Guidelines for the Qualifying Research Paper (QRP)

What is the QRP?

Essentially, the QRP is an independent research study. Since the majority of Master of Arts programs at OISE require a thesis, doctoral applicants who hold master’s degrees based wholly on coursework must complete an independent research study in lieu of a thesis. The QRP should clearly demonstrate the candidate’s potential for undertaking the advanced research activity of an OISE doctoral program.

The candidate assumes complete responsibility for the study, including identification of a research problem, project design, as well as collection, analysis, interpretation and presentation of data.

It is recommended that the QRP conform to OISE’s Guidelines for Theses and Orals, Section 2.2 (available via www.oise.utoronto.ca/ro/Graduate_Students). The format of any acceptable scholarly journal in the field of education is also acceptable.

Who must satisfy the QRP requirement?

All students from other universities holding a master’s degree which did not include a thesis must satisfy the QRP prior to registration in an OISE doctoral program. Some OISE master’s graduates must also satisfy the requirement. Most graduates of an OISE MEd program must satisfy the QRP requirement in order to establish MA equivalence. In addition, graduates of the MA in Child Study and Education, the MA(T), and the MT must satisfy the requirement because all these programs do not require a master’s thesis.

Can previous work be used to satisfy the QRP requirement?

Provided it satisfies the general criteria for evaluation, a report of research carried out before admission to an OISE doctoral program, or an expansion or re-working of such a study, may be submitted.

Moreover, a candidate may use data already obtained by someone else, but this must be plainly acknowledged. In such a case, care must be exercised to ensure there is adequate room for the demonstration of the candidate’s initiative and originality.

Is a QRP a condition of admission?

Absolutely. And all conditions of admission must be satisfied (with appropriate documentation received in the Registrar’s Office, Graduate Admissions Unit) prior to any registration activity, including course selection, tuition fee payment, and attendance in classes.
When should the QRP be submitted?

As soon as possible. It is essential adequate time be allowed for the development, completion, evaluation, and administrative processing of the QRP. Candidates are strongly encouraged to contact their department and submit the QRP for consideration as soon as possible after receiving an offer of admission. Note that most faculty members are available for consultation only on a limited basis over the summer months. Also, students holding financial awards should be aware that the award might be endangered if the QRP is not satisfied by the deadline to register for the session to which they have been admitted.

How is a QRP evaluated?

A candidate must submit a QRP for evaluation directly to the department to which they have been admitted. A QRP should not be submitted to the Registrar's Office. Generally, a QRP is evaluated by the candidate’s assigned Faculty Advisor plus one other faculty member (a.k.a. second reader). If the QRP is considered acceptable, a recommendation form (with signatures of the two readers plus the Department Chair) is forwarded to the Registrar’s Office, Graduate Admissions Unit. If the QRP is not acceptable, the department will contact the candidate. OISE Departments and/or programs of study may vary on the specific details of the evaluation process, including the amount of direction and/or feedback provided to the candidate and available options should a QRP be deemed unacceptable.