SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Guidelines for Graduate Departmental Handbooks
Guidelines for the content of graduate department/program handbooks

Department/Program handbooks should include the fundamental information listed below, plus department- or program- specific information. In addition, a central list of resources developed by SGS and updated annually should be provided as an Appendix.

Content for Graduate Handbooks

1. General information
   a. Information about the department/unit (e.g. graduate faculty and staff, affiliated research centres, unique aspect that distinguish unit from those at other institutions)
   b. Facilities (e.g. laboratories, collections)
   c. Key contacts and their role with respect to graduate students (e.g. graduate assistant, graduate coordinator, graduate student representative(s) on department/program committees)

2. When you arrive
   a. Keys/access to building, laboratory, ...
   b. Training required (e.g. WHMIS, Human research ethics, animal care)
   c. Coffee and lunch room (pay-as-you-go coffee, access to microwave, fridge,...)
   d. Study/work space

3. Master’s program
   a. Description of degree requirements (number of courses, seminars, thesis/project)
   b. Timeline for achieving milestones (e.g. completion of courses, thesis/project proposal, ethics approval if applicable, research data collection and analysis/research, writing)
   c. Consider including expectations for theses and major research projects including access to past submissions
   d. Promotion to the PhD program or advanced standing in the PhD program (if applicable) [see Thesis Completion and Progressing to Degree Completion under Central Resources and Services]

4. PhD program
   a. Description of degree requirements (number of courses, seminars, comprehensive/qualifying examination or equivalent requirement, language requirement if applicable, thesis)
   b. Timeline for achieving milestones (e.g. completion of courses, thesis/project proposal, comprehensive/qualifying exam, ethics approval (if applicable), research data collection and analysis, writing)
   c. Opportunities for field travel, international research or study
   d. Annual report
   e. The advisory/supervisory committee (membership, number of meetings/year)
   f. Consider including expectations for theses and major research projects including access to past submissions
     [see Thesis Completion and Progressing to Degree Completion under Central Resources and Services]

5. Financial support
a. Minimum guaranteed funding for Master’s students (if applicable) and for PhD students (also include the number of years of support)
b. Schedule of payment of funds (per month, per terms, lump sum)
c. Teaching assistant/teaching fellow opportunities

6. How to…
   a. Form your advisory/supervisory committee
   b. Change your supervisor
   c. Add or drop a course
   d. Raise a concern about your program

Central Resources and Services

Thesis Completion

Format of Thesis
Your thesis must adhere to the requirements and formatting standards that apply for traditional style theses and manuscript style theses. Departments may augment these standard requirements as appropriate. Information on thesis formatting, copyright and final e-submission to Q-Space can be found here: [http://www.queensu.ca/sgs/thesis-formatting-other-resources](http://www.queensu.ca/sgs/thesis-formatting-other-resources)

Thesis Examining Committee- Oral Examination
The oral examination may be open (public) or closed as decided by the student and his/her supervisor. Examiners are selected for specific roles and their expertise; they are tasked with providing a fair assessment of the thesis and the oral examination. See: [http://www.queensu.ca/sgs/preparing-your-oral-examination](http://www.queensu.ca/sgs/preparing-your-oral-examination)

Progressing to Degree Completion

Research Ethics Approval
Any research project involving human subjects regardless of whether the project is supported by grant funds must receive approval from one of the Research Ethics Boards (REB) prior to the start of the data collection. The approval process takes time. Students must have completed the online module on Ethics for research involving human subjects prior to submitting the research proposal to the appropriate REB. Research associated with the Health Sciences and Affiliated Teaching Hospitals must be submitted to the HSREB and non-health sciences submit to the General Research Ethics Board (GREB). If you are uncertain of whether ethics is required, consult with your supervisor or the appropriate ethics office.

