

Program Handbook

MSc in Earth Sciences

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About This Handbook

The content in this program handbook is accurate at the date of posting and is applicable for the current academic year. Program handbooks are updated annually, and students should ensure they are referring to the current version. Occasionally, changes to policy and program requirements do occur so students should also check with their supervisor, Graduate Program Director (GPD), or the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs (FGSPA) on critical matters where they are unsure.

This program handbook reflects general policies and guidelines from Brock University's [Graduate Calendar](#) and [Faculty Handbook](#). The specific documents can be consulted for further details.

1 WELCOME

Welcome to the Department of Earth Sciences at Brock University. We hope you have a stimulating and enjoyable experience. Graduate students in Earth Sciences join a research-intensive environment and undertake work with internationally recognized faculty who contribute to a wide variety of geoscientific fields.

Additional information about starting your graduate studies at Brock can be found on the [New Student Welcome](#) webpage, including details about course registration, Brightspace (Brock's Learning Management System), and housing options.

2 PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

2.1 Program Overview

Research areas include the search for water and life on Mars, and throughout the Solar System, using NASA Rovers, meteorites, and geochemistry; documenting sedimentary and structural features on Mars and Earth; structure and tectonics of mountain belts and mineral deposits; measuring atmospheric oxygen of the Proterozoic and Phanerozoic using halite and dolomite; Neogene and Quaternary paleoceanography on a global scale; studying late Cenozoic (including modern) dinoflagellate cysts; Quaternary paleolimnology and paleoclimatology across Canada including the far north; hydrological and hydrochemical impacts of landscape mitigating practices in wetlands; Lower Great Lakes nutrient loads; refining the International Geological Time Scale for the Quaternary; Anthropocene epoch and related studies.

The Department is equipped with geochemistry, palynology, sedimentology, hydrology, and petrography laboratories. Equipment in other departments (e.g., SEM, ICP-MS, etc.) and a machine shop are available to graduate students in the Earth Sciences.

2.2 Program Objectives

The program provides broad instruction in the student's area of research. It encourages the student to think critically and creatively and to identify and solve research problems, and it provides specific research training in the acquisition of data and its interpretation, and in the writing of a research thesis. A relatively small department of seven professors, emphasis is placed on personal and tailored graduate supervision.

In a society facing global change, Earth Sciences MSc graduates receive training that will prepare them for careers in industry, commerce, education and with government agencies, and will allow them to pursue further academic qualifications.

3 PROGRAM GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

The MSc in Earth Sciences has several governance and administrative bodies that support students and faculty. An overview of Brock University's governance structure can be found on the [University Secretariat](#) webpage. The following committees and units are responsible for varying aspects of the governance and administration of the Earth Sciences program.

3.1 Faculty of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs

The Faculty of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs (FGSPA) works closely with Brock's six academic Faculties — Applied Health Sciences, Education, Humanities, Mathematics and Science, Social Sciences, and the Goodman School of Business — to:

- provide quality administrative service and support to current and future graduate students, supervisors, and graduate programs;
- support the personal and professional development of graduate students and supervisors;
- offer competitive funding packages to financially support students through their studies;
- integrate graduate studies into the research, pedagogical, and outreach missions of the University; and
- support the growth and development of graduate programs and the graduate studies sector.

For more information, visit the [Faculty of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs](#) website, including the [Contact Us](#) page.

3.2 Program Governance

Faculty of Mathematics and Science

The Department of Earth Sciences belongs within the Faculty of Mathematics & Science which additionally comprises the departments of Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Computer Science, Engineering, Mathematics, and Physics; and centres for Biotechnology, and Neuroscience.

Department of Earth Sciences

Graduate students in Earth Sciences join a research-intensive environment and undertake work with internationally recognized faculty who contribute to a wide variety of geoscientific fields (see Section 2.1, Program Overview, for details).

Graduate Program Committee (GPC)

Graduate Programs at Brock are governed by a Graduate Program Committee (GPC), administered by a Graduate Program Director (GPD), and supported by a Graduate Program Administrative Coordinator (GPAC).

