

Department of Biology  
ANNUAL GRADUATE STUDENT–SUPERVISOR AGREEMENT 2024/25

NAME ..... Student number ..... Academic Year.....

Candidate for  MSc  PhD Initial registration in this degree (e.g. Fall 2020).....

Committee meetings: last ..... next (expected).....

This is an annual agreement between the graduate student and thesis supervisor with respect to salaries, research plans, and a variety of issues relevant to training. There are 10 parts to this agreement—make sure you read, understand and discuss all parts. It is the student’s and supervisor’s joint responsibility to meet in September (or the first month of graduate work) to complete this form and submit it to the [Graduate Program Advisor](#). Both the supervisor and student are strongly encouraged to read the [Biology Guide to Graduate Studies](#), and ideally also the [Graduate Calendar](#) and the [Graduate Supervision Handbook](#) before completing this form. The relatively short [Senate Graduate Supervision Policy](#) lays out the roles and responsibilities of students and supervisors, among other useful information. [Setting Expectations](#) is a very handy workbook for students and supervisors to discuss such key aspects of their relationship as communication expectations, progression, funding, publication and conflict resolution.

**1. SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE**

Mark Yes or No whether the faculty member has confirmed that they are willing to serve on the student’s supervisory committee.

	Position	Name (please print)	Confirmed
1	Supervisor		
2	Biology Faculty member (usually from same research area)		
3	Faculty member (from different research area)		
4			
5			

\*Note that only members numbered 1, 2 and 3 are required; for MSc students, number 3 is usually a Biology faculty member whereas for PhD students number 3 **is recommended** to be from a different department. Supervisors and students are encouraged to maximize the diversity of expertise on committees, and to discuss I-EDAA considerations in forming committees. Collaborators can serve on supervisory committees, however all examiners for thesis defences and comprehensive exams, with the exception of the supervisor(s), must be at arm’s-length (e.g., must not have a prior supervisory relationship, must not have co-authored or co-presented with the candidate – check the Biology Guide to Graduate Studies for more information). Note that the supervisory and examination committees may differ to meet these requirements.

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## 2. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

List here the required courses (including WHMIS, WHMIS Refresher, Animal Care, Boating, Radiation Safety, BioSafety, etc) that the student has completed, and the marks obtained (where applicable), and courses they anticipate taking in future. MSc students must take 4 half-term graduate-level courses (12.0 credits). No courses are required for the PhD unless the supervisory committee recommends otherwise; Biol824 Audit is highly recommended for PhD students.

COURSE	Term taken	Mark
WHMIS		

COURSE	Term taken	Mark

## 3. COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH

The [Biology Guide to Graduate Studies](#), the [University Policy on Intellectual Ownership](#) and the [SGSPA Guidelines on Intellectual Property](#) provide guidelines on (i) authorship on papers based on thesis research and (ii) ownership of data and intellectual property. Graduate students and supervisors both should read the relevant sections of these documents and detail their arrangements in the expandable box below:

Arrangements for authorship, and ownership of intellectual property:
----------------------------------------------------------------------

## 4. SALARY STATEMENT

This is the student's anticipated salary for the period **1 Sept 2024 - 31 Aug 2025**. (This information may be updated after the Salary Statement is received from the Graduate Program Advisor.) Remember that some scholarships terminate before the end of this period, some may start before the beginning of the next period, and summer TAs count toward salary for the next academic year, so the amount entered below should be prorated accordingly. See page 6 for footnotes.

Source of funds	Amount
TAs	
RAships <sup>2</sup>	
QGA (Queen's Graduate Award)	
Scholarships (list them here)	
Departmental Support	
Stipend from supervisor <sup>3</sup>	
<b>TOTAL<sup>1</sup></b>	

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**IMPORTANT** Please notify the Graduate Program Advisor as soon as possible if there are any changes in the student's salary as outlined above. The Program Advisor must be advised of TA buy-outs at least 6 weeks before the start of the relevant term.

## 5. SAFETY

Queen's University and the Department of Biology take safety seriously and we want to ensure that students have useful training and fill out the required forms.

- At the start of each year, supervisors should discuss with the student all safety considerations with respect to the lab and field work required.
- All graduate students are legally required to take a [WHMIS course](#), and this must be updated *every year*. Please arrange to take or update this course immediately.
- Some students may also need biosafety, radiation, boating or other safety training.
- If your thesis project includes field research, according to the University's Off-Campus Activity Safety Program (OCASP), you and your supervisor are legally required to complete an on-line [Safety Planning Record](#) at least one week prior to field work, as well as for any other time off campus required for your graduate work or for international conferences.

## 6. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Graduate students are encouraged to discuss both the potential impact of their research on Indigenous People and the Land, and ways to reduce or mitigate those impacts. Students and supervisors also are encouraged to discuss potential environmental impacts of their work (e.g., travel for field work or conferences, lab plastics) and measures that can be taken to reduce or mitigate these impacts (e.g., carbon offsets, plastic recycling). See the [Guide to Graduate Studies](#) for additional information, guidance and examples on these two topics.

Potential impacts and mitigation of my research on Indigenous People, the Land, and the environment:

## 7. WORKLOAD and VACATIONS

The following applies specifically to full time students within the normal time limits (2 yrs MSc, 4 yrs PhD).

Students and supervisors should discuss workload expectations and responsibilities as outlined in the [SPSGA Regulations](#) and summarized in the [Biology Guide to Graduate Studies](#). Full-time students are expected to engage in their studies on a full-time basis. Full-time students are expected to limit paid employment unrelated to their research to an average of ten hours per week; students wishing to exceed this level should consult with their supervisor or graduate coordinator.

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All graduate students are entitled to two weeks (10 working days) vacation, in addition to statutory holidays and the annual Christmas Closing (usually 5-6 working days from Christmas Day to New Year's Day)—the undergraduate spring and fall Reading Weeks are breaks from coursework for undergraduate students and are not holidays for graduate students. Vacations are an important aspect of maintaining a healthy program of study - students and supervisors should agree in advance when vacations will be taken, and supervisors should ensure that students take their entitled vacation time.

If students are unable to continue their thesis or TA work for an extended period due to illness or other contingencies, they should apply to the School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs (SGSPA) for inactive status. While students are 'inactive' they do not pay tuition, nor are they paid scholarships, TAships or stipends.

**8. EXPECTED TIMELINE and RESEARCH FUNDING TO COMPLETION OF THESIS**

Successful completion of a thesis in a timely manner usually requires some awareness of and planning for progress. Outline below the expected timeline to thesis completion—the more detail the better (add a page if necessary). Briefly describe the research funding here or on a separate page. Note that research funding, lab space, and lab and field resources are primarily the responsibility of the supervisor. Furthermore, graduate students are entitled to be reimbursed for research- or teaching-related expenses in a timely fashion.

Date	Expected work to be completed by this date
Research funding	

**9. TRICOUNCIL CONSENT for HIGHLY QUALIFIED PERSONNEL (HQP)**

When faculty apply to NSERC, SSSHR, or CIHR for research grants they are required to provide a list of students (HQP) they have supervised. They cannot use your name without your consent. If you consent to this, please sign the following statement:

*I hereby allow my supervisor to include limited personal data about me in grant applications submitted for consideration to NSERC for the next six years. This limited data will only include my name, type of HQP training and status, years supervised or co-supervised, title of the project or thesis and, to the best of my supervisor's knowledge, my position title and company or organization at the time the application is submitted. I understand that NSERC will protect this data in accordance with the Privacy Act, and that it will only be used in processes that assess my supervisor's contributions to the training of highly qualified personnel (HQP), including confidential peer review.*

.....  
(date)

.....  
(student's signature)

**10. RELEASE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

Information contained in the student's file in the Graduate Office is confidential and is normally accessible for administrative purposes only by the Graduate Studies Assistant, the Graduate Studies Committee and the student's Supervisory Committee. On occasion other faculty may request access to the information in that file (e.g. transcripts) to help them in writing letters of recommendation. Please consider whether you wish to allow the release of information in your file to other faculty members and sign below if you agree. Note that some members of faculty may be unwilling to write letters of recommendation without access to material in your file. You will need to provide a separate letter of authorization if you subsequently decide to release this information.

I authorize the release of the information contained in my file to faculty members in the Biology Department.

.....  
(date)

.....  
(student's signature)

## AGREEMENT

**SUPERVISOR:** I agree that this student's research plan is reasonable, and I certify that there are sufficient funds in my research grants to cover the required costs of the proposed research, as well as the salary payments as listed above. In the event that a current grant is not renewed such that I will have difficulty meeting these obligations, I will notify the Coordinator of Graduate Studies immediately. I also acknowledge that I have discussed collaborative research, safety, authorship, workload, vacations, research funding, and the proposed timeline with this student.

.....  
(date)

.....  
(supervisor's signature)

**STUDENT:** I understand and accept the salary arrangements listed above, and I am fully aware that TAships may be cancelled if my performance is deemed to be unsatisfactory by the Graduate Studies Committee. I also acknowledge that I have discussed collaborative research, safety, authorship, workload, vacations, research funding, and my proposed timeline with my supervisor.

.....  
(date)

.....  
(student's signature)

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## FOOTNOTES

1. A minimum salary of \$24,300 (MSc) and \$26,300 (PhD) per year is guaranteed for the first 2 years of an MSc program and the first 4 years of a PhD program (and the first 4 years after transfer into the PhD program); students in 2024-25 will be receiving a minimum of \$25,750 (MSc) and \$27,750 (PhD) (not guaranteed in future years).
2. RAships are usually for work done outside the student's thesis research project, in lieu of TAships, and are paid from a professor's research grant. This is different from the supervisor's stipend, which is support for the student while they work on their degree requirements (courses and thesis research).
3. Stipends paid from a research grant are always contingent upon renewal of the grant. In the event that a grant is not renewed, other salary arrangements will have to be made and the Coordinator of Graduate Studies must be notified immediately.

Financial support that is provided through a research contract may contain terms and conditions that will oblige the student to act in accordance with the research agreement signed with the sponsor of the contract. If you have concerns about this kind of financial support, please contact the Coordinator of Graduate Studies.

The Senate Document on Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment states that graduate students must not be assigned thesis work in which non-academic considerations (e.g., commercial potential, financial gain, etc.) are a significant factor, without the prior agreement of the School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs.