information in the RS Graduate Student Resources Course shell on Avenue to Learn.

Link to form:

https://gs.mcmaster.ca/app/uploads/2020/02/masters_supervisory_report_COVID.pdf

Ideally, the Student and Supervisor Report sections of the Supervisory Committee Meeting Report will be completed and circulated to Committee members for review in advance of the meeting. The final completed copy of the Supervisory Committee Meeting Report (with initials, evaluations, and signatures) will be submitted by the student to rsgrad@mcmaster.ca (with cc to Supervisor) after the meeting. The Report will then be reviewed for approval by the Assistant Dean (RS), then submitted to the School of Graduate Studies for the student's milestone to be updated. If the meeting is not approved, the Assistant Dean (RS) will meet with the student's supervisor to discuss further. Students should keep a copy of their committee meeting report for their own files.

PhD Supervisory Committee Report

Supervisory Committee Reports for PhD students are completed on Mosaic only (paper copy reports are not permitted, with the exception of students in the dual-degree option during the years they are enrolled in the clinical program). To initiate the online PhD Supervisory Committee report, please send an email to rsgrad@mcmaster.ca with a confirmation of the meeting date as soon as possible.

The student will receive an email of their initiated report. In advance of the Committee meeting, the student will complete and submit the Student Report, and the supervisor will complete and submit the Supervisor Report. The supervisory committee will then receive a link via email where they can review the Student and Supervisor reports in advance of the meeting and provide their ratings after the meeting. Once the report is completed by all committee members, it is reviewed by the Assistant Dean of Rehabilitation Science for approval and submission to SGS.

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](#).

Member reports include ratings of the progress made by the student in number, quality, and timeliness (meeting milestones, substantive progress at each meeting) of the student's coursework and research activities as Excellent, Satisfactory, Marginal, or Unsatisfactory. Grading descriptions can be found within the committee meeting report.

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 (RS) 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.**

➤ **RS Student Tracking Sheet**

The *Student Tracking Form* is an ongoing record 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. While this is optional to submit after each committee meeting, students should complete this form for their own personal tracking. This form can also be shared with the supervisory committee to help with timelines. Please note that the RS program office will request students to submit the Student Tracking Form twice in the academic year.

Tracking forms are provided in [Appendix 8](#) (MSc students) and [Appendix 9](#) (PhD students), and also on the RS Graduate Student Resources course shell on Avenue to Learn.

➤ **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 a graduate faculty member who is willing to accept formal responsibility for the supervision of the student to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS). 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 Vice Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS), the Dean of FHS, and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

➤ **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 Vice Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) who will recommend an appropriate course of action.

➤ **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 Vice 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, they 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 an incorrect listing of the supervisory committee on Mosaic.

➤ **Withdrawal from the Program**

Students who wish to withdraw for personal reasons are required to submit a ["Request for Change in a Graduate Student's Status"](#) form, which requires signatures from the Supervisor, and the Associate Dean (FHS) Graduate Studies. Prior to submitting the form, it is expected that the student meets with their supervisor and the Assistant Dean (RS) to discuss the reason for withdrawal.

MSc THESIS REQUIREMENTS AND DEFENSE

See [SGS Calendar, Section 3](#)

MSc students who are completing their degree and are in the process of writing their thesis should consult the **School of Graduate Student's Guide for the Preparation of Master's and Doctoral Theses**. All graduate students must conform to the style and form requirements detailed in the Guide.

<https://gs.mcmaster.ca/current-students/completing-your-degree/masters-thesis/>

The thesis may be submitted in the traditional standard thesis format or a "sandwich" thesis 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. Students must seek approval from the Supervisory Committee for the chosen format.

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/>.

See [Appendix 7](#) of this Handbook for the RS Program Standards for the Manuscript Style Thesis.

The procedure for MSc thesis preparation is as follows:

MSc Thesis Defense Timeline

Timeline	Step	Action/Responsibilities
	Student receives approval from Supervisory Committee to defend thesis	<p>Student: Discuss intent to defend thesis at a Supervisory Committee Meeting. If Committee approves that the thesis is ready for defense, the Student should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Communicate the intent to RS Program, ● Initiate thesis defense on Mosaic, and ● Begin preparing Approval To Defend form (on Avenue to Learn) for submission
Refer to SGS Sessional Dates for Important Dates	Student initiates thesis defense on Mosaic	<p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Initiate thesis defense in Mosaic under My Academics. Select Thesis Intent > Defend Thesis. Instructions can be found here. ● Validate that the Supervisory Committee names and email addresses are listed correctly. It is essential that this information is up-to-date and correct ● Refer to the SGS Graduate Calendar Sessional Dates for the “Final Date to Initiate Thesis Defense in Mosaic”. <p>Note: If the Supervisory Committee list is incorrect, inform the RS Staff as soon as possible.</p>
Minimum of 1 month before scheduled defense	Supervisor Submits Approval to Defend Form to RS Program	<p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In consultation with Supervisor and Committee members, provide three potential dates/times for the oral defense on the Approval to Defend form ● Submit this form to Supervisor to complete the External Examiner section ● Submit final copy of written thesis to RS program <p>Supervisor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify three proposed External Examiners who are at arm’s length from the Student, Supervisor, and Committee members ● The External Examiner is expected to have knowledge relevant to the thesis, and be at arm’s length from the student and their projects. They can be drawn from faculty within the SRS or external to it, as long as they

Timeline	Step	Action/Responsibilities
		<p>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 or have made plans to collaborate with these individuals in the immediate future. There should also be no other potential conflicts of interest, e.g. personal or financial. Ideally, External Examiners will hold graduate faculty status at their university, but individuals with relevant expertise without graduate supervisory privileges may be considered. Please provide rationale in the space provided on the Approval to Defend form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervisor submits the completed Approval to Defend Form to rsgrad@mcmaster.ca <p>Note: Supervisors cannot reach out to proposed External Examiners until they are reviewed and approved by Assistant Dean</p>
	Assistant Dean reviews proposed external examiners	<p>RS Staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forwards completed Approval to Defend form to Assistant Dean to review proposed External Examiners <p>RS Assistant Dean:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviews the three (3) proposed external examiners. Decision communicated to RS Staff <p>RS Staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates to Supervisor if the proposed External Examiners are approved or declined Staff will prompt the Supervisor to start contacting the approved External Examiner(s)
	Supervisor contacts proposed external examiners	<p>Supervisor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact External Examiners in order of preference Once an External Examiner is secured, provide the Examiner with the final copy of the Student's written thesis Confirm the name of the External Examiner, and date and time of the defense to RS Staff <p>*Note: Copy rsgrad@mcmaster.ca to all communication with the External Examiner.</p>
	RS Program secures a thesis exam Chair	<p>RS Staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secures Chair for thesis defense exam
3 weeks before scheduled defense	RS Program Sends out confirmation email	<p>RS Staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once the External Examiner and Chair are confirmed, send confirmation email of date, time, location, and a copy of the final written thesis to Supervisor, Supervisory Committee members, External Examiner, Chair, and Student

Timeline	Step	Action/Responsibilities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send thesis binder to Examination Chair at least 3 days before the thesis defense
Minimum of 1 week before defense	Staff invites student for a practice run of thesis before the examination	RS Staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invites students to briefly meet with staff to ensure that they are familiar with the set-up of the defense. This is an opportunity for the student to ask questions about what to expect on the day of the defense
THESIS DEFENSE		
	Revision	After the defense, the Student will be informed by the Examination Committee if any changes to the written thesis are required Student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete revisions to written thesis Submit the revised thesis to Supervisor for review
	Final Submission Sheet	Supervisor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervisor (and Committee, if applicable) reviews the revised thesis to confirm that all necessary and requested changes have been made If revisions are minor, the Supervisor will act on behalf of the defense committee to ensure that required changes have been made Once revisions are approved, sign and submit the Final Thesis Submission Sheet to RS Staff <p>Note: Please indicate whether or not the thesis requires a delay of publication. Student may request a postponement of digital publication for up to one year at the time of thesis submission to MacSphere</p>
Within 4 weeks of a successful defense (review the SGS Calendar for important dates)	Upload Thesis to MacSphere	Student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within 4 weeks of defense and once requested changes have been approved by Supervisor, upload the final e-thesis to MacSphere. Instructions can be found here Inform the RS Staff once the thesis is submitted to MacSphere <p>Note: <u>Students may have less than 4 weeks to meet SGS deadlines to be eligible for the next Convocation list or to avoid paying fees for the next academic term. It is the Student's responsibility to refer to the SGS Calendar for important dates listed in the sessional calendar.</u></p>
	Clear to Graduate	RS Staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once student submits both the final thesis on MacSphere and the Final Thesis Submission Sheet to the RS office, SGS will clear the student to graduate, provided that all other program requirements are complete.

Timeline	Step	Action/Responsibilities
		Students should be able to see their graduate status on Mosaic changed from “Eligible” to “Approved”.
	Exit Interview	RS Staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct 15-20 minute exit interview with Student to ask about their graduate experience in the Rehabilitation Science program
CONVOCATE/GRADUATE		

Notes about MSc Thesis Preparation:

- Students planning to defend their MSc thesis should communicate the intent as soon as possible with the RS Administrative Staff. This is important to ensure that the student is aware of the procedures, timelines, expectations, and responsibilities.
- 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 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.
- 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 defense.
- The final copy of the thesis must be sent to the RS Administrative Staff. The RS Administrative Staff will be attaching the thesis to the confirmation email sent out to the examining committee.

- When suitable revisions have been made, the student submits a completed *Approval to Defend* form available on A2L (RS Graduate Resources) to the [RS Administrative Staff](#) a minimum of **1 month** before the expected date of the defense. The approval to defend form needs to list 3 potential dates/times that work for the student, supervisor, and the committee. The supervisor is responsible for submitting the form to the RS Administrative Staff with a list of 3 proposed external examiners. The supervisor should not contact the proposed external examiners until they have been approved by the RS Assistant Dean. Students should not contact the external examiner. The External Examiner is expected to have knowledge relevant to the thesis, and be at arm's length from the student and their projects. 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 or have made plans to collaborate with these individuals in the immediate future. There should also be no other potential conflicts of interest, e.g. personal or financial. Ideally, External Examiners will hold graduate faculty status at their university, but individuals with relevant expertise without graduate supervisory privileges may be considered. Please provide rationale in the space provided on the Approval to Defend form. **The Approval to Defend form is for the RS Program's own record.**
- Once the Approval to Defend Form is received by the RS Administrative Staff, the three proposed external examiners will be reviewed by the RS Assistant Dean. Once the examiners have been approved, the RS Administrative Staff will prompt the Supervisor to start contacting the approved external examiners. The Supervisor needs to copy rsgrad@mcmaster.ca in all email communications with the external.
- Once a date and time for the defense and the external examiner is confirmed, the RS Administrative Staff will secure a chair for the defense. The RS Administrative Staff will then send out an email confirmation to the student, supervisor, committee members, external examiner, and examination chair with the defense details and final copy of the thesis. This confirmation email is typically sent out 2-3 weeks before the scheduled examination.
- The defense will be open to the SRS community unless a closed examination is requested. The Examination Chair will ask all persons except the Examination Committee to leave the room 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 2 rounds of questions by the Examination Committee. All examiners are expected to ask at least one (1) relevant question. The

defense should be completed within two (2) hours. For virtual thesis defenses, the examination will be held via Zoom and there will be a limit of 15 student observers.

- 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://gs.mcmaster.ca/current-students/completing-your-degree/masters-thesis/>).

Following the Defense, the student should ensure that the following are completed:

- Revise thesis if necessary
- Submit the **Final Thesis Submission Sheet** after revisions are completed
- Submit the **License to McMaster** form
- Upload thesis to MacSphere: [MacSphere: Home \(mcmaster.ca\)](#)

It is important to review the McMaster sessional dates to make sure that all components are completed by the end of the term.

PhD THESIS REQUIREMENTS AND DEFENSE

For PhD students, the thesis may either take the traditional standard thesis format or a “sandwich” thesis format (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 7](#) of this handbook for the *SRS Departmental Standards for the Manuscript Style Thesis*. See [Appendix 9](#) of this handbook for the *PhD Student Tracking Sheet*.

The RS Program is adopting the Accelerated PhD thesis Defense process. Please see below for more information.

PhD Accelerated Thesis Defense Timeline

Timeline	Step	Action/Responsibilities
	Student receives approval form Supervisory Committee to defend thesis	<p>Student: Discuss intent to defend thesis at a Supervisory Committee Meeting. If Committee approves that the thesis is ready for defense, the Student should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Communicate the intent to RS Program ● Initiate thesis defense on Mosaic, and ● Begin preparing the Approval To Defend form (on Avenue to Learn) for submission
Refer to SGS Sessional Dates for Important Dates	Student initiates thesis defense on Mosaic	<p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Initiate thesis defense in Mosaic under My Academics. Select Thesis Intent > Defend Thesis. Instructions can be found here. ● Validate that the Supervisory Committee names and email addresses are listed correctly. It is essential that this information is up-to-date and correct ● Refer to the SGS Graduate Calendar Sessional Dates for the “Final Date to Initiate Thesis Defense in Mosaic”. <p>Note: If the Supervisory Committee list is incorrect, inform the RS Staff as soon as possible.</p>
Minimum of 1 month before scheduled defense	Supervisor Submits Approval to Defend Form to RS Program	<p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In confirmation with Supervisor and Committee members, provide three potential dates/times for the oral defense on the Approval to Defend* form ● Submit this form to Supervisor to complete the External Examiner section ● Submit final copy of written thesis to RS program <p>Supervisor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify three proposed External Examiners who are at arm’s length from the Student, Supervisor, and Committee members ● Supervisor submits the completed Approval to Defend Form* to rsgad@mcmaster.ca <p>*Note: The Approval to Defend form is for RS Program records only</p>
Minimum of 1 month before scheduled defense	Supervisor Initiates Defense, Selects Accelerated Stream, and nominates External Examiners	<p>Supervisor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● After student initiates defense on Mosaic, Supervisor will receive an email from SGS to initiate defense ● Initiate the defense and select “Accelerated Stream”. Click Continue. ● Enter External Examiner information. Please nominate 3 external examiners. Click “Save” after each nominee. ● The External Examiner is expected to have knowledge relevant to the thesis, and be at arm’s length from the student and their projects. Specifically, the proposed

