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# Telfer Guidelines and Resources for M.Sc. in Management: Thesis and Project

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# Master of Science in Management

The following guidelines are intended to provide general information to students applying to and enrolled in the M.Sc. in Management graduate program. You will also find links to useful resources at the end of this document where you can access additional information.

## 1. Searching for a Supervisor

### 1.1. M.Sc. with Thesis

During your program, you will work closely with a faculty member who will supervise your research. You should identify a potential supervisor when you apply. Include the name of at two to three professor whose research interests correspond to yours and with whom you would like to work. Naming a potential supervisor is required when applying for the thesis option.

You can find professors' information using the [M.Sc. program's "faculty" website](#) to see whether they are willing to supervise a thesis and learn of their research interests, recent publications, and currently funded research projects. When you have identified potential supervisors, email them on an individual basis to schedule an appointment to discuss your qualifications, and obtain more information about their research activities.

In your email to potential supervisors, include the following information:

1. Your CV
2. A short paragraph about your research areas of interest (keep your scope wide and general, not too narrow or focused)
3. Why you find the professor's research expertise interesting and aligned with your own interests (you need to read some of his/her recent publications to write something compelling).

### 1.2 M.Sc. with Research Project

The program options involving a research project (12 months and 20 months with CO-OP) do NOT require you to find a potential supervisor before applying to the program. However, it is highly recommended that you explore the research interests of professors in your preferred concentration before you apply in order to know whether any faculty member's research is of interest to you. You may then want to indicate the names of two or three potential supervisors.

You can find professors' information using the [M.Sc. program's "faculty" website](#) to find out whether they are willing to supervise a research project and learn about their research interests, recent publications, and currently funded research projects. When you have identified potential supervisors, email them on an individual basis ***during your first term in the program*** to schedule an appointment to discuss your qualifications and obtain more information about their research activities.

In your email to potential supervisors, include the following information:

1. Your CV
2. A short paragraph about your research areas of interest (keep your scope wide and general, not too narrow, and focused)
3. The start date of your program
4. The expected date for your program completion
5. Why you find the professor's research expertise interesting and aligned with your own interests (you need to read some of his/her recent publications to write something compelling).

## 2. The M.Sc. Research Project

The research project consists of the delivery of an extended research paper (ERP) in your final term. The ERP requires effort and dedication equivalent to a six-unit course. The central aim of the research project is to give you the opportunity to use your advanced research skills to inform practice within organizations dealing with the type of problem your project addresses. Your project should have one of these two clear-cut goals: either achieve a sharp theoretical understanding of a relevant area of research or help illuminate if not tackle a specific business and management problem that confronts practitioners in their day-to-day work.

The ERP may be fundamentally conceptual or empirical. Put differently, the ERP may focus on a critical analysis of a theory, concepts or conceptual frameworks in your concentration or examine how such theory, concepts or conceptual frameworks can help illuminate or tackle an important organizational problem. Whether the ERP is conceptual or empirical, it typically requires a comprehensive literature review, a relevant methodological underpinning, and a clear-cut write-up. Therefore, you can complete your research project with a conceptual approach, such as a deep literature review that allows you to acquaint yourself with the existing academic literature on a specific research topic. You can also complete your research project with an empirical approach, using primary data (e.g., data previously collected by your supervisor) or secondary data (e.g., publicly accessible databases or results reported in published or unpublished research papers).

However, the extended research paper differs from the MSc thesis. While the ERP must display independent analysis and focus on a research topic in more detail than is possible within any single course, it does not have to make an original contribution to academic knowledge. Compared to an M.Sc. thesis, the ERP is typically narrower in scope. Examples can include:

- 1) conducting a thorough literature review on a given research topic;
- 2) using previously collected data<sup>1</sup> to test a theory or a conceptual framework;
- 3) analyzing previously collected<sup>1</sup> data to propose ways of addressing a particular problem;
- 4) using previously collected data<sup>1</sup> to test whether published research findings addressing a particular management issue are replicable in a different context,
- 5) suggesting a set of practical solutions to a specific problem based on a thorough review of scholarly literature;
- 6) writing a knowledge translation article based on a supervisor's published empirical article but aimed at practitioners.

You are discouraged from taking on a project that would involve collecting new data from human beings (e.g., conducting an online survey) because you will typically not have the time to wait for the University research ethics board's approval to proceed.

### 2.1 Project Proposal

In coordination with your supervisor, you are required to prepare a proposal for your project and submit it to the Graduate Office *before the last term of your program*. For example, if you are to finish the program by the end of a Summer term, then you must submit your proposal during the preceding Winter term.

