WHERE ART MEETS SCIENCE

Why GRADUATE STUDIES in ART CONSERVATION?

Art conservation is an exciting and challenging multidisciplinary field involving the examination, interpretation, analysis and conservation of cultural, historic and artistic objects.

Professional conservators and conservation scientists must rely on their knowledge of both the humanities and the sciences to understand the creation and production of material culture in past and present contexts to ensure its preservation for the future.

“...The instruction and education I received at Queen’s has given me unique treatment and research experience that allows me to be confident when challenging myself as a conservator. The co-operations and deep understanding between all the students and the instructors created a supportive and irreplaceable learning environment that I am very thankful to have been a part of.”

– Kaslyne O’Connor, MAC

Why QUEEN’S?

Queen’s University offers Canada’s only Master’s degree program in Art Conservation. Projects and research topics are individually designed to suit the background and interests of students and faculty. Students have opportunities to work with humanities, science and engineering departments at Queen’s, and may undertake projects with museums, galleries, archives, the Canadian Conservation Institute and industrial partners.

Program STRUCTURE

There are two possible streams within the Art Conservation Program:

- Treatment stream: A four-term program of theoretical and practical study on campus, advanced lecture courses, lab work in conservation of heritage objects, a research project, and two 12-week off-campus summer internships.
- Research stream: A two-year, full-time research program is offered to science and engineering graduates, leading to a career in conservation science. A one-year, mid-career research stream is also available to practising conservators with at least five years of experience.

TREATMENT Streams

- Conservation of paintings
- Conservation of artifacts
- Conservation of paper, photographic materials, and new media

RESEARCH Areas

- History of technology
- Degradation and conservation of materials
- Other conservation-related areas

Treatment-stream students need to apply to one of the three treatment streams. Research students should visit the the Art Conservation Program website to learn more about faculty members and their research areas. We encourage you to contact a potential supervisor before applying.
2022-2023
Art Conservation MAC MAP
MASTER OF ART CONSERVATION (MAC)

GETTING STARTED

- Start with key priorities like developing your relationship with your supervisor, and doing your coursework and labwork.
- Meet early with your supervisor to set expectations and discuss roles, responsibilities, program requirements, resources, research/occupational goals, timelines, and any required accommodation plans.

INTERMEDIATE STAGE

- Complete your coursework, begin to research and write your research project or thesis.
- Look into taking a 12-week summer internship in Canada or abroad.
- Set up regular meetings with your supervisor to discuss progress and obstacles impeding timely completion.

WRAPPING UP

- Complete your coursework, Master's Research Project, or Thesis.

MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT

- Start to think about your research interests and the audiences for the research.
- If you will be continuing graduate studies, apply for SSHRC, NSERC and OGS funding.
- Be aware of application deadlines as most external awards applications (SSHRC, etc) are due in mid-November.

BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Serve on departmental, faculty or university committees. Talk to the Graduate Visual Culture Association for tips on getting involved.
- Check out professional development workshops from SGSPA.
- Engage in professional development activities through organizations such as the Kingston Association of Museums, Canadian Association for Conservation of Cultural Property (ANAGPIC).

ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

- Please visit and, if possible, get experience in a conservation laboratory.
- Consider joining groups like the Emerging Conservators Committee in the Canadian Association for Conservation of Cultural Property (CAC) and accessing online resources such as conservation online (CoOL).
- Consider volunteering with different community organizations, museums, etc., such as the Kingston Association of Museums, the Kingston Museum of Healthcare and the Queen's Archives.

LAUNCH YOUR CAREER

- Finding a career that fits starts with knowing yourself. Get help by taking a Career Services workshop or meeting with a career counsellor.
- 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.
- Check admission test deadlines if needed for further studies.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

A graduate degree in Art Conservation 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 and analyze information, 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 Master's degree in Art Conservation can take your career in many directions. Some of our MAC students choose to continue their academic inquiry with a PhD. Our Master's students are equipped with a strong foundation for careers in:
- Conservation research institutions
- Art galleries
- Museums
- Archives
- Other cultural institutions

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 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
- Four-year Honours Bachelor’s degree in humanities, sciences or engineering.
- One full-year, post-secondary course in fine art studio or workshop practice.
- Three terms of chemistry lectures and labs at the university level, including organic chemistry.
- Applicants with a humanities background must have a minimum of five full-year courses in art history, ethnology, archaeology, or equivalent.
- Applicants with a science background must have a minimum of two full-year courses in art history, ethnology, archaeology, or equivalent.
- Grade requirements: minimum B+ average (3.3 GPA).

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS
- Good visual sensitivity and manual skills.
- Experience in conservation is highly recommended.
- 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, AND ACCEPTANCES
- Application due: January 15th.
- Interviews: Held in March.
- Number Admitted: Approximately 12 students are admitted for the Treatment Stream and 1-2 admitted for the Research Stream per year.

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

What about FUNDING?

Funding is available through Queen's Graduate Awards and other internal awards. Some students may qualify for teaching assistantships in their second year. See the School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs' information on awards and scholarships.