Timeline	Step	Action/Responsibilities
		<p>External Examiners should not have collaborated on a research project with the Supervisor within the last 6 years or have made plans to collaborate with these individuals in the immediate future. There should also be no other potential conflicts of interest, e.g. personal or financial. Ideally, External Examiners will hold graduate faculty status at their university, but individuals with relevant expertise without graduate supervisory privileges may be considered. Please provide rationale in the space provided on the Approval to Defend form</p> <p>Note: Supervisors cannot reach out to proposed External Examiners until they are reviewed and approved by Examining Committee and Assistant Dean.</p>
	<p>Examining Committee Approves External Examiner Nominees</p>	<p>Committee Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> After the Supervisor initiates the defense on Mosaic, Examining Committee will receive an email from SGS to review and approve External Examiner Nominees <p>Note: The nominees will not be sent to the Assistant Dean for approval until all committee members have approved the list.</p>
	<p>Assistant Dean (RS) Approves External Examiner Nominees</p>	<p>RS Assistant Dean:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> After all committee members approve the nominees for External Examiner, the Assistant Dean will receive an email from SGS to review and approve the nominee(s) <p>RS Staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates to the Supervisor if the proposed external examiners are approved or declined Prompt Supervisor to start contacting the approved external examiner(s)
	<p>Supervisor contacts proposed external examiners</p>	<p>Supervisor:</p> <p>Contact External Examiners in order of preference.</p> <p>*Note: Copy rsgard@mcmaster.ca to all communication with the External Examiner.</p>
	<p>RS Program secures a thesis exam Chair</p>	<p>RS Staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secures Chair for the thesis defense exam. Communicate confirmed Chair with Supervisor
	<p>Supervisor Selects Examiner and Enter Defense Details</p>	<p>Supervisor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once the External Examiner is confirmed, Supervisor selects confirmed External via link provided by SGS. Supervisor also identifies date, time, room, Chair of the defense (info provided by RS Staff) Upload a PDF file of the final thesis

Timeline	Step	Action/Responsibilities
3 weeks before scheduled defense	RS Staff Sends Out Confirmation Email	<p>RS Staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once the External Examiner and Chair are confirmed, send confirmation email of date, time, location, and a copy of the final written thesis to Supervisor, Supervisory Committee, External Examiner, Chair, and Student Send thesis binder to Examination Chair at least 3 days before the thesis defense <p>*Note: The email to the Student is separate from the email sent out to the Supervisor, Supervisory Committee, Chair, and External Examiner</p>
At least 2 weeks, with an upper maximum of 4 weeks	External Examiner Reviews Thesis and Completes External Examiner Report Online	<p>External Examiner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviews thesis and completes online report External Examiner must have a minimum of 2 weeks (and upper maximum of 4 weeks, time permitting) to review the thesis. SGS will send email reminders to the External Examiner to complete the report
At least 1 week before defense	Report Received by SGS and shared with Supervisor, Assistant Dean, RS Staff, and Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The link to the completed External Examiner report is sent via email to SGS Positive External Examiner reports are emailed automatically to the Supervisor, Committee, and RS Staff Negative External reports are received by SGS and then distributed by email to the Associate Dean, Committee, and RS Staff Reports are always shared with the Student If SGS does not receive the report 1 week before the defense, the Student has the option to defer their defense or waive their entitlement to the report SGS will email the Student, with a CC to the Supervisor, to confirm in writing that the defense is proceeding on the scheduled date If the report has not been received 2 business days before the defense, it will be rescheduled by SGS without exception
At least 1 week before defense	Staff invites student for a practice run of thesis before the examination	<p>RS Staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invites students to briefly meet with staff to ensure that they are familiar with the set-up of the defense. This is an opportunity for the student to ask questions about what to expect on the day of the defense
THESIS DEFENSE		
	Revision	<p>After the defense, the Student will be informed by the Examination Committee if any changes to the written thesis are required</p> <p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete revisions to written thesis

Timeline	Step	Action/Responsibilities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit the revised thesis to Supervisor for review
	Final Submission Sheet	<p>Supervisor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervisor (and Committee, if applicable) reviews the revised thesis If revisions are minor, the Supervisor will act on behalf of the defense committee to ensure that required changes have been made. Once revisions are approved, sign and submit Final Thesis Submission Sheet to RS Staff <p>Note: Please indicate whether or not the thesis requires a delay of publication. Student may request a postponement of digital publication for up to one year at the time of thesis submission to MacSphere</p>
Within 4 weeks of a successful defense	Upload Thesis to MacSphere	<p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within 4 weeks of defense and once requested changes have been approved by Supervisor, upload the final e-thesis to MacSphere. Instructions can be found here Inform the RS Staff once the thesis is submitted to MacSphere <p>Note: Students may have less than 4 weeks to meet SGS deadlines to be eligible for the next Convocation list or to avoid paying fees for the next academic term. It is the Student's responsibility to refer to the SGS Calendar for important dates listed in the sessional calendar.</p>
	Clear to Graduate	<p>RS Staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once student submitted both the final thesis on MacSphere and the Final Thesis Submission Sheet, SGS will clear the student to graduate, provided that all other program requirements are complete <p>Students should be able to see their graduate status on Mosaic change from "Eligible" to "Approved"</p>
	Exit Interview	<p>RS Staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct 15-20 minute exit interview with Student to ask about their graduate experience in the Rehabilitation Science program
CONVOCATE/GRADUATE		

Notes about PhD Accelerated Thesis Defense:

- Students planning to defend their PhD thesis should communicate the intent as soon as possible with the RS Administrative Staff. This is important to ensure that the student is aware of the procedures, timelines, expectations, and responsibilities. PhD students need to initiate the thesis defense on Mosaic.

- 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 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 they have 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.
- 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 defense.
- The final copy of the thesis must be sent to the RS Administrative Staff. The RS Administrative Staff will be attaching the thesis to the confirmation email sent out to the examining committee.
- When suitable revisions have been made, the student submits a completed *Approval to Defend* form available on A2L (RS Graduate Resources) to the [RS Administrative Staff](#) a minimum of **1 month** before the expected date of the defense. The approval to defend form needs to list 3 potential dates/times that work for the student, supervisor, and the committee. The supervisor is responsible for submitting the form to the RS Administrative Staff with a list of 3 proposed external examiners. The supervisor should not contact the proposed external examiners until they have been approved by the RS Assistant Dean. Students should not make contact with the external examiner. The External Examiner must be external to the SRS, is expected to have knowledge relevant to the thesis, and be at arm’s length from the student and their projects. The nominees for external examiner must have no current primary appointments/affiliation within the past 6 years, and must be at arm’s length from all members of the supervisory committee and the student. Specifically, the proposed External Examiners should not have collaborated on a research project with the Supervisor within the last 6 years or have made plans to collaborate with these individuals in the immediate future. There

should also be no other potential conflicts of interest, e.g. personal or financial. Ideally, External Examiners will hold graduate faculty status at their university, but individuals with relevant expertise without graduate supervisory privileges may be considered. Please provide rationale in the space provided on the Approval to Defend form. The Approval to Defend form is for the RS Program's own record.

- The Supervisor will need to select "Accelerated" thesis defense when initiating the student's defense on Mosaic. The Supervisor will receive a link from SGS to do this. The Supervisor can only contact external examiners once they are approved by the committee and the RS Assistant Dean. Once the external examiner is confirmed, it is the responsibility of the Supervisor to contact the external examiners. The supervisor should copy rsgrad@mcmaster.ca in all their email communication to the external examiner. Once an external examiner is confirmed, the RS Administrative Staff will secure a chair for the defense. The RS Administrative Staff will then send out an email confirmation to the student, supervisor, committee members, external examiner, and examination chair with the defense details and with the final copy of the thesis. This confirmation email is typically sent out 2-3 weeks before the scheduled examination.

- The defense will be open to the SRS community unless a closed exam is requested. 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 2 rounds of questions by the Examination Committee. All examiners are expected to ask at least one (1) relevant question. The defense would normally be completed within two (2) hours and should be no longer than 3 hours. For virtual thesis defenses, the examination will be held via Zoom and there will be a limit of 15 student observers.

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://gs.mcmaster.ca/current-students/completing-your-degree/doctoral-degree/>)

Following the Defense, the student should ensure that the following is are completed:

- Revise thesis if necessary
- Submit the Final Thesis Submission Sheet after revisions are completed
- Submit the License to McMaster form
- Upload thesis to MacSphere: MacSphere: Home (mcmaster.ca)

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, they 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 they 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.

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.

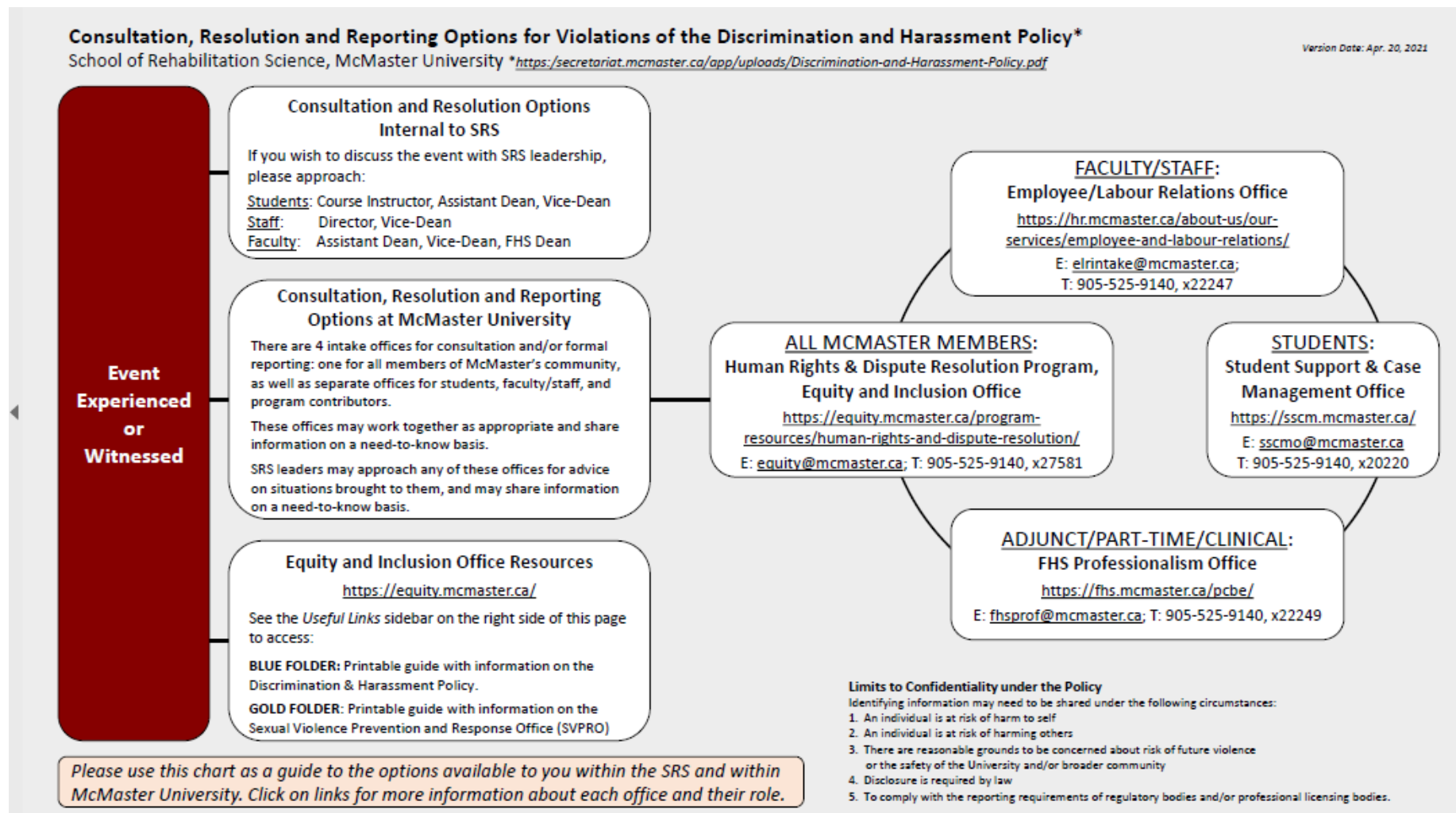
Students leaving the RS graduate program may be invited for an Exit Interview with the Program Coordinator. The contents of the Exit Interview are confidential, and responses will be kept anonymous. The purpose of this interview will be to obtain the graduate's perspective of strengths, gaps, and potential 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 meets with the RS students once a month after each Research 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 twice a year with the Dual Option students to ensure they are progressing within this training pathway.

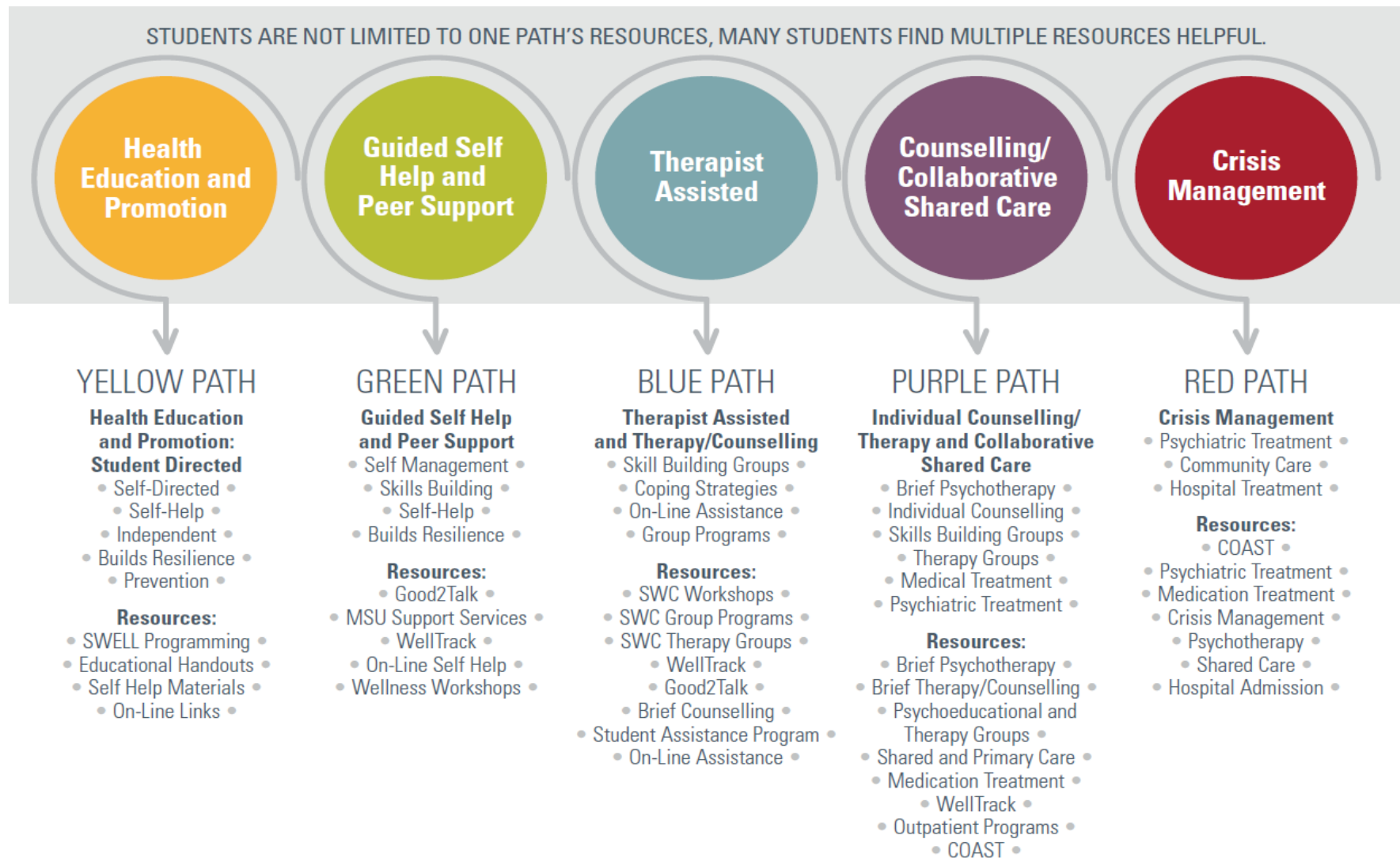
APPENDIX 1: STUDENT SERVICES AND RESOURCES

SRS REPORTING FLOW CHART



PATHWAYS TO CARE

Source: Student Wellness Centre



STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

McMaster University is committed to ensuring that each student is afforded an academic environment that is dedicated to the advancement of learning and is based on the principles of equitable access and individual dignity.

The Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities Policy can be access here: <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/app/uploads/Academic-Accommodations-Policy.pdf>

Student Accessibility Services offers various supports for students with disabilities. SAS assists with academic and disability-related needs, including Learning Strategies, Assistive Technologies, Test & Exam Administration, Note-taking, and Accommodation for Courses.

If you require accommodations for your academic courses, you are required to book an appointment with SAS. It is strongly recommended that you contact SAS, as soon as possible.

Student Accessibility Services

Location: Student Centre (MUSC) B107 (Lower Level)

Email: sas@mcmaster.ca

Phone: 905-525-9140 Ext 28652

Website: <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

Student Success Centre

Location: GH 110, MUSC B118, MUSC 212, Mills 213

Email: studentsuccess@mcmaster.ca

Phone: 905-525-9140 Ext 20960

Website: <https://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/>

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES

The International Student Services (ISS) is a division of the Student Success Centre and provides additional service and programs to international students. They provide services on immigration advising, success coaching, and provide opportunities for international students to connect through peer support and events.

International Student Services

Location: PGCLL 210/201

Website: <https://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/international-students/#>

STUDENT WELLNESS CENTRE

The Student Wellness Centre is a place on campus to address student wellness needs. The Student Wellness Centre provides a range of counselling options, medical services, and wellness programs to support student so that you can get the most out of your McMaster experience, academically and personally.

Student Wellness Centre

Location: PGCLL 210/201

Email: wellness@mcmaster.ca

Phone: 905-525-9140 Ext 27700

Website: <http://wellness.mcmaster.ca/>

HUMAN RIGHTS - EQUITY AND INCLUSION OFFICE

The Equity and Inclusion Office (EIO) promotes and supports institution-wide commitments to equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility, and principles to inclusive excellence, to foster a campus culture and community that respects the human rights, integrity, and dignity of all community members.

Equity and Inclusion Office

Location: University Hall, Room 104

Email: equity@mcmaster.ca

Phone: 905-525-9140 ext 27581

INDIGENOUS STUDENT HEALTH SCIENCES OFFICE

The Indigenous Students Health Sciences (ISHS) is dedicated to providing services and supports for academic success and well-being of all First Nations, Inuit, Métis students in the Faculty of Health Science at McMaster University.

Indigenous Students Health Sciences Offices
Email: ishs@mcmaster.ca
Phone: 905 525 9140 ext 23935
Website: <https://ishs.mcmaster.ca/>

LIBRARY SERVICES

Listed below are McMaster University libraries. For more information on McMaster Library, visit: <https://library.mcmaster.ca/>

For information on how to access McMaster Library resources from home, visit: <https://library.mcmaster.ca/services/off-campus-access>

Mills Library	Thode Library	Health Sciences Library
Email: library@mcmaster.ca phone: 905 525 9140 Ext 22077	Email: library@mcmaster.ca Phone: 605 525 9140 ext 22000	Email: hslib@mcmaster.ca Phone: 905 525 9140 Ext 22327

GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) of McMaster University advocates for the needs of the collective, acts as a resource, and provides support and services that improve the graduate student experience.

GSA provides services such as:

- Health and Dental: <https://gsa.mcmaster.ca/services/health-and-dental/>
- HSR Bus Pass: <https://gsa.mcmaster.ca/services/hsr/>
- Empower Me: <https://gsa.mcmaster.ca/services/empower-me/>

Graduate Student Association
Location: Refectory Rathskeller Building East Tower 2nd floor
Email: macgsa@mcmaster.ca
Phone: 905 525 9140 Ext 22043

McMASTER ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

McMASTER OFFICE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH LEARNERS (MODEL)

MODEL is a free service designed to help students who may be struggling with the English Language. MODEL offers english-language training, workshops, and support developed by certified ESL and EAP experts to meet the needs of McMaster students.

Email: model@mcmaster.ca
Location: LR Wilson Hall, Fourth Floor Room 4047
Phone: 605 525 9140 ext 23718

McMaster English Readiness for Graduate Excellence (MERGE)

The McMaster English Readiness for Graduate Excellence is an intensive certificate program for current or prospective graduate students from any institution who are looking to improve their English-language skills.

This comprehensive summer program is taught by the highest-qualified ESL/EAP instructors who have experience teaching in a university environment.

Email: meld@mcmaster.ca
Location: LR Wilson Hall, Fourth Floor Room 4047
Phone: 605 525 9140 ext 23718

OMBUDS Office

The Ombuds provides a confidential service that is designed to ensure that all students, staff, and faculty are treated in a fair and equitable manner within the institution.

Ombud's Office
Email: ombuds@mcmaster.ca
Phone: 905-525-9140 ext 24151

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.

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

References:

Provide key references.

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

PhD Thesis Proposal Components

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.

Component	Ethics	Data Collection Start	Data Complete	Analysis Complete	Draft to Committee	Revision Returned by Committee	Revisions Complete
Chapter 1 - Lit Review							
Chapter 2 - Paper 1							
Chapter 3 - Paper 2							
Chapter 3 - Paper 3							
Chapter 4 - Paper 4							
Chapter 5 - Final Chapter / Discussion							

References:

Provide key references.

APPENDIX 5: COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION OVERVIEW

OVERVIEW

During the course of their studies, all PhD candidates at McMaster are expected to acquire 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 Plan 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 defense 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 the breadth of knowledge and skills that are required to fulfill future roles as Rehabilitation Scientists. Students are expected to demonstrate their competence 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 funding within a peer-reviewed grant.
- Develop effective strategies to move rehabilitation research into practice.

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**. In their comprehensive proposal, students will explain how their proposed paper is distinct from their thesis research. The standard that will be applied by the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee (CEOC) when reviewing 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**: The proposal should be 10-12 single-spaced pages and ready for submission to an appropriate agency that conducts peer review. The grant proposal may request funding for the student's thesis research, or request operating funds for a different project. Personnel 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 if appropriate.
 - It may but does NOT need to include appendices like support letters, pilot data, and publications.