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<sup>1</sup> Note that if you will be using an existing dataset containing data from human participants, your supervisor will need to file an REB amendment to add you as a new member of the research team.

The project proposal should include, at the minimum, the following components:

1. Title of the project
2. The project's general objective and the specific outcome(s) to be achieved
3. The specific tasks that need to be accomplished during the project to achieve the outcome(s)
4. A workplan (timetable) that identifies the milestones and the progress to be achieved at each milestone

Submit a PDF of your Project Proposal and a completed [Registration to Research Project Form](#) to the Graduate Office as a **Research Paper Service Request (Subtype- Submission of the research paper.)**

## 2.2 Project Submission and Evaluation

The final project report must be submitted to your project supervisor by the last week of the last semester in which you are registered for the project. You must be registered for the project for a minimum of 1 semester.

Your supervisor will evaluate your final project report. Once the evaluation is complete, your supervisor will fill out the [Research Project Evaluation Form](#) and return it to you. Please submit the form to the Graduate Office as a **Research Paper Service Request**.

The extended research paper (ERP) is an imposing work and takes a lot of effort. The ERP is evaluated mainly by its content and quality. But, as a general guideline, it should be approximately 50 pages in length excluding the title page, table of contents, references, and appendices. Please use double-spaced Calibri (size 11) or Times New Roman (size 12) fonts.

Your **Report** can include the following sections:

- Executive summary (a short summary of the project report from introduction to conclusion, including goals, approach, results, and main conclusion[s] drawn)
- Introduction (in the first two paragraphs identify the main topic, explain why it is important, and list the specific research question[s] you aim to answer; in the 4–5 pages that follow, use insights from scholarly literature to justify your project's research questions; and specify what is known and what is yet to be known in the literature about your topic)
- Literature Review (briefly summarize what is already known about the topic in the literature. It should discuss several critical studies that have already been done in this area of knowledge.)
- Methods (explain the steps taken to answer your research question[s] including when conducting a literature review)
- Results (report what your methods yielded in terms of findings)
- Discussion (explain how your findings answer your research question[s], how they can realistically be used to improve management practice, the limitations of your work, and end with a concluding paragraph)

### 3. The M.Sc. Research Project with Co-op

During your first semester, you will submit an application to the co-op program through your **uoZone** account. If accepted, in the second semester, you will go through the placement process to find your employer with whom you'll start working in the Summer term of year one.

Note that if you are an international student, you will also need to apply for your co-op work permit in the first semester of the program in order to be eligible to work in Canada.

Your co-op placements will take place in the Summer term of year one and the Fall term of year two.

In the Fall term of year two, you choose your topic and scope for your research project.

Finally, you complete your research project in the Winter term of year two.

### 4. The M.Sc. Thesis

The M.Sc. thesis does not count for any academic units but is a core requirement of the thesis option of the program. It requires significant research preparation and an approved thesis proposal before it officially starts. A thesis carries significant academic and research merit, and in particular, it is an important requirement to fulfill for those who intend to continue their studies with a doctoral degree.

Compared to a research project, a thesis typically aims to make a novel contribution to scholarly literature. It, therefore, tends to focus more on advancing scholarship that has more generalizable implications for management than on finding practical solutions to specific problems, although one does not necessarily preclude the other. For example, a thesis could aim to clarify the meaning of an important concept, why research studies on a particular topic are inconsistent in their findings, or even identify new reasons why certain types of desirable management outcomes tend to occur. Thesis work is also more likely to involve the collection of data among human participants, which first requires approval from the University research ethics board.

Students typically spend one full year on thesis-related work once they complete all courses. This can be reduced if the student starts thesis work part-time with their supervisor shortly after entering the program while they are also taking the required courses for their program. Students aim to defend their proposal by the end of their second term, after which they conduct the proposed research, produce their thesis, and ultimately defend it.

#### 4.1 Thesis Topic

The thesis topic may be chosen by the student or proposed by the thesis supervisor but must be accepted by both. A pertinent thesis topic corresponds to the research interests of the student and to the areas of specialization of the thesis supervisor. The thesis topic must be submitted to the Telfer Graduate Office by the end of the second term (Winter – year one).

Students must submit their thesis topic through an **Add or Modify Thesis Title Service Request** by typing their thesis topic in the comment box.

#### 4.2 Thesis Proposal

The thesis proposal is compulsory for students who choose the thesis program option. You prepare it in coordination with your thesis committee (your supervisor and two other Telfer professors). A written version of your proposal must be submitted to your supervisor and committee for evaluation. A thesis proposal defence is optional. It will be arranged by your supervisor at their discretion.

