Application FAQs

What do I need to know to APPLY?

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS
- Master's degree in Civil Engineering. Applicants with a Master's degree in a cognate science may be admitted.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS
- If English is not a native language, prospective students must meet the English language proficiency requirements in writing, speaking, reading, and listening. The School of Graduate Studies requires the following minimum scores: TOEFL (paper-based): 550, (internet-based): 20, (ITB): Writing 22/30, Speaking 22/30, Reading 22/30, Listening (20/30), for a total of 88/120 (applicants must have the minimum score in each test as well as the minimum overall score), or (3) IELTS: 7.0 (academic module overall band score), or (4) PTE Academic: 65.

KEY DATES & DEADLINES
- Application deadline: March 1 to qualify for internal funding.
- Notification of acceptance: 2-3 months after the full application has been received.

Before you start your application, please review the Graduate studies application process.

What about FUNDING?

The level of financial support consequently varies among graduate students in the Department, with a guaranteed minimum level of $18,000. As part of the minimum funding package, you may serve as a Teaching or Research Assistant.

We encourage all students to apply for external funding from OGS, NSERC and other sources. Queen's will automatically issue a $10,000 award to incoming PhD students who have won federal government tri-council awards. For more information, see the School of Graduate Studies’ information on awards and scholarships or see what awards are offered through the Civil Engineering Department.

Why QUEEN’S?

As a PhD student in Civil Engineering at Queen's, you are part of one of the most research intensive universities in Canada. Our research program is internationally renowned with a wide range of research activities in all of the major specialization areas of Civil Engineering.

The Queen's graduate programs in Civil Engineering are home to some of the finest minds in the fields of civil and environmental engineering. Student have the chance to study engineering in an environment where multidisciplinary research and activities are encouraged and facilitated. Research activity in the Department is generally classified under two fields: Civil Engineering Environment and Civil Engineering Infrastructure.

The Civil Engineering Department's objective is to provide a broadly-based education in civil engineering which is intrinsically supported by world-class research in the areas of Structural, Geotechnical, Hydrotechnical, and Environmental Engineering.

Program STRUCTURE

PhD (4 years): 4 graduate term length courses, research, comprehensive oral examination and a thesis.

RESEARCH Areas
- Geotechnical Engineering
- Environmental Engineering
- Hydrotechnical Engineering
- Structural Engineering

Visit the Civil Engineering website to read about research areas and learn more about faculty members' research specializations. When you find a faculty member with similar research interests to yours, contact him/her and tell them about your interest in graduate work and related experience.
Achieve your Academic Goals

**YEAR I**
- Key priorities include forming your committee, coursework, discussing direction of your thesis research, and beginning your research.
- Meet early with your supervisor to set expectations and discuss roles, responsibilities, program requirements, resources, research/occupational goals, timelines, and any required accommodation plans.
- Look to Student Academic Success Services for a variety of supports.
- Complete safety training.

**YEAR II**
- Priorities include completing your comprehensive examination and pursuing substantive research.
- Set up regular meetings with your supervisor to discuss progress and obstacles to timely completion.
- Find your way through the academic process with the help of Expanding Horizons and the SGS Habitat.
- Seek experimental/professional development opportunities.

**YEAR III**
- Continue to meet regularly with your supervisor, review research progress, and write your dissertation.
- Check out the SGS Dissertation Boot Camp or Dissertation on the Lake.
- Use conference presentations to create, discuss, and explore ways to disseminate research findings. Learn from the Expanding Horizons Publishing workshop.
- Begin discussion of potential thesis defense examiners.

**YEAR IV & TRANSITIONING**
- Plan date of thesis submission for examination.
- Present your research to graduate students and faculty or at conferences and work with supervisor to prepare for defence.
- Review submission and examination guidelines.
- Secure necessary oral defence accommodations.
- Discuss career pathways, referees letters, and publication options with your supervisor.

Maximize Research Impact

**YEAR I**
- Think about audiences for your research.
- Complete ROMEO online module on research ethics if doing research with living people or sensitive topics.
- Apply to NIER, OGS, and other funding.
- Attend conferences in your field, based on supervisor advising.

**YEAR II**
- Present your work at graduate conferences through professional associations, or topic conferences.
- Expand your research audience through social media such as Twitter or a blog.
- Consider publishing elements of your research. Learn from the Expanding Horizons Publishing workshop.

**YEAR III**
- Continue to present at conferences.
- Consider participating in the 3 Minute Thesis (3MT) competition.
- Contact the Queen’s Media Centre for guidance on speaking to news outlets about your work.

