

ORPAS: GPA

The post-secondary education section requires you to enter your institution, program and degree. The “program” section is used for statistical purposes, so select the option from the drop-down that you feel is most related to your program.

When you submit your ORPAS application, the Transcript Request Form for Ontario generates a request to the student’s university to have a transcript sent electronically from university to ORPAS. You need to complete the TRF form as part of your application, before you submit it by the deadline. If you are not currently enrolled, the transcript will be requested as soon as you pay. If you are currently enrolled, it will be requested when you pay, but with a flag telling the school not to send it until the fall grades are posted. It costs applicant’s \$12 per transcript. If a transcript from outside Ontario is needed, order it early, directly from the school you attended, so it arrives at ORPAS by the deadline date.

Applicants order final transcripts through “SAM” which is the ORPAS Secure Applicant Messaging Tool. You can only access SAM after you have submitted and paid for your application. The final transcript is due at ORPAS by June 30. The receipt of the TRF by this date does not satisfy requirements, so allow sufficient time for transcripts to be sent.

Note that transcripts are required for exchange program grades. Any courses completed outside of Canada need to include an official transcript with a transcript legend explaining the grading scale, and an official English translation. See the ORPAS instructions for complete details, and factor in the extra time it may take to arrange and send transcripts from exchange universities. Exchange grades appear as CRs on Waterloo transcripts, so they are usually not included in the GPA calculation, but each individual school will decide how they will use your exchange grades. Regardless, you must send transcripts directly from your exchange school – it is not enough to have the credits appear on your Waterloo transcript.

This is a screen shot demonstrating how you would submit your transcripts. There is a “From” section in which you will enter your university, and a “To” section to enter ORPAS. Lastly, under “Send” you have the option to send the transcript at the time of your choice; this is dependent on whether you are still enrolled in school or not.

ORPAS will calculate a “sub GPA” for each applicant based on the last 20 half credits earned (each 4 month lecture at Waterloo earns a half credit). An exception to this is the Queen’s OT program, as it uses a cGPA and the Queen’s PT program, as it uses the last 20 credits (sub GPA) and a cGPA.

ORPAS takes each individual grade and converts it out of 4.0 scale and divides by the number of courses to get your sub GPA.

If grades need to be extracted from half a year (one semester in an academic year) to make up 20 courses, the entire academic year (September – April) is used, and the average of all courses within that

time frame are used as many times as necessary to fulfill the 20 half credit requirement. The next slide has an example of this to make it easier to understand.

This is a typical applicant course load. So to calculate the last 20 half credits beginning with the end of the fall term you count back typically beginning with your 4A term.

In your 4A term you complete 5 courses which is 2.5 credits

In your 3B term you complete 5 courses

In your 3A term you complete 5 courses

Because the schools will need another 5 courses, you will take each course completed in your 2A and 2B term, convert them to a GPA out of a 4.0, and divide it by the total number of courses. This average number will be used or counted 5 times.

This is the GPA conversion chart found on the ORPAS website. Waterloo falls under column 3. ORPAS will calculate your GPA for you and have a verification report for you online in February. This report will indicate any issues with your application and confirm your ORPAS GPA.

To calculate your GPA before you apply, use this chart, and individually convert each course grade (that will be included in your calculation) to the 4.0 scale before adding them up and averaging to find your GPA. Although successful completion of graduate work can be viewed favourably in the rest of your application, only grades for undergraduate level courses are included in your GPA calculation.

The GPA does **not** include “challenge for credit” courses. Courses for which a specific numeric grade is not given (e.g., a “Pass” or “CR” course) are not included in the GPA. WDs are also not included (because they have no mark) – but schools will see them on your transcript. The schools will review both your official transcript and the ORPAS grade breakdown.

This is a term example of the GPA conversion. Take each grade and convert it to 4.0 scale; add up all courses and divide by # of courses and get your GPA.

The last point shows how each grade listed above was converted out of the 4.0 scale and then divided by 5 to show the GPA.

Lab credits are used in the GPA conversion by ORPAS. For the McMaster OT program, some 1/4 credits will be counted if they are **labs**, but not weightlifting, coaching, courses.

If you have lab courses where you earned a separate .25 credit, they will be worth half as much when averaging your GPA. We recommend using Excel to make your calculations easier.

In Excel, set the columns up like this:

With your transcript Percent grade as the first column, the ORPAS converted grade (on the 4.0 scale) as the second column, the 3rd will be the Length of the course (each lab will be .5 and each lecture will be 1), and finally, the Value column (this is your ORPAS GPA times the course length).

Then add up all of the columns, and divide the **total** value by the **total** length to find your cumulative ORPAS GPA! Using these two lectures and 1 lab as a brief example, you can see that the lab grades are weighted half as much as the lectures.

This chart demonstrates the varying GPA averages (and corresponding application years) for the OT, PT, SLP and Audiology programs at each school. Competitive GPAs change each year, as it depends on the applicant pool.

The cut-off to be invited for an interview for the OT program at McMaster was a 3.66 sub GPA. Queen's OT is looking for around a 3.3 cGPA to be competitive. Toronto OT typically has a competitive sub GPA between 3.65-3.75, and Western's competitive sub GPA has previously been 3.67 to make the waitlist, and at least 3.73 to earn a first-round offer.

McMaster PT has previously had a competitive sub GPA of 3.82 to be invited for an interview. Queen's PT competitive sub GPA has been 3.65, Toronto's has been 3.8, and Western's has been 3.83 to 3.89.

The SLP programs usually require a low to mid 80's sub GPA, and Western's audiology program's competitive sub GPA is usually around 84-85%.

Grades are not the only factor in the application review, but for many schools are the first tool used to decide if they will review an applicant's full file. Many students take undergraduate level courses after graduation to upgrade their sub GPA, and most schools will use post-graduate courses in the GPA calculation as long as they are at the 300/400 level and are an undergraduate course. Confirm with the school you are applying to if you are relying on this for your GPA calculation.

For some useful tips make sure you read through the ORPAS instructions thoroughly.

Students can also take more than the usual 2.5 credits/term; there is no maximum and no penalty, so students can complete 20 credits in 3A, 3B and 4A terms to ensure the average from 2A+2B is not taken into consideration.

Courses and marks that are failures, INC, repeated and supplementary are included in GPA if applicable and counted within the last 20 credits.

Activity courses are not included in GPA or counted within the last 20 credits.

Also, co-op term work reports are not included in GPA or counted within the 20 last credits.

Failed "pass/fail" course is treated as zero in the GPA and counted within the 20 last credits. However, Passed "pass/fail" courses are not included in the GPA and are not counted within the 20 last credits.