

University of
Lethbridge



The School of Graduate Studies Supervisor – Student Guidelines

Preamble

- This form is designed to provide a framework for a discussion between Supervisors and graduate students at the University of Lethbridge and to establish guidelines that govern their relationship and interaction. This form may be revisited at any stage of the Student's graduate program to accommodate for changes in the Supervisor-Student relationship. The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) encourages that this form be reviewed annually.
- The Supervisor-Student relationship involves mentoring, support, career development, as well as academic oversight. Supervisors and Students must arrive at mutually agreeable terms to establish their relationship and interaction.
- The Supervisor is responsible for supervising the graduate student during his/her program. The Supervisor is the Student's primary point of contact at the University of Lethbridge. Both the Student and the Supervisor need to have a working knowledge of the University's policies, procedures and regulations for graduate programming approved by Graduate Council and University Committees (e.g., GFC), as well as the specific supplementary regulations of the academic unit. Because policies and procedures are revised regularly, they should be reviewed by both parties semi-annually. This form does not replace official University of Lethbridge statements outlining approved policies and procedures.
- If Students or Supervisors have any questions or concerns regarding their graduate program or these guidelines and this form, they should contact their graduate program chair, unit head, or the School of Graduate Studies.
- For additional supplementary information that may pertain to this document such as, the [Graduate Student IP Guidelines](#) or any related program forms and documents (e.g., Graduate Studies Calendar and Course Catalogue, degree-specific Policies and Procedures manuals, etc.), please visit the [School of Graduate Studies website](#) for details.
- The Supervisor and Student must review each of the sections below and should **check off each relevant box** to confirm that the items have been discussed and that both parties confirm they understand each of the items. **This document should be completed prior to the commencement of any research and no later than the end of the Student's first term.**

Part 1: Supervisor and Student

- A. The Supervisor _____ [Insert Supervisor Name], (the “Supervisor”) is a member of the School of Graduate Studies and may supervise students in _____ [Insert Department/Area/Academic Unit] at the University of Lethbridge and agrees to supervise the graduate program of the student named below and;
- B. The Student _____ [Insert Student Name], (the “Student”) is registered in a _____ [Insert Degree] degree program with a major in _____ [Insert Major] under the auspices of the School of Graduate Studies, studying in _____ [Insert Department/Area/Academic Unit] at the University of Lethbridge and wishes to carry out a graduate program under the supervision of the above named Supervisor.

Part 2: Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 The Supervisor

Please review the following points and then check each relevant box to acknowledge it has been discussed with the graduate student.

Supervisors have a responsibility to adhere to the general roles and responsibilities as outlined within the relevant [Policies and Procedures manual](#). In addition, the supervisor will:

- Provide mentorship and guidance to the Student for the duration of his/her program;
- Provide guidance to the Student on all program requirements as outlined in the [Graduate Studies Calendar and Course Catalogue](#), including selecting required and appropriate coursework, research, thesis writing, suitable resources, and workspace.
- Assist the student in the completion of the [Statement of Progress and Standing](#) reports biannually as required by the School of Graduate Studies;
- Provide advice on the composition of the supervisory and/or comprehensive examination committee(s);
- Assess and confer appropriate and fair acknowledgement of Student contribution to scholarly activities as outlined in Part 6 below;
- Provide timely, honest, and fair feedback in support of high academic performance;
- Give reasonable notice to the Student of extended absences from campus, such as research leaves, and make satisfactory arrangements during such absences;
- Disclose any conflicts of interest that may arise with respect to the Student;
- Review and ensure program regulations and requirements as outlined within the [Graduate Studies Calendar and Course Catalogue](#) and the appropriate degree-specific Academic Regulations, [Policies and Procedures manual](#) are met, including those related to coursework, funding, thesis proposal, thesis work, and the Thesis oral defence;
- Discuss performance expectations and academic and ethical standards with the Student;

- Provide guidance on how to work effectively as a team;
 - Assist in providing the resources and facilities required for the Student to undertake scholarly activities; and
 - Any other mutually agreed upon responsibilities; specify below:
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2.2 The Student

Please review the following points and then check each relevant box to acknowledge it has been discussed.

