Transfer from MA to PhD

Under exceptional circumstances, it is possible for a student enrolled in our MA program to be transferred into the PhD program prior to the completion of requirements for their MA degree. The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies regulations on this matter can be found here (section 4.05):

http://grad.uwo.ca/current_students/graduate_regulations/section_4.htm

These regulations state:

4.05 TRANSFER FROM MASTER'S TO DOCTORAL DEGREE STATUS IN A PROGRAM

> *Programs may allow students to transfer their registration from the Master's to the Doctoral degree within the same program, without completion of the Master's degree. The Vice-Provost (Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies) will consider such requests on the recommendation of the student's program.*

Importantly *a student who makes such a transfer will receive ONLY a PhD degree and not an MA and a PhD degree.*

Students who transfer into the PhD after only 2 terms of our MA program will also miss out on the many valuable experiences and learning opportunities that go with the full MA – they will never write a full MA thesis and may not have that first real research/field experience that so many of our MA students get.

PROCESS:

The procedure to be followed in MA to PhD transfers is described below:

* Proposals for MA to PhD transfers should originate with supervisors acting in consultation with advisors, a student's MA teachers, and the student. A proposed applicant must be an exceptional student whose track record and performance in our MA program clearly indicate capacities for research and writing appropriate to the PhD level. Additionally, students considered for this transfer must have a clear PhD level project to propose.
* We will only consider applicants who have completed course requirements for the MA (i.e., after two terms of study), and will not consider applications after a student has begun their 4th term of MA study. In most cases, then, we will consider these cases in the spring or summer between the student's first and second years of MA study.
* We will consider transfer cases in much the same way as we currently consider other PhD applications, meaning that applicants will be asked to prepare an application file that includes a CV, transcripts, a letter of intent, and a writing sample. In addition, the applicant's MA supervisor and their proposed PhD supervisor (if different from MA supervisor) and proposed PhD advisor will provide letters in support of the application, offering evidence of the student's exceptional status and a clear rationale for considering the transfer.
* In addition, the student will submit a 5 -7 page proposal in which they outline the scope of their proposed PhD project.
* The entire application is submitted to the Graduate Coordinator and will make the application available for faculty to review.

* Once complete, the graduate committee will invite members of the relevant subfield to consult the file and will ask that they respond with comments and/or concerns regarding the admissibility of the applicant. We will also invite suggestions as to what additional coursework the applicant should complete as part of their PhD program. Although students may have already met the course requirements for the PhD by completing their MA coursework, they may be expected to complete additional coursework (normally between 1.0 to 2.0 courses) as part of their PhD program of study.
* The graduate committee will make the final determination regarding a transfer as quickly as possible following the completion of the application file. A positive decision will include a list of further required courses (determined by the grad committee in consultation with the applicant's proposed supervisor and advisor), if applicable.
* The applicant's supervisor will complete the Transfer form and submit to the Graduate Coordinator. http://www.grad.uwo.ca/doc/academic_services/academic_request/request_m-d_transfer.pdf
* The graduate committee's decision is then passed on to SGPS. The Associate Vice-Provost in SGPS makes the final approval of all applications.
* Students transferring into the PhD program in this way without completing the MA are eligible for **a total of 15 terms of university funding** (or 5 years) across both programs.

FAQ's:

Q: How are courses affected?

A: When a student is granted a transfer from the MA program directly into the PhD program, their courses for the MA count towards their PhD. My understanding is that this is in part due to the fact that they don't actually earn a master's degree when they do this. Essentially they have a head start on their PhD by using their MA courses towards it.   ~ Kim Clark - Grad Chair 2011

Q: If a student who has been awarded an OGS for Masters, do they still keep their OGS or is it forfeited as a PhD?

A: OGS has not been announced yet. Hypothetically, a student who wins an Ontario Graduate Scholarship for proposed Master's studies may still hold it if he or she transfers to the doctoral level during tenure of the award.

Q: If a student received a SSHRC Masters, how does it affect their ability to apply for a SSHRC Doctoral?

A: A student holding a SSHRC CGS Master's would complete the Master's degree but may only hold one CGS M and it must be in either one of the first two years of the program.

In the fall competition of, for example, Fall 2008 the student would apply for a SSHRC Doctoral Award for proposed doctoral studies starting, for example, September 1, 2009. One does not affect the other. If you are referring to a MA>PhD transfer while holding a CGS M, the SSHRC Web site clearly states that " If you complete your master's degree or transfer to a doctoral program prior to the end of the term of the award, you can request and use the balance of your award to immediately start a doctoral program. To receive the balance of the award, you must have completed a minimum of one full-time term of studies at the master's level."