Application FAQs

What do I need to know to APPLY?

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS
- MA 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, (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: Academic: 65.

KEY DATES & DEADLINES
- Application due: February 2 is the deadline to qualify for funding, but applications will continue to be accepted beyond this date.
- Notification of acceptance: Early March

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

What about FUNDING?

Minimum funding guarantee for PhD students is $23,000. The department will nominate students for internal awards.

We encourage all students to apply for external funding from OGS, SSHRC and other sources. Queen’s will automatically issue a $11,000 award to winners of federal government tri-council awards for PhD studies. For more information, see the School of Graduate Studies’ information on awards and scholarships, or see what awards are offered through the Philosophy Department

“Philosophy is the study of general questions about thinking, being, knowing, possibility, and personal and collective existence. It encompasses a variety of subfields, including ethics, epistemology, metaphysics, and the philosophy of mind. The Philosophy Department at Queen’s University offers a vibrant and diverse community of scholars and students, with opportunities for interdisciplinary research and collaboration.” – Christine Esselmont, MA, PhD

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’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.

Why QUEEN’S?

Queen’s offers high quality graduate programs that aspire to give students both a solid general education in philosophy and opportunities for specialized work on topics of students’ choosing. Queen’s Philosophy faculty are very productive in a broad range of areas of research. The small size of the graduate programs allows for individual attention and a collegial atmosphere.

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 proud of its attractive campus situated on beautiful Lake Ontario.

Program STRUCTURE

PhD (4 years): coursework and thesis.

RESEARCH Areas
- Ethics
- Social & Political Philosophy
- Epistemology & Metaphysics
- Philosophy of Language
- Applied Ethics
ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS

YEAR I
- Key priorities include coursework, identifying your research interests and confirming your supervisor and committee. Consider how your coursework can contribute to defining your dissertation 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 the Student Academic Success Services for support. Attend the highly-regarded Philosophy guest speaker series: the Philosophy Colloquium.

YEAR II
- Write and defend your thesis proposal, and embark on your substantive research.
- Find your way through the academic process with the help of Expanding Horizons.
- Present work at the Departmental Research Seminar.
- Participate in the student-run speaker series: the Graduate Student Colloquium.

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 defence examiners.

YEAR IV & TRANSITIONING
- Plan date of thesis submission for examination.
- Present your research to graduate students and faculty 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

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 SSHRC, OSAP, and other funding.
- Attend conferences in your field.

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.
- Apply for the Graduate Dean’s Travel Grant for Doctoral Field Research.

YEAR III
- Attend or present at a graduate conference such as Waterloo PGS Conference, University of Alberta Philosophy Graduate and Postgraduate Conference, York University’s Graduate Conferences in Philosophy, University of Calgary Graduate Philosophy Conference.
- Attend conferences and connect with scholars in your field and with community partners.

YEAR IV & TRANSITIONING
- Continue to attend conferences and connect with your skills and experience.

BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

YEAR I
- Serve on departmental, faculty or university committees. Talk to the Philosophy Graduate Student Association (PGSA) for tips on getting involved.
- Consider positions in student services, the GGS, or media outlets like the Queen’s Journal, CFRC, or the GGS Blog. Look in the AMS Clubs 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.
- For help with teaching, get support from the Centre for Teaching and Learning (Enroll in GSS901 or the PUTL certificate for more professional development in teaching and learning).

YEAR III
- Apply to teach as a departmental teaching fellow in Year IV.
- Find opportunities for extra training through CTL, 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 & TRANSITIONING
- Practice articulating the skills you have been developing in settings outside the university, such as casual conversation, networking, and interviews. Get help from a Career Services workshop.

ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

YEAR I
- Consider volunteering with different community organizations, museums, and cultural studies groups, such as the Coalition of Kingston Community, Vision for Kingston, local food banks, Boys and Girls Club, Elizabeth Fry Society, Agnes Etherington Art Gallery, or the Marine Museum.
- Explore how you can connect with your community through experiential opportunities on- and off-campus.

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.
- Prepare for work or studies in a multi-cultural environment by taking QUIC’s Intercultural Competency Certificate.

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

YEAR IV & TRANSITIONING
- Consider joining professional associations like the Canadian Philosophical Association.
- Continue targeted networking with people working in careers of interest. Join groups on LinkedIn reflecting specific careers or topics of interest.

LAUNCH YOUR CAREER

YEAR I
- Finding career fits 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? 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
- Start building your teaching portfolio including student evaluations, and seeking mentorship.
- Explore different careers of interest by reading alumni profiles on the GGS website, and using Queen’sConnects on LinkedIn to connect with Queen’s alumni, or find alumni in various careers through Ask an Alumni. For more information check out Career Cruising.
- Investigate requirements for professional positions or other opportunities related to careers of interest.

YEAR III
- Start putting together your resume and begin your job search plan.
- Focus 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 & TRANSITIONING
- Build connections with faculty outside of your department. Pursue internships 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 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: 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 Philosophy 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 and teaching
  - Government sector
  - Journalism
  - Law
  - Private sector
- 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!