The thesis proposal should include the following sections:

- Abstract (a short summary of the proposed thesis, including the main topic, the specific research question[s], and the methods to be used)
- Introduction (in the first 1–3 paragraphs identify the main topic, explain its importance, list the specific research questions you aim to answer, and explain why they need answering; in the 5–7 pages that follow, review scholarly literature that justifies your specific research questions and chosen methodology)
- Methods (explain the steps you plan to take to answer your research questions, such as the type of participants or data needed, how you will access them, the measures you will use, and the analytical methodology you will apply)
- Workplan (a timetable that identifies the milestones and the progress to be achieved at each milestone)

Once the evaluation is complete, the [Thesis Proposal Form](#) must be submitted to the Graduate Office as a **Thesis Proposal Service Request**.

### 4.3 Thesis Submission and Evaluation

Your thesis must be evaluated by two examiners. They may be the same professors who evaluated your proposal, or your supervisor may select new examiners. Your examiners must be approved by the faculty. To get approval, you must submit the [List of Examiners for Final Thesis](#) as a **List of examiners for evaluation of the thesis Service Request** at least one month before you intend to submit your written thesis for evaluation.

Once your thesis is submitted, the graduate office will distribute it to your examiners and collect their evaluations at the end of a one-month evaluation period.

Your oral defence will be scheduled by the graduate office in coordination with your thesis examiners. The final version of your thesis must be submitted within 120 days of receiving your verdict. If the revised thesis is submitted and approved within 30 calendar days, the student will not be required to re-enrol.

For more information on writing and defence of a thesis, please consult the following resource: <https://www2.uottawa.ca/study/graduate-studies/thesis>

## 5. Referencing and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious offense at the University of Ottawa. It applies not just to your thesis or research project report, but also to any deliverable that you hand in for a course, or anything you publish (whether submitting a paper to a journal, conference, workshop, or writing on a website) while a student at the University of Ottawa.

Often students do not realize the seriousness of this issue for universities. Visit <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plagiarism> or <http://www.plagiarism.org/> for a list of various types of plagiarism and how to prevent them.

At the University of Ottawa, there is a detailed list of sanctions that may occur... UP TO AND INCLUDING EXPULSION FROM THE UNIVERSITY. <https://www.uottawa.ca/about-us/policies-regulations/academic-regulations/a-4-academic-integrity-academic-misconduct>

Please be aware of and carefully follow the guidelines listed below in all writing you submit while attending the University of Ottawa.

The University of Ottawa's document on plagiarism states that:

"PLAGIARISM is taking another person's words, ideas or statistics and passing them off as your own. The complete or partial translation of a text written by someone else also constitutes plagiarism if you do not acknowledge your source. When borrowing another person's words, use quotation marks and include complete references (author's name, date, pages). Internet sources must also be acknowledged. Also, when borrowing another person's ideas, acknowledge their origin."

When writing your thesis or research project report, try to minimize the amount of text you borrow from other sources. There might be cases where you see it appropriate to quote exact sentences from the source. If that is the case, then use quotation marks and include the complete reference (author's name, date, pages).

If you paraphrase sentences from other authors, you must still cite the full references and give them credits. When paraphrasing, avoid keeping the same sentence structure used in the original source. Instead, try to use your own words in paraphrasing the original sentences.

Even when you "properly" reference your sources, whether you quote them exactly or paraphrase them in your own words, you should still avoid importing too much material from other sources in your writing. Keep in mind that this is "your" document. As such, it should mainly include your contributions in your own words.

There are software applications to check the similarity of your written materials with other sources available on the Internet, such as published journal articles, conference proceedings, theses, and technical reports. Here are some examples of such software applications:

- WriteCheck (<http://en.writecheck.com/>) to check for plagiarism and grammar.
- iThenticate (<http://www.ithenticate.com/>) is used by publishers to check similarity.
- Turnitin (<http://www.turnitin.com>) is available to all Telfer professors free of charge.

## 6. Resources

The following resources prove to be valuable and useful when planning your research project or thesis, writing the proposal, conducting the research, and writing the final project report or thesis.

### 6.1 Academic Support

[Academic Writing Help](#) provides students with various forms of support. For instance, students can make **writing appointments**, during which they receive mentoring from more experienced peers on how to improve their academic writing skills.

[Academic Accommodations](#) ensures full access and participation in the learning environment with dignity, autonomy, and without impediment.

### 6.2 Library

#### The Management Library

The Management Library is a quiet study and lounge space located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Desmarais Building (DMS 2141). The Management Research Librarians can help you with databases, literature reviews, citation management, specialized software, scholarly communications, data, and more. Visit the [Management Library Website](#) for links to top business databases, library research guides, and to book an appointment with one of the Research Librarians. For questions, contact [bibdms@uottawa.ca](mailto:bibdms@uottawa.ca).

