Department of Materials Science and Engineering

Graduate Program Handbook 2025/2026

Updated: August 2025

WELCOME NOTE (2025/2026)

Please note that this handbook is comprised of two sections: the first contains general information which graduate students in all Faculty of Engineering departments will find useful; the second includes information specific to the Department of Materials Science & Engineering.

Disclaimer:

In the event of a discrepancy between the information provided in this handbook and The School of Graduate Studies Calendar, the latter prevails.
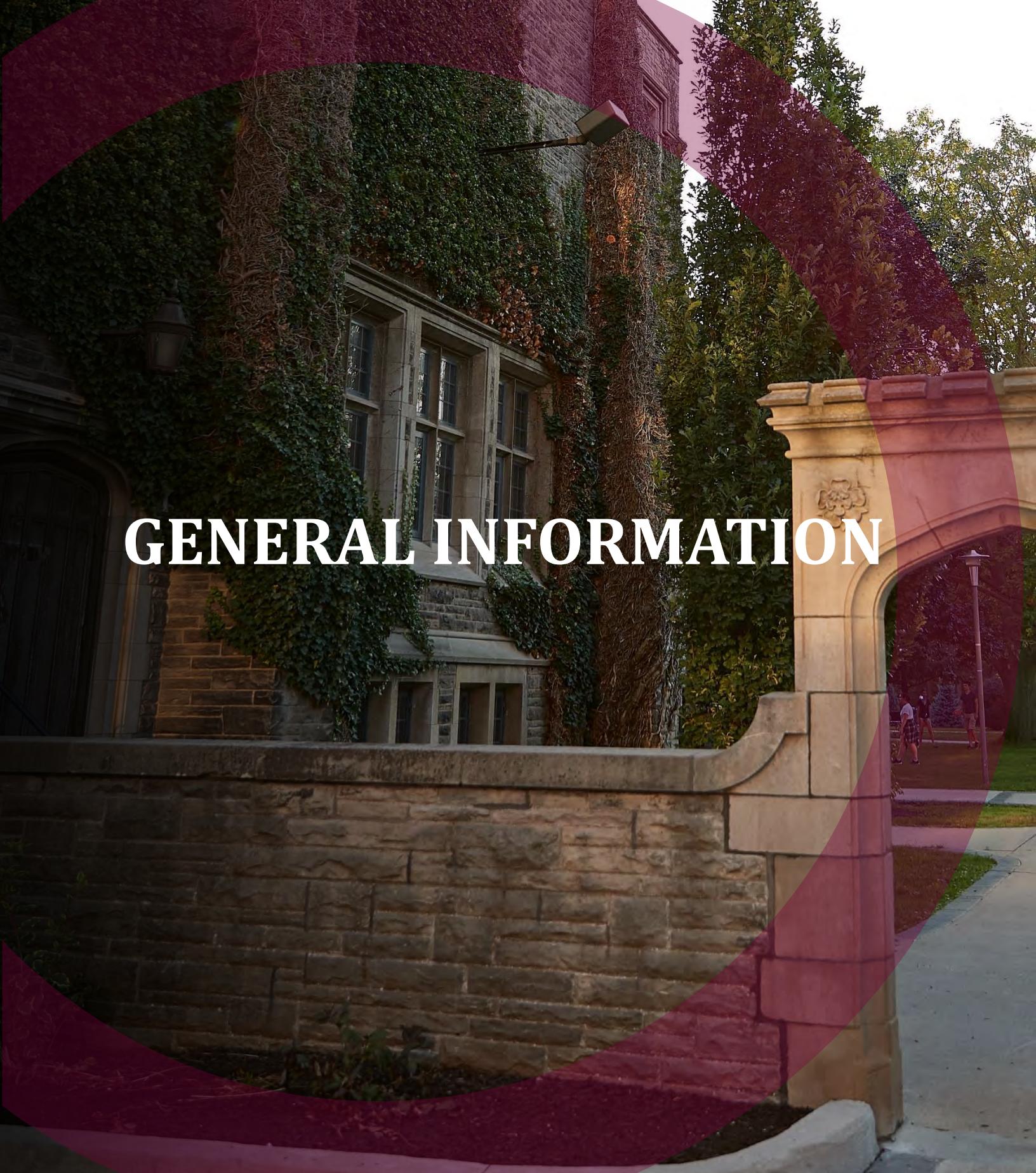
GENERAL INFORMATION

IMPORTANT UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and abide by the regulations, policies and procedures below.

- [The School of Graduate Studies Graduate Calendar (2025-2026)](#)

- [General Regulations on Supervision](#)

- [Dates and Deadlines](#)

- [Policies, Procedures and Guidelines](#)

- [Accommodations, Appeals and Petitions](#)

- [Student Appeal Procedures](#)

- [Student Code of Conduct](#)

- [Copyright Policy (MILO)](#)

- [Discrimination, Harassment and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Policy](#)

- [Research Integrity Policy](#)

- [Thesis Completion and Defence](#)

- [Collective Agreement for TA/RA in lieu of TA](#)

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster graduate student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) (the "Code"). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online.**

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn,

WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms.

Responsibilities of Graduate Students to the University (Section 1.3 Of The Graduate Calendar)

Just as the University has responsibilities to graduate students, they have responsibilities to the University. The student's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

1. Maintaining current contact information with the University, including address, phone numbers, and emergency contact information.
2. Using the University provided e-mail address or maintaining a valid forwarding e-mail address.
3. Regularly checking 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.
4. Maintaining contact and meeting regularly with the faculty advisor, thesis/project supervisor or supervisory committee, for observing departmental guidelines, and for meeting the deadlines of the department and the School of Graduate Studies.
5. Full-time students are obliged to be on campus, except for vacation periods or authorized off-campus status, for all three terms of the university year.
6. In cases of unauthorized absence, the student will be deemed to have withdrawn voluntarily from graduate study and will have to petition for readmission. No guarantee of readmission or of renewal of financial arrangements can be made and a decision on readmission is not subject to appeal.
7. Reviewing and complying with the University's Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities
8. Registering annually until graduation, withdrawal, or withdrawal in good standing due to time limit.
9. Paying fees as required.
10. If there is a problem with supervision, it is the student's responsibility to contact the Associate Chair (Graduate) with their concerns.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

IMPORTANT UNIVERSITY AND FACULTY SERVICES

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students should submit their request to their Graduate Administrative Assistant **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation, or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Academic Accommodations of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities policy.

Note: Approved accommodations of previous undergraduate students at McMaster **do not** automatically apply during graduate studies. Students needing accommodations should return to SAS soon after commencement of their graduate program to implement or update your student status and to activate accommodations.

Engineering Support Services (The Hub)

Services include managing keys and access cards, meeting rooms, and more.
JHE 216A
Ext. 27291
thehub@mcmaster.ca

Equity and Inclusion

The Equity and Inclusion Office (EIO) is a central resource where expertise is proactively drawn upon by administrators, faculty, staff, and students: to advance unit-specific and institutional equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility goals; to enact inclusive excellence principles; and to establish respectful living, learning, and working environments that are free from harassment and discrimination, and sexual violence including through timely and procedurally fair investigative and alternative dispute resolution processes.

Human Rights and Dispute Resolution (HRDR) Program
HRDRP is one of four intake offices listed in McMaster's Policy on Discrimination and Harassment: Prevention and Response and the Sexual Violence Policy. It is responsible for facilitating the resolution of concerns and complaints and for investigating formal complaints related to issues of discrimination, harassment, and sexual violence support.

The Education, Outreach and Support (EOS) engages students, staff and faculty members through education including workshops and special events. The ESP team works closely with on and off campus partners to advance equity and accessibility and to challenge rape culture on campus. EOS also provides15support to the President's Advisory Committee on Building an Inclusive Community (PACBIC), the Anti-Violence Network and the McMaster Accessibility Council.

International Student Services (ISS)

At McMaster, international students have access to accredited experts on staff who offer extra guidance on academics, health, wellness, immigration, finances, housing, cultural and social matters.

More information can be found on the [International Student Services (ISS) website](#).

Mental Health

Resources on Campus

No issues are too big or small. Request support for depression, anxiety, grief, relationship problems, adjusting to life in a new country, addictions, mild substance abuse, educational conflict, disordered eating, and more.

There are many on-campus resources students can reach out to:
- [Student Wellness Centre: Mental Health Resources](#)
- [TalkSpot: A Mental Health Service Exclusively for Mac Eng Students](#)

It is not recommended that students email about a crisis. In a crisis you can call one of the following:

Good2Talk

This is a free, confidential helpline providing professional counselling and information and referrals for mental health, addiction and well-being to post-secondary students in Ontario. Available 24/7/365.

Call 1-866-925-5454 or dial 211 and ask to be connected to Good2Talk.