**YEAR IV**
- Continue to attend conferences and connect with scholars in your field and with community partners.
- Continue public outreach through social media and the Queen’s Media Centre.

Build Skills and Experience

**YEAR I**
- Serve on departmental, faculty or university committees. Talk to the President of CECEG for tips on getting involved.
- Consider positions in student services, the SOPS or media outlets like the Queen’s Journal, CFRO, and the SGS Blog. Look in the AMS Club Directory.
- Use a Teaching Assistant or Research Assistant position to develop your skills and experience.

**YEAR II**
- Hone skills for non-academic employment by continuing involvement on committees and in community.
- Start keeping an eportfolio of your skills, experiences, and competences.
- For help with teaching, get support from the Centre for Teaching and Learning. Enroll in SGS901 or the PUTL certificate for more professional development in teaching and learning.

**YEAR III**
- Find opportunities for extra training through CUL, Expanding Horizons, Mitacs, or other sources to boost your skills. Investigate internships from Mitacs and other sources.
- Prepare for work or studies in a multi-cultural environment by taking QUIC’s Intercultural Competency Certificate.

**YEAR IV**
- Practice articulating the skills you have been developing in difficult forums: casual conversation, networking, and interviews. Get help from a Career Services workshop.

Engage with your Community

**YEAR I**
- Consider volunteering with different community organizations.
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- Connect to broader communities of engineers by joining one of the Engineering Society’s Design Teams.

**YEAR II**
- Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups like Material Matters.

**YEAR III**
- Do some targeted networking with people working in careers of interest. Through CECEGConnects on LinkedIn, the Queen’s Alumni Association, professional associations, and at conferences. Get help from a Career Services workshop.

**YEAR IV**
- Consider joining professional societies like the Canadian Society for Civil Engineers.
- Join groups on LinkedIn reflecting specific careers or topics of interest.

Launch your Career

**YEAR I**
- Finding career fit starts with knowing yourself. Take a Career Services career planning workshop or meet with a career counselor for help. Check out books like So What Are You Going to do With That? for advice on various career options.
- Start reading publications like University Affairs and the Chronicle of Higher Education, and visit non-academic labour market websites.
- Stay on the lookout for special events like Graduate Student Career Week to explore your career pathways.

**YEAR II**
- Start building your teaching portfolio including student evaluations, and seeking mentorship.
- Explore different careers of interest by reading alumni profiles on the SGS website, and using CECEGConnects on LinkedIn to connect with Queen’s alumni, or find alumni in various careers through CECEGConnects. For more information check our Career Cruising.
- Investigate requirements for professional positions or other opportunities related to careers of interest.

**YEAR III**
- Participate in hiring committees and attend job talks. Research academic careers of interest. Craft your CV and job application materials.
- Start focusing on non-academic areas of interest. Research organizations of interest and start putting together your industry resume and begin your job search plan.
- Check out the free online modules at MyGradSkills to help you plan your career.

**YEAR IV**
- Build connections with faculty outside of your department. Pursue interviews for faculty positions and apply for post-doc fellowships and positions.
- Apply to jobs or make plans for other adventures. Get help from Career Services with job searching, resumes, or interviews.
- If considering jobs abroad, research possible immigration regulations. If you are an international student interested in staying in Canada, consider speaking with an International Student Advisor.

What Will I Learn?
- A graduate degree in Civil Engineering can equip you with valuable and versatile skills, such as:
  - Knowledge and technical skills
  - Effective communication skills in multiple forms for diverse audiences
  - Information management: prioritize, organize and synthesize large amounts of information
  - Time management: Meet deadlines and manage responsibilities despite competing demands
  - Project management: develop ideas, gather information, analyze, critically appraise findings, draw and act on conclusions
  - Creativity and innovation
  - Persistence
  - Independence and experience as a collaborative worker
  - Awareness, an understanding of sound ethical practices, social responsibility, responsible research and cultural sensitivity
  - Professionalism in all aspects of work, research, and interactions
  - Leadership: initiative and vision leading people and discussion

Where Can I Go?
- A PhD in Civil Engineering can take your career in many directions. In Canada, less than 40% of all PhDs will work in post-secondary education – the majority will work in industry, government, or nonprofits.
  - Academia and Research
  - Consulting
  - Public sector
  - Manufacturing
  - Policy and Governance
  - Civil Engineering in the public domain
  - Law
- Taking time to explore career options, build experience, and network can help you have a smooth transition to the world of work after graduation.

Visit careers.queensu.ca/gradmaps for the online version with links!