# Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC)

# Administrative Guidelines for

# Graduate Program Assistants and Graduate Program Coordinators

**2020-2021**

## Overview

NSERC offers scholarships that provide financial support to outstanding graduate students pursuing a doctoral degree in natural sciences or engineering. Canada Graduate Scholarship Doctoral (CGS-D) awards are valued at $35,000 per year for 3 years. Post-graduate Scholarships (PGS-D) awards are valued at $21,000 per year for 3 years. Both the NSERC CGS-D and PGS-D are open to Canadian citizens or permanent residents of Canada. There is a single application and selection process (Form 201) for the CGS-D and the PGS-D.

For the 2020-21 NSERC Doctoral competition, the University of Guelph is permitted to forward **TBD** (last year was 45)applications to NSERC for consideration in the national competition. Applicants who self-identify as indigenous on the application may be forwarded to the national competition over and above the quota given to the institution.

## Important Dates

### September 2019

* Graduate Program Assistants can create an account through the [NSERC On-line System](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/OnlineServices-ServicesEnLigne/Index_eng.asp) in order to be able to review the applications submitted. This allows Graduate Program Assistants to confirm the transcripts that have been uploaded correctly and return the application to the student if need be. In order to gain access, contact the Graduate Awards Officers via email providing the email address used to create the account.
* Graduate Program Assistants are encouraged to review the following to become familiar with the competition and application:
  + [Harmonized CGS-D Website](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/PG-CS/CGSD-BESCD_eng.asp)
  + [NSERC Doctoral Overview](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/PG-CS/BellandPostgrad-BelletSuperieures_eng.asp)
  + [Application Form 201 Information and Instructions](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/OnlineServices-ServicesEnLigne/instructions/201/e.asp)

### September 23, 2019

* Student deadline to submit transcripts to Graduate Program Assistant in department/school; transcripts should be uploaded by the Graduate Program Assistant in advance of the student submission deadline (September 30) as students will not be able to submit their application without the transcripts

### September 30, 2019

* Deadline for students to submit complete application on-line

### October 1, 2019 – October 3, 2019

* Graduate Awards Officers upload all submitted NSERC Doctoral Applications to OneDrive, placing them in folders by Department/School

### October 3, 2019 – October 17, 2019

* Department Awards Committee review applications on OneDrive
* Graduate Program Assistants calculate cumulative graduate averages and complete Departmental Ranking Forms on behalf of the Department Awards Committee

### October 17, 2019

* NSERC Departmental Ranking Form is due to the Graduate Awards Officers by email grschol@uoguelph.ca

### October 18-23, 2019

* NSERC Doctoral applications and rankings are prepared by Graduate Awards Officers for adjudication by the Office of Graduate &Postdoctoral Studies Awards Committee

### October 23 – November 6, 2019

* OGPS Awards Committee review and submit score sheets for final selection meeting

### November 7\*, 2019 (tentative date)

* OGPS Awards Committee meet to select applications that will be forwarded to NSERC
* Applicants will be notified after the meeting if their application will be moving forward, or not moving forward, to the national competition
* Applicants chosen to be forwarded will be given feedback, if any, from the Awards Committee so that changes may be made to the application before final submission

### November 21, 2019

* Selected NSERC Doctoral applications are finalized on-line by the Graduate Awards Officers and due to NSERC

## NSERC Doctoral Administration

### Transcript Requirements

Official and up-to-date transcripts/proofs of registration for all undergraduate and graduate programs must be scanned into a single PDF file and must include one copy of the university legend for each set of transcripts (do not scan the legend multiple times).

The PDF file should be formatted as a black-and-white document and the text must be oriented so that it is readable on a computer monitor from left to right without any adjustment by the viewer. A transcript is required for all programs listed in the application, even if a program was not completed.

If the applicant is already registered in their program of study at the time of application, they must submit a transcript for this program regardless of the number of months completed in the program or whether the transcript contains any marks. This requirement also applies to programs of study started in the fall session of the year of application.

If a university’s policy is not to provide transcripts, then a letter bearing the official university seal/stamp or a letter signed by the Dean of Graduate Studies confirming i) the applicant’s program of study and registration status, and ii) that the university does not provide, transcripts must be submitted in lieu of a transcript.

Certified copies will be accepted **only** for transcripts from foreign locations where official transcripts would be difficult to obtain (normally only considered for transcripts from outside of North America).

Up-to-date transcripts are defined as transcripts dated or issued in the fall session of the year of application (if currently registered) or after the last term completed (if not currently registered).

### Uploading Applicant Transcripts

The applicant will be asked to provide the name and email address of a university designate who will be uploading their transcripts. Applicants should name the Graduate Program Assistant in the department that they are currently registered in or plan to be registered in.

Once the Graduate Program Assistant is listed in the application an automated email will be sent from NSERC to the Graduate Program Assistant. The email will include a link which will be used to upload the transcript file. Click on the link and follow the instructions to select Canada, Ontario, University of Guelph and then department. Click on Transcripts – University and save. Add a document description of student last name and first initial. Browse computer to find the previously saved pdf file of the student’s transcripts and attach.