Empower Me

This is an accessible counselling service which includes crisis support, as well as mental health services. You can also speak to a life coach about things like personal performance, well-being and growth, career, relationships, and finances. Available 24/7/365.

Call 1-844-741-6389.

Crisis Support
If you have immediate safety concerns for yourself or others, call campus security at 905-522-4135 if you are on campus or call 911 if you are off campus. More information is available on [Student Wellness Centre website](#).

School of Graduate Studies (SGS)

The School of Graduate Studies website provides robust pages of information and resources including academic services, awards and funding, news, and events. Select the Accepted My Offer tab to help you get started at McMaster and the Current Students tab for important information and resources to help you on your graduate journey.

The School of Graduate Studies offices are located in Gilmour Hall, Room 212, or can be reached by phone at ext. 23679

Additional SGS resources can be found here:
- [SGS Main Page](#)
- [Graduate Studies Forms and Policies for Graduate Students](#)

Security

Emergency
In case of emergency, dial 88 from any campus phone. The McMaster Security office is located in the E. T. Clarke Centre, room 201, and can be contacted at ext. 24281. This office is responsible for overall security on campus. In addition, they operate a Lost and Found service (ext. 23366). Any lost items will be held for 30 days.

Emergency First Response Team (EFRT)
In cases of serious injury or accidents, McMaster University's Emergency First Response Team (EFRT) can provide advanced emergency first aid. The EFRT team is staffed by trained, certified student volunteers. The team responds to incidents across campus. To access EFRT assistance, dial 88 and Security Services will dispatch EFRT to your location.

Escort Service (SWHAT)
During the months of September through April, students operate an escort service, "Students Walk Home Attendant Team" (SWHAT). After dark, if you call (905)525-9140 ext. 27500, you can arrange to be escorted to your car or residence by a male and a female student. During the months, May to August, the Campus Security will look after escorting you to your car or residence. The extension remains the same x27500.

McMaster Safety App
Download the McMaster Safety App for safety alerts, such as campus closures and emergency instructions. The app is available for free download on the Apple and Android app store. For more information, click [here](#).

McMaster Security Office

McMaster Security Officers act under the authority of the Ontario Police Act to enforce federal and provincial regulations. They are here to protect, not to harass you. Students who violate these statutes and bylaws are subject to arrest, prosecution and/or disciplinary action under McMaster's Student Code of Conduct. The Security Office can be reached at ext. 24281.

University Technology Services (UTS)

UTS is McMaster's central IT department, providing IT services and support to students, faculty, and staff. Services include help with emails, passwords, Office 365, and more.

University Technology Services can be reached on ext. 24357, or via live chat or by submitting a service ticket here.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Core Health and Safety Courses

All students must successfully complete *and abide by* the following core health and safety courses:

- SAFE training *(replacing Slips, Trips and Falls, Asbestos Awareness, Fire Safety, Ergonomics)*
- Health and Safety Orientation
- Violence and Harassment Prevention
- WHMIS 2015

Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) Forms

All students must complete a Job Hazard Analysis with your supervisor and read and follow the appropriate Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

Note: In the context of safety, all graduate students are considered "workers".

McMaster University Laboratory Manual

This manual is intended to provide basic rules for safe work practices in a laboratory. The procedures may be supplemented with Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) where applicable and with information on roles, responsibilities and specific procedures outlined in the university's Risk Management Manual (RMM). This is mandatory reading for all employees, graduate students and volunteers working in laboratories. This manual applies to all campus labs. The manual is available on the human resources website.

Eye Safety Regulations

All people entering an active laboratory must wear eye protection. The specific type of protection will be determined by the actual hazards present. Graduate students should discuss this with their Faculty Supervisor.

Fire Safety Procedure

In the case of fire, or the sounding of an alarm, "Get Out and Stay Out". Evacuate the building by the closest exit. You should be at least 50 feet away from the building and not return until the "All Clear" is given by the Fire Warden. Please become familiar with the closest fire exit to your lab, office and classrooms.

Chemical Waste Disposal

- Hazardous chemical waste will be picked up from your laboratory every Tuesday
- You must wait for the waste management company to arrive at your laboratory for the pickup.

- By Friday 9:00 AM prior to the pick-up on Tuesday, you are required to provide EOHSS with a copy of the chemical waste disposal record by e-mail at waste@mcmaster.ca.
- All waste must be identified and properly labeled. Unlabeled waste will not be accepted.
- Do not pour hazardous chemicals down the drains, including any organic solvent or acids/bases that have not been fully neutralized.
- Sharps, broken glass and pipette tips are disposed of as hazardous or biohazardous waste.
- Do not throw hazardous chemical waste into the garbage bins.

Full guidelines are available here.

IT Security

With an increase in online work, there is an increase in cyber threats. Email phishing and malware attacks are on the rise. Click here to learn more about email phishing, anti-virus software and tips for creating a strong password. Consider taking the UTS Phishing Course on Avenue to Learn.

Reporting of a Safety Incident

Any incident, which could have resulted in injury, must be reported to the Department immediately, through your Faculty Supervisor. The University is required, by law, to report such incidents to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB).

The online Injury/Incident Report is available on the Human Resources website, under "Quick Links".

OTHER ACADEMIC POLICIES

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by university instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Guidelines for the Use of Generative AI in Teaching and Learning

Please refer to the [MacPherson Institute Guidelines](#) regarding the use of generative AI (e.g. OpenAI's ChatGPT) in teaching and learning. These guidelines were developed by the Task Force on Generative AI in Teaching and Learning and will continue to be updated as the Task Force explores additional topics and as technology rapidly changes.

Provisional Guidelines for the Use of Generative AI in Research

While generative AI offers promising new avenues for enhancing pedagogical approaches and advancing research, we approach its integration with thought and consideration. As we explore its applications, we continue to prioritize the informed engagement of our community. We invite our students, faculty, alumni, and partners to join us in this exploration, ensuring that our approach to AI remains rooted in our collective values and the broader interests of our community.

The guidelines can be reviewed [here](#). All graduate students are expected to engage in discussions with their supervisors around GenAI and confirm if or how GenAI may be used in their research or milestones. It is the student's responsibility to seek clarification from the Associate Chair (Graduate).

Intellectual Property and Student Ownership

More than roughly 80% of the research carried out in the Faculty of Engineering is done with industry. The university signs intellectual property and ownership agreements with a company and hence the terms of these agreements apply to all members of McMaster, not just the project supervisor. Students are encouraged to talk to their supervisors about the terms covering their research project to understand how their contributions will be weighted in the intellectual property generated and whether any review of theses and papers is required by the industrial sponsor before public disclosure. Student should review the IP Policy [here](#).

Plagiarism-Checking Software (iThenticate)

Effective December 1, 2023 the university requires all Master's and Doctoral theses to be reviewed by iThenticate, a plagiarism-checking software, before being seen by an external reviewer (Doctoral) or the finished copy submitted (Master's). This requirement can be found in the University's [Research Plagiarism Checking Policy](), which can be found on the Secretariat website. This requirement is not meant to catch plagiarism but rather to prevent it. By helping students detect sections of text requiring revision before the document is released to the public, the use of this tool can avoid otherwise serious allegations.

Student and supervisor will work together to revise any sections of the thesis that may be overlapping with previously published content that the student does not have permission to copy; sandwich theses are expected to have a substantial amount of already published content, but in this case the student should have sought, and been granted, permission to use it in their document. The student's supervisor is responsible for confirming the thesis is ready to submit.

GRADUATE PROGRAM REGULATIONS – ENROLLMENT

Matters With Regard to Enrollment (Section 2.5 Of The Graduate Calendar)

1. **Full-Time Student**
    A full-time student is one who is studying on a full-time basis; treating studies like a full-time job; attending to coursework and research in a professional manner; being in consultation with and available to their supervisor at regular intervals (daily and/or weekly by mutual agreement) to monitor progress.

2. **Part-Time Student**
    A part-time student is one who usually has a full-time job outside the university, but wants to work towards his or her graduate degree on a part-time basis. A part-time student is limited to 3 graduate courses (9 units) per academic session (Sept 1 – Aug 31) and will usually take more time to complete the degree [M.A.Sc. program: up to 15 terms from the original date of registration if student began as "part-time"; Ph.D. program: up to 24 terms from the original date of registration if student began as "part-time"]. Part-time students are not eligible for financial support from the department; nor teaching assistantships; nor scholarship equivalent.

3. **Status Changes (FT to PT; PT to FT; Withdrawal; Re-admission to Defend; Program Transfers, Leaves of Absence and Parenting Leave; Full-time Off-Campus)**
    Students who wish to change their status (full-time to part-time; part-time to full-time; transferring from M.A.Sc. to Ph.D.; withdrawal from the program; going on leave of absence, studying full-time off-campus), and former students who wish to be readmitted to the program, are expected to complete paperwork within a timeframe that permits their change to be effective on the first day of the next term (September 1st, January 1st or May 1st). Paperwork should be submitted to SGS at least one month in advance of an expected transition. Please see the Graduate Administrative Assistant well in advance to ensure that all paperwork is completed in a timely manner.

