Why GRADUATE STUDIES in EPIDEMIOLOGY?

Graduate students and their work are an important part of an ongoing research process that provides the community with ways of understanding natural, cultural, imaginative, social and technological phenomena. Students gain skills to communicate scientifically, describe trends and patterns of disease incidence and prevalence, critically review scientific literature related to public health and epidemiology, collect and analyse data, and more.

The goal of the Epidemiology PhD program is to provide a common methodological foundation from which to conduct research in human populations across diverse health-related areas. The scope of the field of epidemiology is broad; it includes a range of content areas and methodologies. Depending upon their focus, students learn about various research designs, biostatistics, program evaluation, health economics, as well as how to design surveys or use administrative data.

“Combined with the intimate and supportive environment cultivated by the faculty, the Queen's Epidemiology program is an outstanding choice for your graduate career!”

– Atif Kukaswadia, PhD

Program STRUCTURE

PhD (4 years): Course work (3 core courses), comprehensive exam, and dissertation.

Research AREAS

- Epidemiology and Population Health
- Health Services and Policy Research
- Clinical Epidemiology

Why QUEEN’S?

At Queen’s, our established strengths are in the areas of cancer, injury, obesity, disability, and mental health epidemiology as well as research in various health services contexts including public health, primary care, cancer care and critical care. We also have some emerging strengths in the areas of Northern health, Aboriginal health, and global health studies.

Visit the Epidemiology website to learn about faculty members’ research areas. 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.
PhD MAP *

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PHD)

ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS

YEAR I

- Key priorities include completing required health and safety, animal, human research ethics training, any required coursework, and your comprehensive exam.
- 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 support.

YEAR II

- Set up regular meetings with your supervisor to discuss progress and obstacles to timely completion.
- Priorities include completing your research outline and proposal, and pursuing research.
- Check out Expanding Horizons workshops and SGS, Habitat for guidance through the academic process.
- Complete AODA training in accessible customer service.

YEAR III

- Continue to research and write your dissertation. Check out the SGS Dissertation Boot Camp – Dissertation on the Lake.
- Consider publishing elements of your research. Learn from the Expanding Horizons Publishing workshop.
- Use conference presentations to create and refine dissertation material.

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, references letters, and publication options with your supervisor.

MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT

- Think about audiences for your research.
- Apply to CIHR, NSERC, OGS, and other funding.
- Attend conferences in your field such as CSEB’s Annual Conference.

BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Serve on departmental, faculty or university committees. Talk to the SGS for tips on getting involved.
- Consider positions in student services, the SGS, or media outlets like the Queen’s Journal, CFRC and 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

- Explore how you can connect with your community through experiential opportunities on- and off-campus.
- Consider volunteering with different community organizations, such as the Queen’s Cancer Research Institute or KFL&A Public Health.
- Attend the seminar series put on by the Centre for Neuroscience Studies.

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 Planning a Scientific Career in Industry 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 Academic Success Week to explore your career pathways.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

A graduate degree in Epidemiology can equip you with valuable and versatile skills, such as:

- Knowledge of 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
- Experience and as a collaborative worker
- Awareness, an understanding of 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 Epidemiology can take your career in many directions. In Canada, about 40% of all PhDs work in post-secondary education – the rest will work in industry, government, or non-profits.

- Health Care (Hospital clinical labs)
- Academic labs
- Research labs
- Scientific supply companies
- Administration in academic, health care or government settings
- Teaching positions in academic institutions or the private sector
- Technical positions in academic institutions or the private sector

This is your chance to explore career options, build experience, and network so you can help you have the 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.
Application FAQs

What do I need to know to APPLY?

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS
- Master's degree in epidemiology or a related discipline.
- Demonstrated research competency, usually through a research-based thesis.
- Grade requirements: First-class academic standing (80%).

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS
- Statement of Interest (including area of research and potential supervisor).
- Transcripts and CV.
- Applicants with non-thesis based Master's training may include published, in-press or under review research papers as documentation of academic research experience.
- 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); 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 Academics: 65.

KEY DATES & DEADLINES
- Application due: January 31.
- Application review begins in early March.

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

What about FUNDING?

The Epidemiology department guarantees a minimum funding of $18,000 per year. There are also opportunities for paid research assistantships.

Apply for external funding from CIHR, NSERC, OGS, the Heart & Stroke Foundation, CBCF, the Department of Defence, the American Cancer Society and other sources. For more information, see the School of Graduate Studies’ information on awards and scholarships.