

November 9, 2021

SGS Non-Standard Admissions Process

The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) provides minimum graduate admissions requirements for graduate units at the University of Toronto. While the minimum admission requirements are clearly defined in SGS admissions materials, there is a process whereby individuals who have suitable experience and background preparation to be a successful graduate student, but do not meet the minimum requirements, may be considered for admission to graduate programs. As highlighted on our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at SGS webpage: “At the School of Graduate Studies, we strive to be an equitable and inclusive community, rich with diversity, protecting the human rights of all persons, and based upon understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and worth of every person” (<https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/equity/>); and hence welcome applications that reflect the diversity of our society.

The non-standard admissions process is an internal review process that has facilitated the admission of applicants whose academic credentials do not meet the minimum SGS admission requirements. Students who have been admitted through this process have gone on to have successful graduate careers. The process is simple, and it is initiated by the graduate unit. The process is as follows:

When the graduate unit wishes to offer admission to an applicant who does not meet the minimum SGS admission requirements, the graduate unit must present a non-standard admission case to SGS. Along with the usual application documents that are required for an applicant to be considered for admission (i.e., applicant’s letter of intent, transcripts, letters of reference, and other supporting documents such as ELP test scores if applicable), the graduate coordinator or chair of the graduate unit writes a supporting letter with a rationale that explains why the graduate unit would like to offer admission to the applicant who does not meet the minimum admission requirements. The non-standard admission case, which includes these documents, is then prepared by the Manager, Front-Line Student Academic Services for review by the SGS Vice Dean, Students, and the Non-Standard Admissions & Programs committee (NSA&P). While all non-standard admission cases are addressed to the NSA&P committee, the vast majority of non-standard admission cases are approved by the Vice-Dean, Students, and in some cases the Manager, Front-Line Student Academic Services, on behalf of the NSA&P committee.

If you have questions or you would like to learn more about the non-standard admissions process, please contact:

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During the 2018-2019 academic year, 99% of non-standard admission cases were approved. There were a total of 12,758 admission offers made, and of those 442 (4%) were non-standard admission cases. SGS follows up on the progress of non-standard admits annually. Of 476 non-standard applicants who were admitted during 2017-2018, 343 (72%) registered, 235 (49%) maintained an A average, 91 (19%) maintained a B average and 13 (3%) students failed.