Graduate Studies FAQs

How do I use this map?

Whether you are considering or have embarked on graduate studies at Queen’s, use this map to plan for success in five overlapping areas of your career and academic life. The map helps you explore possibilities, set goals and track your individual accomplishments. Everyone’s journey is different – the guide offers options for finding your way at Queen’s and setting the foundation for your future. To make your own customized map, use the online My Grad Map tool.

Where can I get help?

Queen’s provides you with a broad range of support services from your first point of contact with the University through to graduation. Ranging from help with academics and careers, to physical, emotional or spiritual resources – our welcoming environment offers the programs and services you need to be successful, both academically and personally. Check out the SGS, HABITAT for available resources.

What is the community like?

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 110 graduate programs within 50+ departments & research centres. With the world’s best scholars, prize-winning professors and excellent funding packages and life in the affordable, historic waterfront city of Kingston, Queen’s offers a wonderful environment for graduate studies. Queen’s 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. For more about Kingston’s history and culture, see Queen’s University Discover Kingston page.

Application FAQs

What do I need to know to APPLY?

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

• Honours BA in Philosophy or equivalent.
• Grade requirements: an A- average is normally required to be competitive.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

• Statement of Interest
• Writing sample (maximum 10-15 pages)

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): 79, TOEFL iBT: 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 Academics: 65.

KEY DATES & DEADLINES

• Application due: February 2.
• Notification of acceptance: Early March.

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

What about FUNDING?

All admitted students to the Master’s of Philosophy program are offered a funding package consisting of a grant and a teaching assistantship. Apply for external funding from OGS, SSHRC and other sources. Queen’s will automatically issue a $5,000 top-up to Masters winners of 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 Philosophy Department.

Why GRADUATE STUDIES in PHILOSOPHY?

The Department of Philosophy at Queen’s University has faculty working in a wide variety of fields, including political philosophy, ethics, bioethics, feminism, contemporary metaphysics and epistemology, philosophy of language, philosophy of science, continental philosophy and the history of philosophy. The Department now has an exciting new MA program in Political and Legal Thought (PLT) that involves interdisciplinary work in Philosophy, Political Studies and Law. The department’s colloquium, which meets weekly during the term, affords the opportunity for graduate students to interact with distinguished visiting scholars in a wide variety of philosophical fields.

“The Philosophy department is both intimate and vibrant – offering the benefits of smaller classes with the advantages of a diverse faculty.”
– Christine Esselmont, MA, PhD

Why QUEEN’S?

Queen’s offers high quality graduate programs that give students both a solid general education in philosophy and opportunities for specialized work on topics of students’ choosing. Queen’s Philosophy faculty is very productive in a broad range of areas of research. The small size of the graduate programs allows for individual attention in a collegial atmosphere. The MA is a 12 month program, unique amongst Canadian MA programs to have courses and a thesis component to be completed in one year.

At Queen’s, the philosophy graduate students form an active and supportive community. They organize their own colloquium series at which they present work-in-progress, and they participate in departmental reading and research groups, such as the Political Philosophy Reading Group that meets regularly throughout the year. All students are members of the Philosophy Graduate Student Association which selects representatives to serve on various departmental committees. The historic city of Kingston, with its vibrant downtown, is a great place to live and study, and the University is nestled in the core of an attractive campus situated on beautiful Lake Ontario.

Program STRUCTURE

The 12-month Master’s of Philosophy is offered with 2 options:
• Option I: 6 term-length courses, thesis and oral defense.
• Option II (specialization in Political and Legal Thought): 6 term-length courses, four of which to be taken in the field of Political and Legal Thought, major research paper.

RESEARCH Areas

• Ethics
• Social & Political Philosophy
• Epistemology & Metaphysics
• Philosophy of Language
• Applied Ethics

We encourage you to identify an area of research interest and contact a potential supervisor before applying.

Visit the Philosophy Department website to read faculty profiles and learn more about faculty member 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, area of research interest and related experience. The email correspondence is also an opportunity for you to find out if the faculty member is accepting new graduate students to supervise. Consider meeting with your potential supervisor at departmental events for prospective students.
A graduate degree in Philosophy 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 social, 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

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