Where Can a Graduate Degree Take Me?

A PhD in English 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.

- Writing
- Editing
- Publishing
- Teaching
- Law
- Civil service
- Business
- NGO work
- Information technologies

Taking time to explore career options, build experience, and network can help you have a smooth transition to the world of work after graduation.

Why GRADUATE STUDIES in ENGLISH?

The English Department at Queen’s University is a professionally-oriented research department whose faculty members are distinguished by both scholarly prowess and teaching excellence. Students in the MA and the PhD programs take courses that involve a wide range of critical methodologies, historical periods, and literary genres; they also take a pedagogical and professional skills course that ranges from academic counselling to grant applications to mentoring undergraduate students.

Why QUEEN’S?

“I have been at Queen’s for both my M.A. & PhD, and I can say it’s an outstanding program. The library collections are among the best in the country. The size of the program is ideal […] and, probably most importantly, the faculty are both accomplished and approachable at the same time.”

– Robyn Carruthers, PhD

Offered by Queen’s since 1942, the PhD in English is designed to foster the scholarly development of our students; we prioritize mentorship, professionalization, and intellectual exchange while maintaining an abiding excitement about our students’ autonomous programs of research. The department is small enough that students get to know our faculty, yet large enough to boast faculty expertise in all major historical periods and a wide array of critical methodologies for literary study.

At Queen’s, graduate students from all disciplines learn and discover in a close-knit intellectual community. You will find friends, peers and support among the graduate students enrolled in Queen’s more than 150 graduate programs within 50+ departments & research centres. With the world’s best scholars, prize-winning professional development opportunities, excellent funding packages and life in the affordable, historic waterfront city of Kingston, Queen’s offers a wonderful environment for graduate studies.

Why KINGSTON?

Described by students as both “quaint” and “eclectic,” Kingston is big enough to provide all the conveniences of modern life, and small enough for students, staff, and faculty to feel instantly comfortable and at home. Kingston is an integral part of the Kingston community, with the campus nestled in the core of the city, only a 10-minute walk to downtown with its shopping, dining and waterfront.
## YEAR I

**ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS**
- Key priorities include developing relationships with members of your cohort and with your faculty mentor, and pursuing courses in your field of study while fulfilling historical breadth requirements, and completing language exams or language courses.
- Look to Student Academic Success Services and Expanding Horizons for a variety of supports.

**MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT**
- Think about audiences for your research.
- Complete ROMEO online module on research ethics if doing research with human or sensitive topics.
- Apply to SSHRC, OGS, and other funding.
- Attend conferences in your field.

**BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE**
- Serve on departmental, faculty or university committees.
- Consider positions in student services, e.g., the SGPS or media outlets like the Queen’s Journal, CFRC, or the SGS 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**
- Consider volunteering with different community organizations, e.g., Literacy Kingston, Kingston WritersFest, the World Island Writers Festival.
- Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups like Material Matters.

**LAUNCH YOUR CAREER**
- Finding career fit starts with knowing yourself! Take the Career Services Career Planning workshop or meet with a career counsellor for help. Check out books like 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. Browse non-academic labour market websites.
- Stay on the lookout for special events like the Graduate Student Career Week, or explore your career pathways.
- 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 QueenConnects on LinkedIn to connect with Queen alumni, or find alumni in various careers through Queen Connects on LinkedIn.
- Investigate requirements for full-time jobs or other opportunities related to careers of interest.

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

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## YEAR II

**ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS**
- Complete two field exams in your area of specialization in the fall.
- Assemble your supervisory committee (including supervisor and second reader).

**MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT**
- Attend or present at a graduate conference, e.g., a Violation: Representations in Literature and Culture, an Interdisciplinary Graduate Conference at McGill University.
- Expand your research audience through social media.
- Apply for the Graduate Dean’s Travel Grant for Doctoral Field Research.

**BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE**
- Hone skills for non-academic employment by continuing involvement on committees and in community.
- Begin working as a teaching assistant in ENGL 100.
- For help with teaching, get support from the Centre for Teaching and Learning.
- Enroll in SGS901 or the PUBL certificate for more professional development in teaching and learning.

**ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY**
- Do some targeted networking with people working in careers of interest, through QueenConnects on LinkedIn, the Queen’s Alumni Association.
- Position yourself in your field of study through QueenConnects, or other sources to develop a research academic career.
- List yourself on the SGS901 Centre for Teaching and Learning Competency Certificate.

**LAUNCH YOUR CAREER**
- Complete the Special Topic Dissertation on the Lake.
- Consider volunteering with different community organizations.
- Teach a one-term course as a Departmental Teaching Fellow.
- Practice articulating the skills you have been developing in difficult forums: casual conversation, networking, and interviews.
- Go to the SGS Blog or the Queen’s Alumni Association for advice on various career options.
- Get support from the Queen’s Alumni Association, or find alumni in various careers through QueenConnects.
- Complete and defend your dissertation.
- Continue researching and begin writing your dissertation. Year III is the one in which students often find it the most difficult to be productive.
- Ensure you have completed language requirements and the upper-year elements of ENGL 100.
- Check out the SGS Dissertations Boot Camp or Dissertation on the Lake for writing help.

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## YEAR III

**ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS**
- Complete two field exams in your area of specialization in the fall.
- Assemble your supervisory committee (including supervisor and second reader).

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## YEAR IV & TRANSITIONING

**ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS**
- Complete two field exams in your area of specialization in the fall.
- Assemble your supervisory committee (including supervisor and second reader).

**MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT**
- Attend or present at a graduate conference, e.g., a Violation: Representations in Literature and Culture, an Interdisciplinary Graduate Conference at McGill University.
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## EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

**Knowledge and technical skills in area of specialization**

- Communication: effective and clear in written, oral and multimedia forms, for diverse audiences.
- Information management: prioritize, organize and synthesize large amounts of information.
- Time management: meet deadlines and responsibilities despite competing demands.

**Project management: develop ideas, gather information, analyze, critically appraise findings, draw and act on conclusions.**

**Creativity and innovation: address complex, multifaceted challenges.**

**Perseverance: work through challenges to achieve desired outcomes.**

**Independence and experience as a collaborative worker.**

**Awareness and 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, collaborative worker.**