DISTINCTION OF THE PORTFOLIO FROM OTHER ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTS

The Comprehensive Proposal meets the requirement of the PhD program and the learning needs of the student by adding the knowledge, skills and opportunities obtained through thesis research. **It is important that work presented in the Comprehensive Portfolio does not duplicate work that has, or will, provide academic credit, including work from previous academic endeavors, current thesis research, or coursework.** Comprehensive portfolio 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 CEOC adjudicates whether the portfolio is sufficiently distinct from other academic activities. 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 in 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 address 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 will begin working on the Portfolio upon admission to the program, with support and guidance from their Supervisor and Supervisory Committee. 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 to complete any of the elements of the comprehensive components. However, the comprehensive plan and how it will be mentored and completed must be approved by the Supervisory Committee. If a mentor who is not appointed within RS is recruited to help with a component of the Comprehensive work, 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 CEOC 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; please include page numbers). 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 two components of the proposed portfolio.
- b. A list of completed or ongoing courses, including titles of the assignments.
- c. An explanation that addresses potential overlap between proposed portfolio components and the thesis or coursework.
- d. A description of each component of the proposed portfolio (Scholarly Paper and 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 Objectives:** A brief description of expected learning outcomes. These may include content knowledge, methodology, or process-related skills and knowledge to be gained by the student, rather than re-stating research objectives of the Scholarly Paper and Grant Proposal
 - **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 this will require identification of the target agency, type of funding call, and research design/approach, and knowledge translation

plan.

- **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 Scholarly Paper: A copy of the Instruction to Authors of the target journal
- For the Grant Proposal: The posted grant call and grant guidelines.

Portfolio Plan Submission Process

After receiving feedback from their Supervisory Committee, the student must submit their Portfolio Plan to the Chair of the CEOC. The Portfolio Plan is reviewed by the CEOC 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.

The CEOC meets on a monthly basis (1st Wednesday of each month, no meetings in August). Portfolio Plans must be received at least two (2) weeks in advance of the meeting; plans received less than two (2) weeks prior to the next scheduled meeting will be held for review at the following meeting. Students therefore need to allow for 2-6 weeks before receiving feedback from the CEOC.

Supervisory Committee Responsibilities Related to Portfolio Plan 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 CEOC has the main responsibility for ensuring the work proposed and conducted complies with program and university policies related to the comprehensive process. The CEOC reviews the proposed scope of work and provides feedback to the student about whether they have defined a scope of work that meets the expected requirements of the comprehensive examination. The CEOC 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 Examination 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 topic.
- 2) There are no apparent critical flaws in the proposed work (e.g., ethical violations).

The CEOC does not judge whether optimal methods have been selected based on the Comprehensive Plan. The CEOC *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, as 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 CEOC. 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 Examination 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 Portfolio Plan and obtaining CEOC approval by twelve (12) months (full-time students) or twenty (20) months (part-time students).
- Conducting independent work and seeking feedback during portfolio completion.
- Notifying the CEOC if a need arises for substantive changes to the approved plan
 - It is anticipated that as the work is executed minor modifications may need to be made to refine the work or accommodate for unexpected events (e.g., difficulty with recruitment, data issues, equipment failure). These modifications do not require contact with the CEOC 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 CEOC.
- 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.
- Completing all 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 CEOC, 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) and copies the RS Administrative Staff. 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 defense. 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 and a reflection on their learning. The CEOC reviews and approves the portfolio or requests revisions within two (2) weeks.

Step 2

Students should prepare the *Approval to Submit Portfolio* form (available on A2L) in consultation with their Supervisor and Supervisory Committee members. The student will submit the final 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 be signed and approved by a majority of the Supervisory Committee members. Whenever possible, all Committee members will sign the form indicating approval or non-approval of the portfolio. The form must include possible dates for the examination and 3 potential External Examiners. The recommended timeframe is 18 months from the time that the student starts the program.

The External Examiner is expected to have knowledge in the field of rehabilitation science and be at arm's length from the student and their projects, as approved by the Chair of the CEOC. 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 or have made plans to collaborate with these individuals in the immediate future. There should also be no other potential conflicts of interest, e.g. personal or financial. Ideally, External Examiners will hold graduate faculty status at their university, but individuals with relevant expertise without graduate supervisory privileges may be considered. Please provide rationale in the space provided. The proposed dates should be held by the student's Supervisory Committee including their Supervisor.

Step 3

The Chair of the CEOC will check eligibility of the proposed External Examiners and will confirm this with the RS Administrative Staff. The RS Administrative Staff will communicate the eligibility of the proposed External Examiners to the student's supervisor. The student's supervisor can reach out to invite any one of the eligible External Examiners. The supervisor will confirm with the RS Administrative Staff once the external examiner has agreed to take the role. The RS Administrative Staff will confirm the availability of the external examiner, committee members, and arrange a chair for the exam. The room to hold the examination is booked by the [RS Administrative Staff](#). If the examination is virtual, the RS Administrative Staff will set up a virtual meeting via Zoom. Confirmation of the Comprehensive Exam will be forwarded to the Supervisor, Chair of the CEOC, Examination Chair, student, Supervisory Committee, and the external examiner by the [RS Administrative Staff](#).

The Examination 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 Examination Committee will consist of:

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

The student's Supervisor will attend the exam but does not vote. If applicable, the 4th member of the student's supervisory committee may attend, but as an observer only (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 three (3) weeks prior to the examination date.

- The approved Comprehensive Examination Portfolio Plan including the appendices
- A description of deviations from the original Comprehensive Examination Portfolio 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 CEOC meets on the 1st Wednesday of each month, except for the month of August.

The External Examiner does not need to prepare a written report.

THE COMPREHENSIVE PORTFOLIO ORAL EXAMINATION PROCESS

The Comprehensive Examination is an open defense. The presentation is open to observers; but only the Examination Committee can ask questions. The deliberations of the Examination Committee and voting will be confidential (the Thesis Supervisor and the Assistant Dean are invited to attend the deliberations; voting is done by private communication to the Examination Chair). The feedback to the candidate will be provided by the examiners with only the candidate, the Thesis Supervisor, the Assistant Dean (RS), Examination Chair, and the Examination Committee present.

The oral 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 their 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 members of the Examination Committee. 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 meeting room, the Examination Chair will moderate a discussion among members of the Examination Committee on the performance of the student. Voting is then completed by private communication to the Chair. The Examination Committee will vote on the student's written portfolio, presentation skills, and oral defense. Both components of the portfolio (scholarly paper, grant proposal) are equally important in evaluation.

If the Portfolio and its defense are considered acceptable to all Committee members, the student will *"pass"* the Comprehensive Examination. To pass, no negative vote is permitted and abstentions are not allowed. Although the Examination Committee is encouraged to deliberate and discuss their feedback, the voting is done by private communication to the exam Chair.

If a pass is awarded, the Committee can then choose whether to assign an excellent overall rating (*"pass with distinction"*). An excellent Comprehensive Examination rating refers both to the quality of the submitted written work and the quality of the defense. Excellent quality for each written component is judged based on standards for a publishable manuscript, and a fundable grant application. To *pass with distinction*, no negative votes are permitted, and abstentions are not allowed.

If any members of the Examination Committee vote *"fail"* for any component of the Comprehensive Examination (two components of written portfolio, oral presentation, oral defense), the student receives a *"fail"*. 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 (i.e. only student, Supervisor, Assistant Dean of (RS) (or the assigned alternate if a conflict arises) and Examiners are present), and the student only presents or responds to areas identified by the Examination Committee. **The repeat examination must be completed within**

two (2) months. The repeat examination is decided as a pass/fail based on majority vote, but the Committee should make every effort to achieve consensus on the final pass/fail decision. If the Committee cannot agree, the Assistant Dean (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.

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 defense. The student’s Supervisor will be invited to attend the feedback session and may take notes to ensure that they are able to clarify or reinforce the feedback with the student at a later date. **Supervisors are not to 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 in the context of the work described in the portfolio.
- 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.

Three components of the Comprehensive Examination are evaluated: the written document, oral presentation, and response to questions asked by the Examination Committee at the Oral Defense.

Pass/Fail Criteria

Written	Presentation	Response
The portfolio fulfills the above criteria in the written document.	The presentation fulfills the above criteria and is organized, clear, and describes / highlights key research findings.	80% of questions must be addressed. Most questions are addressed with breadth, depth and understanding.