- **Graduate Program Committee (GPC):** The GPC has responsibility for recruitment and admissions, preparation of the Graduate Calendar submission, course offerings, teaching allocations, scholarship adjudication, student progress, community liaison, responding to student concerns, changes to the structure of the program and the selection of the GPD. The GPC is composed of the GPD (who serves as chair), and all faculty members.
- **Graduate Program Director (GPD):** The GPD is appointed by the Graduate Program Committee to oversee the graduate program. The GPD carries out all duties in regular consultation with the GPC. The GPD typically serves a three year term and has the support of an administrator/coordinator (see description of GPAC below).
- **Graduate Program Administrative Coordinator (GPAC):** The GPAC oversees the day-to-day operations of the program and provides administrative support to the GPD. The GPAC is often the individual who assists students with questions about the program.

3.3 Program Administration and Faculty

Important: All Earth Sciences program inquiries should be directed to earth@brocku.ca.

Graduate Program Director (GPD)

Prof. Martin J. Head
mjhead@brocku.ca

Graduate Program Administrative Coordinator (GPAC)

Elena Genkin
fmsgradoffice@brocku.ca

A full faculty listing for the Earth Sciences program, along with profiles and research interests, can be found in the program's [faculty directory](#).

3.4 Graduate Students' Association

The [Graduate Students' Association \(GSA\)](#) is a student organization that represents the interests of all graduate students enrolled in a diploma, master's, or doctoral program at Brock. Upon course registration each term, a student becomes a member of the GSA and will gain access to all member benefits, including optional health and dental coverage, a transit pass, student clubs, and other supports and services.

4 ACADEMIC REGULATIONS AND UNIVERSITY POLICY

Academic regulations and University policies pertaining to graduate studies at Brock University are outlined in the [Graduate Calendar \(Academic Regulations page\)](#) and the [Faculty Handbook \(section 3.B\)](#). All students are required to be aware of, and adhere to, these regulations and policies. Some relevant sections have been included in this handbook below for reference.

The Graduate Calendar sets out the regulations, programs and courses for the academic year indicated. Students may follow the academic policies and program regulations set out in the calendar of the term in which they were first admitted to the program or any subsequent calendar. Students whose studies have been interrupted for one or more years (by not enrolling in at least one course) become subject to the Calendar regulations in effect at the time of their re-registration.

Students can check their regulation and calendar year by accessing my.brocku.ca and visiting the Program Status page. For current course descriptions, restrictions, and prerequisites a student will refer to the current [calendar](#) and/or the [course timetable](#).

5 STUDENT STATUS

Students are admitted to the University either as a full-time or part-time student and this status can only be changed for valid reasons with the permission of the GPD and the FGSPA.

Full-time graduate students are defined as students whose main focus is graduate study for the purpose of obtaining a graduate degree. Graduate study differs from undergraduate study in that it is, for most students, an activity that is highly concentrated, demanding and all-consuming. Full-time status is not solely dictated by the number of credits a student is enrolled in each term. Additional details can be found in the [Graduate Calendar](#) under Academic Regulations, II. Student Status.

5.1 Continuous Registration

Graduate students must maintain continuous registration in each successive term from the time of initial admission until degree requirements are complete. This includes registration in a student's thesis (ERSC 5F90) each term.

Students who fail to register for any term, and who have not been granted inactive status or a leave of absence, are considered to have withdrawn from their program of study.

Additional details can be found in the [Graduate Calendar](#) under Academic Regulations, II. Student Status.

6 FEES AND FUNDING

6.1 Fees

The fee structure of graduate programs is outlined by Brock University and the FGSPA. Students should consult the [Graduate Tuition and Fees](#) webpage and the information provided in their offer letter for the most up-to-date information.

