

# Thesis Protocol

This document is prepared for students as they work their way through the thesis process.

***The completion of a thesis requires substantive dedication and commitment.***

Note: for students, this is equivalent to 9 credit hours of course work. There is a maximum 6-year timeline for completion of all M.Ed. program requirements.

Once 15 credit hours (including the 2 core courses: 07.752 and 07.714) have been successfully completed, the student, in consultation with the department chair, may submit an application to move forward into the thesis route for the Master of Education program, following the procedures outlined in the M.Ed. Thesis Protocol.

*Note: the respective forms noted below are available c/o our website:*

[Thesis and Practicum Guidelines | Master of Education Program \(brandonu.ca\)](#)

## **1. M.Ed. Thesis Application**

1.1 The student applies to pursue the thesis route, to the Education Graduate Studies Office using the [M.Ed. Thesis Request Form](#). This includes a brief description of a potential research topic. The completed form is then forwarded by the Graduate Studies Office to the student's department chair. The department meets and determines if the student has demonstrated the academic skills to complete a thesis.

## **2. Thesis Supervisor Selection**

2.1 The department chair and the student meet to discuss the thesis process and to identify possible thesis supervisors. Thesis supervisors should normally be members of the student's department. If no advisor is available within the department, the chair and the student will explore possible thesis supervisors beyond the department. Students are encouraged to approach these possible thesis supervisors and share their preference(s) with the department chair.

2.2 Final approval of the thesis supervisor is the responsibility of the student's department. The department chair completes the M.Ed. Thesis Request Form and returns it to the Education Graduate Studies Office. Full membership within the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) is a requirement for all M.Ed. thesis supervisors.

### **3. Thesis Committee Selection**

3.1 The Committee, with at least one member from the student's home department, is comprised of a minimum of three, to a maximum of four, members. In forming a thesis committee, the student and their thesis supervisor will discuss potential committee members, based on their expected contributions to the topic and the anticipated methodology. The thesis supervisor will discuss the topic with a number of potential committee members. In consultation with the student, committee members are determined. This enables the committee selection and proposal development to take place simultaneously.

3.2 With the approval of the student's home department, a faculty member from another university or a qualified professional with relevant credentials and expertise may be appointed to a thesis committee pending normal membership application procedures and approval of membership to the Faculty of Graduate Studies. In the event that the department wishes to approve a supervisor from outside of Brandon University, an instructor of record from within the department may be recommended.

3.3 After departmental approval of the committee, the department chair notifies the Graduate Studies Office. The M. Ed Thesis Request form will then be updated to include the committee members.

3.4 Any changes to the membership composition, including a change of supervisor (e.g. any of type of leave), shall be approved by the student's home department and then forwarded to the Graduate Studies office as information.

### **4. Thesis Registration**

4.1 The full thesis committee meets with the student to discuss the potential direction for the thesis, the preferred process for feedback and associated timeline. The thesis supervisor notifies the student and the Graduate Studies Office to register for the thesis based upon the agreed-upon start date. In the event that 12 months passes since the student's last registration, to prevent the

student being charged with a continuation fee and losing access to BU services (e.g., BU Library), registration will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

## **5. Thesis Proposal**

5.1 Following the committee process as identified in 4.1 ([Thesis Registration Form](#)), the student drafts the thesis proposal, including a comprehensive review of relevant literature and research methodology.

5.2 Once the thesis supervisor determines the readiness of thesis proposal, the thesis supervisor forwards to the thesis committee, to review and to set a date for proposal defence. The proposal defence may be scheduled prior to fulfilling all course requirements of the Master's program with the consent of the thesis committee.

5.3 During the proposal defence, the student presents the proposed thesis and responds to questions. The committee then determines whether the proposal is (a) approved without revisions, (b) approved with revisions, or (c) rejected. Any required revisions must be approved by the committee before the student can pursue ethics approval. The decision is recorded on the [Thesis Proposal Recommendation Form](#).

## **6. BUREC Approval**

6.1 When the proposal is successfully defended, and should ethics be required, the student develops and submits an application to BUREC for ethics approval, with the thesis supervisor's support. The supervisor must read and approve the Ethics application. Committee members may choose to review the ethics submission, but are not required to be involved.

6.2 Once ethics approval is received, recruitment and data collection may begin. For studies extending beyond one year, the student must submit an annual progress report to BUREC. The annual progress report must be read and approved by the thesis supervisor.

## **7. Ongoing Thesis Progress Communication**

7.1 On-going thesis progress communication with the student and with committee members is the responsibility of the thesis supervisor. The thesis supervisor should ensure that the student and committee members have had reasonable opportunities to meet, and engage in constructive conversation regarding the thesis.

7.2 Committee members should direct their comments to the student through the thesis supervisor.

7.3 Until the thesis is completed, the committee and the student must meet annually and submit an [Annual Progress Report Form](#) (FGS) to the Education Graduate Studies Office.

## **8. Thesis Defence Process**

8.1 The thesis supervisor circulates the draft of the thesis to committee members for feedback.

8.2 Any committee members' substantive comments should be directed through the supervisor. The thesis supervisor will consult with the student on committee members' comments.

8.3 Thesis committee work can be time sensitive and work intensive at different stages of the thesis process, particularly when the student is moving toward the thesis defence stage. With this in mind, the thesis supervisor will endeavor to provide advance notice and an appropriate turnaround time for committee members to provide thesis feedback and committee members will endeavor to prioritize thesis review work and provide feedback to the thesis supervisor in a timely manner.

8.4 Once all courses are complete and committee members are satisfied that the thesis is ready to go for defence, the thesis supervisor schedules a defence date in consultation with the student

and committee members. The thesis supervisor informs the Education Graduate Studies Office of the proposed defence date.

8.5 A minimum of 2 weeks prior to the final thesis defence, the student completes the [Thesis Defence Announcement Form](#) and submits it to their thesis supervisor for review. The thesis supervisor sends the completed announcement form to the Education Graduate Studies Office for a scheduled campus-wide email announcement.

8.6 The Chair of the Graduate Studies Program chairs the thesis defence. During the thesis defence, the student makes a presentation. The presentation is followed by questions from the thesis committee. If time permits, guests may be invited to ask questions.

8.7 Once the questioning is complete, the students and guests are excused and in closed-session the committee deliberates, and makes one of the following recommendations: (a) accept without revisions, (b) accept with minor revisions, (c) accept with major revisions, or (d) reject. The Chair invites the student back, and the thesis supervisor shares the committee's decision. It is the thesis supervisor's responsibility to work with the student to make any required revisions.

## **9. Post Thesis Defence Process**

9.1 The supervisor forwards the following documents to the Education Graduate Studies Office prior to the entry of the final grade online: (a) [Thesis Committee Approval Form](#), (b) The final pdf version of the completed thesis, which must include the Thesis Committee Approval Form inserted after the title page, and (c) The signed [e-Thesis Permission Form](#).

9.2 Upon receipt of the final pdf version of the completed thesis, the Education Graduate Studies Office forwards it and the student's completed e-Thesis Permission Form to the BU Library for e-storage. It is the student's responsibility to submit their completed thesis directly online to <https://brandonu.libwizard.com/f/IRBUThesisSubmission>

9.3 Students with BUREC approval are responsible for submitting their BUREC Final Report Form (see BUREC guidelines at: <http://www.brandonu.ca/research/committees/burec/application-forms>).

## **10. Application for Convocation**

10.1 It is the student's responsibility to apply for the next available convocation via the: [Student Information Portal](#)