



# RESEARCH AND SPECIAL PROJECTS HANDBOOK

## Guidelines for Financial Administration

This reference guide is for new and current accountholders of grants and special project accounts covering common questions regarding the financial administration of their accounts.

**Updated April 2023**

## Contents

Purpose.....	3
Directory of Related Contacts.....	4
Responsibilities of the Account Holder .....	5
Understanding Your Account .....	6
How to Set Up and Close an Account .....	7
Research Grant Account Setup .....	7
Special Projects Account Setup .....	7
Account Closures .....	8
Revenue.....	9
Cheque Requisitions .....	10
Honorariums .....	11
Invoices .....	11
Travel Requisitions .....	12
Payroll.....	15
Procurement .....	16
Year End Processes.....	18
External Audits .....	19
My Budget .....	20
Security Access .....	20
Using “My Budget” .....	20
Budget Selection: .....	20
Drilling Down .....	2120
Budget Summary: .....	221
Frequently Asked Questions: .....	232

## Purpose

This reference guide is designed to be a resource for faculty and staff relating to the financial procedures for research and special project accounts at Mount Saint Vincent University. The major goal is to support and provide guidance in the administration of these accounts. The organization of this reference guide describes the process an accountholder would go through to open an account, receive and expend funds and close out the account. In addition, topics that create a lot of questions or common issues are also discussed.

Research is dynamic and so are the procedures and policies, therefore this guide is intended to be a working document. The handbook is subject to change and your comments and suggestions are welcome which will allow us to make changes in line with the needs of the research and special projects community at Mount Saint Vincent University. Please consult the Financial Services website for the most up-to-date version.

### **\*\*COVID-19 related changes\*\***

This guide has been updated to reflect procedural changes due to COVID-19 to account for employees working remotely. Look for the title as noted above to read through these changes. These procedures are a work in progress and may be adjusted over time while we are working remotely. Once we return to campus, we may continue with these procedures, revert to our pre-COVID procedures, or utilize something completely new. We are currently exploring options and will communicate with everyone should there be any changes. Thank you in advance for your patience and cooperation.

## Directory of Related Contacts

### **FINANCIAL SERVICES:**

#### ***Research & Special Projects* – [research.accounting@msvu.ca](mailto:research.accounting@msvu.ca)**

- Cathleen Madgett
- Valerie Brace

#### ***Accounts Payable* – [accounts.payable@msvu.ca](mailto:accounts.payable@msvu.ca)**

- Janice Young

#### ***Procurement Services* – [procurement.services@msvu.ca](mailto:procurement.services@msvu.ca)**

- Melanie Maclsaac
- Sheri White

#### ***Payroll* – [payroll.services@msvu.ca](mailto:payroll.services@msvu.ca)**

- Heather Grant
- Debbie Avery

### **RESEARCH SERVICES – [research@msvu.ca](mailto:research@msvu.ca)**

### **ETHICS – [ethics@msvu.ca](mailto:ethics@msvu.ca)**

### **PRINT SHOP – [print.shop@msvu.ca](mailto:print.shop@msvu.ca)**

### **IT&S - [helpdesk@msvu.ca](mailto:helpdesk@msvu.ca)**

- Christine Schumacher – [Christine.schumacher@msvu.ca](mailto:Christine.schumacher@msvu.ca)

### **FACILITIES MANAGEMENT**

- Cheryl Delorey – [Cheryl.Delorey@msvu.ca](mailto:Cheryl.Delorey@msvu.ca)

### **CONFERENCE SERVICES**

- Room Bookings – [reservations@msvu.ca](mailto:reservations@msvu.ca)

### **\*\*COVID-19 related changes\*\***

Departmental emails have been set up to ensure more than one person has access to information in the event individuals are sick, on vacation or unable to access email. This ensures the flow of information continues even if we are on reduced staff. Please email forms to the correct departments (i.e. payroll forms to the Payroll email, requisition forms to Accounts Payable, etc.) to ensure timely payment or action.

## Responsibilities of the Account Holder

When a grant or contract has been signed by the University and the sponsor, Financial Services will authorize the opening of a research fund. Funds will be held in trust by the University and are not the property of the grant or special project account holder. The account holder should not allow expenditures to be incurred before the grant or special project has been finalized. The account holder is responsible for all transactions in their accounts and is obligated to review them on a timely basis. Any errors or omissions are to be reported to Financial Services for correction as soon as possible.

The account holder must ensure that all charges authorized against funds conform to the allowable expenditures stated within their budget as well as the terms and conditions of the sponsoring agency. Charges must also comply with university policies and guidelines, such as hiring of staff or the purchase of goods and services.

