

**School of Occupational Therapy**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**  
**Master of Science (Occupational Therapy)**  
*Updated: August 15, 2023*

**1. Why choose MSc(OT) program at Dalhousie University?**

[MSc\(OT\) – Entry Level](#)

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

Please visit our [How to Apply page](#).

**3. What is the list of required documents for the MSc(OT) program application?**

See detailed information in the Table below.

**Please note:**

- **Incomplete applications will not be processed.**
- It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all documentation is complete and has been received by the School of Occupational Therapy prior to the January 31<sup>st</sup> deadline.
- Students can check on the status of their submitted application [here](#).

Application Documentation Checklist:	Submission Format
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <a href="#">Faculty of Graduate Studies Application (FGS) Form</a></li> <li>□ <b>Two ACADEMIC Letters of Reference</b>, submitted via e-reference system.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have the email addresses of your referees ready to include when completing the FGS Application Form. Dalhousie University will only accept university, teaching hospital, and government email addresses (i.e., not personal email addresses, such as Yahoo, Gmail, Hotmail, or business addresses). Please allow <b>five business days</b> for your referee(s) to be contacted by our system. If you made an error in the submission of an email address, please contact <a href="mailto:eref@dal.ca">eref@dal.ca</a>. Please refer to questions 8 and 9 for more information.</li> </ul> </li> <li>□ <a href="#">MSc(OT) Supplementary Application Form</a></li> </ul>	<p><b>ONLINE</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>Application Fee.</b> Payment must be received before your application is processed. Methods of payment are included on the FGS Application Form. (<i>Applications will not be processed if fee is not included</i>)</li> </ul>	<p><b>ONLINE</b></p>

- **One copy of official transcripts from all post-secondary Institutions previously attended.**
  - A transcript is considered official when it is received directly from the issuing institution.
  - Official transcripts must include all courses, including in- progress courses.

**Note:** By **January 31<sup>st</sup>** application deadline, one copy of official transcripts from all post-secondary institutions previously attended must be received.

For all applicants with courses ‘in-progress’ at the time of application, one copy of their final official transcript must be received by **June 15<sup>th</sup>**. This transcript must include final grades for all degrees and pre-requisite requirements and the degree conferred. **If final transcripts are not received by June 15<sup>th</sup>, the application will be considered incomplete, and the applicant will be ineligible for admission.**
- **Proof of proficiency in English** (e.g., TOEFL/IELTS) if primary language is not English. [English language requirements](#)

**Online:** (preferred)  
The transcript must be sent electronically directly from your institution to this email: [otadmissions@dal.ca](mailto:otadmissions@dal.ca).

**Mailing Address:**  
MSc(OT) Admissions  
Secretary School of  
Occupational Therapy  
Dalhousie University PO  
Box 15000  
Halifax NS B3H 4R2

**Courier:**  
MSc(OT) Admissions  
Secretary  
School of Occupational  
Therapy Dalhousie  
University Rm 215, Forrest  
Building 5869  
University Avenue  
Halifax NS B3H 4R2

#### 4. 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) calculated on the last 60 credit hours of study in their bachelor’s degree.
- 2) Two **academic** letters of reference.
- 3) The applicant’s GPA (minimum of 3.0) in human anatomy (3 credit hours) and human physiology (3 credit hours) pre-requisites.
- 4) Place of residence.
- 5) Personal statement.

NOTE: Qualified applicants who self-declare on the MSc(OT) Supplementary Application Form as persons with (dis)abilities and/or who are members of the African Canadian or Aboriginal communities may be given preference in the admission process in accordance with the [Faculty of Health Equitable Admissions Policy](#).

Please note that belonging to one of the minority groups and/or residing in NS do not guarantee your seats. Applicants will be given scores and ranked based on all the requirements, and top candidates will be given an offer.

The admission committee makes recommendations of acceptance to the 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 before the June 15<sup>th</sup> deadline).

## 5. What is the application deadline?

**All application documents** (*Faculty of Graduate Studies Application Form, 2 academic reference letters, MScOT Supplementary Application Form, official transcripts, proof of proficiency in English*) **must** be received in the School of Occupation Therapy by **January 31<sup>st</sup>**.

