

MEd Thesis Progression Checklist

Graduate Program in Education (GPE) | Faculty of Education, York University

Revised July 2026.

1. Registration and Continuous Enrolment

☐	Maintain continuous registration (fall, winter, and summer terms) including payment of applicable fees, through to and including the term in which all program requirements are successfully completed. Why this matters: Blocks are placed on registration if you don't maintain continuous registration. This can result in loss of terms to complete your degree, loss of funding, suspension of approval for studies with ethics approval, holds on milestone progression and oral exams, petitions to appeal FGS decisions, and withdrawal from the program.
☐	Once coursework is complete and you are working on your thesis, enrol in EDUC 6000 (non-credit registration placeholder) each term until degree requirements are met.

2. Supervisor and Supervisory Committee Milestone

☐	Begin identifying and approaching a potential supervisor in term 1 whose expertise aligns with your research interest. The supervisor can provide guidance on a suitable committee member. A master's thesis requires a supervisory committee with two faculty members appointed to the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS), at least one must be from the Faculty of Education. Consult with the GPD if you need guidance in this process.
☐	By end of Term 2, officially assign your supervisor and committee member by submitting a request via the Supervisor and Supervisory Committee Approval (SSC) Portal for GPE and FGS approval. Supervisory committee members must accept their roles in the SSC portal via a system notification link. FGS will block registration after term 2 until this milestone is complete in the SSC portal. Why this matters: It is essential that the supervisory committee begins developing a relationship early to understand your research goals and provide appropriate and ongoing guidance.
☐	Hold regular meetings with your supervisor. FGS suggests supervisors meet with their grad students once a month and requires a meeting at least once per term. Keep notes or a log of meeting dates and key decisions on timelines.

3. Thesis Proposal Development and Approval

IMPORTANT: The proposal must be approved by your supervisory committee not less than three months prior to the oral examination. This is FGS's minimum requirement; building in more time is strongly recommended, especially if ethics review is required.

☐	In consultation with your supervisory committee, begin developing your thesis proposal according to the FGS guidelines. Students and supervisory committees must also consider the feasibility of research proposals to align with term limits (6 terms full-time, 12 terms part-time) and ethics guidelines on whether ethics review is required. At minimum, the proposal must include: a purpose/goals statement in accessible language, a literature review situating the purpose and conceptual framing of the study, research question(s), proposed methodology with rationale and anticipated timelines, and expected contribution to knowledge, including proposed format of the thesis. Include the title, supervisor name, and committee members. At minimum, it should include: a purpose/goals statement in accessible language, an abbreviated literature review, research question(s), proposed methodology with rationale, and the expected contribution to knowledge. Include the title, supervisor name, and committee members. FGS
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	specifies that master's research proposals should be about 3500 words maximum , excluding references.
☐	Submit the draft proposal to your supervisory committee for review and consult with your supervisor for guidance on incorporating feedback.
☐	Once your committee deems it ready, upload a pdf of the proposal to the Graduate Proposal Milestone Portal and complete other required information, including whether ethics review is required. Email your supervisor, committee members, gradprogram@edu.yorku.ca and the GPD so that they can be watching for system notifications, as they all need to complete their approval in the portal.

4. FGS Proposal Approval

IMPORTANT: FGS will review your proposal via the Graduate Proposal Milestone Portal to check if an ethics application is required. Please note this can take 4 to 8 weeks. An identification code will be sent to you once this review is complete. **DO NOT** begin your research until you have received approval from FGS.

PATHWAY A: No ethics review required	
☐	Once FGS proposal approval confirms that your project does NOT require ethics approval, proceed to work on your thesis.
PATHWAY B: Ethics review required	
☐	While waiting for GPD/FGS review to confirm if ethics review is required, complete the mandatory TCPS tutorial prior to conducting any research involving human participants, and consult with your supervisor on the components of your ethics application. Why this matters: - The TCPS certificate of completion is required to upload as part of your online ethics application. It is a mandatory Government of Canada training module for all researchers doing research with human participants. York's office of research ethics also has guidance that must be followed in preparing components of your application, and your supervisor must also sign approval of the completed application. - Please also note that research with Indigenous communities, research with children and adolescents, and research on sensitive topics often requires extra time and may require additional ethics approvals beyond York's ethics application process. Please note: In most cases, due to the shortened timeline, the grad program does NOT recommend this type of study for Master's research. An exception could be research within an existing study that the supervisor as PI has ethics approval to add you as a research assistant.
☐	Once FGS proposal approval is confirmed, they will provide you with an identification code which you will need to submit your ethics protocol separately to the Research Ethics Portal. We recommend working with your supervisor on drafting components of the ethics application, such as recruitment plans and informed consent letters, while waiting for this code. Do NOT begin data collection until both approvals are confirmed: FGS proposal and ORE ethics. Why this matters: If you begin data collection prior to these approvals, you may be liable to lawsuits. Research with human participants is subject to legal regulations in Canada which require research ethics approval and ongoing institutional oversight.

