



Master of Arts in Child Study and Education

Includes Ontario Teacher Certification (JK - Grade 6)

Practicum structure may be subject to change due to Covid-19.

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 (child-centred, evidence-informed, inquiry approach) and may be interested in an eventual leadership role in education
- You want to study effective teaching strategies at the graduate studies level
- Your interest in children is demonstrated by your work and/or volunteer history
- You are curious about research pertaining to the welfare and growth of children
- 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. **Applications to the RIT field of study will not be accepted for a fall 2021 start.**

PROGRAM STRUCTURE AND KEY VALUES - OVERVIEW

Each lesson starts with the child.

One key focus in our program is child development – we believe that successful teaching requires a deep understanding of children and their developmental stages.

Each child needs to feel safe and secure in order to follow their natural curiosities and develop a love of learning. Therefore, fostering a “community of care” is important too.

We use an evidence-informed, inquiry approach to help kids reach their full potential. This [kite video](#) is a couple of minutes long and does a good job of explaining what inquiry can look like in classrooms.

Special education, wellbeing and early childhood are also areas we emphasize. (You don’t have to be exclusively interested in little kids to be a good fit for the program.)

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

There is a range of student research involvement. Students can stick to research encountered in coursework or it can be more in-depth. All MA CSE students undertake (well-supported) research activities in their course work with emphasis on teacher collaboration and using the inquiry process to continually improve teaching practice. Students with strong research interests may join professors’ research labs. **Our students consider the “why” behind everything they do in classrooms.**

We believe in diversity, mutual respect, community, empathy and openness. Matters of social consciousness figure prominently in the program. Anti-oppression education, for example, (anti-black racism, Indigenous education, gender inclusivity, gender inequality), are critically investigated across courses and extra opportunities for learning and involvement are available to students in the form of workshops, clubs, guest speakers, etc.

Laboratory School teacher-researchers in the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study (our building) 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.

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 normally includes two fields of study. *Admissions for the Research Intensive Training (RIT) Field of Study is currently suspended.*

1) The **Practice-Based Inquiry and Data-Based Decision-Making** field of study (**PBI**), is for those who wish to become classroom teachers and acquire the skills to continuously grow, improve and lead. 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.

- We believe that successful teaching requires a deep understanding of children
- Informed teaching with consideration to child development theory (cognitive development, etc.)
- Learn to translate educational theory and research into evidence-informed practice
- Learn strategies for teaching based on exemplary practice models and recent research on pedagogy (teaching methods)
- Students complete a well-supported research project
- Placements and observation in the JICS Lab School under supervision of mentor teacher-researcher

Note that our **new EdD program** may be an eventual option for PBI graduates interested in doctoral education.

https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/aphd/Home/Future_Students/Doctoral_Degrees/EdD_in_Child_Study_and_Education/index.html

2) **Applications to the RIT field of study will not be accepted for a fall 2021 start.** See Research Info sheet if research is a primary interest for you. There are many research opportunities within PBI.

KEY DATES AND EVENTS

The opportunity to apply for a September 2021 start will open on September 25, 2020. The application deadline will be November 16, 2020 at 5pm.

OISE will be hosting an online Open House on Saturday, October 17th. You can register for the **Child Study & Education MA Program info session** [here](#). This is an opportunity to become better acquainted with the program and the application process and to ask questions.

A recent information session can be viewed online. If you can't make it to the Open House, 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! Watch for a 2020 Open House video as well.

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!

ACADEMIC ABILITY:

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.

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:

OISE's requirement for official transcripts at the time of application has been suspended for this year. It's not necessary to submit official transcripts unless you receive an offer of admission.

Unofficial transcripts are still a requirement. Please ensure that your uploaded transcripts are legible, accurate and complete (not missing pages). Upload one electronic or scanned transcript from each and every post-secondary institution you have attended (including OISE and the University of Toronto). Instructions are provided within the online application system.

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 – ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL:

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 for a referee to upload their letter onto the online application system. Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo addresses (etc.) are not acceptable. If there is absolutely no alternative referee option, leave the referee email address field blank. After you have submitted your application, email the Office of the Registrar at admissions.oise@utoronto.ca asking to have your referee's email address manually entered. Because the Office of the Registrar has to authenticate information, processing of your application may be delayed. For all referees, enter a telephone number where they can be reliably reached.

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. (You can apply to up to 3 OISE programs for the same application fee. Be sure to rank in order of priority.)

Statement of Intent: PBI-Specific Tips:

Because our program is academically rigorous, it's a good idea to briefly note learning or research interests. 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.

MORE APPLICATION SYSTEM TIPS

PAYMENT AND SAVING YOUR APPLICATION:

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

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 search field will appear. You can type in a key word and find what you are looking for faster.

LINK TO ONLINE APPLICATION SYSTEM

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

Best of luck!