

School of Occupational Therapy

Frequently Asked Questions

Master of Science (Occupational Therapy)

Updated: August 2018

Q. Why choose Dalhousie School of Occupational Therapy?

<http://www.dal.ca/faculty/healthprofessions/occupational-therapy/about.html>

Q. What are the Dalhousie MSc(OT) admission requirements?

- Four-year completed Bachelor's degree in **ANY** field of study at a recognized academic institution with a minimum B average (GPA = 3.0 or greater; on a 4.3 scale) calculated on the last 20 half credits of the degree (i.e., calculated on the 3rd and 4th year of a four-year degree). For information about GPA calculation refer to

<https://www.dal.ca/faculty/gradstudies/faculty/coordinators/gpa-calculation.html>

- Pre-requisite courses (must total 9 credit hours) with a minimum of a B average (GPA = 3.0 or greater; on a 4.3 scale):
 - Six (6) credit hours (or a full credit) in human physiology with the following systems content: cell, endocrine, neural, muscle, cardiovascular, respiratory, renal and gastrointestinal. Courses at the 3000/4000 level are generally too specialized to meet the 'broader foundation' requirements of the MSc(OT) program, and thus cannot be used as prerequisites.
 - Three (3) credit hours (or a half credit) in human anatomy enable the student to explain and describe, at a basic level, the gross anatomy of the human body. Content topics of the course should include study of the following: development, cells, tissues, skeletal, muscular, integument, nervous, cardiovascular, digestive, respiratory, renal and reproductive systems. Courses at the 3000/4000 level are generally too specialized to meet the 'broader foundation' requirements of the MSc(OT) program, and thus cannot be used as prerequisites.
 - Pre-requisite courses **must** be at the university level.
 - Pre-requisite courses: Do not have to have a lab component; can be online or face-to-face; may be offered in a combined course format, e.g., Human Anatomy and Physiology
 - Note: The credits for a combined course may be distributed across anatomy and physiology. For example, a 6-credit course may satisfy 3-credits in anatomy and 3-credits in physiology. A 3-credit course may **not** be considered to meet 3-credits of anatomy *and* 3-credits of physiology.
- NOTE: Please check with the School of Occupational Therapy if you are unsure whether courses meet the criteria: occupational.therapy@dal.ca.
- Two academic References (see Guidelines from the Faculty of Graduate Studies)
<http://www.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/pdf/faculty/faculty-health-professions/occupational-therapy/FGS%20Reference%20Letter%20Form.pdf>

Q. Where can I get the admission application forms and information?

You will need to complete the **Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS)** application forms according to the FGS guidelines (http://www.dal.ca/admissions/graduate/admission_process.html) concerning reference letters, transcripts, and other requirements. Forms and information can be printed from their website (http://www.dal.ca/admissions/graduate/admission_process.html) or from the Registrar’s website.

You will also need to complete the **MSc(OT) Supplementary Application Forms** which can be downloaded from the School’s website.

Q. Where do I send my completed application?

See detailed information in Table below. It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that all documentation is complete. A confirmation letter will be sent to you as soon as your application package has been opened and documentation has been verified.

Please note: Incomplete applications will not be processed.

Application Documentation:	Submit to:
<p>___ Graduate Studies Application Form</p> <p>___ Application Fee (See Application Form) (Applications will not be processed if fee is not included)</p>	<p>Registrar’s Office Dalhousie University PO Box 15000 Halifax NS B3H 4R2</p>
<p>___ Two Letters of Reference (academic) prepared according to the guidelines of the Faculty of Graduate Studies (see above for link)</p> <p>___ Two copies of official transcripts from all universities previously attended Official transcripts must include all courses, including in-progress courses. Note: <i>It is your responsibility to ensure that your <u>final transcripts</u> for all “in-progress” courses as of January 31st are received by the School of Occupational Therapy by <u>June 15th</u>. If these transcripts are not received by June 15th, the Admissions Committee will not consider your application.</i></p> <p>___ Completed MSc(OT) Supplementary Application Form</p> <p>I. Contact Information Form (p. 1) II. Pre-requisite Courses (p. 1) III. Equitable Admission Form (p. 2) IV. Requirements and Expectations Form (p. 3) V. FHP Statement Regarding Criminal Records Check (p. 4)</p> <p>___ Proof of proficiency in English (TOEFL) if primary language is not English</p> <p>___ A Letter of Intent is NOT required for admission to this program</p>	<p>By Mail:</p> <p>MSc(OT) Admissions Secretary School of Occupational Therapy Dalhousie University PO Box 15000 Rm 215, Forrest Building 5869 University Avenue Halifax NS B3H 4R2</p> <p>By Courier:</p> <p>MSc(OT) Admissions Secretary School of Occupational Therapy Dalhousie University Rm 215, Forrest Building 5869 University Avenue Halifax NS B3H 4R2</p>