4. Preparing for the Oral Examination

IMPORTANT: Check the [FGS Important Dates page](#) for **graduation eligibility deadlines** and plan your exam and submission timeline accordingly. We recommend scheduling of oral exams **not later than the beginning of your last term**, to allow time for organizing the examination committee, scheduling the exam, completing revisions as required, and preparing/uploading the formatted accepted thesis.

☐	Conduct your research under the supervision of your supervisory committee. Consult the FGS guidelines for the Preparation and Examination of Theses throughout .
☐	Once your supervisory committee agrees the thesis is ready for oral examination, the supervisor must submit a completed and signed Recommendation for Oral Examination form to gradprogram@edu.yorku.ca . This must be received 6 weeks prior to day of exam to allow time for GPE and FGS approval.
☐	The Graduate Program Assistant will initiate the exam request via the Graduate Oral Exam Portal. Supervisory committee members confirm via the portal before submission to FGS for final approval. They should be monitoring their emails for system notifications.
☐	Provide an e-copy of your thesis to each member of your supervisory committee no less than 15 business days before the oral examination. For the internal (arms-length) examiner, either your supervisor or the GPE Office can send the copy. If you would like the GPE Office to send it with a memo from the Graduate Program Director, contact gradprogram@edu.yorku.ca and submit your e-copy at that time.

5. The Oral Examination and Post-Exam Steps

☐	Immediately following the oral exam, your supervisor submits the completed and signed Oral Examination Report to gradprogram@edu.yorku.ca for GPE and FGS approval. FGS will not open your Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) record until this form is received.
	If revisions are required
☐	Work through revisions in consultation with your supervisor. “Specified” revisions must be completed within 3 weeks for editorial revisions and 3 months for minor revisions . A major revision may require more time. (FGS policy effective September 2026).
☐	Once revisions are complete and your supervisor approves them, your supervisor submits the completed and signed Revisions Approved Memorandum to gradprogram@edu.yorku.ca for GPE and FGS approval.

6. Copyright and Permissions

Address copyright early, ideally before or during the writing stage. Permission requests can take significant time and will delay your ETD submission if left too late.

☐	Review your thesis for any third-party copyrighted material (tables, figures, images, maps, graphs, previously published chapters or sections) that is not covered by the fair dealing provisions of the Canadian Copyright Act.
☐	If copyright permissions are required, contact copyright holders as early as possible and retain copies of all requests and approvals.
☐	Submit copies of any required copyright permissions to the Graduate Milestones and Progression Coordinator at FGS before finalizing your ETD submission.

7. Final ETD Submission

IMPORTANT: Your degree completion date is the date your final ETD submission is accepted by FGS, not the date of your oral examination. You remain responsible for active registration and all tuition fees until that date.||

FGS will open your ETD record only after receiving all of: the Oral Examination Report (passed), the Revisions Approved Memorandum (if applicable), and any required copyright permissions. You will receive an email with login instructions once your record is open.

☐	Format your final thesis according to FGS organizational and technical requirements. Key requirements include: letter-size pages (8.5 x 11 in.), minimum 10pt font (12pt recommended for body text), 1.5 or double line spacing, 1-inch minimum margins, no running headers, consistent page number location, and an abstract not exceeding 150 words. Review the FGS Thesis and Dissertation Formats Guide before submitting.
☐	Convert your thesis to a single PDF file (Adobe Acrobat 5.0 or higher compatible). The ETD system accepts only one primary PDF.
☐	Log in to the ETD system using your Passport York ID (link and any forms to sign such as the LAC licence will be provided in the FGS email). Complete all six sections: Begin Submission, Update Details (abstract up to 150 words, subjects, keywords), Upload Files, Review Distribution Licences, Submit for Review, and Check Status.
☐	In the Review Distribution Licences section, upload your signed LAC licence and accept the YorkSpace Non-Exclusive Distribution Licence and the ETD Licence Agreement.
☐	Click 'I accept and submit for review' on the Submit for Review tab. Once submitted, your status moves to 'Under Review' and further changes require contacting the Graduate Milestones and Progression Coordinator.
☐	Monitor your ETD record status. If your submission is returned for formatting corrections, make the changes and resubmit. Once accepted, this is the date of your degree completion.

8. Graduation

☐	Apply to graduate online. Watch for convocation and graduation information in program emails and on the FGS Important Dates page.
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Key Resources and Links

GPE program contact	gradprogram@edu.yorku.ca
GPE Current Students page	https://www.yorku.ca/edu/students/graduate-students/
Graduate Studies Portals (incl. SSC, Proposal, & Oral Exam)	https://www.yorku.ca/gradstudies/students/current-students/graduate-portals/
YU Research Ethics Portal	https://www.yorku.ca/research/yeethicsreview/
FGS Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines	https://www.yorku.ca/gradstudies/students/current-students/thesis-and-dissertation/
FGS Important Dates	https://www.yorku.ca/gradstudies/students/current-students/registration-enrolment/important-dates/
Convocation/Graduation	https://www.yorku.ca/gradstudies/students/current-students/registration-enrolment/apply-to-graduate/