

# Alignment of Sessional Dates for First-Entry Divisions FAQs

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## What are sessional dates?

Sessional dates (also referred to as academic dates) are foundational for planning academic activity. Sessional dates indicate the start and end of terms, the start and end of classes, when final exams are scheduled, and administrative dates such as the last day to add a course and payment due dates. They are essential for generating student and teaching schedules as well as various processes that support teaching and learning.

## Why is this change being made?

Following a year-long consultation, several challenges with how sessional dates were established, were identified. Some of the issues include confusion with start and end of classes across different divisions, the lack of fall break for students and faculty registered/teaching courses across divisions, inequalities resulting from different payment deadlines and some students writing final exams, while attending courses in other divisions. There were also increasing challenges with scheduling and space allocation activities caused by different start/end dates for classes and final examinations.

The decision to align sessional dates for first-entry programs is to address the challenges. Aligning sessional dates with first entry divisions can greatly improve how students are supported at the University of Toronto, support faculty members teaching across divisions, and enhance system and process developments in a collaborative manner across divisions. These include:

- Reduced confusion around course change deadlines
- Establishing consistency with payment and refund timelines, improved experience for cross listed courses
- Streamlined messaging for external agencies that have date sensitive processes
- Streamline system updates and enhancements
- Improve room allocation processes
- Create opportunities for multi-year planning

The [Principles for Setting the University Academic Sessional Dates: Direct-Entry Divisions](#) is available on the University Registrar's Office website.

## Who is impacted by this change?

This change is being implemented by all-first entry divisions. All courses and programs across the tri-campus will align sessional dates starting in Fall 2024. Other divisions may choose to participate.

## When will the new aligned dates be implemented?

Fall 2024 will be the first term the aligned dates will be implemented.

### **Why is the 75% refund date being removed?**

The review of sessional dates highlighted several different practices across divisions for refund dates and different practices and structures to refund dates for the different types of fees assessed (e.g., program tuition fees, course-based tuition fees, ancillary fees, and incidental fees). To achieve alignment across first-entry divisions, some dates were moved later in the term, especially in the winter term, to better align with practices in the fall term.

The removal of the 75% refund date is to align practices for both program fees and course-based fee assessments and to align refund practices for incidental and ancillary fees. This will also reduce the impact on academic divisions by moving some winter term refund dates from November to January.

### **Why are classes starting on the Tuesday after labour day?**

Starting in Fall 2024, all classes will begin on the Tuesday after labour day. This is to ensure that there are sufficient instructional and exam days before the winter holiday break. The early start was necessary to align the fall term break across divisions.

### **What are flex days?**

Flex days are designed to give flexibility with scheduling. These dates may be scheduled as study days, make up classes for holidays/course disruptions or to ensure, where needed, that courses meet the number of contact hours required for accreditation.

### **Will this change affect new student orientation?**

Orientation planning is well underway and being led by the Office of the Vice Provost Students (OVPS). OVPS is working with all divisions and colleges to develop orientation schedules for Fall 2024.

### **The principles indicate that new term codes will be developed. When is this being implemented?**

This will be implemented in future term to be determined, there are significant system changes that impact many processes and government reporting that need to be reviewed as part of this change.

### **Will other divisions, aside from first entry, adopt the aligned sessional dates?**

There is an opportunity to establish principles for the creation of sessional dates that could also be implemented by non-direct entry divisions to further increase alignment where possible (e.g., term length, number of breaks, payment deadlines, etc.)

### **Will Summer term dates also be aligned?**

The alignment of sessional dates is being phased in. The first phase was to align fall and winter term dates. The second phase will be to align summer term dates. A timeline has not yet been established.