As a general rule, overspending is not allowed for any research or special project account. An exception is made in cases where contracts require the University to spend first and be reimbursed later. Please inform Financial Services of these circumstances when they apply. It is the responsibility of the account holder to control expenditures within the limits of the budget. Any deficits over the total funding are the responsibility of the account holder and will not be absorbed by the university. In order for MSVU to continue to secure research funding, it is important to keep all supporting documentation. Good recordkeeping helps to provide control over financial aspects of the research project and provides an audit trail for the sponsoring agency.

The account holder is responsible for the completion and submission of all required non-financial reports. The award document should be reviewed to determine the nature and frequency of any required reports. Where no reporting policy is defined by the grantor, it is the responsibility of the account holder to recognize the implied obligation to provide information.

## Understanding Your Account

Your general ledger account contains 14 digits:

XX-X-XXXXXX-XXXXX

The first two digits are called the Fund Number. This Fund Number groups certain grants and special projects together as shown below:

- 40 – NSERC
- 41 – Internal SSHRC
- 42 – Internal/MSVU Funded Grants
- 43 – CIHR
- 44 – External SSHRC
- 45 – Research Contracts
- 49 – Other Research
- 69 – Restricted Special Projects
- 79 – Unrestricted Special Projects

The third digit is called the “function” and is used for external reporting purposes. For Research and Special Projects this will always be ‘0’.

The next 6 digits are referred to as a cost centre and are unique to each account. The first three digits in the cost centre are used to identify the department the account holder is associated with.

The last 5 digits in the account number is called a sub-ledger (or object code) and allows you to categorize your revenues and expenses within your account. For example, 53310 is used to classify undergraduate salaries and 63230 is used for general office expenditures. The first number in the 5 digit sub-ledger is used to identify the type of activity:

- 4xxxx – Revenue
- 5xxxx – Salaries & Benefits
- 6xxxx – Operating Expenditures
- 7xxxx – Indirect expenditures
- 8xxxx – Other Expenditures
- 9xxxx – Interfund Transfers

The list of available sub-ledgers is extensive. When you send in your request to open an account, use this opportunity to detail your budget as you want to track it. We will attempt to set up your sub ledgers to best match your budget in order to make tracking easier.

## How to Set Up and Close an Account

### Research Grant Account Setup

Once confirmation of grant funding is received, an account can be set up. This is done through a “Release of Funds” (ROF) form. Please be sure to fill out the form in its entirety and send to the Research Office. If you need Ethics, there is a separate application for that approval process. You do not need Ethics before you complete the ROF form. The ROF starts the process of opening an account during the Ethics review and in some cases allow for spending with partial approval for certain research activities. **We encourage this process to start as soon as you receive award notification as funds tend to arrive shortly thereafter and we need an account to deposit them into.**

Once Research Finance receives the completed forms an account will be set up. Your account numbers will be sent via email for your records as per the budget that was approved for spending. We will require a Signing Authority Form and My Budget access form for anyone other than the grant holder. Your account numbers will be sent via email for your records.

### Special Projects Account Setup

These are non-research accounts that may also contain funding from other sources (sales, sponsorship, conference registration fees to name a few) not directly related to the operation of the university or department. In order to open an account, you will need to complete a “Special Project Request Form” and forward it to Financial Services. Your account will be set up and the information will be sent via email for your records.

Once you have received either your new research or special project account number, you will need to fill out a Signing Authority Form and My Budget Form (for anyone other than the account holder) and return to Research Finance. Once Research Finance receives the completed forms an account will be set up. Your account numbers will be sent via email for your records as per the budget that was approved for spending.

For the Signing Authority Form, please fill out one form for each cost center. Be sure to indicate the primary and secondary signers along with the signing limit and specimen signature. If you would like to assign a temporary individual to sign on your behalf, please indicate the individual’s information and signing limits. The only way to activate the individual’s signing capabilities is via email from the primary account holder indicating a date range for which they will be signing for.

The “My Budget” forms allow access to an individual, therefore, there should be one form per person listing the accounts they have online access to. This form needs to be signed by the primary account holder.

The ROF form can be found online at:

<https://www.msvu.ca/research-at-the-mount/external-grants/release-of-funds/>

The Special Projects Request form, Signing Authority form and My Budget form can all be found in the Document Centre on the Intranet under Financial Services.

<https://msvuhfx.sharepoint.com/sites/Intranet/docs>

## Account Closures

The closing of a research grant or special project account occurs when:

- The project has been completed
- The fund balance is zero and no further installments are anticipated
- The end date of the grant has passed
- The grant has been terminated

Grants usually have a completion date by which all expenditures must be completed. Approximately two months prior to your grant expiry date, Research Finance will begin to remind you of the nearing end date and to finalize any spending. All services must be delivered, **and** invoices/receipts must be dated prior to the grant/project end date in order to be eligible for reimbursement. Any invoices with dates recorded after the closing will not be reimbursed. Research Finance will keep the account open for approximately two months after the ending date to ensure all expenditures and revenues have been captured. Once completed, Research Finance will complete a financial report if required. Any remaining monies will be treated as per the grant/special project agreement. If there is a deficit balance, the account holder is responsible for the over expenditure. Once the account is at a zero balance, the account will be closed.