## 6. Can I still apply 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 31<sup>st</sup>)?

**Yes.** An official transcript with in-progress courses must be received by January 31<sup>st</sup>. A final transcript with the completed degree and pre-requisite requirements, as well as the degree conferred must be received by June 15<sup>th</sup>.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that their final transcripts with conferred degree are received by the School of Occupational Therapy by June 15<sup>th</sup>. **Transcripts received after this date will not be considered by the Admissions Committee.**

## 7. Can I take extra courses to upgrade my GPA?

**Yes.** For upgraded courses to be included in the GPA calculation, they must be 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year University level courses and a maximum of 5 courses (15 credit hours) can be used. These courses must be completed before our application deadline (**January 31<sup>st</sup>**). The remaining 45 credit hours will be taken from the student's bachelor's degree. The grades obtained from courses taken after your four-year degree will replace your earliest grades (usually, the ones from the first term of 3<sup>rd</sup> year) so you need to look at your transcript to see what grades you received in that term and if it is worth it to upgrade.

## 8. Who can provide reference letters?

- For applicants who completed their undergraduate (or related graduate) degree **within the past three years**: Two academic references.
- For applicants who completed their undergraduate (or related graduate) degree **three to five years ago**: a) one academic reference and one relevant professional reference, or b) two academic references.
- For applicants who completed their undergraduate (or related graduate) degree **more than five years ago**: a) two relevant professional references, or b) one academic reference and one relevant professional reference, or c) two academic references.

Academic references can be provided by university or college instructors who taught academic courses and evaluated your performance.

## 9. Do my referees have to use the online electronic system?

**Yes**, if your references are academic references. Dalhousie University will only accept university, teaching hospital, and government email addresses (i.e., not personal email addresses, such as Yahoo, Gmail, Hotmail, or business addresses).

**No**, if your references are professional and don't have university, teaching hospital, or government email addresses. If you are using a professional reference for your application and are **unable to use the graduate online e-reference system**, please contact [otadmissions@dal.ca](mailto:otadmissions@dal.ca) for preferred method for reference delivery.

- Students are responsible to ensure reference letters are submitted by the deadline by checking on the status of a submitted application [here](#).

- **Late reference letters (received after the January 31<sup>st</sup> deadline) will not be accepted.**
- Referees are strongly encouraged to write additional comments and attach them to the Reference Form.

**10. I still do not have a Dal banner number; can I submit the supplementary form?**

**Yes.** You can still submit the supplementary form. However, if you have obtained a banner number, we recommend that you include it on the form.

**11. What do you mean by resident of Atlantic Canadian provinces?**

Your province of residence corresponds with where you would apply for a government student loan. An applicant is considered a resident of New Brunswick, Newfoundland & Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, if they have lived and/or worked in the

Province for at least the twelve consecutive months immediately preceding the deadline for admission (January 31), excluding time spent as a full-time student at a post- secondary institution.

We might ask for proof of residence to validate the information provided.

**12. 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, and residents of the four Atlantic Canadian Provinces will be given priority consideration.

**13. Does the School have an Equitable Admissions policy?**

**Yes.** Consistent with requirements of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission and the Dalhousie University [Faculty of Health Equitable Admissions Policy](#), the School of Occupational Therapy is committed to improving the representation of people of Aboriginal/Indigenous ancestry (especially Mi'kmaq), members of racialized groups, persons of African descent (especially African Nova Scotians), Acadians, persons with disabilities, and persons belonging to sexual orientation and/or gender identity (SOGI) minority groups in the program. Applicants who self-identify as members of these groups on the *MScOT Supplementary Application Form*, and who meet the minimum application requirements, will be given preference in admissions. If you belong to one of these groups and wish to be included in this policy, you may voluntarily provide this information about yourself.

**14. What if I need accommodations for a disability?**

Students who request accommodations for a disability are required to be registered with the Dalhousie Student Accessibility Centre.

You may contact them by:

Telephone: (902) 494-2836 or by email: [access@dal.ca](mailto:access@dal.ca)

Also see: [Academic Support](#)

**15. Is there an interview with the application process?**

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

**16. May I call the School to find out about the outcome of my application?**

**No.** To ensure privacy of information, the School is not able to provide specific information on each individual application or its status.

All correspondence to applicants regarding the status of their application (application acknowledgement, acceptance, waitlist, or rejection) will be sent by the School **directly to the candidate through email** and in writing once the Admissions Committee has completed the evaluation process.

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

**No.** Applicants are not provided with a specific ranking on the waiting list. Applications on the waitlist may receive and offer up to the start of the academic year. Offers for admission end on the first day of orientation in September of the admission year.

