Applying to and Navigating Graduate Studies

Why GRADUATE STUDIES in REHABILITATION SCIENCE?

Graduate programs in Rehabilitation Science at Queen's University stress the multidisciplinary contribution of many health professions and disciplines to rehabilitation. The focus is on understanding how people who experience disability can be enabled to live full and satisfying lives as members of their community, considering a broad range of individual, community, and societal factors. Students can expect to be introduced to a broad spectrum of rehabilitation related concerns including function and participation across a wide range of health conditions and disabilities (for example neurotrauma, mental health, intellectual disabilities), policy development, professional education, and interdisciplinary and intersectoral services. The program attracts students from varied backgrounds including occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech-language pathology, kinesiology, psychology, social work, arts & humanities, nursing, education, epidemiology, law, engineering, and others.

Why QUEEN’S?

The School of Rehabilitation Therapy at Queen's University is committed to leading and inspiring positive changes that transform lives through rehabilitation research, education, and practice. As part of this commitment, part of our core mission is to educate rehabilitation scientists who contribute to health and well-being globally through collaboration, creativity, and the discovery of new knowledge. We are recognized nationally and internationally for our excellent faculty, high-quality professional and research programs, and the ways in which our scholarship contributes to the lives of people affected by or at risk of disability.

“Completing graduate studies in Rehabilitation Science at Queen’s has provided me the opportunity to develop new research skills and build my confidence as a leader. I'm grateful for the opportunity to learn and work alongside a dynamic group of students, clinicians, and researchers within the School of Rehabilitation Therapy.”

– Kyle Vader, PT, PhD

Program STRUCTURE

PhD in Rehabilitation Science students are required to take 2 core courses (6 credits), 2 elective courses (6 credits), a comprehensive examination, a proposal presentation, and a written thesis with an oral defense over 48 months (4 years).

RESEARCH Areas

- Community-Based Rehabilitation
- Disability & Participation
- Health Professional Education
- Human Mobility & Motor Control Across Lifespan
- Military and Veteran Health
- Moving Knowledge into Practice and Policy
- Workplace Health & Accommodation

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

PhD Map

2023-2024

How to use this map
Use the 5 rows of the map to explore possibilities and plan for success in the five overlapping areas of career and academics. The map just offers suggestions — you don’t have to do all it; to make your own custom map, use the My Grad Map tool.

ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS

YEAR I

- Key priorities include your relationship with your supervisor, completing required health and safety, animal, human research ethics training, any required coursework, and developing your research proposal.
- Meet early with your supervisor to set expectations and discuss roles, responsibilities, program requirements, resources, research/occupational goals, timelines, and any required pre-graduation plans.

YEAR II

- Priorities include completing your comprehensive examination and pursuing research.
- Find your way through the academic process with the help of School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs professional development workshops and GSSPA website.
- Participate in RHBS 903 Academic and Professional Development for Ph.D. Students.

YEAR III

- Continue to research and write your dissertation. Check out the GSSPA writing boot camp.
- Consider publishing elements of your research.
- Use conference presentations to create and refine dissertation material.

YEAR IV

- 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.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

A graduate degree in Rehabilitation Science can equip you with:
- 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 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 leading people and discussion

WHERE CAN I GO?

A PhD in Rehabilitation Science 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 (research and teaching)
- Agencies, government, not-for-profit, or private - that support clinical care, research or workforce related to health or disability
- Clinical/Program Research and evaluation
- International community-based rehabilitation
- Policy development
- Program development at the local, national or international level

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

LAUNCH YOUR CAREER

YEAR I

- Finding career fit starts with knowing yourself. Take a Career Services career planning workshop or meet with a career educator and coach for help. Check out 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 School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs 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 using Queen’s Connects on LinkedIn to connect with Queen’s alumni. For more information check out Career Corner.
- Investigate requirements for professional positions or other opportunities related to careers of interest.

YEAR III

- Participate in hiring committees and attend job talks. Research academic careers of interest. Craft your CV and job application materials.
- Start focusing on non-academic areas of interest. Research organizations of interest and start putting together your industry resume and begin your job search plan.

YEAR IV

- Build connections with faculty outside of your department. Pursue interviews 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 your job search.
- 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.

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PhD Map

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Graduate Studies FAQs

How do I make the most of my time at Queen’s?

Use the Grad Map to plan for success in five overlapping areas of your career and academic life. Everyone’s journey is different - the ideas on the maps are just suggestions to help you explore possibilities. For more support with your professional development, take advantage of the SGSPA professional development framework and the new Individual Development Plan (IDP) process to set customized goals to help you get career ready when you graduate.

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 SGSPA website 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

• High academic standing in a completed Master’s degree in Rehabilitation Science or a related field. Contact the program director and potential supervisors to discuss how your studies and experiences to date may be related to rehabilitation sciences.
• The entire transcript is reviewed but particular attention is given to your last 20 courses and how well you have progressed throughout your academic career. Preference is given to students with higher academic standing.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

• If English is not a native language, prospective students must meet the English language proficiency requirements in writing, speaking, reading, and listening. The following minimum scores are required: (1) TOEFL iBT: Writing (24/30); Speaking (22/30); Reading (22/30); Listening (20/30). Applicants must have the minimum score in each test as well as the minimum overall score, or (2) IELTS: 7.0 (academic module overall band score and a 7.0 for each test band), or (3) PTE Academics: 65, or (4) CAEL CE -70 (minimum overall score).

KEY DATES & DEADLINES

• Application due: February 15th.
• Notification of acceptance: Late April/Early May.

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

What about FUNDING?

PhD students in Rehabilitation Science are offered a minimum funding of $22,000 per year.

We encourage all students to apply for external funding from OGS, CIHR, SSHRC, and other sources. Queen's will automatically issue a one time $10,000 award to incoming PhD students who have won federal government tri-council awards. For more information, see the School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs’ information on awards and scholarships.

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