

**M. A. (Health)
Faculty of Graduate Studies
York University**

**M.A. Major Research Paper
Guidelines**

To fulfill the M.A. in Health Policy & Equity degree requirements, students are required to complete a Major Research Paper. All forms are available in the Health MA forms section of the program website: [guidelines](#).

At this [site](#), you can see the titles of previously completed MA MRP's.

Pre-requisite: Students must have completed all core courses, field-specific and electives (for a total of 18 credits), before conducting research for, and writing the MRP.

Register as active in each term that you will complete the Major Research Paper. A course code will not appear on your transcript. All MA students are responsible to register before the FGS registration deadlines each term, until the MRP is completed.

Overview and Nature of the MRP Requirement

The Major Research Paper Proposal (MRP proposal) and Major Research Paper (MRP):

- provide the opportunity to engage in research through the development and writing up of a specific research project;
- offer an experience of working independently on a research project under faculty supervision;
- evaluate students' work against the educational objectives of breadth, depth, synthesis and originality.

Detailed instructions on the following steps are provided:

STEP 1: Developing a 1-2 page overview of research and forming a Committee

STEP 2: Writing the MRP Proposal

STEP 3: Submitting a Human Participants Research Protocol and getting approval of MRP Proposal

STEP 4: Writing and Revising the MRP

STEP 5: Holding Final Discussion for the MRP

STEP 6: Submitting a Final Electronic Copy to the Health Graduate Program Office & if in agreement the YorkSpace non-exclusive distribution form.

STEP 1: 1-2 page research overview and Committee formation

Develop a 1-2 page overview of the research

The student begins with drafting and revising a 1-2 page, double-spaced document that includes their initial ideas and plans for the research. This document serves as a formal introduction to a potential Supervisor and Advisor. It also explains how the research involves a critical perspective, and why the students have approached prospective committee members. Once the student has a Supervisor, the student and that faculty member work together to find an Advisor. This step when completed formally establishes the Committee.

Supervisory Structure

The Supervisory Committee will in most cases include 2 members: a Supervisor and an Advisor. Each student is responsible for identifying and approaching potential committee members (Supervisor and Advisor) who have expertise in the student's chosen research topic and/or methodology. By the end of February, all students should have identified and entered an agreement with a Supervisor and Advisor.

Roles

A student will work with their Supervisor and Advisor throughout the preparation of the MRP Proposal and the MRP. Both the Supervisor and the Advisor guide the MRP. The Advisor and the Supervisor work with the student to ensure that the MRP meets the standards of the program and the interdisciplinary requirement of the MRP.

Committee Member Eligibility

The Supervisor will in most cases be a faculty or an adjunct faculty member in the Critical Disability Studies graduate program and must be appointed to the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS). A complete Faculty Member listing is posted on the [Health graduate program website](#) (click on "Faculty").

The Advisor can be a faculty member of any graduate programs at York University including the Critical Disability Studies graduate program; however, they must be a faculty member appointed to the FGS and be deemed appropriate by the Graduate Program Director. A complete FGS Faculty Member listing is posted on [the FGS website](#) (click on "Faculty Members" and choose the URL called "List of faculty members appointed to the Faculty of Graduate Studies")

These are some of the factors you may want to consider in choosing the Supervisory Committee: Supervisory committee members must be from different academic disciplines. This is the case even though the Supervisor and Advisor are appointed to the Health graduate program. Take into consideration in choosing:

- Faculty member's area of interest, expertise and their familiarity with the methodology or conceptual framework that will be applied to the work the students plans to undertake;
- Interpersonal and work-style compatibility;
- Availability of faculty members during the research, writing and time of MRP final discussion;
- Only 1 adjunct faculty member may be on each committee.

Working with the Committee

Students are encouraged to arrange a joint meeting with their Supervisor and Advisor during the preliminary stage of developing their research, The expectation is that students will submit a minimum of 2 drafts to their supervisory committee – an interim draft and a final draft, before submitting the final MRP

Completion of this stage involves the student submitting the following to the Health Graduate

Program Office for the approval of the Graduate Program Director:

- signed **MA MRP Notification of Supervisor and Advisor Form** (refer to [p.14](#)) and
- the 1-2 page research overview

STEP 2: MRP Proposal

The MRP-P is an outline of the research question(s) and a description of the process for completion of the MRP. It is an opportunity for the student to provide:

- a theoretical orientation underlying the research;
- the conceptual questions and concerns of the project;
- the scope, scholarly context, and purpose of the MRP;
- the methodology and methods
- contribution of the MRP to the CDS field of study

Writing the proposal prepares students for the writing and research of the MRP. Throughout the writing and revising of the MRP proposal the student works to create a suitable structure for their thinking, synthesizes key literature, and engages in academic work that conforms to academic citation and footnote practices. The MRP proposal serves as a guide for the writing of the MRP, and as a working document that may be revised by the student, Supervisor and Advisor.

The MRP proposal uses the same Title Page as the MRP itself. (see p. 15 for a guide).

Length & Format: The length of the MRP Proposal will vary depending upon the nature of the MRP topic and is an average from 4-6 pages to a maximum length of 14 pages or 3500 words double-spaced. The format is:

- Times New Roman
- Font size 12
- Double-line spacing
- Top and left margins – 1.5”
- Bottom and right margins – 1”

Larger fonts may be used for people with visual impairments, in which case the length of their MRP proposal and MRP will vary accordingly; however, the length will be the proportionate to that required for other students.

Writing the MRP proposal:

1. Statement of the problem

The statement of the problem should address, in narrative form, at least the following questions:

- What is the research question or questions?
- What is the importance of the research?
- What are some of the key concepts?
- What theoretical/conceptual perspectives guide the research and analysis?

2. Statement of key question(s) of the MRP and discussion of relevant literature:

Typically, students consider the following:

- Ways of knowing: the theoretical/conceptual perspective informing the research;
- The central and secondary questions that underlie the research
- The way in which these questions are important to the research?
- The purpose of the research?

Key texts are synthesized throughout the proposal.

3. Research methodology

Describe the methodology and the ways in which data will be collected (the methods). Consider whether or not archival research is needed; what primary and secondary literatures will be drawn upon;

The following should be considered:

- What steps are necessary to complete the research?
- What resources are necessary to complete the research? Describe the availability of relevant sources, literature, technology.

4. Concluding statement

Comment on the suitability of the project to the interdisciplinary nature of critical disability studies. Think about what the paper's expected contribution might be.

Include an outline of how the paper will be organised and provide a realistic plan of completion composed in conversation with the Committee.

References and Appendices

References/bibliographies must be either in Vancouver, Harvard, APA or Chicago style. For on-line tutorials and examples, refer to the [York Libraries' website](#) (click on the "Research & Learn" tab).

Appendices may include data in the form of photographs, questionnaires, lists, and so forth.

Working with the Committee

Students are encouraged to arrange a joint meeting with their Supervisor and Advisor during the preliminary stage of the development of their research and whenever questions arise; they are also encouraged to stay in regular contact.

The expectation is that students will submit a minimum of 2 drafts to their supervisory committee – an interim draft and a final draft, before submitting the final MRP.

If you use a copyeditor it should be acknowledged. The student should retain a copy of the copyedited version of the MRP proposal and/or MRP as well as any correspondence with the copyeditor until the MRP is approved.

Should there be a change to either the Supervisor or Advisor, and/or to the research outlined after the Form has been approved by the Graduate Program Director, students must submit the [Change of Supervisory Committee/Research Form](#) (refer to [p. 16](#)), to the Health Graduate Program Office as soon as a change occurs.

STEP 3: Human Participants Research Protocol and Approval of MRP Proposal

Students who conduct a research study must complete the [Tri-Council Policy Statement \(TCPS2\) tutorial](#), and obtain research ethics clearance for their MRP proposal prior to the conduct of research. If the research is not given ethics clearance prior to its start, the research will be deemed unacceptable for submission to the program as partial fulfilment of degree requirements.

Complete the [TCPS 2 Tutorial](#). Fill out [Appendix A](#) (TD2 form signed by your supervisor and you) and submit it along with your approved MRP proposal, TCPS 2 certificate, and Completion Plan to the Health Graduate Program Office.

Depending on the nature of the research, clearance for MRP Proposals will be granted by the Graduate Program Ethics Review Committee under an expedited review process (maximum of a 2-week turnaround).

Students are required to submit the **MA MRP Proposal Submission form** and indicate with a checkmark, whether ethics is required. Please refer to the categories on [\(p.15\)](#) and include as the cover page, along with their approved MRP proposal to the Health Graduate Program Office. This form is submitted when your research involves human participants.

Completion of this stage involves student submission of the following to the Health Graduate Program Office:

- [MA MRP Proposal Submission Form \(p. 15\)](#), (students are required to submit this regardless of whether their research involves human participants,)
- MRP proposal;
- TCPS 2 certificate;
- Appendix A (TD2 signed by supervisor and student, if human participants are involved)

The Health Graduate Program Office submits the approved MRP proposal to the ethics review committee and informs the MRP Committee once ethics approval has been attained (refer to p. 15 for guidelines on proposal preparation).

STEP 4: Writing and Revising the MRP:

Remember that your MRP will

- use an interdisciplinary lens to explore an issue relevant to Health;
- articulate the conceptual and methodological framework that supports the MRP research;
- provide a synthesis of the literature in the fields;
- provide a critical discussion of the area of focus that shows it moves beyond description and/or argumentation into critical exploration and synthesis of practices and theories; which supports a contribution to an expanded understanding of the issue addressed.

Writing and revising the MRP:

The MRP uses the same Title Page as the MRP proposal. (see p. 13 for a guide).

Length & Format: The MRP will have a required minimum length of 50 pages and a maximum length of 65 pages. This length includes only the text of the MRP. Appendices, references, title page and table of contents are additional. The format is:

- Times New Roman
- Font size 12
- Double-line spacing
- Top and left margins – 1.5”
- Bottom and right margins – 1”

Larger fonts may be used for people with visual impairments, in which case the length of their MRP proposal and MRP will vary accordingly; however, the length will be the proportionate to that required for other students.

Following the title page (refer to p. 13 for a sample), the following items should be listed in Roman numerals at the front of the MRP:

- **Table of Contents**

- **Abstract** – use the Style Guide of the academic style you are using (APA, Chicago)

- **Body of the MRP**

The interdisciplinary lens is fundamental to the M.A. (Health) program. In the MRP-Proposal and MRP, it is realized primarily through the following strategies:

- The Supervisor and the Advisor will represent at least 2 different academic disciplines.
- Students will demonstrate that they have explored their research questions using theories, literature, concepts, knowledge, and methods of at least 2 academic disciplines related to their research questions.

The following should be at the end of the MRP, after the complete text with consecutive page numbers:

- **Endnotes** (where necessary)
- **References/Bibliographies** (must be in either Harvard, Vancouver, APA or Chicago style. For on-line tutorials and examples, refer to the [York Libraries' website](#) (click on the “Research & Learn” tab).
- **Appendices**

STEP 5: MRP Final Discussion

Once the Supervisor and Advisor have read and approved the MRP, a final discussion will be scheduled by the student in consultation with the Committee. The home graduate program office books the room at the Health, Nursing and Environmental Studies building at York University. In general, the Supervisor and Advisor will work towards the final discussion being held in the 2 weeks following the supervisory committee agreeing that the MRP is ready to go to final discussion.

Students who are preparing for their final discussion will submit a hardcopy of the final draft of their MRP to their supervisory committee at least 1 week before the final discussion.

Students are required to bring a hardcopy of the **MRP Final Discussion Report** (p. 17) to the meeting for completion by the Supervisor. They will also bring a hard copy of the front page of the MRP title page for signatures and scanning.

The final discussion meeting provides an opportunity for discussion of the MRP, its development, conclusions and findings. At the beginning of the Final Discussion, the student is asked to give a 15-minute presentation. This is followed by comments and questions from the committee. The student is asked to leave the room while the committee consults on the final discussion. The student is then invited back in to hear the committee's comments.

The total length of the MRP final discussion varies from 1 - 1.5 hours.

In some instances students will be asked to make minor changes at the final discussion meeting. Revisions are to be completed within 10 business days after the meeting.

The MRP will be given a final grade of **"Pass"** or **"Fail"** at the meeting. If revisions to the MRP are required at the meeting, the final grade will be submitted by the Supervisor to the Health Graduate Program Office only after the revisions are approved.

Completion of this stage

- involves the Supervisor submitting to the Health Graduate Program Office:
 - the signed and completed MRP Final Discussion Report; (refer to p. 17)

STEP 6: Submission of a Final Electronic Copy & YorkSpace

Upon completion of any revisions required by the Supervisor and Advisor, the student provides an electronic copy of the final MRP to the Supervisor and emails the Graduate Programme Assistant an electronic copy as well.

The Health Graduate Program Office forwards the final grade to the Office of Registrar. The MRP is then made available to the graduate community at York University. If you would like to have your MRP available electronically, please sign [MA MRP YorkSpace Non-Exclusive Distribution Licence \(.pdf\)](#) located on p. 18

Completion of this stage

- involves the student submitting to the Supervisor and Health Graduate Program Office:
 - an electronic copy of the finalized MRP

The Health Graduate Program Office forwards the final grade of “Pass” or “Fail” and files a convocation request to the Office of the Registrar

Academic Integrity

The program has zero-tolerance for breaches of academic honesty.

For detailed explanation for each type of offence, refer to the [Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#)

Major Research Papers or their drafts/proposals that breach academic honesty will be given a grade of "FAIL" as the minimum penalty, resulting in the student being withdrawn from the program due to failure to maintain academic standards.

More severe penalties may be imposed.

Information on Writing a Research Paper

The [liaison librarians](#) can be key resources for writing research papers. They are subject area specialists & because CDS is interdisciplinary it is likely that you will have conversations with several librarians. I recommend that you start by making an appointment with [Thumeka Mgwigi](#) who is the Health subject area specialist librarian. Below are a series of guides.

1. [York University Libraries - Academic Writing Guide](#)
2. [The Relationship Between the Research Question, Hypotheses, Specific Aims, and Long-Term Goals of the Project](#)
3. [Writing Centre at Harvard University](#)
4. [Developing a Research Question](#)
5. [In Pursuit of the Dissertation Proposal](#)
6. [Dissertation calculators](#). These assist in creating manageable timelines; although this tool is written for students at the University of Minnesota it may work for grad students as well in that it helps break down categories and tasks into achievable parts.
7. and more broadly:
[The Thesis Whisperer](#)
[University Affairs](#)

Frequently Asked Questions

2. When are students eligible to graduate?

York University holds two convocation ceremonies for graduate students each year and one in absentia, as listed below. To ensure convocation and to avoid the need of registering in further terms, the Health Graduate Program Office must receive the following 4 documents by the corresponding deadlines as listed below.

- the completed **MRP Final Discussion Report**; (refer to [p. 17](#))
- an electronic copy of the finalized MRP;
- the final grade of the MRP;
- the final grade of all courses in fulfillment of the M.A. degree requirements.