Pass with Distinction/Excellent

Note that to be awarded Pass with Distinction, the student must complete the comprehensive examination in a timely way e.g., within 24 months or less of doctoral studies

Written	Presentation	Response
<p>The Scholarly Paper is a publishable research manuscript; the grant application is potentially fundable; and the comprehensive package in its entirety is coherent, clear, well organized, and written, with insightful reflections.</p>	<p>The presentation fulfills all criteria and is organized. engaging, clear, highlighting and describing key research, and student is articulate throughout the presentation.</p>	<p>All questions addressed. Student should be able to interpret, apply and clearly, respond with breadth, depth and understanding.</p>

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 aims of our Comprehensive Portfolio/Examination are to provide trainees with an opportunity to achieve learning goals that complement those acquired during their thesis research; and extend their knowledge, research methods, and skills with an emphasis on the type of scholarly 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 three (3) examiners who adjudicate this defense. Two (2) examiners are selected from the student's Advisory 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 Examination 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 both Comprehensive Examination Portfolio components during an oral exam. The Comprehensive Examination components are completed by the student during the first half of the program and are required for successful progression through the program. The student is expected to continue with their thesis research during this time, but may not have a fully developed thesis research plan at the time the Comprehensive Examination 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 student and approved by the student's Supervisory Committee and the Comprehensive Examination 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 defense. The attendance of all Examiners is required for the oral examination. Attendance can be in person, or by conferencing (electronic or telephone) if necessary. The External Examiner does not need to prepare a written

report. There will be an appointed Chair of the Comprehensive Examination, selected from the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee, who will ensure procedures are followed. Typically, there will be two rounds of questions, with the second round being shorter than the first. The student 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 student 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 (non-voting Chair), 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 Defense*').
 - c. The Supervisor will not be a member of the Comprehensive Examination Committee, but will be encouraged to attend the oral defense. If applicable, the 4th member of the student's supervisory committee may also attend (observer only, does not vote)
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 Defense*'). Although the examination committee is encouraged to deliberate and discuss their feedback, the voting is done by private communication to the exam chair.

If the Portfolio and its defense are considered acceptable to all Committee members, the student will "*pass*" the Comprehensive Examination. Although the Examination Committee is encouraged to deliberate and discuss their feedback, the voting is done by private communication to the exam Chair.

If a pass is awarded, the Committee can then choose whether to assign an excellent overall rating ("*pass with distinction*"). An excellent Comprehensive Examination rating refers both to the quality of the submitted written work and the quality of the defense. Excellent quality for each written component is judged based on standards for a publishable manuscript, and a fundable grant application. A *pass with distinction* is determined by unanimous vote.

If any members of the Examination Committee vote “fail” for any component of the Comprehensive Examination (two components of written portfolio, oral presentation, oral defense), the student receives a “fail”. The 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 Comprehensive 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 (i.e. only student, Supervisor, Assistant Dean of (RS) (or the assigned alternate if a conflict arises) and Examiners are present), and the student only presents or responds to areas identified by the Examination Committee. **The repeat examination must occur within two (2) months.** The repeat examination is decided as a pass/fail based on majority vote, but 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.

3. 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 and may take notes to ensure that they are able to clarify or reinforce the feedback with the student at a later date. **Supervisors are not to 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 in the context of the work described in the portfolio.
- 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 portfolio fulfills the above criteria in the written document.	The presentation fulfills the above criteria and is organized, clear, and describes / highlights key research findings.	80% of questions must be addressed. Most questions are addressed with breadth, depth and understanding.

Pass with Distinction/Excellent

Note that to be awarded Pass with Distinction, the student must complete the comprehensive examination in a timely way e.g., within 24 months or less of doctoral studies

Written	Presentation	Response
The Scholarly Paper is a publishable research manuscript; the grant application is potentially fundable; and the comprehensive package in its entirety is coherent, clear, well organized, and written, with insightful reflections.	The presentation fulfills all criteria and is organized, engaging, clear, highlighting and describing key research, and student is articulate throughout the presentation.	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: RS PROGRAM 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/current-students/completing-your-degree/>

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 Supervisory 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 defense (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 defense.
 - 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 usually-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.

Standards for Examination: The thesis will be examined according to the traditional standards of the department. The defense 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. For more information visit:
<https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/index.php>

APPENDIX 8: 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 their Supervisory Committee meeting and reviewed at the meeting. The RS Program will request for students to submit this form to rsgrad@mcmaster.ca when the program does administrative tracking.

Name: _____ McMaster Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

_____ Phone: _____

Status: FT or PT Supervisor: _____

Program Enrollment Date: ____/____/____
MM YYYY

Program Completion Date: ____/____/____
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>	
Education Plan		3 months (e.g., Nov 30)	6 months (e.g., Feb 28)	
Individual Development Plan (IDP)		6 months (e.g., Feb 28)	6 months (e.g., Feb 28)	
IDP meeting #1 with Assistant Dean				
COURSES COMPLETED (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 RS Administrative Staff				
SGS 101		3 months (e.g., Nov 30)	6 months (e.g., Feb 28)	
SGS 201		3 months (e.g., Nov 30)	6 months (e.g., Feb 28)	
Regular Research Rounds attendance				
Regular RS Skills attendance				
Regular Senior Student Seminar attendance				
*First Committee Meeting (Assistant Dean (RS) must attend the 1 st meeting). Committee approves area of research and training plans.		6 months (e.g., Feb 28)	9 months (e.g., May 30)	
Permission to collect data				
Permission to write thesis				
*Supervisory Committee Meeting		Year 2	Year 2	
IDP meeting #2 with Assistant Dean				
Permission to write thesis		18-20 months (e.g., Feb 28 – Apr 30)	24 months (e.g., Aug 31)	
Permission to defend thesis		21-22 months (e.g., May 31 – June 30)	26 months (e.g., Oct 31)	

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 (Insert dates below)	Part-time (Insert dates below)	
Thesis Defense		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

List Publications:
List Presentations:

APPENDIX 9: 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 their Supervisory Committee meeting and reviewed at the meeting. The RS Program will request for students to submit this form to rsgad@mcmaster.ca when the program does administrative tracking.


Name: _____ McMaster Email: _____


Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____

Status: FT or PT Supervisor: _____

Today's Date: ___/___/___ Program Enrollment Date: ___/___/___ Program Completion Date: ___/___/___
M D Y M YYYY M YYYY

PROGRAM MILESTONES					
Activity	Document/Form Required All forms can be found on A2L (RS Graduate Student Resources)	In Progress 	Recommended Timing (Note completion date)		Comments (Note exceptions or planned next steps)
			Full-time (Insert dates below)	Part-time (Insert dates below)	
Education Plan			3 months (e.g., Nov 30)	6 months (e.g., Feb 28)	
Individual Development Plan (IDP)			6 months (e.g., Feb 28)	6 months (e.g., Feb 28)	
IDP meeting #1 with Assistant Dean					
COURSES COMPLETED (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)					
SGS 101			3 months (e.g., Nov 30)	6 months (e.g., Feb 28)	
SGS 201			3 months (e.g., Nov 30)	6 months (e.g., Feb 28)	
*First Committee Meeting (Assistant Dean (RS) must attend the 1 st meeting). Committee approves area of research and training plans.			6 months (e.g., Feb 28)	9 months (e.g., May 30)	
Regular Research Rounds attendance					
Regular RS Skills attendance					
Regular Senior Student Seminar attendance					
Approval of Comprehensive Topics by Supervisory Committee			6 months (e.g., Feb 28)	9 months (e.g., May 30)	