6.2 Funding and Financial Assistance

There are many sources of funding that may be available to graduate students:

- Brock internal funding support packages are available to eligible full-time, research-based master's students. Details about your personalized funding package are normally included as part of your offer of admission and can differ from student to student. Funding sources may include scholarships, Research Fellowships, Graduate Fellowships, and Graduate Assistantships (employment income earned through teaching assistant or research assistant positions). Details are on FGSPA's [Funding Information](#) webpage.
- Students may be eligible for a variety of scholarships, bursaries, and awards administered by Brock University. A complete listing of available awards is available on FGSPA's [Internal Scholarships and Awards](#) and [FGSPA Awards](#) webpages.
- External funding is generally secured by students through an application for grants and fellowships offered by provincial or federal governments, foundations or other agencies. These applications may be accepted prior to a student beginning their studies, or during their graduate studies.
- Check your eligibility to apply for loans through the [Ontario Student Assistance Program \(OSAP\)](#). Additional information is also available on Brock's [OSAP](#) webpage.

6.3 Graduate Student Employment

Full-time graduate students must limit their paid University employment, including Graduate Teaching Assistantships and Research Assistantships. There is no restriction with respect to time spent in paid employment for part-time students.

Additional details can be found in the [Graduate Calendar](#) under Academic Regulations, II. Student Status. For full regulations regarding TA-ships, including duties and rates of pay, see the [CUPE 4207 Collective Agreement](#).

7 SUPERVISION AND COMMITTEES

7.1 Supervisor

Your Supervisor is the person with whom you will be working more closely than anyone else during the course of your studies. They will be your main source of guidance for all academic matters regarding your graduate program, including course selection, research funding, and

degree progress, and will mentor you as you develop research and scientific communication skills. Most importantly, your Supervisor will guide you on all aspects of your M.Sc. thesis research, including proposed research topic selection, research direction, thesis writing, and thesis defence.

7.2 Supervisory Committee Composition

All students are supervised by a thesis committee. Thesis committees usually consists of the student's research Supervisor and one or two additional faculty members, the Supervisory Committee Member(s). Where there are two Co-supervisors, an additional Committee Member is required. The Graduate Program Director will normally serve as Chair of the Committee. Faculty members from other departments at Brock, or external agencies (e.g., Geological Survey of Canada) may serve as additional committee members.

Your Supervisory Committee Member(s) may be considered additional resources for your research and thesis, and program in general. The Committee Members usually have some expertise in your research area and will contribute advice on the selection of courses. They also help monitor your progress (see Committee meetings below), offer advice, and most importantly, read and provide feedback on your thesis and approve it prior to it going to defence.

7.3 Meetings and Monitoring Research Progress

Graduate Students are responsible for attending committee meetings called for by the Graduate Program Director and scheduled by the graduate student, and they must come prepared with material/information requested by the GPD. The thesis committee meets at least three times during the Graduate Student's program; more often if warranted. Graduate Student progress is monitored using the form listed in Appendix 2.

The first committee meeting is used to decide on the courses you are required to take and on the timing of these courses. In addition, several other forms will be filled out at this time and submitted to the GPD and the Graduate Programs Office. Also, a preliminary research outline will be discussed during the initial meeting. This meeting is normally scheduled within the first two months of your first semester on campus. Subsequent meetings are primarily designed to monitor your progress.

If the student's progress has been deemed unsatisfactory, the committee will design a plan to remedy the situation. This plan will normally include a set of agreed upon milestones with deadlines which will be monitored by the supervisory committee, but foremost by the supervisor. Students may be dismissed from the graduate program if they are unsuccessful in following this plan.

8 DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

8.1 Overview of Degree Requirements

The MSc in Earth Sciences is a six-term (24-month) program that includes course work and a research thesis. The thesis will be chosen in consultation with the student's Supervisor and supervisory committee, in a specialized area of Earth Sciences. A total of 2.5 credits are required for the program. Students are expected to complete their course requirements within the first three terms of study and conclude all program requirements (including a thesis defence) within six academic terms.

The 'Academic Performance and Progress' section of this handbook (Section 9), describes the suggested timeframes for completion of degree milestones. Students should consult with their supervisor when planning a program of study.