Engineering Co-op Program

The Engineering Co-Op Program for graduate students is an optional program for full-time domestic and international M.A.Sc., M.Eng., and Ph.D. students in good academic standing, that allows students to gain engineering work experience prior to graduation. Students have the option to complete 4 to 12 months of co-op experience. It is administered by the Career Development and Relationship Manager - Graduate Studies.

Centre for Career Growth and Experience Contact Information
Gerald Hatch Experiential Centre, Room JHE H301, ext. 22571
Email: gradcoop@mcmaster.ca
More information is available on the Co-op for Graduate Students website.

Student Responsibilities

Students who are interested in the Co-op Program must follow the following steps:

1. *Enrol in the Co-Op Program*

   SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND APPLIED SCIENCES (SEAS) STUDENTS:
   a. Complete the Graduate Supervisor Permission Form. The student's academic supervisor must indicate on the form which academic term(s) the student is approved to work.
   b. Submit the signed graduate supervisor permission form to gradcoop@mcmaster.ca.
   c. Enrol in ENGINEER 701 – C01 Work Term Preparation (Lecture) course via Mosaic.
   d. Complete the ENGINEER 701 co-op registration process (link available online).
   e. Complete the ENGINEER 701 – C01 Work Term Preparation (Lecture) course.

   SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING PRACTICE AND TECHNOLOGY (SEPT) STUDENTS:
   a. Enrol in ENGINEER 701 – C01 Work Term Preparation (Lecture) course via Mosaic.
   b. Complete the ENGINEER 701 co-op registration process (link available online).
   c. Complete the ENGINEER 701 – C01 Work Term Preparation (Lecture) course.

2. *Engage in Job Search*

   Students will engage in co-op job search 4-6 months in advance of the term that has been approved for work. Students can work a maximum of 12 months. If they do not secure a job during their approved work term(s), they may submit an amended permission form to access jobs posted for future work terms

3. *Register Your Co-Op and Drop Courses*

   a. Register the co-op by completing and submitting the co-op confirmation form, and if applicable, the RMM-801 form (for co-ops taking place outside Canada) to thecentre@mcmaster.ca.
   b. Contact their Graduate Administrative Assistant (after receiving confirmation from the Centre that co-op is approved) to specify the course(s) they want to drop from their MOSAIC record while on work term.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Quick Links

- [Payroll Information](#)

- [Payment Schedules](#)

- [Pay Statement Guide](#)

- [Tuition Fees](#)

- [Refunds](#)

- [Scholarships Database](#)

- [Graduate Students Association (GSA) Health and Dental Insurance Plan](#)

- [University Health Insurance Plan (UHIP) for International Students](#)

- [OSAP/Government Aid](#)

- [Social Insurance Number (SIN)](#)

Cost of Living and Tuition Fees

Topics, such as cost of living and tuition fees, can be found on [The School of Graduate Studies' website under "Cost of Living"](#) or on [The Registrar's website under "Graduate Fees": Tuition and Supplementary Fees.](#)

Grad Pay

Most full-time graduate students admitted to the thesis-based M.A.Sc. and Ph.D. programs in McMaster Engineering will receive financial support in the form of a teaching assistantship and a departmental scholarship. The minimum level of support varies from year to year.

Research scholarships and departmental scholarships are paid as one lump sum two or three weeks into the start of a new term; TA income is paid biweekly during the term(s) in which you are a TA.

In order to receive research scholarships and TA income, you will need to ensure that you are properly set up on the Student Centre module (under Graduate Studies' Banking webpage, click "If you are receiving a Research Scholarship, TA, and/or RA in Lieu of TA" to see instructions on how to [enrol in direct deposit](#))

In addition to the above, **to receive TA income,** ensure that you are properly set up on the Human Resources module (students must submit their payroll information via the online Employee Self-Service portal in Mosaic).

If you do not see the Enrol in Direct Deposit (Student) tile on your Mosaic Homepage, please log into University Technology Services' (UTS) Client Services Portal (again, using your MacID and password) and select:
   1. "General Requests"; then
   2. "Report a Problem".
   3. Detail your issue in the blank field, then click "Create". Please monitor the portal for confirmation that the tile has been added to your Mosaic Homepage. Detail your issue in the blank field, then click "Create". Please monitor the portal for confirmation that the tile has been added to your Mosaic Homepage.

*IMPORTANT: If you complete any of the previous steps improperly and/or are not fully enrolled in the Fall 2025, Winter 2026 and Spring/Summer 2026 terms by August 1, 2025, your payments will be delayed until a correction is made.

Pregnancy/Parental Leaves

To address a gap in funding provided to MASc students during pregnancy and parental leave, the Faculty of Engineering invites eligible applicants to apply for support.

Eligibility: A parental leave fund of up to $4,000 will be provided to eligible MASc students in the Faculty of Engineering who take an approved parental leave for one term or more, provided that:
   1. The student is currently enrolled in a full-time MASc program in the Faculty of Engineering and is in receipt of McMaster Graduate Scholarship Funds;
   2. The student has been enrolled in their current MASc program for a minimum of one term;
   3. The applicant is in good standing at the time that this leave of absence is requested;
   4. This leave of absence has been approved by the Department's Associate Chair (Graduate);
   5. The student is ineligible for funding from either CUPE or NSERC/CIHR (whether that be directly througha graduate scholarship, or via a supervisor's grant);
   6. The student has applied for funding from all other sources for which they are eligible;
   7. The application below is completed and submitted to the Graduate Studies Administrator four weeks before the leave;
   8. The student provides a medical note for their pregnancy or that of their partner from a licenced Canadian healthcare provider (i.e., the physician, midwife or nurse practitioner that is providing pregnancy care) or an adoption certificate issued from the Canadian government;
   9. The student is the primary caregiver for the duration of the Parenting Leave

Important:
   • This funding may be accessed by a student one time only

- Students receiving Tri-Agency scholarships are ineligible for this funding as they are eligible for Tri-Agency Paid Parenting Leave supplements
- Students who continue to receive research funding from their supervisor are ineligible for this funding
- Fund recipients who return to their program prior to the approved leave of absence end date may be required to return a portion of the funding
- Students who do not return to their studies after their leave must repay the amount received in full
- Multiple births on the same occasion (e.g., twins) do not increase funding duration or value
- If the student wishes to take a leave of less than one term, then the amount for which they are eligible is pro-rated to $1,000/month
- The application should be initiated by the student, who will be responsible for obtaining the approval of their supervisor and Associate Chair (Graduate), before submitting it to the Graduate Studies Administrator at salehl5@mcmaster.ca for approval by the Associate Dean Graduate Studies

Note: PhD students should refer to the equivalent supports provided by the School of Graduate Studies Parenting Grant.

Scholarships, Fellowships, Bursaries and Other Awards

Graduate students are encouraged to apply for any scholarships for which they are eligible. A list of scholarships available can be found on the Graduate Studies Scholarships page and the Engineering Funding & Awards page.

Keep an eye on your email; many of these opportunities will be advertised through that medium. Awards such as NSERC Canada Research Graduate Scholarships are announced in the Fall term, as well as most donor-funded awards. Ontario Graduate Scholarship (OGS) applications are announced in the Winter term. Department-specific awards are often announced between the Winter and Spring terms.

If a graduate student holds a major award (such as NSERC, CGS-M, CGS-D, PGS-D, OGS, QEII GSST, Vanier, etc.), the total stipend provided by the program may be reduced by up to $2,500 per term for each term in which the student holds the award. Any scholarship greater than $10,000 is considered a major scholarship.

Teaching Assistantships

First Time Teaching Assistants (TA)
All first time TAs at McMaster are required to complete five hours of paid mandatory TA training which will include instruction on topics in pedagogy and anti-oppression. This mandatory training is a one-time requirement separate from, and in addition to, other training that you may be expected to complete as part of your employment (which may include general orientations,

institution-wide mandatory health and safety training, and assignment-specific health and safety training required by your Employment Supervisor).

Self-registration for training courses is available through the Regulatory Training Tile on the Mosaic homepage. Once registered, carefully follow the directions under on the welcome page on Avenue to Learn. More detailed instructions will be emailed to students before the beginning of each semester.

Important notes:
1. Training should be completed within two weeks of your assignment.
2. A short quiz follows each module on Avenue to Learn, and a score of 100% is required on each quiz. These quizzes can be taken repeatedly until the required score is reached. *These quizzes trigger the payment process - if the quizzes are not successfully completed (i.e. 100%), you risk not being paid for these five hours.*
3. This training is a one-time requirement for the first time that you TA at McMaster. You will not be paid for more than 5 hours of training, even if you TA for multiple faculties.

