



Master of Arts in Child Study and Education

Includes Ontario Teacher Certification (JK - Grade 6)

Key Info and Application Tips

Thank you for your interest in our program. I hope the details below will be helpful.

You are a good fit for the program if...

- You want to be an exemplary teacher and may be interested in an eventual leadership role
- You want to study effective teaching strategies at the graduate studies level (child centred, evidence-informed)
- Your interest in children is demonstrated by your work and volunteer history
- Your undergraduate grades were fairly strong (mid B or better)
- ❖ *For Research intensive Training (RIT) Field of Study only:* You are interested in working with children (teaching) and research in psychology and education. You have a strong research background and are considering further graduate studies.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE AND KEY VALUES - OVERVIEW

Each lesson starts with the child.

Our focus is child development – we believe that successful teaching requires a deep understanding of children. Children need to feel secure to explore and follow their curiosity; therefore fostering a “community of care” is important too. We use an evidence-based, inquiry approach to encourage children to learn. This [kite video](#) is a couple of minutes long and does a good job of explaining inquiry. Early childhood, special education and wellbeing are also areas we emphasize. (You don’t have to be exclusively interested in little kids to be a good fit for the program.)

We offer a two-year MA degree that qualifies graduates to teach in Ontario elementary schools (Kindergarten to Grade 6). **Our combination of teacher education and graduate degree training is intended to produce teacher-leaders who can apply research and theory in child study to their careers as educators.**

It’s not necessary to have a research or psychology background to be admitted, but research is an important part of our program.

All MA CSE students undertake (well-supported) research activities in their course work with emphasis on teacher leadership and using the inquiry process to continually improve teaching practice. Our students consider the “why” behind everything they do in classrooms.

Laboratory School teacher-researchers supervise practicum placements and internships in their classrooms and participate in lectures, making direct links between research and practice.

Core MA CSE faculty teach most of our courses. They are experts in their field of child study. When you study with us, you learn from world-renowned scholars and researchers who are constantly working to improve the lives of children (and you are on a first-name basis with them). These same professors were once teachers. Other graduate faculty in the Department of Applied Psychology and Human Development teach elective courses; students in the CSE program thus profit from participating in a research-oriented department.

This [kite video](#) is a couple of minutes long and does a good job of explaining the inquiry-based approach to education that is important in our program. Children are invested in learning when they follow their natural curiosity. Experiential learning, or learning through reflection on doing, is valued. We strive to foster a community of care where children feel safe to explore and learn.

Exemplary teachers in public and independent schools also mentor students' placements, ensuring diverse and varied experiences. Placements are in **Toronto** schools (not Peel or York region, etc.).

The program is undertaken on a full-time basis from September in Year 1 to April in Year 2, including 3 half courses to be taken in the spring and/or summer between Year 1 and Year 2 (with some online options). It is not possible to begin the program in January or to complete the program on a part-time basis.

FIELD OF STUDY DETAILS

Our program includes two fields of study. You can apply to one or both. Rank your preferences if you apply to both.

Both options are for those who want to be in a TEACHING program.

1) The **Practice-Based Inquiry and Data-Based Decision Making field of study (PBI)**, is for those who wish to become classroom teachers and to acquire the skills to continuously grow, improve, and lead. Students complete an **intensive research project** (don't worry – you'll be well-supported). PBI was created to match what leaders in education across Ontario report that they want to see in schools: 1) Inquiry 2) Collaboration 3) Continuous Improvement.

2) Students accepted into the **Research-Intensive Training (RIT)** field of study must complete a **major research paper (MRP)** in order to graduate. RIT students are interested in further graduate study and classroom teaching experience to inform their research. A maximum of a few students are admitted each year. **RIT students have a strong research background.** For example, you may be experienced with research methods and statistics and have written a thesis, or have been involved in a research lab. Exactly like PBI students, **those in the RIT field of study will complete approximately 600 hours of practicum placements in classrooms.**

KEY DATES AND EVENTS

The opportunity to apply for a September 2020 start will open in late September 2019. The application deadline will be November 15, 2019.