Convocation

Documentation Submission Deadlines

Fall convocation (October)	before the registration deadline for the Fall term ¹
Winter convocation in absentia (February)	before the registration deadline for the Winter term ¹
Spring convocation (June)	before the registration deadline for the Summer term ¹

¹ Registration deadlines for each term vary and are posted under [Important Dates](#) on the Faculty of Graduate Studies website.

3. What is the degree completion time limit?

As per Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) regulations stated in the FGS Calendar, all students are reminded of the importance of timely completion of their program requirements (course work and Major Research Paper).

In the M.A. (Health) program, full-time students must register for a minimum of 3 terms and part-time students must register for a minimum of 6 terms to complete the program. All M.A. students, regardless of their registration status, have a maximum of 12 terms to complete the program.

With successful petition for an “Extension of Program Time Limit”, students may be granted up to 3 additional terms to complete the program. Terms in which students are registered as “Leave of Absence”, “Maternity Leave”, “Parental Leave”, or “No Course Available” are not included in these time limits.

4. What if students require more time to complete their MRP?

Unless students have/have been withdrawn from the program or are on leaves of absence of any kind, students must maintain continuous registration on a term-to-term basis by the following deadlines and pay the corresponding term tuition fee. Failure to register by the deadlines will result in program withdrawal and subject to a late registration fee of \$200, if applicable.

Completion Plan

Include the following completion plan with provisional dates, in the MRP Proposal:

Step 1:

- Students submit a MA MRP Notification of Supervisor and Advisor form and a 1- to 2-page research outline to the Health Graduate Program Office

Step 2:

- Students submit an approved MRP Proposal along with a MA MRP Proposal Submission Form (p. 14), regardless of whether human participants are involved, to the Health Graduate Program Office by the end of February.
- If human participants are involved in the research, students will initiate the documentations as listed in *Human Participants Research Protocol*. If the research is not funded and at minimal risk, the Proposal will be approved by the Graduate Program/Department Ethics Review Committee under an expedited review process (maximum of a 2 week turnaround).

Step 3:

- **(Optional but highly recommended)** Students have a joint meeting with the Supervisor and Advisor.

Step 4:

- Students submit an interim draft to the Supervisor and Advisor

Step 5:

- Students submit the 2nd draft to the Supervisor and Advisor

Step 6:

- Approval of the MRP by the Supervisor and Advisor
- The Committee finalizes a Final Discussion date, time and location
- a request for a room booking is made by the student to the Health Graduate Program Office for the final discussion

Step 7:

- Students bring a hardcopy of MRP title page (see p. 13) for Supervisor & Advisor signatures, and a hardcopy of the MRP Final Discussion Report (p. 17)
- After the discussion, the Supervisor and Advisor fill out and sign the MRP Final Discussion Report (p. 17) and submits it to the Health Graduate Program Office.
- Student emails the finalized MRP to the Health Graduate Program Assistant along with the completed and signed YorkSpace Non-Exclusive Distribution License (p. 18)

**Use this title page template for BOTH of the Major Research Paper proposal AND
final paper. (SAMPLE ONLY)**

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PAPER PROPOSAL/FINAL PAPER
(format - IN CAPITALS, CENTRED AND SINGLE SPACED)

AUTHOR'S NAME
(format - IN CAPITALS)

Supervisor's Name: (format - Upper and Lower Case)

Advisor's Name: (format - Upper and Lower Case)

Supervisor's Signature:

Date Approved:

Advisor's Signature:

Date Approved:

A Research Paper **Proposal (delete the word "Proposal" if you are using
this title page for your drafts of or finalized MRP) submitted to the
Graduate Program in Health in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of**

**Master of Arts
Graduate Program in Health
York University
Toronto, Ontario M3J 1P3**

(Indicate the date of submission here in this format - Month Year)

M. A. (Health)
Faculty of Graduate Studies
York University

Notification of MRP Supervisor and Advisor

Student: _____ ID #: _____

Tentative Title of Research Proposal:

Supervisor's Name: _____

Member of York Graduate Program in
*(List program relevant to current supervision;
See the faculty listing <http://cds.gradstudies.yorku.ca/research/faculty/>)*

Supervisor's Signature:
(Please sign or attach e-mail acknowledging the agreement of being a MRP supervisor.)