Q. What is the application deadline for the September admissions cycle?

January 31st

Q. What if I am currently completing my fourth year of study, taking pre-requisite or up-grading courses at the time of the application deadline (January 31st)? Can I still apply?

Yes. You must meet all of the admission requirements by June 15th of the year of admission. If you are completing your four year degree and/or any of the prerequisite or up-grading courses as of January 31st, it is your responsibility to ensure that your final transcripts for all “in-progress” courses are received by the School of Occupational Therapy by June 15th. Transcripts received after this date will not be considered by the Admissions Committee.

Q. How is admission to the MSc(OT) program determined?

Each September, enrolment of a cohort of **66** students is determined through a **competitive ranking** evaluation process. Admission is based on:

- 1) The applicant's GPA (minimum of 3.0) of the last two years of their four-year degree in any field
- 2) Two letters of reference (preferably academic)
- 3) The applicant's GPA (minimum of 3.0) in the 9 credit hours (total) of human anatomy and human physiology pre-requisites
- 4) Place of residence

NOTE: Qualified applicants who self-declare on the Supplementary Occupational Therapy Application Forms as persons with disabilities and/or who are members of the African Canadian or Aboriginal communities may be admitted in accordance with the School's Affirmative Action Policy (<http://www.dal.ca/academics/programs/graduate/occupational-therapy/admissions/admission-requirements.html>).

The admission committee makes recommendations of acceptance to the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS). FGS makes the final decision and, if successful, a formal offer of admission is sent to the applicant by the Registrar's office of Dalhousie University. (For applicants with courses 'in progress,' a conditional acceptance letter may be sent well before the June 15th transcript deadline).

Q. Do my referees have to use the reference form provided?

Yes. All referees must use the *Confidential Reference Letter Form* provided on our website (<http://www.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/pdf/faculty/faculty-health-professions/occupational-therapy/FGS%20Reference%20Letter%20Form.pdf>). Referees are strongly encouraged to write additional comments and attach them to the Reference Form. Academic referees who have evaluated your academic performance in university are preferred. If you are still **attending school** you are required to have two academic references. If you have **graduated** and are unable to, for whatever reason, secure two academic references, you may use one academic and one non-academic reference.

Q. Is there an interview with the application process?

There is no interview in the MSc(OT) Entry Level Program application process.

Q. What priority is given to applicants who are residents of Canada's four Atlantic Provinces?

Admission to the program is on a competitive basis with priority given to residents of the four Atlantic Provinces. Admission priorities for 35 of the 66 seats annually are: nine (9) to New Brunswick, eight (8) to Newfoundland and Labrador, sixteen (16) to Nova Scotia, and two (2) to Prince Edward Island. **However, the remaining thirty-one (31) seats are undesignated** and all applicants who meet the admissions criteria, i.e., regional, national and international, are considered eligible.

Q. Does the School have an Equitable Admissions policy?

The School of Occupational Therapy recognizes the need to address the effects of discrimination toward specific groups. Consistent with requirements of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission and the Faculty of Health, the School has an Affirmative Action Policy for the admission and education of qualified persons from groups which historically have been marginalized and educationally disadvantaged including Aboriginal peoples, African Canadians and Persons with (dis)Abilities (<http://www.dal.ca/academics/programs/graduate/occupational-therapy/admissions/admission-requirements.html>).

In addition, the School of Occupational Therapy is committed to increasing the number of qualified occupational therapists from the above named designated groups. Applicants from these groups who wish to take advantage of this policy, may voluntarily provide such information. Qualified applicants will be given priority in admissions procedures.