\*If you receive an extension to your grant/project, please ensure that information is passed along to Financial Services so that we may update our records.

## Revenue

All cheques for grants and special projects must be payable to Mount Saint Vincent University.

If the account holder is collecting the funds and submitting them in batches for processing to Financial Services, please include a spreadsheet reconciling the amount in the batch to the spreadsheet to avoid errors. If you are creating a more detailed spreadsheet for your purposes please include at least:

- Account Number
- Date
- Signature of person confirming the balances match
- Credit Card expiry and type
- Itemized list of cash, cheques, Credit Cards submitted
- Total of batch being submitted for deposit

Please ensure the 14-digit account number is written on the back of the cheque when submitting cheques for deposit. If the cheque is returned NSF, then we will know which account to charge the amount back to.

All NSF cheques will be charged a \$20 NSF fee. All returned payments through credit card or cheque will be returned to the grant holder for collection.

Mount Saint Vincent accepts VISA, MasterCard and AMEX for credit card payments.

If the sponsor requires an invoice to release payment, please contact Research Finance. We will issue an official MSVU invoice. All invoices are to be issued by Financial Services.

### **\*\*COVID-19 related changes\*\***

We have set up an email address for all incoming direct deposit and incoming fund communication. The email address is [onlinepymts@msvu.ca](mailto:onlinepymts@msvu.ca). We are trying to get set up on direct deposit as much as possible but recognize there are instances where cheques will be the only form of payment. In these cases, we ask the cheque be sent directly to Financial Services department for us to deposit.

## Cheque Requisitions

Cheques are printed on Fridays and the turnaround time for cheques to be created is usually no longer than 10 business days. Financial Services date stamps requisitions as they are received and all requisitions received by Friday of one week will be paid on the next Thursday cheque run. This turnaround time is dependent on Financial Services receiving all necessary documents and information. Please note there are peak periods, such as when a public holiday shortens a week, vacation time or at year-end when we are processing requisitions for two fiscal years, which may result in this timeline being revised.

Cheque requisitions are used to pay for all expenditures except travel. Travel expense claims will be discussed below. Cheque requisitions relating to research and special projects should be sent to Financial Services for due diligence review before forwarding them to be processed. Any incomplete requisition will be sent back to the account holder. To ensure your requisition is complete be sure to include:

- The entire 14 digit account number
- The approval signature (as indicated on "Signing Authority" form)
- Social Insurance Number of payee if paying an individual for externally contracted services
- All original receipts

Please ensure you have separated out the pre-tax and tax amounts on the requisitions. HST is charged in in most provinces, while other provinces charge PST and GST. If you are in a province that separates the two taxes, please include the PST with the amount in the pre-tax column and the GST in its appropriate column.

Original receipts are required for all purchases. The receipt must detail item(s) purchased and confirm payment has been received. Please note the credit card or debit approval slip alone does not provide all of the required information. All receipts must detail the amount of HST and/or GST included in the cost. For some travel (especially if booked through an agency or Expedia.com) you may need to contact the provider in order to get the tax details.

Receipts should be **stapled** to the requisition. This will minimize the risk of losing or misplacing the receipts. Also, please display the receipts in the same order as they are entered on the requisition.

If you have lost a receipt or only have the credit card or debit approval slip, please fill out a "Lost Receipt Form" and attach it to your requisition. This form should be authorized by the same person that approves the cheque requisition or travel expense claim form. *This should only be used in the rare circumstance and not as an option.*

If you are filing a claim with receipts in a foreign currency, please use a separate requisition for each currency. When converting the currency into Canadian funds, please attach a copy of the conversion rates and the date calculated to the requisition. This could be a copy of a credit card statement or an online conversion calculator. A tool for calculating foreign currency conversion is available on the Financial Services intranet site, click on "Currency conversion to Canadian dollars".

Please fill out a separate requisition for each cost center. The exception to this is if you are splitting receipts between 2 or more accounts.

On the bottom left corner of the requisition, there is a Special Instructions section. Please use this section to tell us if you want the cheque held for pickup, or sent back to the department, etc. Otherwise, the cheque will go directly to the recipient.

The Cheque Requisition form can be found in the Document Centre on the Intranet under Financial Services.

<https://msvuhfx.sharepoint.com/sites/Intranet/docs>

### **\*\*COVID-19 related changes\*\***

All requisitions are being paid on Friday as per usual, however we are trying to set people up on direct deposit as much as possible. There is a form for this you can request when a business or individual needs to be set up. We are still creating cheques but would like to move to an electronic form of processing as much as we can.

All cheque requisitions are to be sent electronically to [accounts.payable@msvu.ca](mailto:accounts.payable@msvu.ca) with all receipts in electronic form. The file must be in pdf form and sent as one document. Please include a digital signature as your approval on the requisition and ensure all fields are completed (pre-tax, tax, total columns, description, 14-digit account number, etc.) Incomplete requisitions will be sent back to the sender.

Please keep all paper copies of receipts you have submitted in the event we ask for them later. Also keep copies of all your submissions to ensure you do not duplicate reimbursement. I suggest marking the receipt with a numbering system that matches the requisition either by a creation or submission date or your own numbering system.

## **Honorariums**

An honorarium is a lump sum fee paid for services in a volunteer capacity or for services for which fees are not traditionally required, such as speaker fees. These payments do not go through payroll (unless they are already an employee of MSVU) but they are considered a taxable benefit therefore, we require a SIN and full mailing address for tax purposes. As every cheque requisition needs backup information, there is a "Guest Lecturer" form that can be filled out for this purpose.

## **Invoices**

Invoices submitted for payment must have the following included:

- Name of company/person
- Address
- Date
- Description of service/good

- Pre-tax amount (without any reference to number of hours or an hourly rate)
- Tax (If applicable) and the vendor's HST registration number
- Total

The cheque must be paid to the individual/company named on the invoice. If the check is made payable to an individual, then a Social Insurance Number must also be included. If HST or GST is not being charged, the following statement must also be included on the invoice:

***I certify that for HST purposes, I qualify as a small supplier as outlined by Section 148 of the Goods and Services Tax Act. Further, should it be determined that I do not qualify as a small supplier, the consideration I receive will be deemed to have included HST and I will make the required remittances to Revenue Canada.***

## Travel Requisitions

Please use the travel expense claim form for travel related expenditures only. When filling out the form, make sure you include the travelers name and address, the details of the travel and the signature of the traveler. The claim also needs to be countersigned as per the table below. Please ensure the account number to be charged for the travel is written on the form.

Please note – if the person being reimbursed is different than the person travelling, we will need the traveler's signature to ensure they agree with the reimbursement, the payee's signature who covered the expenses as well as the grant holder's signature.

Traveler	Signer
Student/Other	Grant Account Holder
Grant Account Holder (if not a Department Chair)	Department Chair
Grant Account Holder (if a Department Chair)	Dean

When travelling within Canada, travel and per diem rates include the HST and GST. Please include the pre-tax and tax amounts on your requisition within the appropriate columns on the requisition.

Below is a cheat sheet on 15% HST, 13% HST and 5% GST for per diems and kilometers. For other provinces whose HST rate is different than Nova Scotia, please see the below calculation to calculate the HST.

**In a province charging 15% HST (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland & Labrador, PEI):**

	Pre-tax	HST	Total
Breakfast	10.43	1.57	12.00
Lunch	13.91	2.09	16.00
Dinner	22.61	3.39	26.00
Mileage (per km)	.44/km	.07/km	.51/km

**In Ontario, the HST rate is 13%:**

	Pre-tax	HST	Total
Breakfast	10.62	1.38	12.00
Lunch	14.16	1.84	16.00
Dinner	23.01	2.99	26.00
Mileage (per km)	.45/km	.06/km	.51/km

**In a province charging GST and PST, only the GST (5%) gets separated out (Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, NWT, Nunavut, Quebec, Saskatchewan, Yukon):**

	Pre-Tax	GST	Total
Breakfast	11.43	.57	12.00
Lunch	15.24	.76	16.00
Dinner	24.76	1.24	26.00
Mileage (per km)	.49/km	.02/km	.51/km

Per diems can also be calculated as follows:

For example, if you travelled to Digby, NS and are claiming \$225 for kilometers and one day of per diems, the calculation would go as follows:

Equation - 
$$\frac{\text{Total claimed amount}}{\text{HST or GST expressed as a decimal} + 1} = \text{pretax amount}$$

Example: Mileage - 
$$\frac{\$ 225.00}{1.15} = 195.65 \text{ (+\$29.34 HST)}$$

Per Diem - 
$$\frac{\$ 51.00}{1.15} = 44.35 \text{ (+ \$6.65 HST)}$$

Please note that provinces may charge different rates for HST. As with the cheque requisitions, the provincial tax amount (PST/QST) cannot be collected back and is included in the pre-tax amount.

For travel to the United States, the same meal rates apply but in US dollars. Please convert the USD into Canadian dollars on your travel requisition using an online conversion calculator such as OANDA, XE or your bank. Be sure to print the conversion calculation as backup to your claim.

For the per diem meal rate in other countries please refer to the Treasury Board Rates appendix D allowances found on the Financial Services intranet site or [http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pubs\\_pol/hrpubs/TBM\\_113/d-eng.asp](http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pubs_pol/hrpubs/TBM_113/d-eng.asp) or by searching Google for 'Treasury Board Rates Canada Appendix D'. Each country is listed with the meal rates broken out in that country's currency. Please see below for an example of how to read the chart:

Australia - Currency; Australian dollar (AUD)			
	City	Meal Rate	

Type of Accommodation		Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Meal Total	Incidental Amount	Grand Total (Taxes Included)
C	Adelaide	30.00	31.00	46.00	107.00	34.24	141.24
C-75%	Adelaide	22.50	23.25	34.50	80.25	25.68	105.93
P	Adelaide	30.00	31.00	46.00	107.00	21.40	128.40
P-75%	Adelaide	22.50	23.25	34.50	80.25	16.05	96.30

EXAMPLE: A researcher travelled to Adelaide, Australia and is claiming one day of breakfast. In order to determine the rate, use the "C" line as the travel is for commercial purposes. The "C-75%" rate is used on the 31<sup>st</sup> consecutive day of travel status at the same location or when apartment hotels/corporate residences/private accommodations are used. MSVU does not reimburse the incidental amount. Therefore, on the requisition, we would use the 30 AUD rate converted to Canadian dollars as the meal rate being claimed.

When you are travelling and claiming expenses for meals, you cannot claim both a per diem meal rate and an amount supported by a receipt for the same meal. This most often occurs when a hotel restaurant or room service charges the meal to the room. When claiming the per diem rate, you do not have to include meal receipts. If you are including receipts (which would usually occur if you are having a lunch meeting and are paying for another person's lunch), also include on the back of the receipt the purpose of the meeting and the individual(s) being paid for.

If you paid for airfare, hotel, or conference fees prior to travelling and have a receipt to show that payment was made, you can submit a requisition for reimbursement. This will be set up as an advance. Upon your return, when you submit your travel expenses, you will include all of your travel expenses (including the ones you were advanced funds for) and indicate the advance below to offset the re-entered expenditures. As well, we require that boarding passes be included as proof of travel. If the travel plans were cancelled, you will need to reimburse your account for the prepaid travel expenses paid to you. If you are travelling internationally, you can be advanced funds equivalent to your per diem amount for the country you are visiting. Please refer to the travel policy for more details on university travel.

**Please submit receipts within 3 weeks of being incurred.**

The Travel Requisition form can be found in the Document Centre on the Intranet under Financial Services.

<https://msvuhfx.sharepoint.com/sites/Intranet/docs>

**\*\*COVID-19 related changes\*\***

Please check the university's directive on travel during COVID making travel arrangements.

## Payroll

**All employees must be paid through Payroll, and not by cheque requisition.**

Before they can be paid, all employees must complete a federal and provincial tax form (TD1, TD1NS) and a Direct Deposit Form.

The Grant holder must complete a Grant/Special Worker Information Sheet for Term contract and Casual workers. This should be forwarded to the payroll office along with the employees' tax and deposit forms.

All payroll forms may be found on the Mount Intranet, in the Document Centre > Payroll > Forms.

If the individual is already an active employee, and you are simply adding them as an employee under a different Grant/charge Account, please send an email to Payroll advising them of the employees' name, the account number you would like to pay them from, their hourly rate, and date of hire. If you are not sure if they are an active employee please contact the payroll office.

Do not send a timesheet if you have not provided the proper documentation to payroll.

**Positions may be classified in several ways:**

Term/contract position. These positions usually are for a minimum of one year. A position requisition must be completed for term contract positions and forwarded to Financial Services. Aside from the project's approval signature, Financial Services is the only department that needs to sign this form, before it is forwarded to Human Resources.

Casual Workers – These are usually student workers. Casual workers would normally be paid an hourly wage and submit timesheets to the payroll department on a biweekly basis. The timesheet must include the Grant number and the grant holder signature. The payroll schedule is found on the intranet, in the document centre, under memos. If the employee will consistently work the same schedule, with a definite employment start and end date, you may request from the payroll office to have them set up on a salaried basis (no need to complete timesheets). Please ensure timesheets are submitted regularly, and in the fiscal year the work was completed.

One Time Lump Sum Payment – An Assistantship would be an example of a one lump sum, where payment is made at the end of the specified work term. A Special Payment form should be completed and time sheets do not need to be submitted. A common error on this form is the "Total Hours" field is not filled out - this information is required for Record of Employment purposes. A Grant/Special Worker Information sheet is not required.

When hiring international students, payroll must have the following information PRIOR to work being done:

- Copy of Social Insurance Number card showing the expiry date, or Government letter stating the SIN and expiry date. The SIN number for an international worker will begin with the number "9".
- A copy of their Student Permit

Below are the hourly ranges for students:

- Minimum Wage - \$14.50 (**effective April 1, 2023**)
- Undergrad - \$16 - \$19 per hour plus 12.00% (employer CPP, EI and 4% vacation expense)
- Graduate - \$19 - \$23 per hour plus 12.00% (employer CPP, EI and 4% vacation expense)
- Doctorate - \$23 - \$27 per hour plus 12.00% (employer CPP, EI and 4% vacation expense)
- Post Doctorate – Minimum \$50,000 per year unless otherwise dictated by granting institution

All payroll forms can be found in the Document Centre on the Intranet under Payroll.

<https://msvuhfx.sharepoint.com/sites/Intranet/docs>

### **\*\*COVID-19 related changes\*\***

All payroll forms are now submitted online to [payroll.services@msvu.ca](mailto:payroll.services@msvu.ca) .

## **Procurement**

It is the Procurement Department's responsibility to provide for the procurement of goods and services with the objective that they will be available at the proper time, in the proper place and at a quality and price consistent with the University's needs. The Procurement Department is responsible for selecting vendors, deciding on the best method of procuring the needed goods or services and using the appropriate pricing methods and terms to achieve the most favourable results.

The Procurement Department is responsible for initiating and maintaining effective professional relationships with vendors, both actual and potential. Vendors wishing to initiate business with the University are to be directed to the Procurement Department. In order to ensure the University's objectives are achieved and proper vendor relationships are maintained, close communication and co-operation between the Procurement Department and the account holder must occur. Requests regarding products or prices should be channeled through the Procurement Department. While preliminary investigations regarding products, prices and technical detail may be conducted by the end user for budgeting purposes, the vendor should be informed that it is for information purposes only and does not constitute a purchase commitment.

The account holder is responsible for providing the Procurement Department with a specification for the goods or services to be purchased, however the Procurement Department assumes full authority to question the specification in order to ensure that the best interests of the University are served. The Procurement Department will not alter specifications without consultation from the end user. Requests to sole source goods will only be entertained in cases where no other vendor is capable of supplying goods that are equal in quality to the specification.

If you are purchasing AV or IT equipment, please contact the IT&S department. They will assist you in determining what you will need and with a specification that is compatible with the university network and IT infrastructure. Even if the item is under the threshold of the \$250 limit of the procurement policy,

it is advisable to discuss your purchase with the IT&S department. They can help determine the products that are most suitable for your needs and compatible with the university's systems as well as give you the best value for your money.

If you are looking for furniture, please call Facilities Management for assistance. All furniture requests must be discussed and approved by Facilities prior to purchase.

Faculty and Staff members may purchase supplies for University use up to \$250.00 in value without the involvement of the Procurement Department. In this case the individual will submit a cheque requisition with proper approvals for reimbursement. Purchase requisitions are required for any order over \$250 and forwarded to Procurement for processing in accordance with Purchasing Policies.

When filling out your purchase requisition, please ensure you have filled out the 14-digit account number and include all information about your requirement. If your product is only available from a single source, please indicate all pertinent information such as part numbers and preferred vendor information.

All Procurement forms can be found in the Document Centre on the Intranet under Procurement Services.

<https://msvuhfx.sharepoint.com/sites/Intranet/docs>

**\*\*COVID-19 related changes\*\***

All procurement forms are now submitted online to [procurement.services@msvu.ca](mailto:procurement.services@msvu.ca)

## Year End Processes

The University's fiscal year ends on March 31st and the external timeframe is very short to complete year end procedures in order to prepare for the University's external auditors. Financial Services will send out a few notices closer to the yearend giving deadlines for submission for procurement, payroll, accounts payables and revenue so to recognize all the related revenues and expenditures in the proper fiscal year.

Here are the approximate timeframes on when to submit items and apply to all grants and special projects (however, these timeframes are especially important for those whose grants/special projects are ending on March 31):

- Procurement – All orders are to be in for the end of February and goods received by March 31 in order to be recognized in the fiscal year.
- Payroll – Please ensure that all hours worked up to the end of March are submitted on timesheets to the payroll office as per the payroll schedule listed on the intranet under Financial Services sub-categorized under Memo as shown below.

Department : Financial Services (24)		
Content Type : Forms (17)		
Content Type : Memo (3)		
	CANADA PENSION PLAN ANNOUNCEMENT	1/30/2013 11:34 AM
	Pay Advice and T4's - orientation information	2/9/2015 2:47 PM
	Pay Schedule 2015	11/24/2014 2:44 PM
Content Type : Policy Procedure Guideline (1)		
Content Type : Reference Material (3)		

- Accounts Payable – All requisitions are due around the first week of April. This is for all receipts and invoices dated on or before March 31. This applies to grants that are both closing and carrying forward to the new year.
- Revenue - All revenue received for the fiscal year must be deposited by March 31. If you are expecting revenue to come in or it is in transit, please let Financial Services know so we may recognize the revenue as a receivable by the end of March.
- Liabilities – If there are outstanding liabilities related to the fiscal year being processed (such as services performed but not yet invoiced or the invoice has not yet been received), please contact Financial Services so the liabilities may be accrued in the appropriate year.

## External Audits

The University is occasionally visited by external auditors and monitoring teams to financially review selected research and special projects. These visits are to ensure that agency rules are being followed and that funds are being used as per their guidelines. Any account holder whose project has been selected for an audit should contact Financial Services immediately. They will prepare and provide the auditors with the requested information. If an audit is conducted and expenditures are deemed ineligible, the account holder will be held responsible for covering these expenditures.

## My Budget

My Budget is a program that allows account holders to review their accounts in detail online. The functionality also provides the capability to drill down on the numbers to view detailed transactions that comprise totals. You can drill down to the actual purchase order or voucher.

### Security Access

Requests for access to “My Budget” will be processed through Research and Special Projects and require sign-off by the Account Holder. Each individual wishing to access “My Budget” will be assigned a username and password and will access the system through the Faculty Menu in WebAdvisor. The individual will only be able to access the General Ledger accounts within their responsibility.

### Using “My Budget”

Go to the MSVU website at [www.msvu.ca](http://www.msvu.ca) and select “WebAdvisor” at the bottom of the webpage. Click on that link and then select “Login” at the top of the screen. You will be prompted to enter your username and password. You will be asked to change your password the first time you login. On an ongoing basis, you can manage your password through the User Account Options. You will see four colored boxes – one for prospective students, one for current students, one for employees, and one for faculty. Click on the employee box (unless you have previously been set-up for faculty access). You will see three sections - User Account and two sections for Financial Information. The budget information will be located under the Financial Information section.

There are two options under Financial Information:

- Budget Selection
- Budget Summary

### Budget Selection:

Here you can choose which accounts you wish to review. For general ledger purposes, we use a fourteen digit account number as described in the “Understanding Your Account” section.

The first section allows you to choose the accounts you want to review. The more components that you enter, the more focused your selection becomes. For example, if you only entered the two digit fund, your selection would include all accounts for the fund (that you are authorized to access based on your security). The most common selection would be the account number containing six digits (cost.ctr).

You can choose to save your selection by ticking that box. The next time you log in your selection criteria will default to the saved selection.

Next, you need to choose your sort criteria by selecting the components that you wish to view. The most common sort criteria is COST.CTR, and GL.CLASS, with totals selected on the two components.

Finally, you need to indicate the fiscal year you wish to review. Currently, the only fiscal year available is the current fiscal year 2009/10 (2010). You can also indicate a start and end date that will apply if you choose to drill down on the actual numbers. This will help to limit wait time in cases where there are high transaction levels in the detail. When selecting dates use the date format of DD/MM/YY.

Please note: Only the current fiscal year is available. If you are looking for old fiscal year information, you will need to contact Financial Services to get the account details. If Financial Services is working on year end, the new fiscal year will not appear in My Budget until year end has been completed and the general ledger has been closed which is usually around June.

Once you have completed your budget selection criteria, click on SUBMIT.

Your Budget Summary report will now be displayed. The columns provided include:

- Account number (14 digits)
- G/L Description – short description for the object
- Budgeted – If a budget was set-up in our accounting system you will see the budget (target) for the fiscal year
- Requisitioned – You can ignore this column as we presently do not use online requisitioning.
- Encumbered – This column includes any transactions that are not yet charged against the account but funds have been committed. This usually represents items ordered through Procurement but not yet received or paid for.
- Actual – This column includes all actual transactions, vouchers paid, journal entries, payroll transactions, cash receipts etc.
- Funds Available – this column provides the sub-total of Budget minus Encumbered transactions, minus Actual transactions – the amount of funds available to be spent.

Anytime you see a number underlined, you can click on it and drill down to view the break-down of numbers comprising the summary number. After drilling down once, if you again see information underlined, such as a voucher number, you can drill down again for further detail. You will not be able to drill down on some information such as payroll entries, journal entries etc.

## Drilling Down

Drilling down lets you review more detailed information. You will be able to review the detail of cheque requisitions and travel expense claims which all have a reference number beginning with V followed by 7 digits. If you double click on the underlined 'V' number, you will get more information on the requisition. Many of the questions to Research and Special Projects are about when checks were produced, were they cashed, what the requisition was for, etc. Here are additional areas that may be helpful.

- The Voucher number - reference number that is attached to a specific requisition
- The Voucher Status - shows if the check has been reconciled back to the bank account (A reconciled status means it has been cashed)
- The Voucher Date - shows the date the entry was put into the system
- The Paid Date - shows when the check was physically created.
- Vendor ID/Name - shows who the check was paid to.

Payroll, Journal Entries and Revenue deposits are not shown in this detail. If you require further information on this, please contact Research and Special Projects.

Once you are through reviewing the information, follow the on-screen instructions to close the window.

The Grand Total number at the bottom of the screen shows the amount of funds currently available in your account. If the number under “Funds Available” on this line is negative then your account is showing overspent.

### **Budget Summary:**

This section is good for account holders that:

- have only one account
- keep the same sort selection
- review all the same accounts at the same time

Once you have filled in and saved your criteria in the ‘Budget Selection’, your information will automatically open in ‘Budget Summary’. The end result is exactly the same in both screens. The ‘Budget Selection’ option allows you to manipulate the cost centres to be viewed as well as the sort pattern of your data.