**18. If I am offered admission, do I have to pay a deposit to hold my seat?**

**Yes.** A non-refundable deposit of \$200 is payable within **two weeks** of receiving your acceptance letter. The deposit is to be paid to the Registrar's Office and it will be credited towards fees at the time of registration. If the non-refundable deposit is not received by the designated deadline, the offer of admission will be withdrawn.

**19. 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.

**20. May applicants transfer courses from another professional program?**

**No.** The program does not accept transfer credits from other programs.

**21. What are the MSc(OT) program fees?**

Details about program fees can be found [here](#). Please note that the program fees do not include the costs incurred during fieldwork. During fieldwork placements, students are responsible for all costs associated with travel and living expenses, immunizations, and any special fees (e.g., insurance, parking) as required by some placement sites.

**22. Are there options for the program format?**

**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.

### **23. What are the immunization requirements?**

Before participating in site visits or clinical placements, students must be appropriately immunized as follows:

- Diphtheria-tetanus
- Rubella
- Measles
- Mumps
- Hepatitis B
- Varicella
- Tuberculosis skin tests

All students will be required to sign a Statement of Compliance regarding these requirements. Refer to: [Faculty of Health Student Policies and Procedures](#)

**Note 1:** In some cases, even though students have received the series of Hepatitis B immunizations in childhood, immunity is lost over the years. It is suggested that students get tested for Hepatitis B antibodies to determine their immune status. If they are no longer immune, and need to redo the Hepatitis B series they will need to get a vaccination, then a booster in 1 month and a third shot 6 months later. One month after the 3rd shot serology is repeated and it is determined that the student is either immune or a "non-responder." This is an eight-month process, and during those eight months students are not able to undertake any clinical experiences outside of the school. Applicants are advised to verify their immune status as early as possible.

Serology and CRC/VSS records must be dated no earlier than 6 months prior to the September start date.

**Note 2:** Clinical placement sites may have additional requirements and timelines.

Students should be prepared to have updates if needed.

Per Immigration Canada guidelines, international students are to receive a medical examination (see: [Medical exams for visitors, students and workers](#)) and obtain a co-op work permit (see: [Dalhousie International Centre - Working in Canada](#)) in order to participate in fieldwork placements. Students are responsible for providing proof of these and are responsible for associated costs.

If you require more information about this, please contact Dalhousie University's International Centre:

- tel: (+1) 902.494.1566
- email: [international.centre@dal.ca](mailto:international.centre@dal.ca)

### **24. 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.

## 25. 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 may take place across the Atlantic Region, with limited opportunities for placements in other provinces in Canada, and/or internationally.

Students who have family, health, or other obligations, may need to be prepared to be outside Halifax for up to 8 weeks at a time. Requests regarding fieldwork location are only considered for unforeseeable and/or extenuating circumstances. Work and financial obligations are not grounds for waiving requirements for fieldwork related travel. Every waiver is considered on a case-by-case basis.

## 26. 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.

## 27. May applicants who have not been accepted apply again?

**Yes.** Acceptance to the program is based on an annual competitive process. Applicants who are 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 **minimum** standards for admission.

**NOTE:** virtual consultation sessions will be available throughout the Fall to support you with your (re)application. Please note, meeting times are limited and are booked on a first-come basis. Please contact [otadmissions@dal.ca](mailto:otadmissions@dal.ca) for more information.

## 28. Should I send my application again if I apply to the program another time?

**Transcripts and reference letters** can be used for reapplication the following year. Applicants who are re-applying are advised to contact the School of Occupational Therapy to determine whether reference letters and transcripts from a previous application can be carried forward. If you apply for a 3<sup>rd</sup> time, letters and transcripts must be resubmitted as part of the new application package. Other required documents including *Faculty of Graduate Studies Application Form*, *MScOT Supplementary Application Form* and *application fee* should be resubmitted every year you apply.

**For further information on occupational therapy as a career, please visit:**

- **School of Occupational Therapy, Dalhousie University** <https://www.dal.ca/faculty/health/occupational-therapy.html>
- **New Brunswick** [www.nbaot.org](http://www.nbaot.org)
- **Newfoundland and Labrador** [www.nlaot.ca](http://www.nlaot.ca)
- **Nova Scotia** [www.nssot.ca](http://www.nssot.ca) or [www.cotns.ca](http://www.cotns.ca)
- **Prince Edward Island** [www.peiot.org](http://www.peiot.org)
- **Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists** [www.caot.ca](http://www.caot.ca)