

Pro-Grid Decision-Assist Tool: Instructions for Reviewers

Chinook Summer Studentship

Background

The Pro-Grid Decision Assist tool was originally developed in 2000 by Alberta Innovates Health Solutions (AIHS) to assess their Summer Studentship applications. A number of factors led to the adoption of the tool in the Chinook Summer Studentship Award adjudication process including:

- Increasing numbers of proposals;
- Increasing demands on reviewers' time;
- More turnover on committees;
- The need for consistency in review criteria and process;
- Need for more sensitive ranking scale; and
- Request for more feedback from applicants.

The Pro-Grid Tool is based on a matrix of performance factors developed to align with values, priorities and expectations of related to the funding opportunities. The tool uses a set of calibrated performance levels (language ladder). It is designed for high number of proposals and results in a graphical representation of strengths and weaknesses resulting in improved feedback to applicants.

How it works

Pro-Grid Chinook Studentship Matrix is based upon the evaluation criteria to align with the Chinook Summer Studentship Award description.

Evaluation Criteria:

The following evaluation criteria apply to all applicants:

- A. Student (50%):** Both the GPA and the Student Letter are evaluated for research/scholarly/creative achievements of the applicant as well as how the project fits with the learning objectives of the student.
- B. Supervisor (25%):** The supervisor letter is evaluated based on the project description, the work schedule and whether there will be adequate supervision over the term of the award.
- C. Recommendation (25%):** The Letter of Recommendation is evaluated on the assessment of the student by the referee as well as the quality of the letter. The recommendation should include specific examples and information to support the assessment.

	A. Student (50%)	B. Supervisor (25%)	C. Recommendation (25%)
1	Academic Record	Supervisor's Letter	Letter of Recommendation
2	Student Letter	Project description	

Language Ladder

A1 – Student

1. The candidate **meets the minimum expectations** for applicants to the Chinook Summer Studentship program.
2. The candidate has a **good academic track record**, with mostly average to above-average grades in all courses.
3. **Very good academic record** with consistently above-average grades, especially in relevant courses.
4. **Outstanding academic record** throughout candidate's academic training.

A2 – Student Letter

1. The Student Letter provides **general information** about the candidate's learning objectives related to academic program and qualifications and course withdrawals (if applicable).
2. The Student Letter is **supportive of the candidate**, and speaks in general terms of his/her learning objectives and academic program and qualifications. The student may have received previous awards and scholarships. Adequate justification for course withdrawals is provided (if applicable).
3. The Student Letter is very **positive and provides considerable detail** about the candidate's relative strengths. Candidate has accumulated some research experience and provides strong rationale for course withdrawals (if applicable).
4. Candidate's **research experience has been significant**. The Student Letter lists a details including specific learning objectives associated with the academic program and student's qualifications. The student has a strong track record of previous awards and scholarships. The student provides a detailed description of course withdrawals (if applicable).

B1 – Supervisor's Letter

1. From the information provided, it is **not clear** that adequate resources and supervision will be provided to support the student's work.
2. The supervisor has provided a description of the work schedule and supervision plans. A **description of some of the requirements may be unclear**. Other useful resources appear to be available within the general environment.
3. The supervisor has provided an **adequate description** of the work schedule and supervision. Candidate will have access to all necessary tools within the immediate environment.
4. The supervisor has provided a **detailed description** of the work schedule and a **strong indication that adequate supervision** will be provided. **All equipment and/or support systems** required by the candidate and his/her program of research are in place.

B2 – Project Description

1. The project appears to be **commensurate with the level of the candidate's training**.
2. The project description is **well written, providing sufficient detail**.
3. The project description is well written. In addition, this work will potentially produce an **original contribution** to existing knowledge in this field.

- The project is **clearly defined**. The description provides enough methodological detail to evoke confidence that the goals of the project will, in all likelihood, be achieved. The project has the potential to **contribute substantially to knowledge** in this field.

C1 – Recommendation

- Letter provides **general information** about the candidate’s personal characteristics and/or academic strengths.
- Letter is **supportive** of the candidate, and speaks in **general terms** of his/her personal characteristics (motivation, intellectual capacity, maturity, etc.), research potential and academic strengths.
- Letter is **very positive and provides considerable detail** about the candidate’s relative strengths. Candidate has accumulated some research experience, and the letter comments on the candidate’s competence/abilities in this area.
- Letter is **very strongly supportive** of the candidate and communicates an element of excitement about his/her future prospects in conducting research, level of independence, and academic record.

Scoring the Proposals:

Each of the three reviewers assigned an application will provide a score (1 to 4) on each of the five criteria. The three scores of each criteria will be combined to provide an average score for each criteria. The Student will be evaluated on the combined average of the Academic Record and the Student Letter. This score will be given a 50% weighting for total score. The Environment will be calculated based on scores of the Supervisor’s Letter and Project Description provided in that letter. The Environment takes into account 25% of the final score. The Letter of Recommendation is combined with the Student’s Score and also the Environment to make up the last 25% of the score. All of the proposals are then ranked relative to each other from highest to lowest. Applications will be funded from top to bottom to a maximum dictated by the budget allocation at the University of Lethbridge.

Plotting the scores

Each criteria has a **language ladder** and each step on the ladder is given a value (1 to 4) (Appendix A – Reviewer Score Sheet). The ratings from the three reviewers are averaged to provide a score for each of the criteria. For example, STUDENT A is given the following scores:

Criteria	Reviewer 1	Reviewer 2	Reviewer 3	Average
A1	2	2	3	1.3
A2	3	2	3	2.7
B1	3	3	3	3.0
B2	2	2	2	2.0
C1	2	3	2	1.3

The **Student Score** is totaled (A1+A2) and weighted for 50% of final rank and the Supervisor Score is totaled (B1+B2) and weighted for 25% of final rank. The Letter of Recommendation (C1) makes up the final 25% of the score. The applicants are then ranked relative to each other. Funding will be awarded based on this relative rank.

