

USRA Rubric

Academic Excellence (/10)

	Points				
	1	2	3	4	5
Academic record (GPA)	GPA 7-7.99	GPA 8-8.99	GPA 9-9.99	GPA 10-10.99	GPA 11-12
Scholarships and other academic awards	None	In course scholarships	In course + Entrance scholarships	President's Gold Scholarships	President's Gold Scholarships and other competitive scholarships and awards

When assessing academic excellence, adjudicators are expected to consider applicant's additional circumstances and can award up to 4 additional points. See other considerations, below.

- Full-time or part-time studies
- Improvement over time
- Level of program/course difficulty
- Year of study (priority given to senior students)

Research Potential (/8)

	Points				
	1	2	3	4	5
Research Potential (consider: judgement and ability to think critically ability to apply skills and knowledge, enthusiasm for research, community involvement, outreach, initiative, autonomy)	Insufficient: Shows limited or no ability to think critically or apply research skills. Lacks enthusiasm, initiative, and involvement in research or outreach. Requires constant supervision.	Developing: Demonstrates basic critical thinking and some application of research skills. Shows limited enthusiasm and initiative. Involved in research activities but still requires significant supervision.	Proficient: Applies critical thinking and research skills effectively. Shows enthusiasm and takes initiative. Actively participates in research and outreach, and works independently with minimal guidance.	Advanced: Consistently demonstrates strong critical thinking, judgment, and research skills. Enthusiastic and proactive, taking initiative beyond standard expectations. Engages meaningfully in research and outreach, and works autonomously.	Exceptional: Demonstrates excellent critical thinking, judgment, and application of research skills. Highly enthusiastic, takes strong initiative, and contributes significantly to research and outreach. Works autonomously and leads research efforts.
	1	1.5	2	2.5	3
Relevant academic training and work or volunteer experience (e.g., honours and directed studies projects and co-op)	No relevant experience		Moderate experience		Significant experience

When assessing research potential and previous work experience, adjudicators are expected to consider applicant’s additional circumstances and award up to 4 additional points. See other considerations, below:

- Extenuating circumstances
- Described barriers due to EDI considerations
- In circumstances of a tie, adjudicators should consider providing an award to those who have not previously held an NSERC USRA

Expected Quality of Training (/5)

	Points				
	0.5	1.0	1.5	2.0	2.5
Interactions with supervisor and/or research team	The project will not provide opportunities for interactions with supervisor and/or research team	The project is unlikely to provide opportunities for interactions with supervisor and/or research team	The project will provide some opportunities for interactions with supervisor and/or research team	The project will provide routine opportunities for interactions with supervisor and/or research team	The project will provide extensive opportunities for interactions with supervisor and/or research team
Training in research techniques and skills	The project will not provide training opportunities in research techniques and skills	The project is unlikely to provide training opportunities in research techniques and skills	The project will provide training opportunities in research techniques and skills	The project will provide significant training opportunities in research techniques and skills	The project will provide outstanding training opportunities in research techniques and skills

Evaluation notes:

Adjudicators are expected to give careful consideration to, and be sensitive to the impact of, personal circumstances (as outlined in the research interest and/or personal circumstances statement) when assessing the student applicant’s research productivity, GPA, and relevant work or research experience. Adjudicators may assign up to 8 additional points at their discretion as outlined in the Academic Excellence and Research Potential sections, above.