

School of Occupational Therapy
Frequently Asked Questions
Master of Science (Occupational Therapy)
Updated: August 15, 2022

1. Why choose Dalhousie School of Occupational Therapy?

[About – School of Occupational Therapy – Dalhousie University](#)

2. 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 grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or greater on a 4.3 scale (B average) calculated on the last 60 credit hours of study.
- 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 1:** 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 on Anatomy and 3-credits of Physiology.
 - Note 2:** To see if courses you took at a different institution are equivalent to Dalhousie courses, please visit the [Registrar's Office equivalencies site](#).
- Two **academic** references (see Guidelines from the [Faculty of Graduate Studies](#)) **MUST be submitted via the online electronic reference system.**
- [MSc\(OT\) Supplementary Application Form](#)
 - **Online** only. Please see posted Supplemental Application Information pdf for information you should have prepared to complete the form.

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

- You will need to complete the [Faculty of Graduate Studies \(FGS\) online Application](#).
- You will also need to complete the online [MSc\(OT\) Supplementary Application Form](#)
Note: No paper copies will be accepted.
- For more information, click [here](#).

4. 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 <input type="checkbox"/> Two ACADEMIC Letters of Reference prepared according to the guidelines of the Faculty of Graduate Studies, submitted via Dalhousie online electronic reference system <input type="checkbox"/> MSc(OT) Supplementary Application Form 2022-23 	ONLINE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Application Fee. 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>) 	ONLINE
<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 and previous transcripts as of January 31st are received by the School of Occupational Therapy by June 15th. If in-progress transcripts are not received by June 15th, the Admissions Committee will not consider your application.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Proof of proficiency in English (e.g., TOEFL/IELTS) if primary language is not English. English language requirements_____ 	<p>Mailing Address: MSc(OT) Admissions Secretary School of Occupational Therapy Dalhousie University PO Box 15000 Halifax NS B3H 4R2</p> <p>Courier: MSc(OT) Admissions Secretary School of Occupational Therapy Dalhousie University Rm 215, Forrest Building 5869 University Avenue Halifax NS B3H 4R2</p>

5. What is the application deadline for the September 2023 admissions cycle?

January 31st.

6. 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. All transcripts should be received by January 31. If you are completing your four years 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.

7. 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
- 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 (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 Affirmative Action 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 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).

8. Can I take extra courses to upgrade my GPA?

Yes. For upgraded courses to be included in the GPA calculation, they must be 3rd and 4th 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 31st). The remaining 45 credit hours will be taken from the student's bachelor degree. The grades obtained from courses taken after your 4-year degree will replace your earliest grades (usually, the ones from the first term of 3rd 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.

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

Yes.

- 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. Click [here](#) for more information.
- Late reference letters will not be reviewed.
- 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.

10. 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.

If you have been out of the school for more than 5 years and unable to provide academic referees, please email us and we will guide you about referees.

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, 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.

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

12. Is there an interview with the application process?

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

13. 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 to receive an offer.

14. 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 disabilities, 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 be included in this policy, you may voluntarily provide this information about yourself. ([Providing equal opportunities](#)).

15. 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
Also see: [Academic Support](#)

16. 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.

17. 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 orientation day 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 **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. 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 for OCCU courses.

21. 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.

22. 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.

23. 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: [Faculty of Health Student Policies and Procedures](#)

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 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 months 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 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.

As 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

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. How should I submit my transcripts?

You need to ask your institutions to directly submit the transcripts to the school of occupational therapy. If the documents are not in English, please ask your institution to include both the translated transcript in English along with the transcript in the original language and directly send the documents to the school. The documents should be official and sent directly by the institutions issuing the transcript. It is your responsibility to ensure the documents are received by Jan 31st.

Mailing Address:

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

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. 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.

28. 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.

29. Should I send my application again if I apply to the program for another time?

Transcripts and reference letters will be retained for 2 full academic years (AY) after the AY the institution rejects application, then securely destroyed. If you apply for the 3rd time, please submit the letters and transcripts again.

Other required documents including supplementary form and application fee should be resubmitted every year you apply.

30. 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.

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

School of Occupational Therapy, Dalhousie University

<https://www.dal.ca/faculty/health/occupational-therapy.html>

New Brunswick www.nbaot.org

Newfoundland and 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