*Please note that Budget Summary will run based on the budget selection information that defaults from the last time you accessed that screen i.e. start and end dates for actual data.*

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### 1. Why does my requisition claim total and the amount charged to my account differ?

The difference lies in the HST/GST amount. The university claims back a rebate equal to 67% of the HST/GST from the government. The other 33% is expensed to your cost centre in addition to the pre-tax amount.

### 2. How do I transfer funds between accounts?

If you need to transfer funds between Research & Special Purpose cost centres under your authorization, please email us with the 14 digit number, the amount, and a detailed description for the transfer. If you are expecting funds from another cost centre not under your authorization, the appropriate individual needs to send the email with the necessary information.

### 3. What happens to my external grant when I move to/from another university?

Moving a Tri-Council Grant - If the grant is funded by the Tri-Council, you will need to notify the Tri-Council of your relocation in writing while your previous University's Finance Department will complete a Form 300 and Form 303. The new university will send a letter from the president of the institution or delegate, countersigned by the appropriate department head/ dean, giving the date of appointment and academic status at the new institution. The letter must include a statement agreeing to abide by all Agency policies and requirements relating to the Grant. Once Tri-Council approves the transfer of funds, the previous institution will forward the remainder of funds as indicated on the Form 300 to the new university and any additional installments from the Tri Council will be sent to the new institution.

Moving Other Funds - Please contact the granting agency for approval to transfer the funds to your new institution. If approval is granted, a letter from the agency should be forwarded to Financial Services to initiate the transfer to the new institution.

### 4. What do I do with any leftover money when my grant has been completed?

If there is remaining funds left at the end of your grant period, you may contact the granting agency and ask for an extension to fully utilize the funds. If you have exhausted the extension period(s), the contract usually states what should be done with the remainder funding. In most cases, the funds are sent back. Tri-Council funds are usually transferred into an internal pool of funds which is used for internal grants awarded at the discretion of the Research Office.

### 5. How do I set up a conference?

Running a conference can be overwhelming as there are many aspects to manage. Here is a list of items that will hopefully help you cut down on the confusion.

- Set up an account - As discussed previously, fill out a Special Project Request form and send it to Financial Services with all the requested information. Please include all funding sources and expectations from the sources (i.e. final reports, restrictions on funding, etc).
- Payroll - Set up any casual workers through payroll with the necessary forms.

- Room Bookings – Contact Conference services to book your room(s), order catering, and any equipment (such as tablecloths, chairs, staging, AV equipment, etc)
- Procurement – Any purchases over \$250 need to go through procurement. Please note that any printing should go directly through the MSVU Print Shop.
- Revenue – Please keep a detailed spreadsheet of conference registration as payments are processed to ensure registrants pay and are not double charged. All cheques should be made payable to ‘Mount Saint Vincent University’.
- Reimbursements – Please include only the original receipts with cheque requisitions. If the project is awarding lump sums of funding for travel, recognition, etc, a SIN will be required on the form for tax purposes. If a requisition is made for payment of services to an individual, we will need a SIN on the invoice. If the invoice is not charging HST, we will need the aforementioned “HST Statement” included on the invoice.
- Petty Cash – If you are anticipating the need for a petty cash box for the day of the conference (i.e. to collect cash payments for registrations or if you are selling items), please ensure you send up a cheque requisition in enough time to allow for processing and the creation of the cheque.

**6. What is the difference between an employee and self-employed?**

A question frequently asked is whether an individual should be paid through payroll or a cheque requisition. Below is a basic chart with common scenarios at the University:

Payroll	Cheque Requisition
All students being compensated for all employment duties.	
All staff and faculty working within their job descriptions.	A staff member working outside their regular job duties (i.e. A member of the Financial Services team asked to teach a yoga class.)
Anyone being compensated with an hourly rate of pay.	A sole proprietor or business charging a fixed amount for externally contracted services.

Sometimes there are circumstances where the line is fine between an employee and self employment status. Below is a list of questions that are asked to help determine the working relationship, however please talk to Human Resources before entering into a contract of services.

(Canada Revenue Agency Reference - <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/E/pub/tg/rc4110/README.html>)

- What is the level of control the payer has over the worker?
- Does the worker provide their own tools and equipment?
- Can the worker sub-contract the work or hire assistants?
- What is the degree of financial risk taken on by the worker?
- Is the worker required to make any investment in order to provide the services?
- Does the worker realize a profit or incur a loss from the services rendered?

**7. If I am travelling and am staying with a family/friend instead of a hotel, can I claim a daily rate to give them for their hospitality?**

When travelers stay with relatives or friends, a maximum daily allowance of \$25 may be claimed to cover related expenses. The relevant dates should be specified.