

Guidelines for the Transfer Exam (Fast-tracking from the Master's to PhD)

Procedure:

1. To initiate the fast-tracking process, a letter of intent should be sent to the Director of the Graduate Program by the research supervisor as soon as the decision has been made. The letter should explain the reason for fast-tracking and pledge support and resources needed to successfully complete the proposed research.
2. Upon approval by the Director, the student will be required to pass the Transfer exam that consists of two parts - oral and written - before a panel consisting of the research supervisor, the RAC and 1-2 additional members selected from the faculty by the supervisor, in consultation with the RAC chairperson.
3. Prior to the oral exam, the student will be required to submit a 15-20 page written progress report (double-spaced, font size 12, standard margins) containing:
 - i. background information
 - ii. the rationale and objectives of the original Master's and the proposed PhD projects
 - iii. methodology and a description of progress already achieved
 - iv. the research plan for future work
4. The exam will follow the format of a RAC meeting and will include a 20-30 min. presentation to be followed by a question period.
5. The exam is evaluated as Pass/Fail, as per the [Fast Track Evaluation form](#). Evaluation criteria include:
 - a. knowledge and understanding of the project
 - b. knowledge of the relevant scientific literature
 - c. ability to propose an experimental plan and to ask new research questions
 - d. knowledge of research methodologies and the ability to interpret results
 - e. critical thinking skills
 - f. written and oral communication skills
6. Following the examination, the student must submit the completed and signed  [Fast Track Evaluation form](#) to the Graduate Program Coordinator.
7. The panel will then be asked to submit a written recommendation to the Director of the Graduate Program regarding the suitability of the student and the research project for a PhD program.

RAC chair checklist

Prior to the transfer exam:

- Approval of the application by the Director of the graduate program
- Good academic standing with CGPA of at least 3.5
- Written report sent to the committee one week before

At the exam:

- Evaluate progress made so far
- Evaluate if the project can be converted to a PhD project
- Evaluate if the student has enough knowledge to carry out a PhD
- Assess the student's critical thinking and creativity
- Make sure the supervisor has funding to carry out the project
- Fill out Fast Track Evaluation form