

Principles for Graduate Study at Ontario's Universities

Ontario Council on Graduate Studies

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The universities are autonomous and make individual decisions to determine their admission requirements. As enrollment in graduate and professional programs is typically limited in number by institutional and departmental capacity, it is not possible to accept everyone who applies. Thus many applicants who meet the minimum entrance requirements are not admitted to these programs.

Applicants to provincially assisted universities in Ontario are considered for admission on an individual basis in a process whereby the appropriate range of academic and other relevant evidence is weighed.

Each applicant is considered on his or her own merits, according to standards set by each institution, program by program.

Resolution 5. (The principle of timely program completion)

OCGS members are committed to student success and timely program completion.

Full-time graduate students are expected to pursue their graduate degree on a full-time basis and make satisfactory progress toward timely completion of all program requirements. It is not possible, or desirable, for the university to monitor and enforce the employment activities of its graduate students outside the university. However, it is both possible and desirable for the university to ensure that it does not itself create a structural situation that jeopardizes the ability of the graduate student to make full-time progress towards the completion of graduate program requirements.

Resolution 6.

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Resolution 7.

That Ontario Council of Academic Vice-

- b. Program requirements, including a research component appropriate to the degree level and to the discipline or profession; and
- c. Curricular content and level.

Resolution 8.

coherence of its content. It should not be

Principles for

Types 1 and 2 are not stand-alone qualifications and, therefore, the standards that apply to them are those of their parent program(s). Type 3 diplomas are stand-alone programs.

Resolution 12.

Principles for

6. Awareness of limits of knowledge

Knowledge is limited, and students should be aware of the limits of their own knowledge, and of the potential contributions of other interpretations, methods, and disciplines.

Ontario universities should provide students with knowledge through a diverse range of programs that are thesis-oriented, course-based, or professional.

Resolution 14.

That regardless of the program type, the degree is awarded to students who have demonstrated the following:

1. Depth and breadth of knowledge

A systematic understanding of knowledge, including, where appropriate, relevant knowledge outside the field and/or discipline, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which are at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study, or area of professional practice.

2. Research and scholarship

A conceptual understanding and methodological competence that:

- a) enables a working comprehension of how established techniques of research and inquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline;
- b)

- c) The ethical behaviour consistent with academic integrity and the use of appropriate guidelines and procedures for responsible conduct of research; and
- d) The ability to appreciate the broader implications of applying knowledge to particular contexts.

5. Level of communications skills

The ability to communicate ideas, issues and conclusions clearly.

6. Awareness of limits of knowledge

Cognizance of the complexity of knowledge and of the potential contributions of other interpretations, methods, and disciplines.

Doctoral Degrees

Independent original research, the preparation of a thesis, and its successful defense are considered to be the essential core of doctoral studies. However, because thesis research is highly specialized, it is important that some mechanism be in place to ensure that breadth of knowledge and skills are acquired by doctoral students. This objective can be achieved by course work, participation in colloquia, a comprehensive examination or other means.

Two types of doctoral degrees are offered in Ontario universities, the PhD and the practice-based doctoral degrees that are designated by the name of the discipline (e.g., EdD in Education, Mus.Doc. in Music, DVSc in Veterinary Science). Both types have a requirement for research, but research in the practice-based degrees is generally of an applied nature, related to a professional or creative activity.

Both types of doctorates can be distinguished from second entry professional programs, such as the MD, DDS, OD, or DVM, in that appropriate advanced training is required for admission and research is an integral and necessary component of the degree requirement.

Resolution 15.

to students who have demonstrated:

1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge

A thorough understanding of a substantial body of knowledge that is at the forefront of their academic discipline or area of professional practice including, where appropriate, relevant knowledge outside the field and/or discipline.

2. Research and Scholarship

- a) The ability to conceptualize, design, and implement research for the generation of new knowledge, applications, or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the research design or methodology in the light of unforeseen problems;
- b) The ability to make informed judgments on complex issues in specialist fields, sometimes requiring new methods; and
- c) The ability to produce original research, or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to

Resolution 18.

A Collaborative Specialization must have at least one core one-semester course that is foundational to the specialization and does not form part of the course offerings of any of the partner programs. This course must be completed by all students from partner programs

program (diploma or degree). The skills required to be successful in the microcredential will be articulated. Entrance requirements may include enrolment as a current graduate student, or job experience equivalency related to the field of study. In some instances, and/or at some institutions, a microcredential may be transcriptable. New graduate microcredentials should align with some aspects of the Graduate Degree Level Expectations. Quality assurance processes should follow the COU principles that were submitted to The Ministry of Colleges and Universities in July 2021.

Resolution 24.

A graduate micro-course/micro-program is a transcriptable academic credit at the graduate level that is shorter in duration than traditional courses/degrees. These credits can sometimes be stacked into other credentials. Admission requirements to micro-courses/micro-programs follow the same standards as traditional graduate courses. If a student is not registered in an existing graduate program, a student wishing to take a graduate micro-course/micro-program may enroll as a non-degree special student. Proposals for new micro-courses/micro-programs must be submitted to the relevant academic body and align with Graduate Degree Level Expectations.

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