#### The Morisset Library

The Morisset Library (MRT) is the main campus library and holds all of uOttawa's print business collection. You can



also borrow [multimedia equipment](#) from the service desk, [place a hold](#) for pick up of physical items, [borrow from other libraries](#), and make requests for [scan-on-demand](#). Search the Library's print and electronic collection using the [Omni](#) search bar on the [Library's homepage](#). For immediate assistance, contact the [Library's Ask Chat service](#) or text 613-801-5603.

### **The Financial Research and Learning Lab**

The Financial Research and Learning Lab, located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Desmarais building (DMS 2186), offers a high-quality and technologically advanced environment supporting research and experiential learning at the University of Ottawa. The Lab houses industry-standard products found in both the public and private sectors. For more detailed information, visit the [Lab's website](#). To access databases, refer to the [Lab's instructions](#) page. For upcoming lab events such as database demos, add the [Lab's calendar](#) to your list of favorites. For questions, contact [finlab@uottawa.ca](mailto:finlab@uottawa.ca).

### **6.3 Service Request Guide**

An [instruction guide](#) to creating Services Requests and the different types of Service Requests is available on the [Student Handbook, Forms, and Guidelines](#) page.

## 7. Typical Course Sequence

Please see [Courses and Program Concentrations](#) for a typical course sequence specific to your concentration.

### 7.1 The M.Sc. Research Project

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| <b>FALL</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• MGT 5300 (Foundations of Management)</li><li>• MGT 5200 (Foundations of Quantitative Methods)</li><li>• Concentration course</li><li>• Concentration course</li><li>• MGT 6191 (Research Seminar Series)*</li></ul> <p><b>Note: Students must find their supervisor during this term.</b></p> <p>*Students must attend 4 Research Series Seminars throughout their program.</p> |
| <b>WINTER</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Concentration course</li><li>• Concentration course</li><li>• Concentration course</li><li>• Concentration course</li><li>• MGT 6191 (if not completed)</li></ul> <p><b>Note: Students are required submit their project proposal at the end of Winter term</b></p>   |
| <b>SUMMER</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• MGT 6997 (M.Sc. Research Project)</li></ul>   |

## 7.2 The M.Sc. Research Project with Co-op

|               |               |   |
|---------------|---------------|---|
| <b>YEAR 1</b> | <b>FALL</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MGT 5300 (Foundations of Management)</li> <li>• MGT 5200 (Foundations of Quantitative Methods)</li> <li>• Concentration course</li> <li>• Concentration course</li> <li>• MGT 6191 (Research Seminar Series)*</li> </ul> <p><b>Note: Students must apply for Co-op during this term.</b></p> <p>*Students must attend 4 Research Series Seminars throughout the program.</p> |
|               | <b>WINTER</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concentration course</li> <li>• Concentration course</li> <li>• Concentration course</li> <li>• Concentration course</li> <li>• MGT 6191 (if not completed)</li> </ul> <p>Note: Students will go through the placement process to find their summer placement</p>  |
|               | <b>SUMMER</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-op Work Term</li> </ul>   |
| <b>YEAR 2</b> | <b>FALL</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-op Work Term</li> </ul> <p><b>Note: Students are required to submit their project proposal.</b></p>   |
|               | <b>WINTER</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MGT 6997 (M.Sc. Research Project)</li> </ul>   |

### 7.3 The M.Sc. Thesis

|               |               |   |
|---------------|---------------|---|
| <b>YEAR 1</b> | <b>FALL</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MGT 5300 (Foundations of Management)</li> <li>• MGT 5200 (Foundations of Quantitative Methods)</li> <li>• Concentration course</li> <li>• Concentration course</li> <li>• MGT 6191 (Research Seminar Series)*</li> </ul> <p><b>*Students must complete 6 Research Series Seminars.</b></p> |
|               | <b>WINTER</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concentration course</li> <li>• Concentration course</li> <li>• Concentration course</li> <li>• MGT 6191 (if not completed)</li> </ul> <p><b>Note: Students should submit their thesis proposal for evaluation.</b></p>  |
|               | <b>SUMMER</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• THM 7999 (Thesis)</li> </ul>   |
| <b>YEAR 2</b> | <b>FALL</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• THM 7999 (Thesis)</li> </ul>   |
|               | <b>WINTER</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• THM 7999 (Thesis)</li> </ul>   |
|               | <b>SUMMER</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• THM 7999 (Thesis)</li> </ul>   |