For the online module: [http://www.queensu.ca/traq/human-ethics](http://www.queensu.ca/traq/human-ethics)

For information about the General Research Ethics Board including the schedule of meetings: [http://www.queensu.ca/urs/ethics/general-research-ethics-board-greb](http://www.queensu.ca/urs/ethics/general-research-ethics-board-greb)

For information about the Health Science Research Ethics including the schedule of meetings: [http://www.queensu.ca/urs/ethics/health-sciences-and-affiliated-teaching-hospitals-research-ethics-board-hsreb](http://www.queensu.ca/urs/ethics/health-sciences-and-affiliated-teaching-hospitals-research-ethics-board-hsreb)
**Animal Care**
The University Animal Care Committee is responsible for the review and approval of all protocols proposing the use of animals in research, teaching, or testing at Queen’s. If your research involves the use of animals (any species) then you must complete the course in animal care (QACS 799). For registration and content information go to: http://www.queensu.ca/uvet/training/theoretical-training-qacs-799%E2%80%93introduction-animal-care

**Annual Report**
An annual report describes your achievements to date, your academic goals for the next year, what supports need to be in place to accomplish your goals, and whether there have been unanticipated delays. Continuing and satisfactory progress is required to be in ‘good standing’. Annual reports are mandatory for students in PhD programs and strongly recommended for student in research-based (doctoral-stream) Master’s programs. Reports must be discussed with your supervisor.

Tips for completing the annual report:

Annual report template:

**Persistence 101**
This is a new initiative that brings graduate students together to set goals and objectives about what individual students want to achieve in each session and to write elements of the thesis accordingly. There are two 3 hours sessions/week over 6 weeks. See:
http://www.queensu.ca/sgs/sgs-counsellor

**Dissertation Boot Camp**
The School of Graduate studies hosts two Dissertation Boot Camp events throughout the year. The primary aim of the 5-day Boot Camp is to write and to make substantial headway on your thesis. Advice and tips about writing, one-on-one consultation and snacks and lunch are provided. For details and how to register go to: http://www.queensu.ca/sgs/dissertation-bootcamp

**Dissertation on the Lake**
Another thesis writing support program hosted by the School of Graduate Studies is Dissertation on the Lake. This writing retreat is held on the shores of Elbow Lake, 30 minutes north of Kingston. It provides graduate students with the opportunity to write in a relaxing and inspiring environment, setting aside the distractions of daily life at home. To learn more, visit http://queensu.ca/sgs/retreat

**Three Minute Thesis (3MT)**
The 3MT is a university wide competition for Master’s students (thesis or research project) and doctoral students in which participants present their research and its wider impact in 3 minutes or less to a panel of non-specialist judges. This is an excellent opportunity to develop strong communication skills and convey the significance of your research work.
http://www.queensu.ca/3mt/home
**Student Academic Success Services**
These services include thesis writing support in small groups covering topics of interest to the participants, learning strategies for graduate students, and through the writing centre graduate students can get assistance with academic writing and one-on-one consultations. SASS works with students in all disciplines and provide specialized support for English language learners.
http://sass.queensu.ca/

**Tips & Resources Webpage**
Queen’s School of Graduate Studies have many valuable resources and events in place to assist you in progressing toward degree completion. Take advantage of the many services available to you during your time at Queen’s. Click the link below for details.
http://www.queensu.ca/sgs/current-students/resources

**Policies and Regulations**
[Note: for a complete listing of all SGS regulations see the Calendar : http://www.queensu.ca/calendars/sgsr/. A subset of graduate policies is provided below]

**Academic Integrity Policy**
Academic integrity is constituted by the five core fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. Queen's students, faculty, administrators and staff all have responsibilities to support and uphold the fundamental values of academic integrity.
http://www.queensu.ca/calendars/sgsr/Academic_Integrity_Policy.html

