

Maintaining graduate funding at Dalhousie

Acceptance of Awards

Procedures for accepting your awards are typically communicated at the time of offer. For most awards managed through the harmonized scholarship process, acceptance is made through correspondence with the Department and FGS. FGS will notify departments of successful applicants and the department will contact them to determine if they are able to accept the award. The department is responsible for communicating acceptance to FGS, which must include a valid B00 number obtained after the applicant has completed and paid for their application for admission. Following acceptance, the awards are entered in Dalhousie's Graduate Funding Payment system.

Most awards must be taken up in the first eligible term (NSGS, Killam, Bader, other internal Dalhousie awards). Students who apply to FGS's Harmonized Scholarship Process in December/January and are starting that same winter term are only eligible to take up their award in May of that year (i.e. award start dates will not be back-dated to dates prior to the competition). Students who are already in-program and receive late award announcements will typically have the official start-date of their award backdated to the earliest eligible date (normally May) unless the late award is issued with an explicit start date. [Tri-agency Masters](#) or [Doctoral awards](#) may be taken up in May, September or January in the year following the competition provided the student meets all eligibility criteria for the award. Masters students can indicate the desired starting term when accepting the award in the [tri-agency research portal](#). Doctoral students wishing to activate a Tri-agency award in May must submit appropriate documentation to fgs.slo@dal.ca as soon as possible to avoid delays in payment, and should consult with their department on the impact this might have on other department-level funding over the summer. Doctoral students wishing to activate the Tri-agency award in September/January must provide appropriate documentation to fgs.slo@dal.ca by May 31st to avoid delays in payment in the fall or winter. Note that students who are eligible for president awards can only hold the award while Killam-D or Tri-agency Doctoral funding is active.

All FGS managed awards are issued with the condition that **students are required to accept all eligible awards for which they receive an offer, even if honorary**. Failure to do so will result in other award offers being withdrawn.

Payment / Automatic Deposit

Scholarships are administered through the Graduate Funding Payment system on a term-by-term basis. Fees and tuition are deducted from the total term scholarship amount and the remaining amount is divided equally by the number of pay periods (maximum of four) covered by the award in the term. Scholarship payments are made on the 27th of each month (or the Friday before if the 27th falls on a weekend). Note that this means the first payment of funding occurs at the end of the first month in-program. Students are expected to account for this delay in their funding arrangements when first arriving at Dalhousie.

Students must arrange for automatic bank deposit by completing the [Direct Deposit form](#) and emailing it to payroll1@dal.ca

Deferral of Start Date

Students who need to defer their start date in the program must formally notify FGS of the deferral prior to their originally intended start-date in program. Deferrals may be requested once, for no more than 12 months. Failure to submit a deferral request will normally result in loss of some or all scholarship funding. Deferral requests must also be submitted for delays in the transfer from a Masters to a Doctoral program beyond the originally intended start date. Students who are required to defer their start-date due to unanticipated circumstances (i.e. visa processing delays) must de-register and request a deferral by the add-drop deadlines within a given term. Failure to do so will normally result in fees owing to the university and loss of funding for that term.

Award Durations and Time in Program Eligibility

Awards are issued with terms of “up to” a set duration. Most FGS-managed funding internal to Dalhousie University cannot be held beyond the end of a student’s 2nd year in a Masters program, or 4th year in a Doctoral program (NSGS, Killam, Bader). Exceptions may arise for some tri-agency funding depending on timing of the application and award (CGS-M, CGS-D). The time in the doctoral program for scholarship eligibility purposes is determined based on the first term that a student is formally registered at the doctoral level (i.e. date of transfer for students who fast-track from a Masters to a PhD degree). In all instances, terms in which a student is on an approved leave of absence or approved interruption are not counted towards the calculated time in program for scholarship purposes.