For more information, please refer to the links below:
1. Mandatory TA/RA in Lieu Training (Anti-Oppression and Pedagogy)
2. MacPherson Institute New TA Programming

Returning Teaching Assistants
If for any reason, a returning TA has not taken the five-hours of mandatory training (due to being away on a leave of absence or co-op placement), the TA will be required to complete this training and will be compensated accordingly.

Resources and Useful Information for Teaching Assistants
Before commencing your Teaching Assistantship duties, you must complete all TA training and complete the following forms in consultation with the course instructor and submit the completed forms to the Graduate Administrative Assistant.
1. TA Hours of Work Form
2. TA Performance Expectations Form

A useful guide is provided here.

Travel and Expense Claims

If you require a reimbursement for travel or other expenses, you may submit Travel and Expense claims through the Mosaic system by logging in with your Mac ID. To get to the Travel and Expense module use the following path: *Mosaic Home > Employee Self Service > Travel and Expenses*

Please note that these claims will require a valid chartfield string and approval from your supervisor.

University Health Insurance Plan (UHIP)

UHIP is a mandatory, comprehensive health insurance plan that provides health coverage for international and incoming exchange students. UHIP covers medically necessary doctors and hospital visits within Ontario for international students, incoming exchange students and dependants (spouse and children).

For more information, click here.

Coverage
Through UHIP, your necessary medical costs are covered for the entire academic year, from September 1 to August 31 with a few exceptions for incoming exchange students and other students with plans to study at McMaster for fewer than 12 months.

Your UHIP coverage begins on the tenth day of the month before your academic term start date or your scheduled arrival date in Canada, whichever is later. If you plan to arrive in Canada before your UHIP coverage begins, the department recommends that you purchase additional medical insurance. This way, you'll be covered if you need to access health care before your UHIP coverage starts.

Enrolment of UHIP
If you're an international student, you're automatically enrolled in UHIP every year. However, it's your responsibility to ensure your coverage is correct. Check your account on your *Mosaic Student Center > Finances > Other Financial > View/Maintain UHIP*.

UHIP Card
In late August/early September, your UHIP provider, Sun Life Financial, will send an email to your McMaster email account with your UHIP card attached. To make sure you receive your UHIP card, please make sure you've activated your McMaster email account.

When you receive your UHIP card, print a copy, and always carry it with you. This way, you'll have it easily accessible in case you need to seek medical care.

If you have dependents living in Ontario with you, please contact the university's international student services (ISS) at uhip@mcmaster.ca for further information on how to register your dependents for UHIP. **Dependents must enrol in UHIP within 30 days of arrival in Canada.** More information is available on the university's international student services (ISS) website.

STUDENT LIFE

Quick Links

- [Information for Incoming Graduate Students](#)

- [Housing and Student Life](#)

- [Graduate Student Orientation Hub](#)

- [Advice From Current Graduate Students](#)

- [Athletics and Recreation](#)

McMaster Engineering Graduate Society (EGS)

The EGS is a student run organization dedicated to supporting engineering graduate students in any way possible, including hosting fun events, running professional development workshops, and providing travel bursaries. The EGS has three major mandates:
- To represent the interests of Engineering Graduate Students to the Faculty and other organizations, making sure your voice is heard.
- To help create an open and welcoming community of Engineering Graduate Students
- To advance Academic and Professional Development at McMaster Engineering.

More information is available on the [Engineering Graduate Society website](#).

Graduate Students Association (GSA)

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) advocates for the needs of the collective, acts as a resource, and provides support and services that improve the graduate student experience. Some of the service available include Health and Dental, HSR Bus Pass, and Empower Me. The GSA also hosts a number of events, clubs and recreational activities throughout the year. Visit the Graduate Student Association page for more details.

Studentcare Health Plan/Dental Plan
Initiated by your student association, the Studentcare Health Plan provides students with unique health benefits. The Plan was designed by students for students to provide many important services and cover expenses not covered by a basic health-care plan (i.e. OHIP), or the equivalent (e.g. UHIP for international students) such as prescription drugs, health practitioners, medical equipment, travel health coverage, and more. A comprehensive dental plan was added to cover those graduate students who were not covered by the CUPE 3906 plan (except for Divinity students).

Please note all GSA members are automatically enrolled in the Studentcare dental plan and are assessed the fees as part of their supplementary fees paid in September. Students who have a TA, or an RA in lieu, will be covered by the CUPE 3906 dental plan are automatically opted out of the Studentcare dental plan and will receive a reimbursement cheque.

Graduate students who are covered by an alternative health and/or dental plan can upload proof of coverage using the Studentcare's secure website.

Please remember that you need to pay the Studentcare plan fees on your student account. As mentioned above, once you are opted out, you will be receive your reimbursement cheque directly from Studentcare. More information, including opt out dates, is available on the Graduate Student Association website.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Quick Links

- [Campus Map](#)

- [Accessibility Floor Plans](#)

- [Parking and Transit Services](#)

- [OMBUDS Office](#)

- [Supervisory Relationships](#)

Letter/Verification Requests

Please refer to the list below for instructions on requesting various letters and verifications:
- [Degree verification](#)
- [Enrolment verification](#)
- [Proof of graduation](#)
- [Study permit /Extension of study permit](#)
- [Transcript request](#)

MacQuest

MacQuest provides on-campus searchable navigation, including indoor floor map visualization and other campus-related services. Users can use the app to navigate from class to class; it also lists last, next, and following bus arrival times near campus by bus stop and route number. It also allows users to look for nearby bathrooms, stairs and elevators.

The app is available for free download on the Apple and Android app store. For more information, click [here](#).

Professional Development

Build Professional and Technical Skills
Discover the Technical Communications for Graduate Students module on Avenue2Learn: The Art and Science of Persuasion, Audience Analysis, Writing for Publications, Proposing and Reporting a Project, Presentations and Visualizing Data, How to Give an Oral Presentation. All essential skills for success in today's competitive market.
After logging in, click on the 'Discover' link, and search for 'Technical Communications for Graduate Students' to find the course.
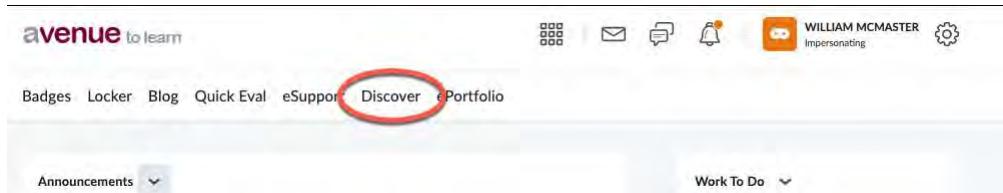
Thesis Writing and English Language Skills Development

If you are having difficulty with the English language and thesis writing, there are several on campus resources available to help you. The following are particularly useful:

McMaster Office for the Development of English Language Learners (MODEL). This is a FREE service designed to help students with the English Language. They offer training, workshops and support to meet student needs of all academic backgrounds and English language proficiency. You can get more information at MODEL | MELD Office.

The School of Graduate Studies also offers help with Thesis writing. Often, the Thesis writing can be the stumbling block for students to graduate on-time. Using their resources at the start of one's graduate study can significantly help with the writing process. Please check out their resources at Graduate Writing – School of Graduate Studies.

The Student Success Centre also has resources to support student development and careers.

FACULTY OF ENGINEERING REQUIREMENTS

All Degrees

In order to receive a degree, students must fulfill all departmental or program requirements and all University regulations, including those of the School of Graduate Studies. Students who have outstanding financial accounts at the end of the academic year will not receive their academic results, diplomas, or transcripts.

Upon Arrival

Please refer to the arrival plan communicated by your Graduate Administrative Assistant prior to your arrival. Arrival processes will differ depending on term start. For helpful information on your journey to McMaster as an incoming student, please visit McMaster Engineering Incoming Student Page. For information on your McMaster ID card, please visit MacCard.

Condition Clearing

Conditions must be cleared by the date indicated on your offer letter. This does not restrict your current enrolment. However, failure to clear conditions by the deadline may result in your offer being rescinded. Please follow the instructions as indicated by the Graduate Administrative Assistant and the School of Graduate Studies regarding condition clearing. More information can be found on the Conditions of Admissions page.

Student Authorizations (International Students Only)

International students admitted to graduate studies degree programs must have a valid study permit issued by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), provided that their program of study is longer than six months. A copy of the study permit must be submitted to their department upon arrival at the university. Incoming graduate students should email their Graduate Administrative Assistant a copy of their Port of Entry (POE) letter or Letter of Introduction (LOI) as soon as possible. Students will not be allowed to enrol without it.

Student permit extensions take some time to process, so please plan accordingly. Last-minute requests do not constitute urgency. Canadian Social Insurance Numbers (SIN), study permits and passports have expiry dates. The responsibility for maintaining up-to-date documentation lies with you – the graduate student.

Note: Department staff cannot provide information about Visa or immigration. Students should contact the Immigration and Mobility Advisor via the university's international student services (ISS) website.

SGS 101 / SGS 201

Graduate students are required to complete the following two (2) online courses:
- SGS 101 – Academic Research Integrity and Ethics
- SGS 201 – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act – AODA Training

Students are required to take [these online courses in Mosaic](#) only once during their graduate career at McMaster University. All students must pass and abide by these online SGS courses. Each course takes approximately one hour to complete and consists of watching an online presentation followed by a test. Anyone who has not completed either of the following courses by the deadline provided by SGS will be automatically assigned an F grade.

Check your Mosaic Student Centre to ensure that you are registered in these courses. If they do not appear in your course schedule or in Avenue to Learn, please contact the School of Graduate Studies at sgsrec@mcmaster.ca.

SGS 700 / SGS 711

Graduate students are required to enrol in the [placeholder course, SGS 700 or SGS 711](#), if they are not taking another course in that term (SGS 700 for programs charged per term; SGS 711 for programs charged per course). If you do not add a course in each term, you may have impacts on aspects of your student life, including scholarships, fee assessment and ordering transcripts.

Career Planning Reports

Incoming graduate students to the Faculty of Engineering are required to complete a [career planning report](#) **within their first year of study.** Students must first book a career planning session with the faculty's career development specialist before submitting a career planning report. The report should not exceed 2 pages and must be submitted to their Graduate Administrative Assistant to be evaluated by the Associate Chair (Graduate).

Note: Industrial PhD students and students registered in the School of Engineering Practice and Technology are exempt from this requirement.

Additional Information

Academic Advisement Reports

Mosaic offers graduate students the Academic Advisement report tool as a method of tracking your progress towards graduation via completion of your curriculum requirements. A guide on how to use it can be found [here](#).

Failing a Course or Milestone

The minimum passing grade in a graduate course is a B- (70-72%). Failure in either a course or a milestone is reviewed by the appropriate Faculty Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study or the Associate Dean Graduate Studies in the Faculty, and may result in withdrawal from the program. Those allowed to remain in the program must either repeat or replace the failed course or milestone, per the decision of the Faculty Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study. Further details can be found in [Section 2.6.11 of the Graduate Calendar](#).

Regulations for Degree Progression

It is the student's responsibility to follow the academic calendar's degree progression in order to successfully obtain their degree. Further details can be found in [Section 3 of the Graduate Calendar](#).

Master of Applied Science (M.A.Sc.)

Supervision of M.A.Sc. students is governed by the School of Graduate Studies regulations as outlined in [Section 3.1 of the Graduate Calendar](#).

M.A.Sc. Supervisory Committee Meeting

The supervisor shall meet with the student between 9 months to 12 months of commencement of the program for a formal review of progress. The student will complete the M.A.Sc. supervisory committee report form and submit to the supervisor at least one week in advance of the meeting. The supervisor will complete the form and submit it to the Department Graduate Administrative Assistant at the end of the progress review meeting.

Student Responsibility
1. Set up the meeting with supervisor within 12 months of starting.
2. Complete the student sections of the M.A.Sc. supervisory committee report form. (Details of progress towards meeting degree requirements since beginning of program).
3. Submit the form with a critical literature review of your research area to your supervisor at least one week before the meeting.

Supervisor Responsibility
1. Complete Part A: Progress made towards meeting degree requirements.
2. Complete Part B: Specific goals for next number of months.
3. Complete Part C: Areas for improvement.
4. Provide an overall assessment.
5. Review the form with student, sign and submit to the Graduate Administrative Assistant.

M.A.Sc. Thesis Defence

Examination Committee

Each M.A.Sc. student must successfully defend their thesis in an oral examination before a committee proposed by the supervisor and approved by the Department Chair or their delegate. A member of the committee, other than the supervisor, will be appointed to chair the committee. The committee shall be composed of 3 (three) members, including the supervisor. In the case of co- supervision, the committee will consist of 4 (four) members including the supervisors.

Plagiarism Check

Thesis candidates are required to use plagiarism-checking software, iThenticate, before submitting. Students must speak with their supervisor for directions on how to submit their thesis through the plagiarism-checking software. The supervisor must sign off on the originality report of the student's thesis after they scan their theses for originality using iThenticate.

Procedure

The thesis defence starts with the candidate's presentation of the main elements of the thesis, including the relevance of their work, approach, samples of the most important findings, and contributions. The presentation should not exceed 20 minutes. This is followed by one round of questions and another round of follow-up questions, as appropriate. The duration of the Master's defence (including the candidate's presentation) is expected to vary from 1¼ to 1¾ hours, but it normally should not exceed 2 hrs. If the examining committee is not satisfied with the candidate's performance in the thesis defence, the candidate must retake the defence after completing any thesis revisions which may be recommended by the examining committee. The student must be informed in writing of the conditions they must meet to be able to succeed in the second and final defence.

Regulations/guidelines for thesis writing, submittal and defence can be found here.

Please refer to the department section of the handbook for program specific details of procedure and timelines.

Transferring from M.A.Sc. to Ph.D. Without Completing M.A.Sc. Degree
Refer to the department section of the handbook for details on a MASc transfer to PhD.

Accelerated M.A.Sc. Option
Refer to the department section of the handbook for details of an accelerated M.A.Sc. option.

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

Supervision of Ph.D. students is governed by the School of Graduate Studies regulations as outlined in Section 3.1 of the Graduate Calendar.

Ph.D. Supervisory Committee
As soon as possible, and no later than twelve (12) months after commencing doctoral studies, a supervisory committee for the student shall be approved by the Department Chair or their delegate, on the recommendation of the supervisor and in consultation with the student.

The supervisory committee will consist of at least three members. Two, including the supervisor, must be from within the department/program. A third member, whose scholarly interests include the area of the student's main interest, may be from outside the department/program. One member may be appointed from outside the University with the permission of the Vice-Provost & Dean of Graduate Studies.

Ph.D. Supervisory Committee Meeting
Please refer to the department section on the specific timeline and deadline of the Supervisory Committee meeting.

Ph.D. Supervisory Committee Meeting Procedures

Students must talk to the Graduate Administrative Assistant to initiate the report. Students will receive this message via email:

Dear Student Name,

All PhD students must meet at least once a year with their supervisor and committee.
Our records indicate that you should have a meeting this year. Please work with your supervisor, and/or graduate office to arrange a meeting date and time. Once a date has been fixed, please click on the link below to initiate the report to be submitted by you to your committee and supervisor, prior to the meeting.
***[Link to student's report]***

Student Records
School of Graduate Studies

Follow the instructions at the link in the email to complete your Annual Supervisory Committee Report. (Images from the online report appear on the next page.)

Please refer to the department section of the handbook for program specific details of procedure and timelines.

Ph.D. Supervisory Committee Meetings: Process Path

Grad Admin initiates process → Student confirms committee → Student begins Report for SGS → Committee meeting → Supervisor adds to Report → Committee members rate Report → Student reviews Report → Dept/Grad Chair approves Report → Milestone is added by Grad Studies
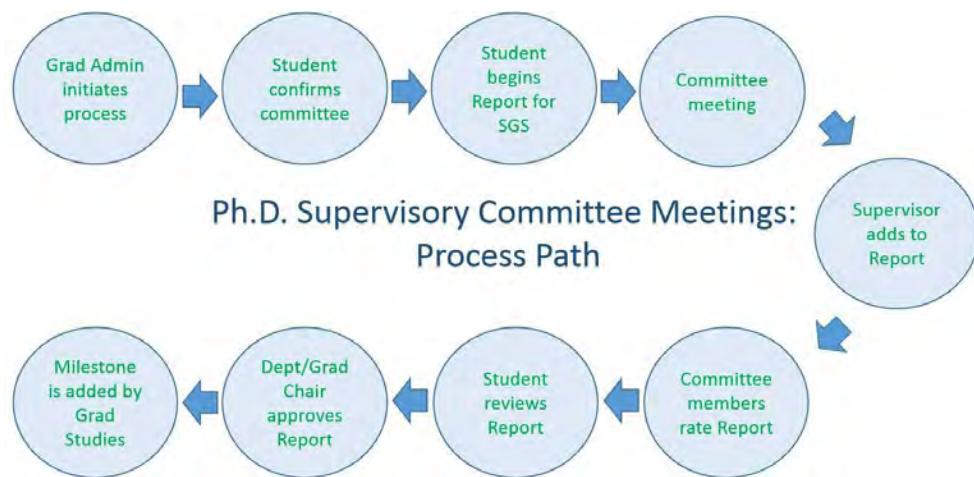
Ph.D. Supervisory Committee Meeting Online Report

The link will bring the student to the following screen.