**Accommodation of Graduate Students with Disabilities**
Queen’s University is committed to providing accommodation for graduate students with disabilities. University administrators, faculty, staff and other students are expected to support, to the point of undue hardship, all reasonable individualized and appropriate accommodation plans that preserve the program’s academic standards and adhere to the principles of academic integrity.
For the roles and responsibilities associated with accommodation (students, faculty and staff) visit: http://queensu.ca/accessibility/educators/accommodating-students-disabilities

For the policy click the following link:

**Appeal of an Assigned Grade in a Graduate Course**
Most graduate departments have a procedure compatible with that of the School of Graduate Studies whereby any graduate student wishing clarification about, or who is dissatisfied with, an assigned grade in a graduate course, can appeal that grade. When departments do not have their own procedure, a graduate student follows the steps outlined in the SGS policy; see
http://www.queensu.ca/calendars/sgsr/Appeal_of_an_Assigned_Grade_in_a_Graduate_Course.html

**Off-Campus Study**
Subject to the residency requirement of the program of study, students registered in a master's or a doctoral program may be permitted to study at another approved university, institution, library or
laboratory. To do so requires program approval, the submission of a request for Full-time off-campus registration, and approval by the School of Graduate Studies.

http://www.queensu.ca/calendars/sgsr/Off_Campus_Study.html

Time Limits for Completion of Programs and Extensions
While Master’s programs are designed and approved to be completed in one year (3 terms) or two years (6 terms) and doctoral programs are designed and approved to be completed within four years (12 terms) of initial full-time registration there are many reasons why additional time may be required. This regulation describes the standard timeframe for program completion and the process for extending the timeframe:

http://www.queensu.ca/calendars/sgsr/Time_Limits_for_Completion_of_Programs.html

For extensions of the standard time limit for program completion see:
http://www.queensu.ca/calendars/sgsr/Extension_of_Time_Limits.html

Appeals Against Academic Decisions
In the event that academic problems arise, efforts should always be made to deal with them early and by informal means. There are however situations in which informal resolution is not possible and formal processes need be pursued. If a resolution is not reached then the student may appeal the decision on procedural grounds if they exist. Refer to:
http://www.queensu.ca/calendars/sgsr/Appeals_Against_Academic_Decisions.html

Withdrawal on Academic Grounds
A department may recommend that a student be required to withdraw on academic grounds when academic performance including progress is unsatisfactory. There are several circumstances that may lead to such a serious recommendation. These circumstances, the process, and procedures for appeal are described in the policy found at:
http://www.queensu.ca/calendars/sgsr/Withdrawal_on_Academic_Grounds.html

Professional Skills Development for Graduate Students

Expanding Horizons
The School of Graduate Studies, in partnership with student service providers at Queen’s, offers Expanding Horizons - a series of workshops and seminars to support the academic, personal, and professional success of graduate students. Graduate students are encouraged to participate according to their needs and interests, and may attend as many workshops/seminars as desired. A planning guide assists by recommending when students might benefit most from certain workshops, see:
http://www.queensu.ca/exph/workshop-series/planning-guide

For complete details on Expanding Horizons visit:
http://www.queensu.ca/exph/workshop-series

Career Services
Career Services provides career education and employment support services at Queen's for undergraduate and graduate students in all disciplines. A comprehensive range of services are offered
including drop-in career advising, supporting graduate students in making informed decisions about career options, job search strategies, and CVs/resumes. For a full description of services see:  
http://careers.queensu.ca/

**Career Week**
The School of Graduate Studies hosts an annual Career Week, which is a five-day program with workshops focusing on strategies for career success in various sectors. During the week, learn how to identify your skills and how to translate them into future employment opportunities. See the daily schedule, and learn more at the Career Week page on the Expanding Horizons website - http://queensu.ca/exph/career-week

**Centre for Teaching and Learning**
The Queen’s Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) offers a wide array of programs and services that are designed to meet the teaching and learning needs of students, post-doctoral fellows, staff, and faculty members.  
http://www.queensu.ca/ctl/