For a full list of graduate course offerings by subject area, please refer to the Courses tab within the navigation menu in the [Graduate Calendar](#). For a full list of scheduled courses for the current academic year, please visit the [Graduate Academic Timetable](#). Additional details about course registration can be found on FGSPA's [Graduate Course Registration](#) webpage.

Full-time students must complete all degree requirements within three years from the date of first registration.

8.2 Courses

8.2.1 Required Courses

As outlined in the [Graduate Calendar](#), students must complete:

- ERSC 5F90 - MSc Thesis (taken in each term of the program, including terms where coursework is the main focus)
- ERSC 5P95 – Graduate Seminar
- Two (2) ERSC half-credit courses numbered 5(alpha)00 or higher. Upon student's supervisory committee's and GPD's approval, and the instructor's approval, one (1) of these courses may be numbered 4(alpha)00. Students may take one (1) of the two half-credit courses on Letter of Permission (LOP) at another university with the permission of the Supervisor and the GPD.
- Additional credits may be required of candidates with insufficient preparation in their area of research specialization.

With the exception of the Graduate Seminar (ERSC 5P95), students are expected to complete all course work within the first 12 months.

The Graduate Seminar (ERSC 5P95) requires the student to present two seminars. One is aimed at an undergraduate audience and delivered in an appropriate undergraduate class. This seminar is on a topic related to the student's research thesis and is accompanied by the submission of an essay. The second seminar should be presented at a conference, preferably

one that is national to international in scope. Performance in the Graduate Seminar is evaluated by the student's supervisor (motion passed Dept. Meeting March 14, 2012).

Earth Sciences MSc students are required to attend all Departmental as well as Graduate Student Seminars. Failure to attend will result in the deduction of 2% for each seminar missed from the grade assigned by the supervisor for ERSC 5P95 (motion passed Dept. Meeting March 7, 2012).

8.2.2 Course Evaluation

At the beginning of each course, course instructors must provide students with a course syllabus that outlines details about their evaluation, assignments required, as well as deadlines and associated penalties if applicable.

Students must meet the minimum academic performance criteria set out in the Brock University [Graduate Calendar](#) (see Academic Regulations, Section II).

8.3 Thesis / Research Proposal

The student's supervisor (and/or co-supervisors) will provide guidance on all aspects of the M.Sc. thesis research, including proposed research topic selection, research direction, thesis writing, and thesis defence. The members of the Supervisory Committee help monitor progress (especially at Committee meetings), offer advice, and most importantly, read and provide feedback on the student's thesis and approve it prior to it going to defence. Graduate Student progress is monitored using the form given in Appendix 1.

Additional details can be found on the FGSPA [Research-Based Students](#) webpage.

8.3.1 Procedures

When each chapter or section of the thesis is written, it should be submitted to the Supervisor for careful checking of the scientific content and editing of the language. The draft may go back and forth between Supervisor and student until at least near-publication quality is reached. This version is then passed along to the committee member(s) for final checking. Ideally, each chapter or section of the thesis will be submitted to the Supervisory Committee in the sequence in which it will appear in the thesis without undue delay between successive chapters or sections.

8.3.2 Format

The thesis can be written in the form of a traditional submission, or as one or more (potential) publications.

Formatting guidelines are available on the FGSPA [Research-Based Students](#) webpage.

8.3.3 Evaluation

A complete final draft of the thesis is submitted to the Supervisory Committee for final internal review. Adequate time, at least two or three weeks, must be allocated for Supervisory

Committee members to read the thesis draft and determine whether it can be submitted for external defence, once any required revisions have been made. The Supervisor and Committee Members must agree that the thesis can be defended in its submitted form. This includes checking that the thesis meets required formatting guidelines.

The student then submits the thesis for external defence to the Graduate Programs Office, Faculty of Mathematics and Science.

8.4 Thesis / Research Defence

Once the thesis has passed internal review, external defence procedures are followed as outlined below.

