

Guidelines for Graduate Student Accommodations Comprehensive Examinations and Thesis Defences

These procedures for graduate student accommodations (comprehensive examinations and defences) supplement the University policy on [Accessibility for Students with Disabilities](#) and are intended to guide students, academic units, and the Blundon Centre through the process.

In keeping with its [Core Values](#), particularly those of responsibility to learners and inclusiveness and diversity, Memorial University is committed to ensuring an environment of understanding and respect for the dignity and worth of each student and also to supporting inclusive education based on the principles of equity, accessibility, and collaboration.

Further, the expectations in relation to learning by and examination of graduate students are frequently very different from that of undergraduates and these differences need to be reflected in the way accommodations are approached, recommended, and implemented.

Academic unit(s) should be brought into the process as early as possible so that student needs are met appropriately and without unnecessary delays to the student's graduate program.

Steps toward accommodation of graduate student comprehensive examinations and thesis defences:

1. The student is informed by academic unit of the comprehensive areas, deadlines and dates of examinations and any other criteria (as per calendar regulations 4.8 and 4.10).
2. If they have not already done so, the student self-identifies with a Disability and requests an Accommodation sufficiently early in order to assist with providing any accommodation. To request an accommodation students should contact the campus co-ordinating centre: St. John's campus [Glenn Roy Blundon Centre](#), Student Life.
3. Staff of the Blundon Centre will conduct an initial interview with the student to discuss individual accommodation requests.
 - I. As part of this process, documentation will be reviewed to ensure that recommendations and decisions about accommodations are based on appropriate medical and/or psycho-educational information.
 - II. Where necessary, and with the student's written consent, the Blundon Centre may seek further information from or consult with professionals or experts, either internal or external, to the University in finalizing an accommodation plan.

4. Staff from the Blundon Centre will request learning or competency outcomes for the comprehensive exams and/or defence from Academic Unit and/or School of Graduate Studies if these are not part of the information sent to student in step (1) above.
5. Staff from the Blundon Centre, in consultation with the student, will review and discuss the learning outcomes to inform the accommodation plan.
6. Documentation of the accommodation plan will be communicated to the Chair of the Comprehensive Examination Committee (or Academic Unit head in the case of a PhD defence), the student, and the School of Graduate Studies no later than two months prior to the examination.

Approved at Academic Council February 18, 2019.