**Graduate Program Assistants should ensure that the transcripts have scanned accurately and completely and that the correct PDF has been uploaded before submitting the file.**

After submitting the transcripts, if the transcripts need to be re-uploaded for any reason, a new email will need to be generated with a new link. Contact the student and ask them to delete the Graduate Program Assistant as the designate and then re-add the Graduate Program Assistant. This will generate a new email with a new link.

**Please be advised that it is the applicant’s responsibility to access the application after the Graduate Program Assistant has uploaded the transcripts (but prior to their final submission) to ensure that it is complete (no missing pages, no upside down pages, that their registration record is complete on their transcript, that all transcripts are there and none are missing). Failure to do so may result in the applicant being deemed ineligible.**

## Accessing the Applications through OneDrive

The applications are electronic and should be shared with the department awards committee electronically. There is no need to print off the applications. Graduate Program Assistants will receive an email when the files are available in OneDrive and ready to be reviewed.

1. Go to the OneDrive link that will be provided to you via e-mail.
2. You will need to sign in via your official University of Guelph central login.
3. Click on **2020-21 NSERC Doctoral Applications**
4. Click on your department’s folder.
5. Click on the appropriate Department/School to view the application files.
6. You may download and share the folders via OneDrive with your Department Awards Committee as appropriate.

\*Please note that all applications will be unshared following the 2020-21 Competition.

## Department Ranking Forms

All applicants must be recorded on the *CGS-D Departmental Ranking Form*. When determining how the applicants rank among other applicants in the department, the department awards committee should utilize the *Canada Graduate Scholarships Doctoral Selection Criteria and Weightings* document. Both the ranking form and selection criteria document will be posted on OneDrive in a folder named *NSERC Selection Criteria and Ranking*. They are also available as secured documents on the [OGPS website](https://www.uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/faculty-staff/scholarships-and-awards-administrative-guidelines), under NSERC Doctoral.

## Verifying Applicant Eligibility

To be considered eligible for support, as of the application deadline date, applicants must:

* be a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident of Canada;
* intend to pursue, in the following year (S20, F20, or W21 as the starting semester), full-time graduate studies and research at the doctoral level in an eligible program in one of the areas of the natural sciences and engineering supported by NSERC;
* have completed, as of December 31 of the year of application, between zero and 24 months (between four and 36 months if admitted to the doctoral program directly from a bachelor’s program) of studies (full-time equivalent) in the doctoral program for which they are requesting funding;
* the months of study completed are calculated starting from the date on which an applicant is officially registered in the doctoral program – specifically applying to applicants registered in a Master’s program who subsequently transferred to a doctoral program. If an applicant transferred to a PhD, you would start counting based on the first month of the first semester of their transfer.
* submit only one doctoral award application in a given academic year. Nominations to the [Vanier CGS](http://www.vanier.gc.ca/en/home-accueil.html) program do not count towards this limit;
* must not hold, or have held, a scholarship or fellowship from SSHRC, NSERC or CIHR to undertake or complete a doctoral program.

*\*Reminder - NSERC removed a previous requirement in 2018 that applicants must have obtained a first-class average (a grade of "A-") in each of the last two completed years of study (full-time equivalent).*

## Calculating the Cumulative Graduate Average

While NSERC has now removed the GPA requirement from the eligibility criteria, the applicant’s entire academic record including their transcripts is still to be taken into account when evaluating the overall strength of the application. Thus, instead of providing the GPA from each of the last two years as in previous years, please provide the cumulative graduate average and total credit equivalents earned (if there are no grades, simply note – “no grades”). For example, 93%/2.5 crd.

Colleague tip - you may determine the cumulative graduate average through utilizing the STAT screen in Colleague for current University of Guelph students. To determine the cumulative graduate average for students who have previously completed graduate level studies at institutions other than Guelph, ImageNow would be the best resource to view previous transcripts. While the cumulative graduate average will not be used to determine the applicant’s eligibility, it is still a useful tool in assisting Awards Committees in their analysis of the strength of each application.

NSERC provides the [University Grading Table](http://uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/system/files/2018%20-%20University%20Grading%20Systems%20-%20Syst%C3%A8mes%20de%20notation%20universitaire%20%281%29.pdf) to assist institutions in determining averages at all Canadian Universities (you will need to login with your central login ID to access the table; if you do not currently have access to secured OGPS documents, please request access [via this form](https://uoguelph.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5o4cFMdcKyAarYN)).

If you notice any other discrepancies in an application – i.e. a transcript is missing, or the student is beyond the allowable number of months of study as outlined in the ‘Verifying Applicant Eligibility” section of this document, please flag this on the department ranking form.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at [grschol@uoguelph.ca](mailto:grschol@uoguelph.ca).

*This document will be updated once allocation information is released.*