Additional details can be found on the FGSPA [Research-Based Students](#) webpage and in the [Graduate Calendar](#) under Academic Regulations, X. Thesis Defences.

8.4.1 Procedures

Defence copies of the thesis are submitted to the Graduate Administrative Coordinator for the Faculty of Mathematics and Science, together with a Master of Science Appointment of External Examiner form that provides the contact information and credentials of potential external examiners (nominated by the Supervisory Committee). The M.Sc. defence is scheduled through the office of the Graduate Administrative Coordinator.

At the time of submission, the student must also submit a Declaration of Originality with respect to the thesis, and the Supervisor(s) must sign this declaration as well. This Declaration includes the requirement that neither ChatGPT nor any other artificial mode (AI) was used to construct/modify/edit the text of the thesis.

8.4.2 Committee Composition

The Examining Committee comprises a Chair (Faculty Dean or delegate), the External Examiner, the thesis Supervisor(s), and the other Supervisory Committee member(s). The External Examiner is appointed from outside the university or from outside the program but within the University. In exceptional circumstances, an External Examiner who is external to the Supervisory Committee but internal to the program may be appointed, but such an examiner must be approved by both the Faculty Dean and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

8.4.3 Written Document

Formatting guidelines are available on the FGSPA [Research-Based Students](#) webpage.

8.4.4 Format of Exam

- In accordance with University regulations the defence will be open, which means that members of the audience will be allowed to be present for all rounds of questioning.
- The Chair of the Examining Committee introduces the committee and candidate, explains the format of the defence.
- Candidate presents a research seminar, 20–30 minutes in length.

- The floor is open to questions from the audience.
- This is followed by a short break. The audience may remain but may not ask further questions.
- Order of questioning is usually the external examiner, the Supervisory Committee member(s) and finally the Supervisor. The Chair of the Examining Committee is not required to participate in the questioning period.
- The defense period will be limited to 2 hours, normally consisting of two rounds of questioning by the Examining Committee.
- When the committee is satisfied with the questioning, the Chair thanks the candidate and the audience, who then leave the room so that the Committee may deliberate *in camera*.

8.4.5 Evaluation and Possible Outcomes

All members of the Examining Committee, excluding the Chair of the Examining Committee, will vote on the outcome of the exam and thesis:

Fail – the majority of members of the committee, including the external examiner vote to fail

Pass – the majority of members of the committee vote to pass

In the event of a tied vote, the vote of the External Examiner will determine the outcome of the exam.

The Examining Committee has the following options:

- Thesis is satisfactory and accepted as submitted.
- Thesis is accepted after minor corrections or modifications.
- Thesis is accepted conditionally upon completion of major modifications (substantial rewriting and reinterpretation).
- Thesis is unsatisfactory and not acceptable.

If a failing determination is made for a thesis, one resubmission will be allowed, and a new examination will be required. The resubmission can occur no sooner than 6 weeks and no later than 6 months from the first exam date. Additional details can be found in the [Graduate Calendar](#) under Academic Regulations, V. Grading System for Graduate Courses.

8.5 Post-Defence Requirements

Students are given up to four weeks to complete minor revisions, which are to be approved by the Supervisor. Up to 12 weeks may be given to complete major revisions, which require approval by the Supervisor and by the External Examiner should he/she have requested it.

The Supervisor is responsible for confirming to the FMS Graduate Programs Office that the revisions are complete, after which a Pass Grade for the thesis course is assigned.

Following a successful thesis defence and completed revisions, additional steps must be completed prior to graduation. Additional details can be found on the FGSPA [Research-Based Students](#) webpage.

8.5.1 Required Forms

Several forms must be submitted to the Graduate Program Administrative Coordinator, which are available on the FGSPA [Student Forms](#) webpage under Thesis Submission. Some forms are specific to circumstances, but all students must submit the following:

- Library and Archives Canada (LAC) Non-Exclusive License to Reproduce Theses
- Brock University Thesis and Major Research Paper Copyright License Form

Under certain circumstances (e.g. to protect confidential commercial information, patentable material, pending submission to a journal for publication), the Vice-Provost and Dean of FGSPA may approve to restrict circulation of a thesis in the digital repository for up to 12 months from the date of a successful defence. Details and instructions can be found on the FGSPA [Research-Based Students](#) webpage.

