

# PhD Program Learning Outcomes and Methods of Assessment

# Template

*This document is a working document for programs to use to articulate learning outcomes. The University of Alberta PhD Learning Outcomes within this template were developed by the University of Alberta, in addition to or in support of Alberta Credential Framework, and have been endorsed by FGSR Council.*

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| Program Name: |  |
| Date: |  |
| Author(s): |  |

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| **KNOWLEDGE**  The ability to apply and exercise awareness of the limits of advanced level knowledge in a specialized field | |
| **University of Alberta PhD Learning Outcomes** | **Knowledge** learning outcomes are specifically defined within programs, in alignment with these requirements from the Alberta Credential Framework:   1. **Depth and Breadth of Knowledge** – Students will be able to independently undertake pure or applied research and professional skills at an advanced level, and translate knowledge to research or practice settings. Students will demonstrate a thorough understanding of a substantial body of knowledge with expertise in a specialized field that is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice. 2. **Application of Knowledge** – Students will have the capacity to:  * undertake research at an advanced level, and * contribute to the development of academic or professional skill, techniques, tools, practices, ideas, theories, approaches, and/or materials.  1. **Awareness of Limits of Knowledge** – Students will have an appreciation of the limitations of one’s own work and discipline, of the complexity of knowledge, and of the potential contributions of other interpretations, methods, and disciplines. |
| **Program- Specific Learning Outcomes** |  |
| **Methods of Assessment** |  |

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| **RESEARCH COMPETENCY**  The ability to conceptualize, design and implement research for the generation of new knowledge; to make informed judgments on complex issues, in a specialized field | |
| **University of Alberta PhD Learning Outcomes** | **Research Competency** learning outcomes are specified below and are to be augmented in programs using field specific requirements, as appropriate.  Students will be able to:   1. Conceptualize, design, and implement research for the generation of new knowledge, applications, or understanding at the forefront of the discipline and to adjust the research design or methodology in the light of unforeseen problems. 2. Make informed judgments on complex issues in specialist fields, sometimes requiring new methods, such as being able to:  * Generate research questions/hypotheses based on experience, discipline specific expertise, and scholarly literature. * Conceptualize, design, and implement a research project of significant scope to complete a thesis. * Assess strengths and weaknesses of various methodological approaches relevant to a research question. * Select, defend, and apply a methodological approach to answer a research question. * Locate and/or generate information/data relevant to a research question. * Situate a research question within the existing field specific knowledge and where appropriate outside the field and/or discipline. * Organize information/data to reveal patterns/themes. * Analyze information/data and synthesize information to generate new knowledge/understanding. * Monitor research progress, refine, and pivot approach as needed. |
| **Program- Specific Learning Outcomes** |  |
| **Methods of Assessment** |  |

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| **COMMUNICATION SKILLS**  The ability to demonstrate written communication, oral communication, and listening skills, and to communicate effectively and professionally with a broad audience | |
| **University of Alberta PhD Learning Outcomes** | **Communication Skills** learning outcomes are specified below and are to be augmented in programs using field specific requirements as appropriate.  Students will be able to communicate complex and/or ambiguous ideas, issues, and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences, using:   1. written communication 2. oral communication   Beneficial Options  Students will be able to:  communicate using technical, digital, or other methods  use active listening skills |
| **Program- Specific Learning Outcomes** |  |
| **Methods of Assessment** |  |

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| **PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY/AUTONOMY**  The ability to research, reflect upon, and take ownership of the development of skills and career goals | |
| **University of Alberta PhD Learning Outcomes** | **Professional Capacity/Autonomy** learning outcomes are specified below and are to be augmented in programs using field specific requirements as appropriate.  Students will be able to demonstrate:   1. The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex situations 2. The intellectual independence to be academically and professionally engaged and current, developed in part through the Individual Development Plan process of:  * researching potential career options * reflecting upon skills and competencies in the University of Alberta graduate attribute areas of creativity, communication, confidence, scholarship, ethical responsibility, critical thinking, and collaboration * creating timelines and milestones for professional development, academic, and personal commitments * reviewing progress regularly  1. The ability to evaluate the broader implications of applying knowledge to particular contexts. 2. The ability to receive, handle and act upon, and provide constructive feedback.   Beneficial Options  Students will be able to demonstrate:  The ability to take initiative to identify need and provide service to a community.  The ability to acquire new, or enhance existing leadership skills, including those required to teach or supervise students.  The ability to take initiative to bring about positive change in academic, professional and personal contexts, guided by the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI). |
| **Program- Specific Learning Outcomes** |  |
| **Methods of Assessment** |  |

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| **ETHICS**  The ability to identify, explain, analyze, and propose solutions to ethical issues | |
| **University of Alberta PhD Learning Outcomes** | Ethics learning outcomes are specified below and are to be augmented in programs using field specific requirements as appropriate.  Students will be able to:   1. Identify ethical concerns specific to their field of research, such as treatment of human and animal subjects, interdisciplinary research, and Indigenous research. 2. Recall, recognize, analyze, discuss and act in ethical matters in:  * the subject field under investigation including those specific to course work, capstone project, thesis, scholarship and funding applications, * academic conduct, and * interactions with others in the community as stipulated in the code of student behaviour.  1. Propose solutions to ethical dilemmas and articulate what makes a particular course of action ethically defensible. 2. Identify ethical concerns in academic integrity, use and citation of sources, the misrepresentation of data and/or facts. 3. Recognize the importance of information and data handling (confidentiality, transparency, not falsifying data, etc).     Beneficial Options  Explain, recognize, and analyze ethical areas of responsibility held when teaching or mentoring within their field. |
| **Program- Specific Learning Outcomes** |  |
| **Methods of Assessment** |  |