

Frequently Answered Questions

This is not meant to be a comprehensive overview of departmental, faculty, or university regulations or procedures. It is intended only as a guide to help you find answers that might not be available from other sources. The information on this page was correct at the time of posting but is subject to change without notice.

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Do I have to apply for funding?

All prospective students should apply for any external funding for which they are eligible. The main sources of federal external funding are NSERC, SSHRC, CIHR. These applications must be completed in the fall of the year prior to graduate admission. Speak to your Honours coordinator, undergraduate coordinator and/or research supervisor about how to apply for these awards. Instructions are also available online on each agency website.

The Harmonized Scholarship application is online from the Faculty of Graduate Studies website under funding here (check side bar for degree program):

<https://www.dal.ca/faculty/gradstudies/funding/newstudentsnewprogram.html>

Students do not have to apply for a Dalhousie Graduate Fellowship.

Students in the program must apply for all external funding for which they are eligible, as a condition of receiving funding from Dalhousie. Discuss with your supervisor(s) possible sources of funding. Most students should apply for the Harmonized scholarship. The Harmonized Scholarship application is online from the Faculty of Graduate Studies website under funding here (check side bar for degree program):

<https://www.dal.ca/faculty/gradstudies/funding/newstudentsnewprogram.html>

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Are GREs required?

GREs are no longer required or considered

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Should I contact the department if my graduate application will be a few days late?

The admission date for the Clinical Program (Nov. 15) is a strict deadline. Late submissions will not be accepted.

For the Experimental Psychology and Neuroscience Programs, the due date is Dec. 1. While we recommend that applications be received by December 1st to receive full consideration for admission, we will continue to accept applications after this date. Any decision-making that proceeds will do so whether we have received notification of a late application or not. Please do not contact us if your application will be a few days late.

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Will my GPAs be high enough to be admitted?

Our programs require that student have at least a B+ average over all courses taken. The GPA of admitted students is often higher than this.

That said, however, we consider all aspects of the student's application: GPA, letters of reference (esp. commenting on research potential/ability and clinical suitability if applicable). If a student has had a rough start to their academic career, we will consider whether there has been improvement over the degree, leading to better performance in subsequent years - particularly in courses related to the proposed area of study. Plus, our program is **based on a mentorship model** and so a close fit between the interests of a student and the interest of the primary research supervisor is of utmost importance. **Thus, even if a student had a perfect GPA, we would be unlikely to admit that person unless there was a faculty member excited about having that student in their lab. For this reason, it is important that prospective students contact potential supervisors in advance of applying to our program.**

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Do you offer a master's degree in Clinical Psychology?

No. Our clinical program is a 6-year program into which students are usually admitted from a 4-year Honours degree. Students holding a master's degree from another institution may apply to our program; they may receive advance standing for some courses, determined on a case-by-case basis after admission.

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I have no research experience and/or am not really that interested in research; I'm more interested in doing clinical or counselling work. Should I still apply?

Our clinical psychology program is based on a scientist-practitioner model. There is a heavy emphasis on research in all years of the program. If you have no research experience and/or are not interested in doing research, our program will probably not be a good fit for you.

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I already hold a Master's degree and would like to be admitted to the Clinical Program - is this possible?

Our Clinical Psychology program is a straight-through 6-year Ph.D. program. Students are normally admitted directly from the bachelor's degree (i.e., there is no requirement for a master's degree and no preference given to students who hold one). For students who do hold a master's degree, we will consider their graduate grades during the admissions process - but not to the exclusion of undergraduate grades. Students who have completed some graduate training may receive advanced standing for a few courses (primarily electives), at the discretion of the Director of Clinical Training. This will be determined after an admission decision has been made. Any advanced standing is on a per-course basis and does not significantly alter the time required to complete the Ph.D. training.

Student entering with a master's degree in Psychology and Neuroscience are usually admitted to a 5-year (rather than the more typical 6-year) program.

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I am interested in the clinical psychology program. Will my master's degree be looked upon favourably?

Students may be admitted to our clinical psychology PhD program directly from a 4-year undergraduate honours degree. Students with a master's degree may apply to our program but there is no particular advantage for applying with a master's versus a bachelor's degree, no particular advantage for having a master's from one school versus another, and no particular advantage for having a clinical versus a non-clinical master's degree.

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What if I don't have an Honours degree?

Our graduate programs are research intensive and our Clinical training is according to a Scientist-Practitioner model. Given the emphasis on research, we carefully review an applicant's research experience and interests when considering admission to our program. Students applying for our Clinical Program are required to hold an Honours degree in Psychology - which, in addition to a major in Psychology, includes training in research design and statistics, and independent research experience.

An applicant seeking admission without an Honours degree would need to demonstrate "equivalent to Honours". This would require that the applicant have a strong background in Psychology or a related discipline (sufficient to serve as a Graduate Teaching Assistant in our undergraduate Psychology and/or Psychology/Neuroscience courses), courses in research methods and design, statistics, and independent research experience.