8.5.2 Submission to Brock Digital Repository

Upon completion of thesis revisions, students must upload their final thesis document to the [Brock University Digital Repository](#). Details and instructions can be found on the FGSPA [Research-Based Students](#) webpage.

Important: Students will not be approved to graduate by FGSPA until their dissertation is finalized in the digital repository.

9 ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS

9.1 Academic Performance and Continuation

Graduate students must achieve and maintain minimum satisfactory academic performance to be eligible to continue in the graduate program. Following the establishment of a supervisory committee, a student's performance must be reviewed and documented once per term.

The Earth Sciences MSc program has a defined length of six terms (24 months) to completion for full-time students. Graduate funding periods are typically tied to the program's defined time to completion.

At the end of the first year, following a scheduled meeting, the Supervisory Committee must determine whether satisfactory progress has been met before a student can proceed to the next year of the program. This decision will take into account the student's research progress and the completion of course work. The student's research progress is judged on the basis of a written Progress Report and oral report which includes a detailed plan of research that will lead to the timely completion of the research and thesis. Courses should be completed within the

first 12 months, with the exception of ERSC 5P95 (Graduate Seminar) which should be started in the first year but may be completed in the second year.

Graduate students must maintain a minimum cumulative average of at least a B-(70%) during each term of study. If a graduate student falls below the minimum cumulative average the student will be automatically placed on academic probation for the subsequent term by the FGSPA. A probationary student must achieve the minimum cumulative average, normally during the probationary term, to be eligible to continue as a graduate student.

9.2 Residency Requirements and Recommended Completion Timelines

The program length is 6 terms (24 months). The table below provides guidance on term and year 'milestone' tasks leading to degree completion.

Year 1 – Fall	ERSC 5F90 plus two graduate courses. Establish supervisory committee. Plan research.
Year 1 – Winter	ERSC 5F90 plus two graduate courses. Data collection
Year 1 – Spring/Summer	ERSC 5F90 Data collection
Year 2 – Fall	ERSC 5F90. End-of-year-one Progress Report Data collection and beginning of analysis
Year 2 – Winter	ERSC 5F90 Data analysis and results or findings
Year 2 – Spring/Summer	ERSC 5F90 Final thesis approved by committee (by June) Defence (August)

9.3 Progress Reports

Following the establishment of a supervisory committee, a student's performance must be reviewed and documented once per term. At least three supervisory committee meetings are held during the student's program, progress being monitored using a Progress Report Form (Appendix 1).

9.4 Final Stage Status

If an additional term beyond the standard length of their program is required to finish the program, students can apply for 'Final Stage Status' (FSS) for reduced tuition in the final academic term. Students approved for Final Stage Status by their graduate program must have completed all course work, other program requirements and must have a complete draft of their thesis that their supervisory committee agrees requires no additional chapters/sections. Students approved for Final Stage Status must be able to complete their exit requirement

within the subsequent term. Final Stage Status will be awarded only once and for only one term.

The Final Stage Status form is available on the FGSPA [Student Forms](#) webpage under Registration and Student Status.

9.5 Application to Graduate

To receive their diploma, a student must apply to graduate through their my.brocku portal even if not planning to attend a convocation ceremony. Brock has two graduation ceremonies in June and October of each year. The deadline to apply to graduate is February 1st for the June (Spring) ceremony and July 1st for the October (Fall) ceremony.

Please refer to the FGSPA [Apply to Graduate](#) webpage for details on applying to graduate, and the FGSPA [Important Dates](#) page for convocation deadlines and dates.

Details about post-graduation work permits (PGWPs) can be found on the [Brock International](#) website.