OISE will be hosting a **Teacher Education Information Day** on **Saturday, October 19th** beginning at 1pm (252 Bloor Street West). **Our program-specific info sessions begin at 2:20 and 3:10pm**, room TBA (same session will repeat). This is an opportunity to become better acquainted with the program and the application process and to ask questions. An in-person experience like this can be quite beneficial.

A recent information session can be viewed online. If you can't make it to the Teacher Ed Day, the [video](#) will give you a sense of what our program has to offer, including the caring faculty and staff, current students and grads who are a part of it!

WHAT IS REQUIRED FOR ADMISSION?

Both experience with children and grades are taken into consideration.

EXPERIENCE WORKING WITH CHILDREN:

Paid work experience managing groups of children is particularly advantageous in terms of admission (especially with elementary school aged children). It is important that your application shows that you have been striving to gain experience working with children and that you have worked in positions of responsibility. Any experience with children is valued and should be included in your application – volunteer work too!

ACADEMICS:

If you have completed an appropriate Bachelor's degree (a 4-year degree) with at least a mid-B average in the final year of study, you will meet the minimum academic admission standard. A mid-B is approximately 73-76%. Higher grades will raise an applicant's ranking.

Typically, the Office of the Registrar looks at your fourth year average if your degree is complete or your third year average if the final year of your program is still in progress when you apply.

If your Bachelor's degree was completed on a part-time basis, the Office of the Registrar will typically look at your average from the five most recent academic, senior-level, full-year courses (or ten half courses). Students enrolled in fewer than four full course equivalents in their last academic year – including Summer Session – are considered part-time.

Your Bachelor's degree need not be in psychology and you don't need to have a research background!

Diverse backgrounds - academic and otherwise - are welcome! Your undergraduate degree can be in any discipline as long as the *academic* course content is significant (around 75% is a good guideline). It is difficult to gauge academic abilities if a degree is comprised mainly of non-academic courses (courses with a big professional training, practical, studio, performance or sports component – Example: Dance).

Note that your Bachelor's degree is the "admitting degree", the only one that will be assessed by the Office of the Registrar. Any additional education may be an asset, but will not be factored into your academic assessment for admission.

Because teachers at the elementary level teach all subjects, there is no need to identify "teachable" subjects.

If you haven't yet enrolled in or completed an undergraduate course in child development, it is recommended. Otherwise, in order to successfully complete our program, you will have to take one as an elective (usually ADP1201H at OISE).

APPLICATION COMPONENTS

TRANSCRIPTS:

Submit both "unofficial" online transcripts and "official" paper transcripts. Applicants are generally not required to submit official transcripts of study undertaken at UT.

Online transcripts are electronic records uploaded via the online admissions application. Printing to PDF directly from your web browser is ideal, but if this is not possible you may copy and paste into Word and print to PDF from there. Where possible, the file should include the university's grading legend plus your name.

LETTERS OF REFERENCE:

Applicants are strongly encouraged to include a professional and an academic reference in their application. Both academic ability and experience with children are important for admission.

Your academic letter of reference should assure the Admissions Committee that you will be able to handle the academic coursework in the program. Your professional reference should instill confidence that you have something positive to offer groups of children/parents/schools and that you will be comfortable in your placements. It is also important that you have a realistic sense of the challenges that accompany work with children.

Your **professional reference** should be written by a supervisor who has directly witnessed you working with children. **Please have your professional referee comment on the following.**

- a) Applicant's rapport and experience with children (K to 6)

- b) Organization, problem-solving, and planning
- c) Professionalism and work ethic
- d) Interpersonal skills
- e) Able to adapt to changing circumstances and response to stress
- f) Ability to take direction and feedback

For your **academic reference**, providing a letter from a professor is the strongest way to represent your academic abilities. Letters from a TA or college level instructor are not as impactful.

Please have your academic referee answer this question in their letter: How would you compare this applicant to other students in your program? For example: Top 5%? Top 10%?

Even if you have been out of school for years, it's possible that a prof will remember you. You can remind them of your capabilities by providing transcripts, a past essay or assignment or a list of academic awards and achievements. If it's just not possible to have a former professor write the letter, perhaps a supervisor/employer could provide the reference.

