



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Department of Educational Studies

Faculty of Education

Procedures Governing Program Change Requests into the PhD and EdD Programs in EDST

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1. Introduction & Background

Admissions Committees of EDST’s two doctoral programs – the PhD in Educational Studies and the EdD in Educational Leadership and Policy – occasionally receive requests for admission from students already registered in programs, whether within EDST, or within UBC, or still from programs at other higher education institutions in Canada and abroad. These requests are often referred to as “transfer request”, a term which leads itself to misunderstandings and lack of clarity with regard to the process by virtue of which a request is considered by the relevant doctoral Admissions Committee.

This document provides guidance on how various program change requests should be handled in a way that is consistent with UBC policies and with the principles and procedures approved within EDST. Because there are funding requirements for all incoming PhD students (new admissions), currently, the standing practice is that each request for program change is considered individually on its merits by taking into account its implications for the overall PhD funding commitments for EDST. Such a process means that there is no possibility to plan ahead with regard to doctoral admission and supervision, given that in practical terms newly admitted students can enter a doctoral program at any point during the academic year. To address this situation, the following document revisits current practices and establishes clear procedures concerned with program change requests submitted to the PhD and the EdD Programs in EDST.

Three principles drive the present policy:

First, admissions to EDST’s doctoral programs fall under the responsibility and charge of the respective doctoral program, namely, the PhD Admissions Committee and the EdD Admissions Committee, respectively.

Secondly, all allowed program change requests must be submitted to the respective admissions committee within the relevant Program's application deadline advertised every year. Thus, all program change requests will be considered once a year only, as part of the general pool of applicants for the PhD and the EdD programs, as applicable.

Thirdly, the two doctoral programs within EDST—the PhD and the EdD – are committed to UBC's and EDST's vision with regard to Indigenization, decolonization and reconciliation (Among others, refer to: <https://indigenousinitiatives.ctlt.ubc.ca/classroom-climate/indigenization-decolonization-and-reconciliation/>). The two programs will endeavour to welcome and promote in particular the applications of Indigenous students who are requesting a program change into one of EDST's two doctoral programs.

2. Program Change Requests from the EDST MA Program into the PhD Program in EDST

- (a) Although the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (G+PS) allows – in exceptional circumstances – master's students to request admission into doctoral programs without completing master's requirements, EDST discourages this practice based on past experience with difficulties encountered in the successful completion of PhD research.
- (b) In exceptional circumstances, the PhD Admissions Committee will consider admission requests from MA Programs at UBC under the following conditions:
 - (1) The applicant meets the conditions of the UBC guidelines for "transfers" from the MA to PhD Program. (Relevant UBC policy: <https://www.grad.ubc.ca/faculty-staff/policies-procedures/transfer-masters-doctoral-programs-without-completing-masters>).
 - (2) The applicant must complete the application to the EDST PhD Program and submit it by the admission deadline, as is the case for any applicant to the PhD Program.
 - (3) The applicant will have identified a faculty member who has agreed to serve as PhD supervisor, if admitted.
 - (4) The applicant will request three letters from faculty, including one from the potential PhD supervisor. Letters should provide support for the program change, clearly justify the program change request, and provide evidence to that effect. Letters of support should be submitted directly to the PhD Admission Committee, through the office of the Graduate Program Assistant in EDST.

- (5) If admitted to the PhD Program in EDST, the student from another program must complete all required PhD courses.

3. Program Change Requests from Other UBC Doctoral Programs into the EDST PhD Program

(A) The PhD Admissions Committee will consider requests submitted by doctoral students from other Programs at UBC to join the EDST PhD Program in Educational Studies under the following conditions:

- (a) The applicant will complete the application to the EDST PhD Program and submit it by the admission deadline, as is the case for any applicant to the PhD Program.
- (b) The applicant must identify a faculty member in EDST who has agreed to serve as the applicant's PhD supervisor, if admitted.
- (c) The potential PhD supervisor will submit a letter of support for the program change clearly justifying the program change request and providing evidence to that effect. The letter of support should be submitted directly to the PhD Admission Committee, through the office of the Graduate Program Assistant in EDST.
- (d) If admitted, the student will start the EDST PhD Program at same time as the next incoming cohort (thus only September starts are permitted).
- (e) The admitted applicant must complete all required PhD courses in effect in EDST.
- (f) The admitted applicant will be offered PhD minimum funding, as specified by UBC policy and EDST practices, and as part of the admitted pool of applicants.

(B) Program Change Requests from EDST's EdD to EDST's PhD Program in Educational Studies and Vice Versa

The EdD and PhD programs have different objectives, emphases, and course requirements, as well as different admission criteria. Therefore, requests for program changes between these two doctoral programs within EDST will be handled by the respective Admissions Committees (PhD and EdD) in the same way as any new admission. Such requests should be submitted as a new application with the specified deadline. These applications will be adjudicated within the pool of all applicants of the respective programs.

Given the different emphases of the two doctoral programs in EDST, the EdD and PhD Admissions Committees must remain flexible in terms of re-directing applications they have each received if one committee is of the opinion that an application appears more suited to

the requirements of the other program. In order to re-direct applications to the other doctoral committee, the following steps should be taken:

1. The Chair of the admissions committee that wishes to re-direct an application must consult with the respective admissions committee Chair. If agreed by the two committee Chairs that the application can be re-directed (because it appears to be a better fit in the other doctoral program), the applicant must be contacted to obtain their consent, in writing, regarding the re-direction.
2. Once the consent of the applicant has been obtained, the application will be re-directed to the other admissions committee, as agreed between the two committee chairs.
3. The re-directed application will be considered by the receiving admissions committee as part of its pool of applicants to that program and subject to its admissions criteria.

Program Admission Requests from PhD Programs at Other Universities than UBC

Requests for admission from doctoral students already admitted by and studying in programs or universities other than UBC will be considered exclusively as new applications to the EDST PhD Program. Such applications are subject and must conform to all admission and application requirements advertised by UBC and the PhD Program in Educational Studies.

Appendix: Relevant UBC and EDST Policies

1. Minimum Funding Policy for PhD Students
<https://www.grad.ubc.ca/awards/minimum-funding-policy-phd-students>
2. Handbook on the Minimum Funding Policy for PhD Students
https://www.grad.ubc.ca/sites/default/files/doc/page/2017-08-01_faculty_handbook_for_minimum_funding_policy_form.pdf
3. Transfer between closely-related programs at UBC
<https://www.grad.ubc.ca/faculty-staff/policies-procedures/transfer-between-closely-related-programs>
4. Transfer to another degree programs at UBC:
<https://www.grad.ubc.ca/current-students/managing-your-program/transfer-another-degree-program>

5. EDST's PhD Student Handbook
https://edst-educ.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2017/08/EDST-Handbook-draft_april24.pdf
6. PhD. Program in Educational Studies: Application Requirements
<https://edst.educ.ubc.ca/programs/phd-in-educational-studies/>
7. EdD Program in Educational Leadership and Policy: Application Requirements
<https://edst.educ.ubc.ca/programs/edd-in-educational-leadership-and-policy/>
8. Indigenization, decolonization, and Reconciliation in Teaching and Learning at UBC
<https://indigenusinitiatives.ctlt.ubc.ca/classroom-climate/indigenization-decolonization-and-reconciliation/>