10 ACADEMIC INTEGRITY, ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT, APPEALS

10.1 Academic Integrity

In accordance with the Brock University [Academic Integrity Policy](#), all students are expected to display the highest standards of academic integrity. Academic integrity means upholding a strong personal and professional ethic within your own work, and that of your colleagues. In upholding the principles of academic integrity, graduate students are expected to demonstrate respect and acknowledgement of others' words and ideas when conducting research, writing, publishing, and teaching.

For more information, visit Brock's [Academic Integrity](#) webpage and the [Graduate Calendar](#) Academic Regulations page (XII. Academic Integrity/Academic Misconduct).

10.2 Academic Misconduct

Integrity is fundamental to the process of research and scholarship, and misconduct damages the entire academic enterprise. Academic dishonesty, while traditionally defined as plagiarism, also includes inappropriate collaboration with other students, data falsification, fabrication of results, and the unauthorized resubmission of previous work.

In the event a student is suspected of engaging in academic dishonesty, professors will contact the GPD and there will be an interview between the GPD and the student. During this interview students have the right to have an advisor present such as Brock's [Ombudsperson](#). Additional procedures covering academic misconduct can be found on the [Graduate Students - Academic Integrity](#) webpage and in the [Graduate Calendar](#) under Academic Regulations (XII. Academic Integrity/Academic Misconduct).

10.3 Appeals

Students who have concerns about a grade in a particular course should first discuss the issue with the instructor of the course in question.

If the issue cannot be resolved, the student should refer to the pre-appeals procedures and appeal timelines as summarized in Faculty Handbook section III, [Appendix 1](#). Additional details are outlined in the [Graduate Calendar](#) (Academic Regulations, XIII. Graduate Student Appeals) and the [Student Senate Appeals](#) webpage.

11 HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELLNESS

The health and safety of individuals is to be a primary objective in every area of operation at Brock University. Every person utilizing University premises must comply with this policy and all related regulations, standards, programs, and procedures. [Health, Safety and Wellness](#) provides information, resources, tools, and support to assist the Brock community in creating and fostering a healthy, safe, and environmentally sustainable place to visit, study, live, and especially, work. Students should also be aware of Brock's [Occupational Health and Safety Policy](#), as well as [Lab Safety](#) and the process for [incident reporting](#).

As outlined in the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act, students employed by the University are required to complete the mandatory [Health and Safety Awareness Training](#) available on SharePoint in the Health Safety and Wellness Toolbox (requires a Brock employee login).

Under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and the Human Rights Code, students employed at Brock University are legally obliged to undertake [mandatory online training](#) through Brightspace, Brock's learning management system.

11.1 Details for Earth Sciences

In addition to the above, the Supervisor will inform the Student of any specific training, such as the handling of specific chemicals, they will need before being allowed to work in the laboratory.

12 STUDENT RESOURCES

Below are details about some of the services and resources available to students across Brock University, including those offered by the FGSPA. For a full list of services and supports available at Brock, please visit the University's [Services, Departments and Offices directory](#).

12.1 Earth Science Resources

The Supervisor and other members of your Supervisory Committee are the student's main resources for information and support. A graduate student will normally work as a Teaching

Assistant (TA) during their two-year stay as in the Department. Note that students are eligible to work as a TA beyond the two-year program, but they then must compete with other applicants, and placements beyond the normal program term are based on experience and seniority, as specified in the Collective Agreement with CUPE 4207. The Senior Laboratory Coordinator (Astride Silis: asilis@brocku.ca) will determine TA assignments in consultation with the student's Supervisor. Any issues regarding assignments prior to, or during the work term, should first be brought to the attention of the Senior Laboratory Coordinator.

12.2 FGSPA Graduate-Specific Resources

Academic Writing Supports

All graduate students have access to FGSPA's [academic writing supports](#) to help develop their writing skills. The Graduate Academic Support Specialist, in partnership with [Learning Services](#), offers a variety of one-on-one and group support and events (with in-person, online, and hybrid options) to help graduate students at all levels of study, including bookable sessions, workshops, and events to support their writing development.