If the committee is correct, select Continue.

If the committee is incorrect, close the page and contact the Graduate Administrative Assistant.

Student Begins Report

Once the student confirms their committee, they'll be shown a screen where they will begin to enter information about their new meeting.

They'll also be asked to report on their progress since their last report (or since they started their research if this is the first report).

The student will click Submit, and the primary supervisor will receive an email.

Supervisor Adds to Report

After the student clicks Submit, the primary supervisor will receive an email inviting them to see what their student submitted.

The supervisor will complete their portion of the report and select the members who will be signing off on the report. An email with a link will be sent to each selected member of the committee.

Committee Rates the Report

When the supervisor clicks the Submit button, each selected committee members will receive an email with a link inviting them to review the report.

The committee member can view the student's report and must click the tick box acknowledging they've read it.

The committee member will also rate the report from the drop down. The default is Excellent.

The system now sends the report back to the student to view.

Student Reviews the Report

The student receives a final email to view their supervisor's report, committee rating and if they are satisfied with the supervision.

When they select Submit, the report will be sent to the Department Chair/Associate Chair (Graduate) for approval.

Department Chair Approval

An email is sent to the Department Chair/Associate Chair (Graduate). They can see the report and choose to approve it.

The default is Yes.

Clicking Submit will complete the report.

Ph.D. Comprehensive Exam

The purpose of the comprehensive examination is to test the breadth of knowledge and maturity of approach over a range of topics that are both within and peripheral to the student's discipline. The student's level of achievement in this examination will determine possible academic background deficiencies that the candidate may have. Successful completion of the comprehensive examination is a necessary requirement for the candidate to continue in the program.

Comprehensive Exams are private examinations, open only to the student and their comprehensive examination committee.

The student is expected to complete all requirements of the comprehensive examination **within 12 to 20 months of first registration in the Ph.D. program, with an upper limit of 24 months.** Part-time students must take the comprehensive examination by the end of their 36th month. Students who transferred from M.A.Sc. to Ph.D. without completion of M.A.Sc. are expected to complete their comprehensive exam 2 years from initial start date of their M.A.Sc. Special exceptions require the approval of the Department Chair or designate and the Graduate School. Normally, course requirements will be completed before the Comprehensive Exam, but this is not a requirement. Likewise, preliminary research results are not required, but the student is expected to present and defend a viable research proposal including anticipated new contributions to the existing scientific literature.

Please refer to the department section of the handbook for program specific details of procedure and timelines.

- The candidate's achievement in each of the parts shall be judged as: Pass or Fail.
- **The candidate must pass all parts to successfully complete the comprehensive exam.**
- The committee chair shall communicate the result of the examination to the Graduate Administrative Assistant.
- Should the candidate fail any part, they may request a re-examination. **The re-examination will follow the same format, and must be completed between one to six months after the student was notified that they had failed the original assessment.** The candidate will be allowed only one re-examination of each part.
- Once the candidate completes all parts of the examination, the Graduate Administrative Assistant will submit the official result to SGS so that the student's academic record will be updated.

Ph.D. Thesis Defence

Plagiarism Check

Thesis candidates are required to use plagiarism-checking software, iThenticate, before submitting. Students must speak with their supervisor for directions on how to submit their thesis through the plagiarism-checking software.

The supervisor must sign off on the originality report of the student's thesis after they scan their theses for originality using iThenticate.

Procedure

The thesis defence starts with the candidate's presentation of the main elements of the thesis, including the relevance of their work, approach, samples of the most important findings, and contributions. The presentation should not exceed 20 minutes. This is followed by one round of questions and another round of follow-up questions, as appropriate. The duration of the PhD defence (including the candidate's presentation) will not normally exceed three hours. If the examining committee is not satisfied with the candidate's performance in the thesis defence, the candidate must retake the defence after completing any thesis revisions which may be recommended by the examining committee. The student must be informed in writing of the conditions they must meet to be able to succeed in the second and final defence.

Regulations/guidelines for thesis writing, submittal and defence can be found here.

Review the following:
- Ph.D. Defence Flowchart
- SGS Final Submission – Final Thesis Checklist (PhD (Doctoral) > Step 3. Submit)

Please refer to the department section of the handbook for program specific details of procedure and timelines.

DEPARTMENT SPECIFIC INFORMATION

DEPARTMENT CONTACTS

Dr. Hatem Zurob (Department Chair)

- Email: zurobh@mcmaster.ca
- Point of contact for any issues that cannot be resolved by the Associate Chair (Graduate).

Dr. Leili Tafaghodi (Associate Chair, Graduate Studies)

- Email: tafaghodi@mcmaster.ca
- First point of contact for all graduate program academic matters.

Samantha Kandilas (Academic Department Manager)

- Email: samjohn@mcmaster.ca
- First point of contact for all financial matters.

Alisha Digba (Graduate Administrative Assistant)

- Email: digbaa1@mcmaster.ca
- First point of contact for all graduate program administrative matters.

Ed McCaffery (Laboratory Manager)

- Email: mccaffer@mcmaster.ca
- Point of contact for all laboratory matters.

Doug Cully (Research Technician)

- Email: culleyd@mcmaster.ca
- Point of contact for all laboratory matters.

Xiaogang Li (Research Technician)

- Email: lixiaog@mcmaster.ca
- Point of contact for all laboratory matters.

GETTING STARTED: KEY DEPARTMENT RESOURCES

Building Access and Keys

Grad office keys and desk keys will be assigned upon arrival. Lab keys will be assigned by your supervisor. There is a $20 key deposit required for each physical key (excluding desk keys). Keys and access cards are issued with a deposit as a charge to your student account. The money will be credited to your account once keys or cards are returned. For safety and security do not lend your keys or allow anyone else into your office after hours. External building keys are not permitted. Lost or stolen keys must be reported to Security Services, The Hub, and the grad admin.

Departmental Photocopying

Each graduate student office is equipped with a printer. Paper is stored in the department office (JHE 357). When taking paper, fill in the form stating your name, supervisor and how many packages you are taking. Your supervisor is billed at the end of the month. There is no need to ask for permission. There is also a photocopier/scanner in JHE 355 for larger jobs. Photocopying or scanning for research-related purposes also requires an account number from your supervisor that is charged for the expense.

Departmental Specific Lab Safety

Each lab area has its own set of safety rules that you need to adhere strictly to. Please familiarize yourself with these rules and discuss lab safety with your supervisor prior to engaging in lab activities. Do not eat or drink or share food in the laboratory areas. Smoking (including vaping and cannabis) is not allowed anywhere on Campus.

For more Lab Safety information, refer to "McMaster University Laboratory Manual", "Reporting of a Safety Incident", "Eye Safety Regulations", and "Waste Chemical Disposal" under General Information > Health and Safety.

Lab Safety Reports
Before the start of an experimental program, all graduate students, PDF's, plus all other researchers are required to submit a safety report to the Departmental Safety Committee. No one can commence their experimental work until their report is submitted and approved. The report must be updated regularly or when a significant change in the experimental work occurs. Safety Report forms and instructions can be downloaded here.

If you are carrying out computational work, you are still required to submit a safety report.

ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS

As per [Section 1.3 of the Graduate Calendar](#), full-time students are obliged to be on campus, except for vacation periods or authorized off-campus status, for all three terms of the university year. Students must be geographically available and visit the campus regularly which normally means multiple times per week; written permission from the department/supervisor is required for studies to be off campus. In all such cases, Full Time Off Campus status must be formally submitted to SGS.

Mandatory Course Requirements

MSE Graduate Seminar Course (MATLS 701/702) – Attendance is Mandatory

The Department holds a regular meeting, which incorporates the Graduate Seminar, featuring oral presentations by registered graduate students (MATLS 701 or MATLS 702) and by visitors and fulltime researchers.

Each student is required to prepare and present a major seminar, based upon extensive research work and literature surveys, on any topic of current research interest in Materials Science and Engineering. A pass/fail grade will be assessed based on overall performance in the course.

MATLS 701 (M.A.Sc.)
- One (1) seminar required, usually in Year 2 of program
- Enroll in Mosaic
- Watch for communication from the Graduate Administrative Assistant

MATLS 702 (Ph.D.)
- Two (2) seminars required, usually in Year 2 and Year 4 of program
- Registration with the Graduate Administrative Assistant is required for first (1st) seminar (do not enroll in Mosaic)
- Enroll in Mosaic for second (2nd) seminar
- Watch for communication from the Graduate Administrative Assistant

Note: There is a permission placed on the course to prevent students from registering for this course more than once. Attendance at the seminar is mandatory.