Changes to Program / Thesis Topic / Supervisor

Students who are scholarship funded must report changes in program, supervisor, or substantial changes in research topic to FGS (and in some instances Tri-Agency). Provided the new program/research topic is still eligible within the terms of the scholarship funding held, students can typically continue to hold their award for the remaining term based on their original award. Tri-agency funded students are responsible for maintaining awareness of their thesis topic’s alignment with the mandate of their funding agency.

Combining Funds - Scholarship Stacking Cap

Total funding from the stacking of multiple FGS-managed sources will not exceed \$6666.66/term (Master) or \$10000/term (Doctoral). Students who receive multiple awards in excess of this limit will be funded at this cap unless an individual award’s value is greater (e.g. NSERC CGS-D awards may be as high as \$35,000/year).

Note that the following funding is NOT included when evaluating this Cap: International fee waivers, President’s award, FGS Department Allocations, department or research grant funding, TA/RA funding, or scholarships/fellowships not managed by FGS (e.g. Mitacs, program or faculty-level scholarships, etc.). Note that some external awards do require students to report other funding sources and may impose their own limits based on the awards held.

Program Status and Progress

Awards may only be held for the period you are engaged in full-time graduate degree studies. If for any reason your full-time graduate study status ceases or is interrupted, or if you fail to maintain the appropriate academic standing, payment of scholarships and awards will cease immediately. Any retroactive changes to registration (i.e. exceptional requests for leave of absence, retroactive withdrawal or dismissal) which result in a change in eligibility will require that a student return over-payments to the university.

Thesis Submission

Students who submit their thesis within a given academic term will continue to hold their FGS-managed scholarship funding to the end of that academic term. Some department-level funding may be cancelled effective the date of thesis submission. Students should consult with their program to confirm policies on how the date of thesis submission might affect their funding within a given term from departmental/research grant sources. Note that students who hold tri-agency funding are normally required to submit a Request for Termination of Award as per the Award Holders Guide.

Leave of Absence/Program Interruptions

Scholarship deferrals are normally approved for official leave of absences or program interruptions. Paid leave of absence is only available for parental leave, and only for specific scholarship programs (i.e. Tri-agency). Students must submit requests to FGS to defer their award and may be required to also complete additional forms for external awards (such as a tri-agency request for deferment or interruption of an award). Please be aware of your obligations as detailed in the award holders guide for any external awards. FGS only considers retroactive leave of absences and program interruptions under exceptional circumstances. Scholarship holders seeking retroactive changes to their registration status are encouraged to consult FGS before-hand to determine the potential impact this may have on their eligibility status and possible repayment requirements imposed by funding agency rules.

Withdrawal

Please note that withdrawal from a program is grounds for **immediate** termination of scholarship funding and cancellation of future payments. Voluntary withdrawal mid-term will normally result in cancellation of scholarship payments as of the effective date of the withdrawal. Students who fail to register within a given academic term are considered to have voluntarily withdrawn from a program and are normally required to apply for readmission. FGS recognizes that mistakes may occur which result in a student failing to register by the required deadlines. If FGS is notified of such a mistake within the same academic term and late registration is supported by the department, reinstatement of the scholarship funding may be possible. Failure to maintain continuous registration or failure to register in more than one consecutive term without an approved leave of absence will result in loss of scholarship funding.

Dismissal

Note that a failing grade within courses or the comprehensive examination process at the Doctoral level results in immediate dismissal. Please refer to the graduate academic calendar for information on grading and academic dismissal in Master level programs.

Students who are academically dismissed are no longer considered to maintain appropriate academic standing. All FGS-managed scholarship funding held by a student is immediately cancelled effective the date of an academic dismissal.

Annual Scholarship Renewal

Please refer to the award holders guide for externally managed funding to ensure that you submit renewal paperwork on time. It is the student's responsibility to comply with reporting requirements and renewal requirements for externally funded awards.

Renewal of FGS managed funding is based on timely completion of annual progress reports demonstrating satisfactory progress in the degree, full-time continuous enrollment and good academic standing. Killam award holders are expected to apply to other major funding opportunities when eligible (i.e. Vanier, CGS-D).