

Graduate Research Hazards Assessment

University personnel in positions of supervision/responsibility of graduate students have ethical and legal responsibilities for the students' safety in regard to their approved research activities. The purpose of this form is (1) to bring to the attention any possible hazards that a graduate student may be exposed in carrying out their proposed research activities, (2) to provide an initial risk assessment, and (3) propose an initial risk management strategy. This form should be seen as the initiation of the management of the risk associated with hazards in graduate research, not the complete process. As hazards and risks associated with research activities change, it is students' responsibility to bring these to the attention of their Supervisors.

This form should be completed as soon as possible as the thesis research is being developed/developed and updated/resubmitted if the hazards/risks change.

While graduate students are individuals of the age of majority with the right of self-determination, without appropriate assessment and oversight of the graduate students' abilities to manage the risks associated with doing research in hazardous settings, the Supervisors and the University may be legally culpable in the case of death or bodily harm to the graduate students if they are found to have been negligent. With this in mind, **Supervisors reserve the right to refuse approval of thesis research proposals when the risks to the graduate students are assessed to be greater than can be reasonably managed. Similarly, the University reserves the right to override the approval of thesis research and/or to recall graduate students from the field when the risks (anticipated or newly arising) to the graduate students are assessed to be greater than can be reasonably managed.**

Procedures:

- The student prepares the thesis research proposal and completes Sections 1 to 8 of the Graduate Research Hazards Assessment form, as applicable.
- When the research proposal is discussed with the Supervisor/Supervisory Committee, the information provided by the student in Graduate Research Hazards Assessment form should also be considered.
- If the Supervisor/Supervisory Committee cannot sign the certification as detailed in Section 9, the Program Coordinator should be notified and normally the student will revise their proposal and/or the information within the Graduate Research Hazards Assessment according to the recommendations of the Supervisor/Supervisory Committee.
- Only once the Supervisor/Supervisory Committee is satisfied that any risks associated with the thesis research are manageable, should they sign the certification in Section 9.
- The Graduate Program Coordinator will make their comments and forward the Form to the Associated Dean of the FGSR.
- The graduate student can not move forward on their research until they have notification of the approval of the Graduate Research Hazards Assessment from the Associate Dean of FGSR.
- If the hazards or risks associated with the proposed research changes, the student must notify the Supervisor/Supervisory Committee as soon as possible. The Supervisor/Supervisory Committee will notify the Program Coordinator and the Associate Dean of the FGSR as applicable/needed.

***Vetting of your GRHA by FGSR normally takes a minimum of 10 working days.**



Graduate Research Hazards Assessment

Student: Fill out sections 1 to 8

1. Student Identification

Student's Name _____ Student Number A _____

Email _____ Phone Number _____

Mailing Address _____

Program _____

Supervisor's Name _____

Thesis Research Title _____

Proposed dates that research is to be conducted _____

- 2. This application is:** An original notification
 An update on an earlier notification

3. Briefly describe your thesis research in non-technical terms

4. Identify the hazard(s)

My thesis research will not involve any hazards (go to Section 8)

My thesis research will involve hazards (continue below)

My research will be carried out: On campus Off campus On and off campus

Please check the box or boxes that identify the hazard and provide details:

International travel: list proposed countries _____

Field work in isolated settings _____

Field work in hazardous environments
(e.g., unpopulated sites; marine environments;
industrial settings; dangerous urban settings) _____

Use of hazardous equipment
(e.g., tractors; chain saws) _____

Interactions with dangerous individuals _____

Hazardous substances
(Please specify: biohazards? dangerous
chemicals? Substances under pressure? Radio-
active materials? Other?) _____

Other (please specify) _____

5. Risk Assessment

Clearly list each risk and your assessment of the level of danger associated with each.

Examples:

1) I will be using perchloric acid in my experiments. Perchloric acid is extremely corrosive, and when mixed with organic substances, can be explosive. Crystalline perchloric acid is extremely dangerous and can explode at elevated temperatures...

2) I propose to do my research in Egypt in the summer of 2022. Although armed hostilities have not taken place there for some time, the volatile situation in the middle-east region means one should be aware of all possibilities. There has also been several isolated bomb attacks of tourism sites in the recent past. The most dangerous settings are in the border regions with Gaza and in the tourism region along the Red Sea. . .

6. Proposed Risk Management Strategy

Explain your previous experience handling such risk or relevant training.

Examples:

(1) I am familiar with normal laboratory practices from working in a laboratory as a summer lab assistant. However, I have never handled perchloric acid before. I will receive WHMIS training in my Department and specific training on the safe handling and use of perchloric acid by my Supervisor. MSDS data sheets on perchloric acid exist in the lab. Perchloric acid will only be used within fumehoods specially designed to handle such corrosive/explosive substance, located in Room X and Y in the Science Building. We have a practice in our lab that if anyone is using perchloric acid, there must be at least one other person present on the floor at all times. . .

(2) I have travelled extensively in western Europe and throughout North America as a tourist. However, I have never travelled in the Middle East or carried out research abroad. As per procedures at Saint Mary's, I will attend a pre-departure meeting at the Global Learning and Intercultural Support office on the risk associated with traveling in the Middle East and Egypt in particular. My research will be taking place in Cairo and I will not be traveling near the border with Gaza or in tourism regions along the Red Sea. Upon arrival in Egypt, I will register with the Canadian Embassy. . .

7. If you are travelling internationally, please affirm the following:

- I confirm that I have adequate travel insurance. General information on insurance is found at: <http://travel.gc.ca/travelling/documents/travel-insurance>.
- I confirm that I have adequate health insurance
- I will identify the nearest consular office and carry their information with me while I travel
- I have consulted a physician about appropriate vaccinations
- I have registered with the International Travel Office’s Travel Registry and understand that I must attend a pre-departure briefing at the Global Learning and Intercultural Support office: (contact global@smu.ca)
- In case of emergencies, I will consult the following Foreign Affairs websites:
<http://travel.gc.ca/assistance> (Assistance Abroad)
<http://travel.gc.ca/assistance/emergency-info> (Emergency info)
<https://travel.gc.ca/assistance/emergency-info/consular> (Consular Services)

8. Sign the following declaration

I certify that I have completed this Graduate Research Hazards Assessment form to the best of my ability and I have not knowingly withheld any information on my understanding of the hazards and risks associated with my proposed research.

I recognize that if the risk associated with my proposed research is assessed to be unmanageable by my thesis Supervisor(s) or at higher levels in the University, I will be required to modify the proposed research in a manner that will satisfy the concerns of my Supervisor(s)/the University.

If the hazards or risks associated with my proposed research changes, I will notify my Supervisor/Supervisory Committee as soon as possible. The Supervisor/Supervisory Committee will notify the Program Coordinator and the Dean of the FGSR as applicable/needed.

Signature _____ Date _____

9. Supervisory Committee

I/We have reviewed the student’s research proposal and have discussed with the student the information provided in this form. I/We have found that the hazards are well identified, that the risks are well assessed, and that the risk management strategy will enable the risks to be reasonably well managed.

If the hazards or risks associated with this proposed research changes, I/We will notify the Program Coordinator and the Dean of the FGSR.

Note:
While graduate students are individuals of the age of majority with the right of self-determination, without appropriate assessment and oversight of the graduate students’ abilities to manage the risks associated with doing research in hazardous settings, the Supervisors and the University may be in legally culpable in the case of death or bodily harm to the graduate students and they are found to have

been negligent. With this in mind, supervisors reserve the right to refuse approval of thesis research proposals when the risks to the graduate students are assessed to be greater than can be reasonably managed. Similarly, the University reserves the right to override the approval of thesis research and/or to recall graduate students from the field when the risks (anticipated or newly arising) to the graduate students are assessed to be greater than can be reasonably managed.

Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____
Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____
Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____
Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

10. Graduate Program Co-ordinator

Complete the checklist

- Student has been registered for all semesters since admission and is currently registered
- Student's CGPA is at least 3.00
- Student has achieved a passing grade in all courses

Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Return form to:
Saint Mary's University
Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
AssociateDean.FGSR@smu.ca

FGSR USE ONLY

Approved: Yes No

Signature FGSR Dean or Designate:

Date: _____