Vacation Entitlement

Graduate students are expected to be on campus for all three terms of the university year. Normal vacation entitlement is two weeks, to be scheduled by mutual acceptance with the supervisor. An exception to this allotment requires approval from the supervisor.

Course-Related

Department Course Offerings

Overview descriptions and outlines for these courses are available on the [Department website](#).

Courses Outside the Department

Graduate students are normally required to complete their course degree requirements by taking courses from within their program (Department of Materials Science and Engineering). As a minimum, at least 50% of courses taken must be listed or cross-listed by the Department's (Materials Science and Engineering) program in order to be counted towards your degree; these courses have the MATL prefix in the Graduate Calendar. Graduate students are encouraged to consult with their supervisor to select some of their courses from areas beyond the focus of their research, including courses offered outside of the department. For courses to be taken for credit outside of the department, but within the Faculties of Engineering, Science and Health Science, written approval from the supervisor is required (to be submitted to the Graduate Administrative Assistant for record keeping purposes). For any other courses to be taken for credit require approval from the Associate Dean – Graduate Studies (Engineering).

The passing grades for all graduate courses outside of the Department are A+, A, A−, B+, B, and B−.

Extra Course(s)

This category identifies courses that a graduate student takes (with the approval of the supervisor) that are not necessary to meet the course requirements for the degree program. In order to designate a course as 'extra', graduate students need to submit a Request for In-Program Course Adjustments during the normal add period of enrollment in a particular term. The form is submitted to the program office and once approved will have the designation added to the enrollment record for that course only. If a failing grade (i.e. less than B−) is received in a course taken as Extra, the courses (and grade) will not appear on the graduate student's transcript unless of academic dishonesty. Graduate students may petition to change the designation of an Extra Course to a M.A.Sc. or Ph.D. course prior to the term deadline to drop a course (see Sessional Dates in the Graduate Calendar) provided that this change is supported by the supervisor and program and approved by the Associate Dean – Graduate Studies (Engineering). Changes of designation after the drop date will not be approved. Courses that are required by the supervisory committee or the Department Chair, as additional requirements in excess of the stated minimum for the program, must be designated as a M.A.Sc. or Ph.D. course.

The passing grades for an Extra Course are A+, A, A−, B+, B, and B−.

Failing a Course or Milestone

The minimum passing grade in a graduate course is a B−. Failure in either a course or a milestone is reviewed by the appropriate Faculty Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study or the Associate Dean. The Faculty Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study or the Associate Dean acting on its behalf requests a departmental recommendation regarding the student, and

this recommendation is given considerable weight. In the absence of a departmental recommendation to allow the student to continue, the student will be required to withdraw. Those allowed to remain in the program must either repeat or replace the failed course or milestone, per the decision of the Faculty Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study. A failing grade in a Certificate, Diploma, Master's or Doctoral course remains on the transcript. Students who fail a second course or milestone will not normally be allowed to continue in the program.

Auto Replies (Out of Office) Email Notification

If you are away from your email for more than two days; it is recommended that you put your out of office notification on. This will let the graduate admin know that you are unable to respond to their emails. If you are unsure on how to create an out of office notification, please visit: Microsoft Auto Replies (out of office)

Auto Reply (Out of Office) Example:

Hello, thank you for your message. Please note that I am currently away and will return on __(insert date of return)_ to answer your emails.
If you have an emergency that cannot wait till my return, please contact ___(insert supervisor name and email)___
Kind Regards,
(Insert Name)

MASTER OF APPLIED SCIENCE (M.A.Sc.)

Program Requirements

Graduate students are required to successfully complete at least 12 units of course work, which must include the mandatory seminar half course (3 units) MATLS 701. Courses at the 700-level are offered as either a half course (3 units) or a quarter course (1.5 units). Only one 600-level course is allowed for graduate course work credit. Courses offered at the 600-level are offered as half courses (3 units). Only one non-technical half course (3 units) is permitted with written approval from the supervisor.

The passing grades for a graduate level course are A+, A, A−, B+, B, and B−.

Additional Requirements

Students must complete SGS 101 and SGS 201 within their first month of full-time studies. Additionally, they are required to complete a career planning exercise within the first three terms (12 months) of full-time enrollment.

Supervision

Supervision of M.A.Sc. students is governed by the School of Graduate Studies regulations as outlined in Section 3.1 of the Graduate Calendar.

Supervisory Committee Meeting
Refer to "M.A.Sc. Supervisory Committee Meeting" under Faculty of Engineering Requirements > Master of Applied Science (M.A.Sc.)

M.A.Sc. Thesis Defence

Refer to "M.A.Sc. Thesis Defence" under Faculty of Engineering Requirements > Master of Applied Science (M.A.Sc.)

M.A.Sc. Defence Procedures/Timelines

Initiating the Defence
Inform the Graduate Administrative Assistant by email a minimum of 6-weeks from the anticipated defence date including:
1. The title or working title of the defence
2. Supervisory Committee Members
3. Approximate date of the defence
4. Suggested Examiner/Chair as approved by the Supervisor

5. Confirm all degree requirements (course and milestones) have been met by checking Student Summary in Mosaic. If a degree requirement or grade is missing, contact the Graduate Administrative Assistant.

Organizing the Defence

The Graduate Administrative Assistant will coordinate the defence including submitting all required forms to the Chair. A copy of the report must be submitted to the examination (pdf or printed) a minimum of 2-weeks prior to the confirmed defence date.

After the Defence

After a successful defence, the student must correct any errors identified in the written report identified by the examination committee to the satisfaction of the supervisor. Once approved by the supervisor, the student must submit an electronic copy to the School of Graduate Studies via MacSphere. Students are normally expected to submit their final thesis within four weeks of a successful defence.

Clear to Graduate

The Graduate Administrative Assistant will receive all required forms from the supervisor and/or Chair and submit to the School of Graduate Studies. The forms are then processed, and the student is clear to graduate. Please note the administrative process to clear to graduate may take up to 4-weeks. The final defence date is the date which the thesis was uploaded to MacSphere. Students requiring a verification letter (clear to graduate, degree completion) for work or Post Graduate Work permit, should be planned in advance. Last minute requests for verification letter are not guaranteed. See information about verification letters.

Tuition fees continue to be assessed until all degree requirements are met, including the successful submission of the final approved thesis to MacSphere.

More information is available on the [School of Graduate Studies website](#).

Important: It is the student's responsibility to ensure they have met all course requirements and milestones prior to initiating the defence.

Accelerated M.A.Sc. Option

An Accelerated Option is available to students currently enrolled at McMaster as undergraduate students in the Department of Materials Science and Engineering, whereby the M.A.Sc. degree may be completed in three or four terms (12-16 months) of full-time study. In exceptional circumstances, undergraduate engineering students from another department may apply for entry into the Accelerated Option by contacting the Associate Chair, Graduate. Application for entry into the Accelerated Option occurs in the penultimate year of undergraduate studies. Applicants must have a sessional average of 8.0 at the time they are applying for the option. Entry into the M.A.Sc. program under the Accelerated Option requires students to complete at least one term (four months) of their research project with a Supervisor from the department, plus successful completion of MATLS 4K06, and successful completion of advanced credit for one 600-level

course (3 units) in the final undergraduate year for graduate credit (which also counts towards the undergraduate degree course requirements) provided it is listed within the department.

Alternatively, the student is required to complete two terms (8 months) of their research project with a Supervisor from the department, plus successful completion of one term 600-level half course (3 units) in the final undergraduate year for graduate credit (which also counts towards the undergraduate degree course requirements) provided it is listed within the department. Entry into the M.A.Sc. program under the Accelerated Option must occur within one year of completing one's undergraduate degree, providing the applicant meets the same requirements for admissions as for regular students.

The Advanced Credit Option is open to students who were undergraduates in the Materials Engineering program at McMaster University who graduated with an overall average (CGPA) of at least B. The Advanced Credit Option allows graduate credit for one 600-level course taken during their final undergraduate year. The Advanced Credit Option may not be used in conjunction with the Accelerated Option.

Transfer to Ph.D.

Students wishing to be transferred to the Ph.D. program prior to the completion of the M.A.Sc. degree (see section 2.1.2 of the General Regulations of the Graduate School) must submit a Transfer Report, embodying a statement of progress and achievement in the research to date and a proposal for Ph.D. research. The Transfer Report must be submitted to the Associate Chair, Graduate not later than the completion of five terms (20 months) after initial registration in the M.A.Sc. program. Approval to transfer will be determined through a closed (non-public) oral examination in defense of the submitted Transfer Report. The successful completion of the Transfer Exam would be in lieu of the written comprehensive milestone once in the PhD Program.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (Ph.D.)