Graduate Advising

[Graduate-specific academic advising](#) is available to all graduate students to discuss a variety of topics related to their studies in a safe, confidential environment. FGSPA's Graduate Academic and International Specialist helps students navigate their graduate studies and overcome barriers that may impact their success. Students are encouraged to reach out at any point during their studies for guidance and support.

GRADvantage

[GRADvantage](#) is a centralized hub of academic and professional development resources, workshops, and events, aimed to help guide graduate student success. This framework is organized into five areas based on a student's unique interests and goals for the future: Communicator, Community Builder, Innovator, Leader, Researcher. Current graduate students can also complete the GRADvantage pathway on ExperienceBU to earn a certificate.

Additional Development Opportunities

Graduate students are encouraged to explore other [development opportunities](#), such as the Three Minute Thesis (3MT) Competition, Mapping the New Knowledges Graduate Student Conference, and GRADflix to share their research and practice their knowledge translation.

12.3 Additional Resources at Brock

Office of Research Services

The [Office of Research Services \(ORS\)](#) provides support to graduate students on internal and external grant funding opportunities, improving research communications and knowledge mobilization, and discovering real-world applications to research. Students are encouraged to contact ORS for further support.

Student Wellness and Accessibility Centre

Brock's [Student Wellness and Accessibility Centre \(SWAC\)](#) offers a range of services that support student mental health (e.g. crisis management, personal counselling), wellness, medical care, and accessibility. Students requiring accommodations during their graduate studies can contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) within SWAC.

Brock University Library

The [Brock University Library](#) offers a variety of resources to students, including scholarly content in digital and print format, diverse study spaces, innovative technologies, an institutional repository and open access publication platforms, and guidelines for research strategies. Hours of operation at Brock's various library locations, including the James A. Gibson Library in Schmon Tower, can be found on the library's website.

Career Services

Brock's [Career Education](#) team helps students with career exploration, feedback on documents (CV, resume, cover letter, statement of intent), job search strategies, interview preparation, and personal branding. Students can contact the Career Education team for further support.

Centre for Pedagogical Innovation

Brock's [Centre for Pedagogical Innovation \(CPI\)](#) supports excellence in teaching and learning across Brock University, including instructional development, support on digital tools for teaching and learning, curriculum support, and fostering effective teaching. Graduate students can explore workshops and supports tailored for teaching assistants through CPI's website.

Brock International

[Brock International](#) offers in-person and virtual support services tailored specifically to international students, including immigration consulting, academic coaching, language support, transitioning to life in Canada and living in the Niagara region, and working as an international student. Details about these services and a listing of events and workshops for international students are available on the Brock International website.

13 APPENDICES

(See next page for Appendix 1)

Appendix 1

Graduate Student Progress Report

Name of Student: _____ Date: _____

Committee: _____
Supervisor Committee Member(s)

Chair of meeting

Thesis Title: _____

Date of Enrolment in M.Sc. Program: _____

Report Period: Meeting 1 (), Meeting 2 (), Meeting 3 (), Meeting 4 ()

Anticipated Completion Date: _____

Courses completed to date and grades

Course: – date completed and grade _____
Course: – date completed and grade _____
Course: – date completed and grade _____
Course: – date completed and grade _____

Courses to be completed (specify course & term)

Course: _____

Course: _____

Course: _____

Course: _____

Documentation: NSERC Consent Form, Safety Training, Timetable

Research Progress:

Demonstration Performance:

Teaching Assistantship: ☐ Continue ☐ Discontinue

Other Information (can append separately):

Publications (#, journal and title with authors)

Conference Proceedings (#, conference with title of authors, date)

Other Contributions

List of awards

Student: _____ Date: _____

Recommendation of the Committee:

☐ Progress Satisfactory

☐ Progress Needs Monitoring (give details) _____

☐ Progress Unsatisfactory (specify reasons) _____

SIGNATURES:

Student: I have seen this report.

Supervisor: _____

☐ I agree

☐ I disagree

Committee Member: _____

Committee Member: _____

GPD: _____

Notes: _____