Date Signed: _____

Advisor's Name: _____

Member of York Graduate Program in
*(List program relevant to current supervision;
See the faculty listing at <http://cds.gradstudies.yorku.ca/research/faculty/> or
FGS Appointment list at <http://gradstudies.yorku.ca/faculty-staff/academic-affairs/faculty-membership/current-members/>)*

Advisor's Signature:
(Please sign or attach e-mail acknowledging the agreement of being a MRP Advisor.)

Date Signed: _____

Graduate Program Director's Signature

Date Approved

Student submits this form, along with an 1- to 2-page research outline to the Graduate Program Office.

M. A. (Health)
 Faculty of Graduate Studies
 York University

MRP Proposal Submission Form

Student: _____ ID #: _____

Tentative Title of Research Proposal:

The Graduate Program/Department Ethics Review Committee confirms that the above stated proposal:

- does not involve human participants** and hence does not require an ethics approval.
- involves human participants (non-funded and at minimal risk)** and is given an ethics approval.
- involves human participants (non-funded and at minimal risk)** but is NOT given an ethics approval.
- involves human participants (funded or not minimal risk)**. The above stated student is, therefore, required to follow an alternate ethics approval process to be carried by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee (HRPC) through the Office of Research Ethics (ORE), 5th Floor of York Research Tower. MRP Supervisor is required to first contact the Chair of the Graduate Programme/Department Ethics Review Committee to establish and follow through the approval process.

 Ethics Review Committee Member's Signature

 Date Approved

 Ethics Review Committee Member's Signature

 Date Approved

 Graduate Program Director's Signature

 Date Approved

MA Candidate includes final copy of MRP Proposal, with emails from supervisor/advisor stating its approval. If research involves human participants, include documentation and submit complete package to your Graduate Program Office.

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 York University

Change of MRP Supervisory Committee

Student's Name: _____

Student ID #: _____

Tentative Title of Major Research Paper:

Which Supervisory Committee member has been changed?

Supervisor Advisor

Fill out the following.			
Supervisory Committee Member	Member of York Graduate Program in <i>(List program relevant to current supervision; See the faculty listing at http://cds.gradstudies.yorku.ca/research/faculty/ or FGS Appointment list at http://gradstudies.yorku.ca/faculty-staff/academic-affairs/faculty-membership/current-members/</i>	Date (DDMMYY)	Supervisory Committee Approval <i>(Please sign or attach e-mail acknowledging the agreement of being a committee member.)</i>
Previous Member:			
New Member:			

 Graduate Program Director's Signature

 Date Approved

Student submits this form, along with an 1- to 2-page research outline to the Graduate Program Office as soon a change occurs.

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Major Research Paper Final Discussion Report

A. Information to be filled out by the student.

Student's Name:	Student ID #:
Final Title of Major Research Paper:	
Date of Discussion:	

B. Comments and Grade to be filled out by the Major Research Paper Supervisor. (Use the back of this page if more space is needed. If the student is required to make changes, specify work to be done **within 5 business days.**)

Grade assigned to the Major Research Paper	<input type="checkbox"/> PASS	<input type="checkbox"/> FAIL	
Revisions required?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	

	Supervisor	Advisor	Reader (if applicable)
Names:			
Signatures:			

The Supervisor fills out this Report and submits it along with a hardcopy of MRP title page signed by the committee members to the Graduate Program Office.

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York University will clearly identify your name(s) as the author(s) or owner(s) of the submission, and will not make any alteration, other than as allowed by this license, to your submission.

Dated this _____ day of _____, _____

Student _____ Signature _____