PROGRAM MILESTONES					
Activity	Document/Form Required All forms can be found on A2L (RS Graduate Student Resources)	In Progress 	Recommended Timing (Note completion date)		Comments (Note exceptions or planned next steps)
			Full-time (Insert dates below)	Part-time (Insert dates below)	
Plan for Comprehensive Exam Portfolio: Approved by Oversight Committee			12 months	18 months	
Comprehensive Exam			18 months	24 months	
Thesis Proposal/Plan: Approved by Supervisory Committee			Recommend maximum of 24 months	Recommend maximum of 36 months	
*Supervisory Committee Meeting			Year 2 (Sept-Aug)	Year 2 (Sept-Aug)	
IDP meeting #2 with Assistant Dean					
Ethics Completed (if required)					
Permission to collect data			20-24 months	28-36 months	
*Supervisory Committee Meeting			Year 3 (Sept-Aug)	Year 3 (Sept-Aug)	
IDP meeting #3 with Assistant Dean					
Permission to write thesis			24-30 months	36-44 months	
*Supervisory Committee Meeting			Year 4 (Sept-Aug)	Year 4 (Sept-Aug)	
IDP meeting #4 with Assistant Dean					
Permission to defend thesis			38-46 months	58-70 months	
Thesis Defense			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

List Publications:
List Presentations:

APPENDIX 10: Transfer Procedure from RS MSc Thesis-Based to PhD Thesis Program

See [SGS Calendar, Section 2.1.3](#)

Eligible students enrolled in the MSc thesis-based program can transfer to the PhD (RS) program **after completing four (4) 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 course-based MSc (RS) student, proposed supervisor. The course requirements to transfer are the same in both MSc (RS) thesis-based or course-based options. Students may express intention to transfer by submit Request to Transfer form after they have successfully completed a minimum of three (3) MSc (RS) courses, which must include a research methods or statistics course.

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:

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

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 Student and PhD Supervisor will indicate their intention to transfer by submitting the Request to Transfer form (below, and available on Avenue to Learn).

To be eligible to transfer, the Student must have successfully completed the four (4) required courses as follows, with an overall A- average:

1. REHAB 700 (The Development, Evaluation and Utilization of Theories in Rehabilitation)
2. **An approved content course**
 - a. *e.g., REHAB 704 (Independent Study), REHAB 716 (The Role of Rehabilitation Chronic Disease Management), REHAB 718 (Mobility Across Adult Life Span) REHAB 725 (Knowledge Exchange and Translation), or an alternative substantive course approved by the Assistant Dean*
3. **An approved research methods course:** *e.g. REHAB 707 (Research Methods in Rehabilitation Science), REHAB 772 (Introduction to Qualitative Research), NURS/HRM 745 (Qualitative Research Methods)*

4. **An approved data analysis course:** REHAB 714 (Statistical Methods in Rehabilitation Science), REHAB 717 (Special Topics in Statistical Methods for Rehabilitation Science), REHAB 758 (Qualitative Research Methods for Collecting, Analyzing and Interpreting Data)

Note: If applicable, students may consider courses from course-based program, such as REHAB 702, REHAB 703, REHAB 772

The process to initiate or express interest to transfer is normally done 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. Expressing interest to transfer requires submission of the “Request to Transfer form”.

If the student plans to transfer to the PhD program and will meet the minimum requirements, the following should be completed to initiate the transfer process:

- **Meet with the Assistant Dean**

The supervisor and the student meet with the RS Assistant Dean to review the transfer process and discuss the student’s eligibility to transfer.

This meeting should take place at 12 months of study for full-time students or 24 months of study for part-time students.

- **Submit Request to Transfer from MSc to PhD form**

The **Request to Transfer from MSc to PhD** form is provided below, and also located on Avenue to Learn RS Graduate Student Resources Course shell.

This form should be submitted **three (3) months prior** to the date of the expected transfer.

Transfers become effective only on the following dates: September 1st, January 1st and May 1st.

The transfer becomes effective at the start of the next term. For example, if a student successfully passed their transfer exam in the Spring/Summer term, the transfer would become effective in the Fall term.

Documents Required for the Transfer Meeting Package

The following documents will comprise the Transfer Meeting Package, which will be circulated to the Transfer Evaluation Committee for review:

1. **Transfer Meeting Report**

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 Transfer Meeting Report will consist of three (3) components and should be 4-5 pages double spaced: The three components are:

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

2. Letter of Support from Supervisor

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.

3. An Updated Curriculum Vitae (CV)

The student should submit an updated CV.

Scheduling a Transfer Meeting

The time, date, and place of the Transfer Meeting will be arranged by the Rehabilitation Science Graduate Office. Once arrangements have been made, the student, the Transfer Committee, and the Assistant Dean (RS) will be notified.

The Transfer Meeting Package (Transfer Meeting Report, Supervisor Letter of Support, CV) 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.

Transfer Meeting

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 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.

The student is allowed one (1) hour maximum for the Transfer Meeting. The Transfer Meeting Report will be defended to the Transfer Meeting Evaluation Committee through a brief presentation (15-20 minutes), followed by one round of questioning. The Chair will then 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:

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

- One (1) RS graduate faculty member, appointed by the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#)
- One (1) member of the RS Admissions Committee who is independent from the student's committee; and,
- The [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#) or 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.

The student's planned PhD Supervisor will be present but does not have a vote.

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

- Chair of the PhD Admissions Committee;
- Chair of the Curriculum Committee; or,
- Chair of the Comprehensive Examination Committee.

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.

Upon successful transfer, the student's record will be updated by the School of Graduate Studies. The academic term count will also be re-set once the student starts their PhD studies. Course work that students have previously done in their MSc will be counted towards the PhD degree.

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

Student to complete this section of the form and submit to the RS Administrative Staff

Student's name: _____

Brief statement of reasons for transferring into the PhD program (maximum 100 words)

Brief summary of the area of research (noting if in progress) (maximum 100 words)

By adding my name below, I indicate that I approve of the information submitted:

Student Name

Date

PhD Supervisor to complete this section of the form.

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 is required.

By adding my name below, 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: _____

Supervisor Name

Date

APPENDIX 11: REHAB 730 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 taking more than 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, research, 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 their faculty advisor to discuss topics and prepare a proposal. This proposal becomes the student's contract with the examiners and their 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 in Microsoft Word format 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 11](#) of the REHAB 730 Scholarly Paper Course Outline), 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 12: ACADEMIC TIMELINE

Year	Term	Month		MSc		PhD		PhD Dual		
				FT	PT	FT	PT	FT		
1	1	1	Sep	Education Plan Due	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	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	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	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				

Year	Term	Month		MSc		PhD		PhD Dual					
				FT	PT	FT	PT	FT					
4	10	37	Sep	OUT OF TIME				MSc OT / MSc PT					
		38	Oct										
		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						OUT OF TIME				
		66	Feb										
		67	Mar										
		68	Apr										
	18	69	May										OVERTIME
		70	Jun										
		71	Jul										
		72	Aug										
7	19	73	Sep										
		74	Oct										
		75	Nov										

Year	Term	Month		MSc		PhD		PhD Dual
				FT	PT	FT	PT	FT
	20	76	Dec					
		77	Jan					
		78	Feb					
		79	Mar					
	21	80	Apr					
		81	May					
		82	Jun					
		83	Jul					
8	22	84	Aug					
		85	Sep					
		86	Oct					
		87	Nov					
	23	88	Dec					
		89	Jan					
		90	Feb					
		91	Mar					
	24	92	Apr					
		93	May					
		94	Jun					
		95	Jul					
96		Aug						
9	25	97	Sep					
		98	Oct					
		99	Nov					
		100	Dec					