Q. What if I need accommodations for a disability?

Students who request accommodations for a disability are required to be registered with the Dalhousie Advising and Access Services Centre (AASC). You may contact them by telephone at: (902) 494-2836 or by email at: access@dal.ca Also see: http://www.dal.ca/campus_life/student_services/academic-support/accessibility.html

Q. May I call the School to find out about the status of my application?

Not before April 15th. To ensure privacy of information, the office is **not** able to provide specific information on each individual application or its status, including family members. All correspondence to applicants regarding the status of their application (application acknowledgement, acceptance, waitlist or rejection) will be sent by the School through email and in writing once the Admissions Committee has completed the evaluation process.

Q. May applicants on the admissions' waiting list find out their ranking?

No. The admissions committee is unable to inform applicants of a specific ranking on the waiting list. An individual's ranking is affected not only by their academic merit but also by the Atlantic Provinces designated seat structure of the program. The waiting list closes on the first day of classes in September of the admission year.

Q. If I am accepted, do I have to pay a deposit to hold my seat?

Yes. A non-refundable deposit of \$200 is payable within **three weeks** of receiving your acceptance letter. The fee is to be paid to the Registrar's Office. The admission deposit will be credited towards fees at the time of registration.

Q. May applicants who are accepted defer admission to another year?

No. Acceptance to the program is determined on a year to year basis. Applicants who are unable to accept a position into the program are encouraged to re-apply.

Q. May applicants transfer courses from another professional program?

No. The program does not accept transfer credits from other programs for OCCU courses. Non-OCCU courses will be subject to the approval of the Course Instructor.

Q. May applicants who have not been accepted apply again?

Yes. Acceptance to the program is based on an annual competitive process. Applicants not accepted are encouraged to re-apply. Applicants seeking to improve their application should review their application documentation and ensure that it **meets or exceeds** the following **minimum** standards for admission

- Minimum B average calculated on the last 20 half credits of a 4 year degree
- Minimum B average on the pre-requisite courses
- 2 FGS Academic Reference Letters. Applicants are encouraged to request letters from referees who can clearly address their specific abilities and potential for graduate level study in a health profession. Applicants who are re-applying are advised to contact the School of Occupational Therapy to determine whether reference letters from a previous application can be carried forward.

NOTE: Re-applicants are also encouraged to contact the School of Occupational Therapy's Recruitment Officer to review their individual application.

Q. Are there options for the program format? How is the program offered?

No. The program is offered in one format only. A cohort of 66 students will begin the full-time, on-site program in September of each year. The duration of the program is 22 months and includes more than 1000 hours of fieldwork education.

Q. Will all fieldwork placements be in Halifax?

No. The first, part-time fieldwork placement (one day per week) does take place in the Halifax/Dartmouth area. However, the three full time fieldwork placements will be organized by faculty with students' input and will take place locally, within the Atlantic Region, other provinces in Canada, and/or Internationally.

Q. What are the MSc(OT) program fees?

Details about program fees can be found at

http://www.dal.ca/admissions/money_matters/tuition_fees_costs/fee_calculator.html

Q. Is it possible to be employed while also studying full time in the MSc(OT) program?

The School recognizes students' financial challenges. Applicants are cautioned that the MSc(OT) is a full-time program completed over a 22 month (6 consecutive semesters) time period. The academic program is intensive and fieldwork requirements are rigorous. Typically more than one fieldwork placement will require travel away from Halifax. While students have their own methods of time management, many students will find this program difficult to manage with the addition of full or part-time employment. Class scheduling is complex and cannot accommodate special schedules to take employment into account.

Q. After graduating from the Dalhousie Occupational Therapy MSc(OT) program would I be eligible to work in countries other than Canada?

For this information, you will need to contact the regulatory occupational therapy organization in the country or jurisdiction where you intend to practice.

Q. What is the MSc(OT) Curriculum?

<https://www.dal.ca/academics/programs/graduate/occupational-therapy/program-details/courses-curriculum.html>

For further information on occupational therapy as a career contact:

School of Occupational Therapy, Dalhousie University www.occupationaltherapy.dal.ca

New Brunswick www.nbaot.org

Newfoundland/Labrador www.nlaot.ca

Nova Scotia www.nssot.ca or www.cotns.ca

Prince Edward Island www.peiot.org

Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists www.caot.ca