**Advising and Counselling Services**

**Academic Counselling, Confidential Advising**
The Associate Deans in the School of Graduate Studies are available to graduate students who wish to talk about any academic issue they have. The Associate Deans will offer advice and lay out options to manage the specific issues. These meetings are in confidence and actions are only taken with the student’s consent. To make an appointment please contact the Administrative Assistant at: sgsasst@queensu.ca

**Peer Advising (Society for Graduate and Professional Students, SGPS))**
The Student Advisor program provides advocacy and support for graduate and professional students. The program’s primary goal is to assist SGPS members negotiate their many roles as students, researchers, teachers, employees and colleagues. Services are strictly confidential.  
http://sgps.ca/sgps-services/student-advisor-program/

**Student Wellness Services (formally HCDS)**
Student Wellness Services provides a welcoming, confidential and integrated service that is responsive to the needs of students be it health services, counselling services, disability services or advice on maintaining or improving your overall well-being. For a full listing of services visit:  
http://www.queensu.ca/studentwellness/home

**School of Graduate Studies on-site Counsellor**
This service is part of HCDS and provides an additional access point for graduate students to counselling services. Located in the School of Graduate Studies, graduate students have access to individual counselling services, group programs and various health and wellness events. Strict standards of confidentiality or upheld. Visit:  http://www.queensu.ca/sgs/sgs-counsellor
SGS Habitat
http://queensu.ca/sgs/current-students/sgs-habitat

The SGS Habitat offers a wide range of resources for staying well during your studies. The page, Staying Well, includes resources for physical and mental well-being. - http://queensu.ca/sgs/sgs-habitat-staying-well

Adjusting to living in a new city is made easier with SGS Habitat’s Coming from Away resources. http://queensu.ca/sgs/sgs-habitat-coming-from-away

Opportunities for getting involved, staying in touch, and physical activity are listed on the SGS Habitat Playing page - http://queensu.ca/sgs/sgs-habitat-playing

Balancing life in grad school takes planning and support. The Managing page in SGS Habitat offers advice and information to help with stressful situations, such as finances, housing, family life, and more. http://queensu.ca/sgs/sgs-habitat-managing

Other Services and General Resources

Queen’s University International Centre (QUIC)
QUIC is a support service for all members of the Queen’s Community and through its activities promotes an internally informed and cross-culturally sensitive learning environment. The centre offers support for international students in finding housing, it provides a relaxing and welcoming space for conversation, and provides information about study permits, visas, health insurance coverage, taxes and living in Kingston. Visit: http://quic.queensu.ca/

Queen’s Libraries
Students can access library materials on-site or via the internet with a Queen’s netID. In addition, students can book study space, borrow materials from other libraries, seek advice on searching for the information you need, and access information about copyright, open access and scholarly communications. For service descriptions visit: http://library.queensu.ca/help-services/services-graduate-students

Guidelines to Intellectual Property
These guidelines are intended to support your study and research at Queen’s and to provide you with a general overview of what intellectual property is, what you should know, and how to find out more. You will find practical guidance about issues associated with intellectual property (IP) including patents, copyright and ownership of IP.


Guidelines to Graduate Supervision
Understanding roles, responsibilities and expectations is important in graduate study and effective communication is essential to ensuring a shared understanding. The development of strong working relationships helps to promote an excellent graduate experience. This guide provides best practices,
advice and general information to assist in forming and maintaining good student-supervisor relationships and references resources that may be helpful in the pursuit of a graduate degree.


**Handbook for International Students**
This handbook provides valuable information and resources that will help students find what they need upon arrival and throughout their stay in Kingston. Sections include student services, academic life, housing, money matter, cross-cultural transition, and community and recreation.


**School of Graduate Studies (SGS) Website**
The SGS website links you to the many programs and resources available. For information about funding, events, profiles of graduate students and much more visit the SGS website:
http://queensu.ca/sgs/