Students have a responsibility to adhere to the general roles and responsibilities as outlined within the relevant [Policies and Procedures manual](#) and University policies as outlined in the [Graduate Studies Calendar and Course Catalogue](#) and other official documents. In addition, the Student will:

- Develop a working knowledge of the University's relevant policies, procedures, regulations, and deadlines set by the [University of Lethbridge](#), the [School of Graduate Studies](#) and their respective academic unit. Because policies and procedures are revised regularly, they should be reviewed by both the Student and Supervisor semi-annually;
- Seek the advice of the Supervisor regarding required and appropriate coursework, research, thesis proposal, thesis writing, suitable resources, and work space;
- Demonstrate appropriate professional judgement, collegial behaviour, academic rigour and integrity at all times and in every facet of the graduate program. Academic integrity at the University of Lethbridge refers to principles associated with honest, ethical and sound scholarship. Students should refer to the [Academic Regulations, Policies, and Program Requirements section of the Graduate Studies Calendar and Course Catalogue](#) which outlines this further, paying special attention to the [Student Discipline Policies](#) for both academic and non-academic offences;
- Dedicate the appropriate amount of time to the graduate program in order to make effective progress towards any associated deadlines and timely degree completion. Further, the Student is responsible for the submission of [Statement of Progress and Standing](#) reports biannually as required by the School of Graduate Studies;
- Submit materials in a timely manner to the Supervisor for review and assessment;
- Consult with the Supervisor regarding the composition of the supervisory and/or comprehensive examination committee(s);
- Maintain contact with the Supervisor as discussed in section #3 (Meeting and Communication) of this form;
- Keep laboratory, research, and computer areas tidy and adhere to laboratory safety rules as outlined in the Non-academic Offenses section of the Student Discipline Policy in the [Graduate Studies Calendar and Course Catalogue](#);
- Respect the space and property of others;

- Strive to work effectively as a member of a team;
- Obtain the required safety and research training, and, if necessary, the required ethics approvals that may be required by the University of Lethbridge, School of Graduate Studies or the academic unit;
- Determine yearly program, funding and professional development plans in consultation with the Supervisor;
- Work with the Supervisor to identify and address any barriers to academic success (for example, English as a Second Language challenges, writing support, or deficits in required background knowledge); and
- Any other mutually agreed upon responsibilities; specify below:

Part 3: Timelines and Completion

Please review the following points and then check each relevant box to acknowledge it has been discussed.

- [Statement of Progress and Standing reports](#) are to be submitted biannually as per the relevant [Program Policies and Procedures](#). The Student, Supervisor, and committee must jointly complete this form and complementary reports;
- The maximum time period, including course work, examinations, research, thesis proposal, thesis writing and defence (if applicable) permitted for the student’s program is _____ years (please consult the [Graduate Studies Calendar and Course Catalogue](#) and your specific program regulations as set by the School of Graduate Studies). It is anticipated that the Student should complete the graduate program within _____ years;
- Student commitments for other duties such as non-degree research, teaching and teaching assistantships, or other responsibilities should not delay efforts to complete the degree requirements of the graduate program; and
- Any other mutually agreed upon responsibilities; specify below:

Part 4: Meetings and Communication

Please review the following points and then check each relevant box to acknowledge it has been discussed.

- The Supervisor and the Student will arrange and attend regular meetings to report on progress, to provide support and mentorship, and to attend to relevant deadlines. The frequency of the

meetings may vary, but at minimum, meetings will normally be held every _____
(indicate weekly or monthly intervals and/or frequency);

- The Supervisor will respond in a timely manner with constructive suggestions/revisions to written work (including proposals, literature reviews, analysis, thesis chapters), as well as research grants and scholarship applications, reports, manuscripts or scholarly presentations;
- The Supervisor and the Student will organize and schedule an in-person meeting with the entire supervisory committee at least twice annually. Additional meetings may also be held at the request of the Student or the Supervisor. If appropriate, the Student will distribute reports or meeting materials in advance of the scheduled meetings with the supervisory committee;
- The Student will participate in departmental meetings, seminars and training regularly as determined by the Supervisor; and
- Any other mutually agreed upon responsibilities; specify below:

Part 5: Publication

Please review the following points and then check each relevant box to acknowledge it has been discussed.

- The Supervisor and Student should present research results that are publishable in reputable, externally refereed journals, thereby achieving the goals of creating new knowledge and disseminating it to the appropriate community;
- The Supervisor and Student will mutually agree upon deadlines for timely completion and publication of manuscripts or presentations;
- The Supervisor will acknowledge the contribution of the Student in any publication and /or presentations, as appropriate;
- Order of authorship and the fair and reasonable criteria to determine the order of authorship on any shared publications will be established;
- Should the need arise, the Student and the Supervisor will discuss the patentability of any invention arising out of the research before any publication or presentation of the research in order to ensure that the patentability of the invention is not compromised. Supervisors and Students should consult the [Graduate Student Intellectual Property Guidelines](#) to assist with such decisions; and
- Any other mutually agreed upon responsibilities; specify below:

Part 6: Intellectual Property, Academic Integrity and Ethics

Please review the following points and then check each relevant box to acknowledge it has been discussed.