Our Clinical Psychology PhD Program is designed for entry from a Bachelors with Honours in Psychology. If your (UG or grad) degree differs, it is incumbent on you to demonstrate equivalency for us to consider your application, keeping in mind that you will not be eligible for registration as a Psychologist without undergrad courses in the 'foundational' areas of psychology (cognitive, social, biological, individual behavior, historical). This [requirement](#) will not be waived and applicants with non-psychology degrees that do not have core psychology content courses will not be admitted. You may wish to consult with the [Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Psychology \(NSBEP\)](#) (and/or other provinces' registering bodies) if you wish to consult or find out which psychology courses would count toward the core areas of registration.

For the Experimental Psychology and Neuroscience programs, an honours degree, or equivalent to honours (see 1st paragraph of this section) is required. The Honours can be in any relevant subject (e.g. Biology).

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Is there any funding available for international students?

There are some sources of funding for international students depending on their academic achievements and their program of study. Outstanding non-Canadian applicants may be eligible for the Vanier scholarship (via NSERC, SSHRC, or CIHR), or a Killam scholarship (provided the student has applied for any funding for which he/she is eligible). Other scholarships available include the Nova Scotia Graduate Scholarship and the Scotia Scholars award from Research Nova Scotia. Please consult the Faculty of Graduate Studies website for more information for other scholarship for which you may be eligible. If a non-Canadian student is admitted to our program but unsuccessful in securing external funding, he/she will offered a Dalhousie Graduate Fellowship; the amount of the Dalhousie Graduate Fellowship will be increased over the base level by the amount of the international differential fees.

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I submitted an application early to be considered by my potential supervisor for a Research Nova Scotia award. Should I update my application materials for the December 1st deadline?

If your application contains unofficial documents (e.g., transcripts) and you now have access to the official documents, you should send the official documents. Likewise, if your transcripts have been updated, please send these as well. If there have been other substantive changes in your application (e.g., new publications or conference presentations), then you may update this information as well. However, it is unnecessary to resubmit your application or to otherwise update the materials in your file.

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Do you offer course-based degrees?

Our degree programs all require the completion of some number of courses. However, all programs also require the completion of a research-based thesis. We have no course-only degree programs.

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How many new students are admitted each year?

Our capacity to accept new students varies somewhat from year-to-year, depending on a number of factors (e.g., number of students currently in the program, faculty sabbaticals and leaves, finances). We receive ~200 applications per year to our various programs, the majority of which are to the clinical program. In most years, we accept approximately 10-16 students. Usually, 6 are in the clinical program. This means that the success rate is approximately 6-10% across all programs.

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I have an Honours degree in Neuroscience. Can I be admitted to the Clinical Psychology program?

If a student has obtained the required background that would make the undergraduate neuroscience degree "equivalent to" a psychology undergraduate degree, then the student can be considered for admission to our program. This would include courses in methods, statistics, as well as core psychology courses.

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I am an international student who will receive full funding from my government to attend graduate school in Canada. Will you accept me into your graduate program?

Obtaining funding for graduate work does not secure a position in our graduate program. All prospective students must submit a completed application. For full consideration, this must be received by December 1st prior to fall admission. We will consider every application based on merit: GPA, GREs, letters of reference, the availability of a willing supervisor within our department, and the capacity of the program to accept a student. In the case of applicants from non-English universities, demonstrated [competency in English](#) is required; our *minimum* standards are the same as outlined by the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

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When are students admitted to the graduate program?

Admission decisions are generally made between mid-January to mid-March. Admissions are performed in several rounds with the first-round of admissions being made for students who will be nominated by the department for the Harmonized Scholarships. After that, admissions are made in several rounds, depending on how many students have already accepted offers and how many positions remain available in the program.

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I haven't heard anything yet - what does that mean?

If you have not received a letter rejecting your application, then your application is still under consideration for admission. The admission process takes several months and may not be complete until mid- to late April. In rare circumstances, we may consider applications even after this date. If you have not yet heard from us, please be patient. **Please do not email or phone to ask us whether we have made a decision.** We will let you know as soon as we have.

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I received an external scholarship and have a willing supervisor: Now will you take me?

Unfortunately, there are constraints on our program that limit our ability to take all the students we might like to take. Even a very strong applicant with external funding and a willing supervisor may not find room in our program because of other priorities that are established at admissions. We not only consider the excellence of the applicant and whether there is a willing supervisor for that applicant, but also capacity limitations and admissions priorities for our program as a whole. We are a small, elite program that must sometimes turn away qualified students.

However, if you receive external funding after you submit your application, you should alert your prospective supervisor. You should also submit information about the award to the department. Having external funding increases the odds that we will be able to accept you. [top](#)