

# Conversation Checklist for a New Graduate Student

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Program of Study: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This list is not exhaustive and expectations will change over the course of the student's program. The points serve as a starting point, with future discussions held at students' annual supervisory committee meetings.

	Discussed	Interested in further information?
<b>Who's who</b>		
Identify key members of faculty and staff within the department, including the graduate coordinator and the graduate program administrator.	at LMP Orientation	<a href="#">Laboratory Medicine and Pathology</a>
Explain the role of the department in setting the requirements of the degree program. Note the role of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR).	at LMP Orientation	<a href="#">University Calendar - Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research</a> <a href="#">FGSR Handbook Section 1 - Areas of Responsibilities</a>
<b>Key documents</b>		
Identify the documents with which every graduate student should be familiar, including the university's Calendar (containing the academic schedule and important deadlines), and the FGSR Graduate Program Manual, and any departmental graduate handbooks.	at LMP Orientation	<a href="#">University of Alberta Calendar</a> <a href="#">Graduate Program Manual on FGSR web site</a> <a href="#">LMP Graduate Program Handbook</a>
Introduce the graduate student to the Code of Student Behaviour, the Practicum Intervention Policy (if applicable), and the university's Research and Scholarship Integrity Policy. Direct the student to the Student Conduct and Accountability website	at LMP Orientation	<a href="#">Code of Student Behaviour</a> <a href="#">Practicum Intervention Policy</a> <a href="#">Research and Scholarship and Integrity Policy</a> <a href="#">Student Conduct and Accountability</a>

<b>Registration requirements</b>		
Confirm that it is the student's responsibility to ensure that his/her registration is accurate, complete and done before the deadlines, and advise that there are consequences for letting a program lapse by failing to register. Advise students of their responsibility to pay fees by the deadlines set out in the university's Calendar.	at LMP Orientation	<a href="#">Calendar on registration responsibility</a> <a href="#">Costs and tuition (FGSR)</a>
<b>Academic requirements</b>		
Discuss the academic requirements of the particular degree program, including the minimum GPA and minimum grade requirements. Discuss the time limits for completing program requirements (other than the thesis) and for completion of a graduate degree.	at LMP Orientation	<a href="#">LMP Program Requirements (see handbook)</a> <a href="#">Calendar - Academic Standing</a> <a href="#">Calendar – Time Limits</a>
Note the requirement for all graduate students at the University of Alberta to complete at least 8 hours structured academic integrity and ethics training.	at LMP Orientation	<a href="#">Calendar – Academic Integrity and Ethics Requirement</a>
Note the requirement for all graduate students at the University of Alberta to complete the Professional Development Requirement, including an Individual Development Plan (IDP) and 8 hours of professional development activities.	at LMP Orientation	<a href="#">Calendar – Professional Development Requirement</a>  <a href="#">FGSR Website Resources for PD</a>
<b>The role of the supervisor</b>		
Discuss the role of a supervisor, including the assistance provided in planning a student's program, and a supervisor's obligation to stay informed about the student's research activities and progress.	at LMP Orientation	<a href="#">Supervisor's Obligations</a>
Discuss the importance of maintaining open communication throughout the student's program of studies. Discuss the obligation of the student to keep the supervisor informed of progress.	at LMP Orientation	
Exchange contact details and discuss general availability and preferences for keeping in touch (e.g. email, in person, phone).		
Discuss the scheduling of meetings and expectations for how many meetings, as well as the importance of record keeping.		

<b>Lab specific</b>		
What are the expectations of the time the student should spend on their studies/research per week?		
What are the expectations regarding how long it will take the student to complete the MSc/PhD?		
What responsibilities will the student have that are un-related to my thesis topic? E.g. training others, teaching assistantships, group research activities etc.		
Who in the lab should the student expect to get hands on training from?		
What alternative projects/contingency plan is there in case the main research project fails to progress as planned?		
What set of goals must the student achieve to have the supervisor's approval to defend? e.g. number of publications, time spent, etc.		
What does the organizational structure of the research group look like? Who makes the decisions? Who reports to who?		
How much vacation time does the student receive each year? What determines when the student may take time off? (For students covered by GSA Collective Agreement: "one week of vacation leave without a reduction in pay for each four-month University Term".) How much advanced notice would the supervisor like, and in what format?		
<b>Funding</b>		
Discuss funding, making clear whether funding is or is not guaranteed, and discuss the possibility of future applications for scholarships and other awards. Be aware of the contractual obligations attached to graduate assistantships.		<a href="#">FGSR Awards and Funding</a>  <a href="#">Collective agreement and contractual obligations</a>
Discuss the LMP Good Standing Policy which may impact student funding opportunities.		<a href="#">Section 3.1.1 of the LMP Graduate Program Handbook</a>
<b>Research collaboration</b>		
Where collaboration in research is expected, discuss your practice, and the practice of your department and discipline, with respect to co-authorship, first authorship, order of authorship, and acknowledgement of contributions. General guidelines on authorship are also available from the FGSR Graduate Program Manual and the university's <i>Intellectual Property Guidelines for Graduate Students and Supervisors</i> .		<a href="#">Graduate Program Manual (FGSR) - Intellectual Property</a>  <a href="#">Graduate Program Manual (FGSR) - Ownership of Research Material</a>  <a href="#">Intellectual Property Guidelines for Graduate Students and Supervisors</a>

The thesis		
Discuss the university's policy of public access to a thesis, noting the increasing availability of theses on the Internet, and the possible implications (if any) with respect to any future publication plans or (if applicable) patent applications. Encourage the student to use their time at the university to become familiar with publishing practices in your discipline.	at LMP Orientation	<a href="#">Calendar – Restricting Access to the Publication of a Thesis</a> <a href="#">Theses Canada</a> <a href="#">ERA: Education and Research Archive (UAlberta)</a>
Direct the student to the university's guidelines for formatting a thesis.	at LMP Orientation	<a href="#">Thesis Requirement &amp; Preparation</a>
Availability of further assistance		
Mention the availability of professional development opportunities, such as the teaching development week organized by FGSR, and the guidance offered by the university's Career Centre (CAPS).	at LMP Orientation	<a href="#">Professional Development (FGSR)</a> <a href="#">Career Centre (UAlberta)</a>
Mention the availability of various resources on campus to assist graduate students, including FGSR, the Student Success Centre, the Centre for Writers (C4W), the Graduate Students' Association (GSA), the Student Ombudservice, as well as any department-specific groups.	at LMP Orientation	<a href="#">Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research</a> <a href="#">Academic Success Centre</a> <a href="#">Centre for Writers</a> <a href="#">Graduate Students' Association</a> <a href="#">Office of the Student Ombuds</a> <a href="#">Office of Advocacy and Wellbeing</a>

We confirm that the above matters have been discussed on the date indicated above:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Graduate Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor