

School of Engineering Science  
Simon Fraser University  
**Graduate Student Funding Policy**

**Approved on August 27, 2013**

The School of Engineering Science is committed to providing financial supports to all PhD and MASc students. The following funding policy will be applied to new students admitted from spring 2014. The school will also strive to apply the GF and TA support level as specified below to existing PhD and MASc students. There is no change to the RA support of existing PhD and MASc students as specified in their admission letters.

The funding package of the school for PhD and MASc students may consist of Research Assistantships (RA) (including MITACS Accelerate Internships), Teaching Assistantships (TA), Graduate Fellowships (GF) (including Faculty of Applied Science GF (FAS-GF), and President's PhD Scholarship (PS)), or any combination of the above. The FAS-GF is treated as 0.5 GF from the school and the same amount of RA from the supervisor

(Note: The school also offers a professional MEng program. MEng students are not eligible for financial support from the university, except for the TAs. However, MEng students will have lower TA priority than PhD and MASc students from the school).

**1.** For each new PhD student, at the time of admission, the school will commit an average minimum funding of **\$14,000 per year for four years**, subject to satisfactory performance. The funding includes a minimum RA of **\$8,000/year** from the senior supervisor, and TA and GF support of **\$24,000 over 4 years** from the school, provided that the student meets the school's GF and TA criteria and has satisfactory TA performance. A typical funding from the school over four years includes 2 GFs (currently \$6250 each) and 9 TA units (currently \$1312 per unit for PhD). If the RA commitment from the supervisor is less than 4 years, the total amount should be at least **\$32,000**.

For each new MASc student, at the time of admission, the school will commit an average minimum funding of **\$10,000 per year for two years**, subject to satisfactory performance. The funding includes a minimum RA of **\$6,000/year** from the senior supervisor, and TA and GF support of **\$8,000 over two years** from the school, provided that the student meets the school's GF and TA criteria and has satisfactory TA performance. A typical funding from the school over two years includes 0.5 GFs and 4.5 TA units (currently \$1107 per unit for MASc), or one GF and 2 TA units.

In order to receive the guaranteed GF and TA support, PhD and MASc students should apply to GF and TA whenever they are eligible.

If a student meets the GF criteria but could not get it due to limited GF resource, or if a student could not meet the GF criteria but maintains a minimum GPA of 3.0, the student is still eligible to receive the aforementioned guaranteed support from the school, but the student will be supported by TA, provided that the student has satisfactory TA performance. If the student receives an unsatisfactory TA evaluation from the students in the class or the instructor, the guaranteed TA and GF support from the school will be reduced by \$3,000. In either case, the senior supervisor will still provide at least the minimum amount of RA as specified above, subject to satisfactory research progress.

If a PhD student receives more than \$6,000 TA or GF from the school in an academic year, or if a MASc student receives more than \$4,000 TA or GF from the school in an academic year, the senior supervisor is still required to provide the minimum annual RA as specified above.

The faculty members are encouraged to provide higher guaranteed total funding to the student. However, the guaranteed TA and GF support from the school will remain the same.

**2.** If a faculty member loses all research funding, the faculty member should make all efforts to graduate existing students. A faculty member that does not have any funding is eligible to admit one domestic MASc student without any RA commitment, if this student is scheduled to start no earlier than the graduating or termination semester of the faculty member's current students. This new student is eligible to receive the guaranteed TA and GF supports from the school, subject to the conditions listed in Article 1 above. At any time, if this faculty member receives new funding (including industrial internship and the SFU bridging grant), the faculty member should make all efforts to support the existing unfunded students, after meeting the expenses needed to continue the faculty member's research.

**3.** If a graduate student holds a major domestic or international scholarship, such as NSERC scholarship or SFU Major Entrance Scholarship with an annual value of \$14,000 or above, the guaranteed support from the senior supervisor and the school may be reduced for the duration of the scholarship. The student might be eligible for other university scholarships such as the Provost Prize of Distinction and the Provost International Fellowship (\$5,000 each). The supervisor is still encouraged to top-up the scholarship with RA support. This student will have lower priority for funds administered by the school such as TA and GF. Once the major scholarship expires, the student will have normal priority.

4. Applicants with full-time job in Vancouver area can be admitted to MASc without any RA support from the senior supervisor. The student should provide a support letter from his/her employer (the company) satisfying a set of school's requirements (see the appendix for details). These students have lower priority for university-based financial support compared to other full-time PhD, MASc and MEng students in the school. At any time, each faculty member is allowed to have **only one** student admitted in this category. These students are not counted as the unfunded students as described in Article 2 above.

5. Other self-funded graduate students without minimum funding commitment from the supervisor, or major scholarships, or full-time jobs in Vancouver area are **NOT** allowed to be admitted.

6. If a graduate student has to change supervisor, the student can stay in the program for two terms while searching for supervisor, during which the GPC chair will serve as the interim supervisor. The student is still eligible for the guaranteed GF and TA supports, subject to the conditions listed in Article 1 above. If the student could not find a supervisor after two terms, the student should withdraw from the school. If the student can find a new supervisor, the new supervisor needs not provide any guaranteed RA support, according to DGS policy. If the new supervisor does not provide any RA, the student is not counted as the unfunded student as described in Article 2 above.

## Appendix

### **Financial Support Agreement for MASc Applicants with Full-Time Jobs**

This is to confirm that the undersigned MASc applicant has a full-time permanent job in Vancouver area and has formally obtained the permission from his/her employer to pursue the MASc degree at the School of Engineering Science, Simon Fraser University.

The applicant understands that a MASc degree requires much more efforts than a MEng degree, and the applicant will have lower priority for financial support than other full-time PhD, MASc, and MEng students in the school. We agree that in the future if the applicant becomes a full-time student, the supervisor should provide the necessary RA support to the applicant as mandated by the school's funding policy for regular MASc students. If the senior supervisor is not able to arrange the required RA, the student should withdraw from the program.

Enclosed please find a formal signed letter from the applicant's employer that includes the following information about the applicant:

1. Job Title.
2. Status of the job (must be permanent full-time job that not on probation).
3. Starting date of the job (should be at least six months before the date that the applicant starts his/her MASc program).
4. The applicant's salary (a minimum of \$35,000/year is required).
5. Company information (date of incorporation, number of employees, number of R&D staff, revenue, annual R&D expenditures)
6. A statement from the employer that the applicant's proposed research is directly relevant to his/her job at the company, that the applicant is granted necessary timeoff to take courses according to SFU requirement and conduct research at SFU, and that this timeoff does not incur a penalty to the applicant's income or other equivalent worktime expectations.

We understand that this application is still subject to the approval of the Graduate Program Committee and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Applicant Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Senior Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_