Application FAQs

What do I need to know to APPLY?

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

- Honours Bachelor's degree and Master's degree with a major in Economics
- Grade requirements: first-class or upper second-class standing (B+/A- average). A minimum average of 80% is typically required to be competitive.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- List of the five most recent courses and marks in economics, math, or statistics.
- Two official transcripts.
- Minimum 2 academic reference letters (maximum of 4 references)
- A Graduate Record Examination (GRE) score may be required 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, (2) TOEFL iBT: Writing (24/30), Speaking (22/30), Listening (20/30), Reading (22/30); IELTS: 7.0 (academic module overall band score), or (4) PTE Academics: 65.

KEY DATES & DEADLINES

- Application due: January 15th.
- Notification of acceptance: Mid February and onward.

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

What about FUNDING?

The minimum funding guarantee for Economics PhD students is $18,000 per year, throughout years 1-4. However, most students receive substantially higher. In 2014-2015, the minimum level of funding for doctoral students within the department was $23,000. The funding package consists of scholarships and teaching assistantships.

We encourage all students to apply for external funding from OGS, S5HRC and other sources. Queen’s will automatically issue a $10,000 award to incoming PhD students who have won federal government tri-council awards.

Why GRADUATE STUDIES in ECONOMICS?

The Economics graduate programs prepare students for both applied and theoretical academic research, and for non-academic careers in both the private and public sectors. The PhD program involves a core of courses in economic theory and quantitative methods, together with a range of specialized electives chosen according to each student’s interest and designed to impart economic knowledge that is at the forefront of the discipline. There are opportunities to collaborate with the Smith School of Business, Policy Studies, Law and other departments.

Why QUEEN’S?

Economics at Queen’s is widely recognized as one of the leading Economics departments in Canada. The programs are challenging, rigorous, and of small to medium size. Graduates have had great success in initial job placements and in their subsequent careers. All students are assigned an office with a phone and a computer to provide network access.

RESEARCH Areas

- Macroeconomics
- Macroeconomic Theory
- Applied Microeconomics
- Applied Econometrics
- Economic History

Why is Queen’s Economics Department a fantastic place to be a graduate student? The coursework is challenging and the professors are approachable. The department hosts regular workshops in microeconomics, macroeconomics and econometrics and provides grad students with the opportunity to meet and engage with visiting researchers.

— Kevin Andrew, PhD

Program STRUCTURE

PhD (4 years): Course work, comprehensive written exams in Micro and Macro Theory, doctoral thesis.
YEAR I

ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS

- Key priorities include completing core courses and comprehensive exam requirements.
- By the end of the first year, students should be at the forefront in terms of the main theoretical and empirical methodology in all areas of economic analysis.
- Look to Student Academic Success Services for a variety of supports.

MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT

- Think about audiences for your research.
- Apply to SSHRC, OGS, and other funding.
- Attend conferences in your field.
- Apply for the Graduate Dean’s Travel Grant for Doctoral Field Research.

BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Serve on departmental, faculty or university committees. Talk to the Economics Graduate Student Executive for tips on getting involved.
- Consider positions in student services, the SGPS or media outlets like the Queen’s Journal (FRQ), and the SGSS Blog. Look in the AMS Clubs Directory.
- Use a Teaching Assistant or Research Assistant position to develop your skills and experience.

ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

- Attend departmental workshops regularly and meet with visiting speakers.
- Consider volunteering with different local community organizations, such as Martha’s Table, or Loving Spoonful.

LAUNCH YOUR CAREER

- Finding career fit starts with knowing yourself. Take a Career Services career planning workshop or meet with a career counsellor for help. Check out books like So What Are You Going to Do With That? or The Academic Job Search from the Career Resource Area for advice on various career options.
- Start reading publications like University Affairs and the Chronicle of Higher Education. Browse non-academic labour market websites.
- Stay on the lookout for special events like Graduate Student Career Week to explore your career pathways.

YEAR II

- Complete three research topics courses.
- Finalize a supervisor, work on second-year paper.
- By the end of their second year, students should have a deeper understanding of key issues and debates relating to their chosen areas of study.
- Find your way through the academic process with the help of Expanding Horizons and the SGSS Habitat.
- Seek experiential/professional development opportunities.

YEAR III

- Present your work at the departmental student workshop (ECON 999).
- Expand your research audience through social media such as Twitter or a blog.
- List yourself on the Arts and Science University Research website.
- Present your work at graduate conferences, through professional associations, or topic conferences.
- Consider participating in the 3 Minute Thesis (3MT) competition.
- Contact the Queen’s Media Centre for guidance on speaking to media outlets about your work.
- Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups.

YEAR IV & TRANSITIONING

- Continued to meet regularly with your supervisor, review research progress, and write your dissertation.
- Check out the SGSS 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 defence examiners.

- 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, references letters, and publication options with your supervisor.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

A graduate degree in Economics 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
- Perseverance
- 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 Economics 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 non-profits.

- Academia
- Public sector
- Banks
- Private research firms
- International organizations

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!

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* This map is intended to provide suggestions for activities and careers, but everyone’s abilities, experiences, and constraints are different. Build your own Grad Map using our online My Grad Map tool.