It is appropriate for the professor or employer to comment on things like general impressions of your aptitude, contributions in class, work with others, writing/language skills, problem solving ability, creativity, organizational skills, research ability, technical expertise, research software savvy, or any other academic asset you would bring to our program.

Your referees' impressions of you can be quite important. It is appropriate to ask a referee if they are comfortable writing a strong letter of reference.

Once you have confirmed your application by moving to the payment stage, the system will automatically email each of your referees an invitation to submit a letter of reference, along with technical instructions.

Please ensure all your referees are expecting the email from the University of Toronto School of Graduate Studies. Occasionally, the invitation ends up in junk mail.

An institutional/organizational email address is necessary. Gmail, Hotmail and Yahoo addresses and similar are not acceptable. If no alternative option is possible (including selecting a different referee), you may ask your referee to provide a paper letter of reference on professional letterhead with a phone number where they can be reached. We may contact them for verification purposes. The email address field in the online application system can be left blank. The letter goes to:

OISE-UT
Office of the Registrar and Student Services, Admissions Unit
252 Bloor Street West, 8th Floor
Toronto, ON M5S 1V6

RESUME:

Include a list of all experiences working with children at the end of your résumé *using the [chart](#) provided on our website* (under Résumé). It's not necessary to repeat the same info in your résumé. Please avoid redundancy.

STATEMENT OF INTENT:

The statement of intent is one of the most important parts of your application. It is your opportunity to describe experiences and assets, describing how they relate to the program and your interests in graduate study in this area. You may also wish to note future goals. Why do you care about children and teaching? If there are any glaring weaknesses in your application, this may be an opportunity to explain briefly.

Ideally, a letter of intent should be two to three pages in length (approximately 1500 words). Concrete examples are often more impactful than vague general statements.

If you are applying to more than one OISE program, we suggest you include one heading for each program in your statement to guide the reader. Apply the length restriction to each section of the document rather than to the document as a whole.

Statement of Intent: PBI-Specific Tips:

Because our program is academically rigorous, it's a good idea to briefly note learning or research interests. Research involvement can be fairly "light" (just what is encountered in coursework) or it can be more in-depth. Students sometimes join professors' labs, for example – even students with no prior research experience. Regardless of your goals, it is important to see depth of thought and academic curiosities that will make for interesting discussions in courses.

Leave the online application system's "proposed area of study" field blank. You can also ignore the part that says, "You may wish to identify OISE faculty members with whom you are interested in working". These parts of the online application system are for students seeking thesis supervision.

Statement of Intent: RIT-Specific Tips

Students interested in the RIT field of study should describe their research interests and nominate 3 supervisors of interest in the statement of intent. You can cite any faculty member in our department - Applied Psychology and Human Development (APHD). Should you be shortlisted for admission into the program, we will be in touch to identify your supervisor. The following links will help you familiarize yourself with faculty research interests.

[CSE Faculty Profiles](#)
[APHD Faculty Profiles](#)

MORE APPLICATION SYSTEM TIPS

PAYMENT AND SAVING:

Complete your application before making payment. After you've paid, the application system will not allow you to make changes.

HOW DO I KNOW IF MY DOCUMENTS HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFULLY UPLOADED/RECEIVED?

Supporting documents show "Received" as soon as the upload is successfully completed. A letter of reference shows "Received" as soon as your referee has successfully submitted. All hard copy documents are date-stamped upon arrival so you won't be penalized because of processing time.

HELPFUL APPLICATION RESOURCES

OUR PROGRAM'S WEBSITE – PREPARE TO APPLY:

<https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/jics/ma-cse-program/future-students/prepare-to-apply/>

OISE WEBSITE, PREPARING TO APPLY (Step 3):

<https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/orss/Admissions/index.html>

FAQ PAGE:

Should you find yourself "stuck" in the application process, you may wish to check out the **Office of the Registrar's Admissions FAQs page**.

If you hold down <Control> and <F> on your keyboard simultaneously, a box will appear. You can type in a search term and, hopefully, find what you are looking for faster.

LINK TO ONLINE APPLICATION SYSTEM

<https://apply.sgs.utoronto.ca/>

Best of luck!