

School of Occupational Therapy
Frequently Asked Questions
Master of Science (Occupational Therapy)
Updated: August 1, 2020

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 with a minimum of a B average (GPA = 3.0 or greater; on a 4.3 scale):
 - Three (3) credit hours 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 may not be used as prerequisites.
 - Three (3) credit hours 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 may not 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: You can check with the School of Occupational Therapy if you are unsure whether courses meet the criteria: OTadmissions@dal.ca
- Two **academic** references (see Guidelines from the Faculty of Graduate Studies) **MUST be submitted via the online electronic reference system**. To view the form refer to https://cdn.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/pdf/faculty/faculty-health-professions/occupational-therapy/FGS_Reference_Letter_Form_1Rev.pdf
- [**MSc\(OT\) Supplementary Application Form 2020-21**](#)
 - **Online** only. Please see posted Supplemental Application Information pdf for information you should have prepared to complete the form.

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

1. You will need to complete the [Faculty of Graduate Studies \(FGS\) online Application](https://www.dal.ca/faculty/gradstudies/graduate-programs-admissions/admission_requirements/admission_process.html) according to the FGS guidelines (https://www.dal.ca/faculty/gradstudies/graduate-programs-admissions/admission_requirements/admission_process.html). Please note the requirement of online academic reference letters, submission of original transcripts, and other requirements.
2. You will also need to complete the online [MSc\(OT\) Supplementary Application Form 2020-21](#) Please note no paper copies will be accepted.

Q. Where do I send my completed application?

See detailed information in the 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 completed application has been received and the documentation has been verified.

Please note: *Incomplete applications will not be processed.*

Application Documentation Checklist:	Submission Format
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty of Graduate Studies Application Form https://dalonline.dal.ca/PROD/bwskalog.P_DisplLoginNon <input type="checkbox"/> Two ACADEMIC Letters of Reference prepared according to the guidelines of the Faculty of Graduate Studies (see above for link) <input type="checkbox"/> MSc(OT) Supplementary Application Form 2021 https://surveys.dal.ca/opinio/s?s=57647 	<p>ONLINE</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Application Fee (See FGS Application Form) <i>(Applications will not be processed if fee is not included)</i> 	<p>Registrar's Office Dalhousie University PO Box 15000 Halifax NS B3H 4R2</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 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 June 15th. If these transcripts are not received by June 15th, the Admissions Committee will not consider your application.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Proof of proficiency in English (TOEFL/ILETS) if primary language is not English 	<p><i>If you have difficulty to use mail due to COVID-19, please ask your institute to "directly" submit your transcript online to OTadmissions@dal.ca)</i></p>

Q. What is the application deadline for the September 2021 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 **academic** letters of reference
- 3) The applicant's GPA (minimum of 3.0) in the 6 credit hours (total) of human anatomy and human physiology pre-requisites
- 4) Place of residence
- 5) Personal statement

NOTE: Qualified applicants who self-declare on the survey as persons with disabilities and/or who are members of the African Canadian or Aboriginal communities may be given preference in the admission process 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 and online electronic system?

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 required.

Reference letters must be submitted using the online electronic system. Students are responsible to ensure reference letters are submitted by the deadline by checking the online electronic system. Late reference letters will not be reviewed.

Q. Who can provide academic reference letters?

Faculty, university or college instructors who taught academic courses and evaluated your performance might provide these references. All applicants **have to submit two academic** references. Please email us if you have any questions.

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

Please note that your province of residence corresponds with where you would apply for a government student loan. An applicant is considered a resident of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, or Newfoundland & Labrador, if s/he has 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.

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 and the majority of the seats allocated for residents of the four Atlantic Canadian Provinces.

Q. Does the School have an Equitable Admissions policy?

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 Aboriginal/Indigenous ancestry (especially Mi'kmaq), members of racialized groups, persons of African descent (especially African Nova Scotians), Acadians, persons with dis/Abilities, and persons belonging to sexual orientation and/or gender identity (SOGI) minority groups in the program. Applicants from these groups who meet the minimum application requirements will be given preference in admissions. If you belong to one of these groups and wish to take advantage of this policy, you may voluntarily provide this information about yourself. (<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 Student Accessibility Centre (SAC). You may contact them by telephone at: (902)

494-2836 or by email at: access@dal.ca Also see:
https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/accessibility.html

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

Not before April 15th. To ensure privacy of information, the School is not able to provide specific information on each individual application or its status. Information is shared directly with the candidate, not family members or designates. 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. Applicants are not provided 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. Offers for admission end on the first day of classes in September of the admission year.

Q. 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 a **designated time** of receiving your acceptance letter. The deadline to pay the deposit will be communicated with you and will vary from few days to weeks depending on when you receive the offer. The fee is to be paid to the Registrar's Office. The admission deposit 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.

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. 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.

Waivers for fieldwork location are only considered for unforeseeable and/or extenuating circumstances. 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. Work and financial obligations are not grounds for waivers. Every waiver is considered on a case by case basis.

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

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.

Q. Difficulty mailing transcripts due to COVID-19 situation, how can I proceed?

The School of Occupational Therapy will now accept final transcripts the following ways:

- Electronic file-transfers from the issuing institution and from services such as Parchment, National Student Clearinghouse, eScript-Safe, or TranscriptsNetwork. Electronic transcripts are to be sent to **“OTadmissions@dal.ca** and cc **“graduate.studies@dal.ca”**.
- PDFs sent by email directly from the issuing institution. These emailed transcripts are to be sent to **“OTadmissions@dal.ca** and cc **“graduate.studies@dal.ca”**.

It is your responsibility to make sure the school of Occupational Therapy (OTadmissions@dal.ca) receives your transcripts prior to the deadline.

***Note that we reserve the right to verify the validity of all documents provided, as well as the ability of an issuing institution to issue documents.**

Note: If there are difficulty with the electroic submission, the transcripts directly can be mailed to below address:

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

Q. I emailed the school but have not received a response, what should I do?

Due to a high volume in inquiries, you can expect to receive a response within 5-7 business days (excluding weekends and holidays). In the meantime, you can review the Frequently Asked Questions as your question might have been answered before. All the question should be sent to OTadmissions@dal.ca. If you email other email addresses, other staff, or other faculty members in the school, your question will not be answered. Please make sure to use the correct address when sending your question at **OTadmissions@dal.ca**.

Q. What are the immunization requirements?

Although immunization is not required until accepted into the MSc OT program. It is important to know that all applicants will be required to sign a Statement of Compliance regarding these requirements. Refer to: <https://www.dal.ca/faculty/health/current-students/student-policies-and-procedures.html>

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

Note: In some cases, even though students have received the series of Hepatitis B immunisations 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 undertake any clinical experiences outside of the school.

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

As per Immigration Canada guidelines, international students are to receive a medical examination (see: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/medical/medexams-temp.asp>) and obtain a co-op work permit (see: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/international-centre/immigration-info/working-in-canada/coopwp.html) 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).

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. 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. 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.

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