Program Requirements

Graduate students entering the Ph.D. program are required to successfully complete at least 12 units (4 half-courses) of course work, which includes the mandatory seminar course MATLS 702 (3 units) and 6 units of technical courses at the 700 level. Courses at the 700 level are offered as either a half course (3 units) or a quarter course (1.5 units). Only one 600-level course is permitted for graduate credit. Courses offered at the 600-level are offered as half courses (3 units). Only one non-technical half course (3 units) is permitted for graduate credit with written approval from the supervisor. Graduate students who have successfully transferred to the Ph.D. program from the Master's program in the Department are allowed to count the course work that they completed as a M.A.Sc. student towards their course requirements for the Ph.D. program.

The passing grades for graduate level course are A+, A, A−, B+, B, and B−.

Additional Requirements

Students must complete SGS 101 and SGS 201 within their first month of full-time studies. Additionally, they are required to complete a career planning exercise within the first three terms (12 months) of full-time enrollment.

Supervision

Supervision of Ph.D. students is governed by the School of Graduate Studies regulations as outlined in [Section 3.1 of the Graduate Calendar](#).

Supervisory Committee Meeting

The Ph.D. student's supervisory committee shall meet with the student a minimum of once a year **and submit their report** before our department deadline of October 31st. **Committee meetings should be planned and scheduled with this deadline in mind**. Additional and/or subsequent meetings shall be held to monitor progress towards the comprehensive exam as well as the completion of the thesis, as needed.

Supervisory Committee Report Deadlines

The department deadline for completion of the supervisory committee report for students who have been in the program for one semester or more is October 31st, 2025 or within ONE year of starting the PhD program, whichever comes **FIRST.**

Student start date of January or May 2025: Deadline is October 31st, 2025
Student start date of September 2025:   Deadline is October 31st, 2026
Student start date of January or May 2026: Deadline is October 31st, 2026

Ph.D. Comprehensive Examination

Refer to "Ph.D. Comprehensive Exam" under <u>Faculty of Engineering Requirements > Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)</u>.

Structure of Examination Committee
The comprehensive examination committee shall consist of:
1. Committee examiner/chair;
2. Student's supervisor;
3. Two supervisory committee members excluding the supervisor.

Overview
Students enrolled in the Ph.D. program in Materials Science and Engineering are required to successfully complete (pass) the Comprehensive Examination. The Comprehensive Examination includes two parts: Part A: Written Proposal Report and Part B: Oral Examination. The oral exam, tests the student's knowledge of three topics related to the research at an advanced level. Students are expected to show the greatest depth of knowledge in their field of research, but also be expected to demonstrate knowledge of fields related to their areas of specialization. The exam committee will consist of the Supervisory Committee, augmented by one other member, assigned by the Associate Chair, Graduate. The comprehensive exam must be completed within three-five terms (12-20 months) in the program, but no more than six terms (24 months). For students transferring into the Ph.D. program from the M.A.Sc. program, the Transfer Exam would be in lieu of Part A: Written Proposal Report of the Comprehensive Examination.

How to Initiate the Comprehensive Examination
1. Inform the Graduate Administrative Assistant by email a minimum of 6-weeks from the anticipated exam date including the following:
   a. The three topics as decided by the supervisory committee within 6-weeks of the anticipated exam date.
   b. Supervisory Committee Members
   c. Suggested Examiner/Chair as approved by the Supervisor
   d. Approximate date of the comprehensive exam
2. The Graduate Administrative Assistant will email the student and their supervisor a letter of regulations. The student and supervisor must sign and return the Acknowledgement of regulations letter
3. The candidate is required to submit a written proposal, within 21 days (3 weeks) of receiving this letter.
4. The Graduate Administrative Assistant will send out all meeting invites, book all meeting rooms, and send out grading sheet to the examining committee

Format Part A: Written Proposal Report
The candidate is required to submit a written proposal, up to 10,000 words in length, plus references, on their Ph.D. topic. It will normally include an explanation of the relevant background, a critical survey of literature in the field, and a research proposal related to the topic. The candidate is required to submit this report within 21 days of receiving this letter.

General guidance on the written report is provided in the graduate handbook and can be discussed with your supervisor or supervisory committee. The report should not be a lengthy document. It should indicate that you have a good grasp of the background of the project being undertaken, have demonstrated a potential to perform research, and have thought carefully about your proposed research.

- Sections to include in report:
    - Title
    - Introduction/Summary (~ 1 pages),
    - Literature Review (~3-4 pages)
    - Proposed Research methodology or Proposed Approach (~3-4 pages)
    - Preliminary Results (~2-3 pages)
    - Expected Impact, Significance and Novelty (~0.75 pages),
    - Timeline/Milestones (~1 pages)
    - Figures (throughout with wrapped text or at the end, normally no more than 10 figures)
- Formatting guidelines:
    - Maximum length (10,000 words = 20 pages single spaced) excluding references
    - Use page size US Letter (8 ½ x 11 inches), portrait format, single column
    - Set margins at 0.75 inch all around
    - Text must be in black, single-spaced, 12 pt font, Times New Roman
    - Figures must include captions
    - No table of contents is necessary, but headers are required
    - References are to be appended at the end, and do not count towards word count. It is suggested to use a reference manager and appropriate citation style for your
- Suggested 3-slide summary for comprehensive topics
- Acknowledgment of regulations by student/supervisor including aide

Part B: Oral Examination

The oral examination will assess the depth and breadth of the student's fundamental understanding in various areas of materials science and engineering. It will be scheduled five weeks from receipt of the Acknowledgement Letter. The oral examination will normally require two hours to complete, but in no case will continue for more than three hours.

The student will be required to make a brief PowerPoint presentation of the proposal report (no more than 20 minutes) and answer questions directly related to their report and presentation. In addition, to probe their general comprehension of the research field and peripheral areas, they will be asked more general questions in three fundamental areas related to the topic of their research.

The student may either prepare a 3-slide summary on each of these topics or incorporate these topics in their proposal presentation.

Their supervisor will meet with them to discuss these requirements/expectations and any questions they may have.

Ph.D. Thesis Defence

Refer to "Ph.D. Thesis Defence" under Faculty of Engineering Requirements > Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

Ph.D. Defence Procedures/Timelines

Format

This is an oral exam administered by the School of Graduate Studies. Please contact gthesis@mcmaster.ca for any questions pertaining to the Ph.D. defence process. After a short oral presentation, the student will be asked to defend the contents and background to the written thesis. This is a PUBLIC examination open to all interested persons.

Examination Committee

The examining committee includes members of the supervisory committee, members of the university from outside the department, and an external examiner from outside the university. Either your supervisor or the School of Graduate Studies will determine the additional members (external examiner and chair).

Initiating the PhD thesis Defence

- The deadline to initiate your defence varies each term and can be found on the School of Graduate Studies website Dates and Deadlines page.
- You can initiate your defence at any time but keep in mind if they are outside the deadline to initiate date, you may not meet convocation deadlines.
- Once you initiate your defence, your supervisor will have the choice to select the standard defence stream or the accelerated defence stream. The difference in mainly administrative and does not impact when you initiate your defence.
- Confirm all degree requirements (course and milestones) have been met by checking Student Summary in Mosaic. If a degree requirement or grade is missing, contact the Graduate Administrative Assistant.

Organizing the Defence

The School of Graduate Studies together with your supervisor will coordinate the defence including submitting all required forms to the Chair.

After the Defence

After a successful defence, the student must correct any errors identified in the written report identified by the examination committee to the satisfaction of the supervisor. Once approved by the supervisor, the student must submit an electronic copy of the final thesis to the School of Graduate Studies via MacSphere. Students are normally expected to submit their final thesis within four weeks of a successful defence.

Clear to Graduate

The Graduate Administrative Assistant will receive all required forms from the supervisor and/or Chair and submit to the School of Graduate Studies. The forms are then processed, and the student is clear to graduate. Please note the administrative process to clear to graduate may take

up to 4-weeks. The final defence date is the date which the thesis was uploaded to MacSphere. Students requiring a verification letter (clear to graduate, degree completion) for work or Post Graduate Work permit, should plan in advance. Last minute requests for verification letters are not guaranteed. See information about verification letters.

Tuition fees continue to be assessed until all degree requirements are met, including the successful submission of the final approved thesis to MacSphere.

More information is available on the School of Graduate Studies website: More information can be found here.

Important: It is the student's responsibility to ensure they have met all course requirements and milestones prior to initiating the defence

DEPARTMENT SOCIALS

MSE Graduate Student Representatives

Each year, a group of graduate students (domestic and international) are elected to serve as liaisons between the graduate student body and the department faculty and staff. These representatives participate in the monthly department meetings and are responsible to provide a voice for graduate student body and collect and disseminate relevant information to and from the graduate student body.

Department Social Media

Connect with us!

🌐 mse.mcmaster.ca

📷 @msemcmaster

f Materials at Mac

𝕏 MSE_McMaster

in linkedin.com/in/mse-mcmaster

Department Feedback

Any questions, reach us at materials@mcmaster.ca