

# Urban Planning MPL Map

*Applying to and Navigating Graduate Studies*



GRAD MAP FOR MPL STUDENTS →

## Why GRADUATE STUDIES in URBAN PLANNING?

The School of Urban & Regional Planning (SURP) in the Queen's Department of Geography and Planning emphasizes excellence in teaching, with high faculty-student engagement and courses that capitalize on the considerable planning experience of our energetic faculty. This is a professional education program that also has a significant research component. It is officially recognized by the Canadian Institute of Planners as a key stage toward earning the Registered Professional Planners designation.

## Why QUEEN'S?

Your instructors will be a team of exceptional professors. The core faculty combine years of professional experience with strong research skills and a passion for promoting learning. Their books are used as core texts in planning courses across Canada and several have been honoured with university teaching and professional service awards.



About half of SURP graduates work in the public sector, with policy agencies at the federal and provincial levels or as planners at local and regional governments.

## Program STRUCTURE

There are three methods of completion for the Master's of Urban and Regional Planning:

- Method I: course work and thesis.
- Method II: course work and research report.
- Method III: course work only. Most students also complete a paid summer internship.

## Areas of SPECIALIZATION

- Environmental Services
- Health & Social Planning
- Land Use & Real Estate

Supervisors are matched late in the first year, based upon the final topic of the student's report or thesis proposal and the availability and research skills of the particular faculty members. Most students preparing a thesis or Master's research report find a research supervisor from among the regular or adjunct faculty of the School.

*"My experiences at Queen's University opened many doors for me, and prepared me for entering the industry with a solid background of planning theory and practical applications."*

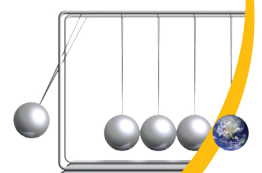
*– Michelle Taggart, MPL*



Over the past five years, more than 90% of our students have obtained paid professional internships during the summer term in the middle of the MPL program. And over 90% of our graduates have obtained planning-related employment within six months of graduation.



School of Graduate Studies  
Create an impact  
[www.queensu.ca/sgs](http://www.queensu.ca/sgs)



# Urban Regional Planning MPL MAP\*

MASTER OF PLANNING (MPL)



## TERMS 1 AND 2

## SUMMER

## TERMS 4 AND 5

### ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS

- Start with key priorities like developing your relationship with your Advisor, preparing your Plan of Study, and doing your required coursework.
- Identify a research topic and supervisor (Term 2), if student is undertaking report or thesis option.
- Apply for Exchange Programs and International Experience Awards (Term 2).

- Literature review and start research proposal.
- Complete a paid professional internship related to planning.
- Find your way through the academic process with help from departmental and [Expanding Horizons](#) professional development workshops, the department Grad Chair and the [SGS Habitat](#).

- Update your Plan of Study.
- Complete your research proposal (Term 4).
- Possible international exchange (Term 5).
- Complete your coursework, Master's Report or Thesis.

### MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT

- If you will be continuing graduate studies, apply for SSHRC and OGS funding for Year 2.
- Prepare a proposal for a conference presentation.
- Attend and participate in graduate seminars in the [Department of Geography and Planning](#).

- Attend or present at a graduate conference such as the [Canadian Institute of Planners](#).
- Consider participating in the [3 Minute Thesis \(3MT\)](#) competition.
- Expand your research audience through social media.

- Consider publication options for your research.
- Attend a major conference in your field, such as the [Canadian Association of Planning Students Conference](#) or the [National Planning Conference](#).
- Start to think about the audiences for your research (Term 5).

### BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Serve on SURP departmental, faculty or university committees. Talk to the [Queen's Graduate Association of Planning Students \(QGAPS\)](#) for tips on getting involved.
- Start keeping an eportfolio of your skills, experiences and competencies.
- Check out professional development workshops from [Expanding Horizons](#).
- Investigate internships from SURP, [Mitacs](#) and other sources (Term 1).

- Complete a professional internship.
- Use a Research Assistant position to develop your research or teaching skills.
- Consider positions in student services, the [SGPS](#), or media outlets like the [Queen's Journal](#), [CFRC](#), and the [SGS Blog](#). Look in the [AMS Clubs Directory](#) for more ideas.

- 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](#).
- Use a Teaching Assistant position to develop your teaching skills.
- Check out opportunities for extra training through CTL, [Expanding Horizons](#), [Mitacs](#), or other sources to boost your skills.
- Attend workshops hosted by the [Ontario Professional Planners Institute](#) or the [Canada Institute of Planners](#).

### ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

- Tour Kingston, Montreal, Toronto and Ottawa with SURP field trips.
- Join professional associations like the [Canadian Institute of Planners](#).
- Attend your first professional conference (Term 1).
- Participate in public visioning exercises for local projects.
- Explore how you can connect with your community through experiential opportunities on- and off-campus.

- Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups like [Material Matters](#).
- Consider volunteering with different community organizations, museums, and cultural studies groups, such as the [Social Planning Council](#).
- Prepare for work or studies in a multi-cultural environment by taking QUIC's [Intercultural Competency Certificate](#).

- Do some targeted networking with people working in careers of interest, through [QueensConnects](#) on LinkedIn, the [Queen's Alumni Association](#), professional associations, and at conferences. Get help from a [Career Services workshop](#).
- If you are an international student interested in staying in Canada, consider speaking with an [International Student Advisor](#).

### LAUNCH YOUR CAREER

- Finding a career that fits starts with knowing yourself. Get help by taking a [Career Services career planning workshop](#) or meeting with a career counsellor.
- Update (or prepare) your LinkedIn page (Term 1).
- Start reading publications like [Plan Canada](#) and browse planning job web sites. Stay on the lookout for special events like Graduate Student [Career Week](#) to explore your career pathways.
- Research careers of interest. Craft your CV or Resume and job application materials (Term 2).

- Explore different careers of interest by reading [alumni profiles](#) on the SGS website, and using [QueensConnects](#) on LinkedIn to connect with Queen's alumni, or find alumni in various careers through "[Ask an Alum](#)".
- Check out the free online modules at [MyGradSkills](#) to help you plan your career.
- If you are considering a PhD, explore programs of interest reach out to faculty, and apply to PhD programs and external scholarships. Check admission test deadlines if needed for further studies.

- Participate in hiring committees and attend job talks. Start focusing on areas of interest. Research organizations of interest and start putting together your CV or resume for potential positions of interest. Get help from Career Services with [job searching](#), [resumes](#), or [interviews](#).

### WHAT WILL I LEARN?

A professional degree in Urban Regional Planning can equip you with valuable and versatile skills, such as:

#### Knowledge and technical skills:

- Human Settlements
- History and Principles of Planning
- Government and Law
- Issues in Planning and Policy-Making
- Processes of Planning and Policy-Making
- Plan and Policy Implementation

#### Critical Thinking:

- Quantitative and qualitative analysis
- Identifying patterns and trends
- Thinking at various geographic scales
- Designing scenarios and plans

#### Social Interaction and Leadership:

- Mediation, facilitation, negotiation, and conflict resolution
- Inclusion of diverse people and values
- Team-work and team-building
- Relations to bosses, officials and the public

#### Communication:

- Written, oral, graphic communication
- Information technology (GIS; CAD)

#### Professionalism:

- Managing complexity, uncertainty and change, learning from practice, and handling ethical dilemmas

### WHERE CAN I GO?

A Master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning can take your career in many directions. Our students are equipped with a strong foundation for careers such as:

- City planner
- Community development officer
- Conflict resolution mediator or negotiator
- Doctoral studies
- Economics development officer
- Environmental planner
- Geographic Information System planner
- Health planner
- Heritage coordinator
- Industrial planner
- Land use planner
- Municipal, recreation, or park planner
- Planning director or consultant
- Policy or real estate analyst
- Regional planner
- Resource development officer
- Social planner
- Transportation planner
- Urban designer

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

# 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 130 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. 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's [Discover Kingston](#) page.

# Application FAQs

## What do I need to know to APPLY?

### ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

- 4 year Bachelor or Honours degree.
- **Grade requirements:** minimum upper second class standing (B+ average), with preference for those with a first class standing (A- average) in the final 2 years of undergraduate study.

### ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- Statement of interest.
- Two letters of reference.
- Numeracy skills and the ability to solve basic math problems using algebra and geometry.
- 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 (international students)/March 1 (domestic students) but applications are accepted on a rolling basis.
- **Notification of acceptance:** Typically 6 weeks after the application is received.

Before you start your application, please review the [Graduate studies application process](#).

## What about FEES?

There is no guaranteed funding for MPL students. However, students may apply for Teaching Assistant and Research Assistant positions in the Department of Geography and Planning. Most students also undertake a paid professional internship in the summer between first and second year.

Many students typically receive Queen's Graduate Awards, based on class standing. For more information, see the School of Graduate Studies' information on [awards and scholarships](#).



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