- The Student and Supervisor will review, understand and discuss the [Graduate Student Intellectual Property \(IP\) Guidelines](#) developed to provide a framework for graduates students and Supervisors to address the various issues associated with IP that may arise in the graduate education context;
- The Student will keep orderly records of all research data produced or developed;
- Document or data storage should be limited to University servers or a server that is accessible by the Supervisor at any time;
- The Student will adhere to any institutional agreements related to their research or any equipment being used in their program. These include, but are not limited to agreements such as external and internal grant/funding agreements/awards (e.g., Tri-Council Award Holders Agreements), leases (e.g., an MRI equipment lease). Students should have a working knowledge of all restrictions on time of use, ethics information and approvals and any other relevant information related to these agreements;
- All Students are responsible for understanding the meaning of academic integrity at the University of Lethbridge and ensuring its application to all of their work. Academic integrity at the University of Lethbridge refers to principles associated with honest, ethical and sound scholarship. Students should refer to the [Academic Regulations, Policies, and Program Requirements section of the Graduate Studies Calendar](#) which outlines this further, paying special attention to the [Student Discipline Policy](#) for both academic and non-academic offences;
- All Students are responsible for understanding and adhering to the [University's Copyright Policies](#);
- The Supervisor and Student will adhere to the University's policies and procedures relating to the conduct of research, including any necessary human ethics review procedures, and animal care ethics that must be completed. For more information, please see the [Office of Research Services & Innovation website](#); and
- Any other mutually agreed upon responsibilities; specify below:

Part 7: Funding

Please review the following points and then check each relevant box to acknowledge it has been discussed.

- The Student, in consultation with the Supervisor, will actively seek internal and external opportunities for scholarships, awards, and grants related to their program;

- The Supervisor will provide \$ _____ for the academic year(s) _____ in funding to the Student as a Research Assistantship or Research Stipend as specified in the letter of offer, subject to the satisfactory progress of the student; and
- Any other mutually agreed upon responsibilities; specify below:

Part 8: Professional Development

Please review the following points and then check each relevant box to acknowledge it has been discussed.

- In consultation with the Supervisor, the Student will develop an individualized professional development plan. The Student will be encouraged to actively seek out opportunities to attend professional development workshops on topics such as effective writing, teaching training, grant writing and transferable skill development (e.g., project management, networking, etc.);
- Opportunities for the Student to attend suitable conferences and present scholarly work will be sought;
- Sources of funding for Student travel should be investigated and then appropriate applications submitted; and
- Any other mutually agreed upon responsibilities; specify below:

Part 9: Safety

Please review the following points and then check each relevant box to acknowledge it has been discussed.

- The Student may be subject to safety courses/workshops or requirements at the University of Lethbridge, including those pertaining to workplace protection (including but not limited to Workplace Hazardous Material Information System “WHMIS”), hazardous materials, radioisotopes, laboratory and environmental waste management, or others; and
- The Supervisor and Student will seek input and direction from safety officers or other appropriate personnel within their unit and/or [Risk and Safety Services](#) to determine if further training is required.

Part 10: Privacy and Confidentiality

Please review the following points and then check each relevant box to acknowledge it has been discussed.

- If confidential information is provided to a student in the program, the student will not disclose the confidential information to any third parties, except as required by law or as permitted by the agreement pursuant to which the confidential information was shared;
- When appropriate a Confidentiality and Privacy statement should be prepared and signed by the student; and
- The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act applies to the student's program. For more information, see [the Privacy Office Website](#).

Part 11: Other

- Any other mutually agreed upon responsibilities; specify below:

Signatures

The Student and Supervisor have reviewed and understand these guidelines.

Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

The Supervisor and the Student will keep copies of these signed guidelines, as well a copy shall be forwarded to the School of Graduate Studies or the relevant program office to be placed in the student's personal file by the end of the Student's first term.

References & Acknowledgements

This document was created under the guidance of the Canadian Association of Graduate Studies (CAGS) best practices relating to Letters of Understanding between Supervisors and Graduate Students. Additional resources from the Queens University School of Graduate Studies *Graduate Supervision Handbook* and the University of Manitoba *Advisor-Student Guidelines for Thesis/Practicum Programs* were consulted as references in the creation of this document.

This is not a legal document. It is in no way intended to replace consultation with the University's [School of Graduate Studies](#) or [Office of Research and Innovation Services](#) should the need arise. These guidelines do not replace the need for or provide any independent legal advice on the issues covered in these guidelines. Its purpose is to guide the discussion between students and faculty members and to identify potential issues that may arise over the course of a supervisor-student relationship within the University setting.