Application FAQs

What do I need to know to APPLY?

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS
• Honours Bachelor's degree.
• Grade requirements: minimum upper second class standing (B+ average of all courses).

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS
• Statement of research interest.
• Curriculum Vitae.
• If English is not your native language, prospective students must meet the **English language proficiency requirements** in writing, speaking, reading, and listening. You will need (1) a total TOEFL (paper-based) score of at least 600, or (2) TOEFL iBT: Writing 24/30, Speaking 22/30, Reading 22/30, Listening 20/30, for a total of 84/120 (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: January 31 (Domestic & International students), which must include all supporting documents. However, late applications may be considered on a rolling basis until all spots are filled.
• Notification of acceptance: Beginning in March.

Graduate applications are done online. Before you start your application, please review the Graduate studies application process.

What about FUNDING?

Master’s students in the Geography program are guaranteed minimum funding of $15,000 per year for two years. Minimum funding levels are, however, generally higher than the guaranteed minimum. International students will be provided with an additional $5,000 per year to help offset higher tuition costs. This basic funding package consists of graduate awards and teaching assistantships. Additional funding is highly likely. Apply for external funding from NSERC, SSHRC and other sources. Queen’s will automatically issue a one-time award to incoming Masters students who have won federal government tri-council awards. For more information, see the School of Graduate Studies’ information on awards and scholarships.

For detailed information about how to apply, please visit the Graduate Admissions website.

Why GRADUATE STUDIES in GEOGRAPHY?

Explore critical questions about our environment and our society as you develop research skills. Study with award-winning faculty in an interdisciplinary department that combines fundamental analysis and research with practical, applied approaches to planning and implementation.

Why QUEEN’S?

The Department of Geography and Planning at Queen’s University offers a comprehensive graduate program based on innovative research and strong collaboration between faculty and graduate students. Our specialized Earth System Science labs include GIS and remote-sensing labs equipped with a wide range of the latest software and hardware, and facilities with the latest field equipment and laboratory instrumentation. In human geography, we provide strong support for fieldwork that engages topics of public interest from the community to the national and international scale. Many of our students work on questions of global significance, including development projects in Latin America or Africa, ecological change in the Arctic or the relationship between international migration and human rights. We provide a place for graduate students to learn and excel within a vibrant and supportive intellectual community.

“Studying Geography has allowed me to go places I never thought I would be able to go.”

– Rebecca Edwards, MSc
What Will I Learn?
A graduate degree in Geography 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, 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 Master's degree in Geography can take your career in many directions. Many of our MA and MSc students choose to continue their academic inquiry with a PhD. Our Master's students are equipped with a strong foundation for careers in:
- Further academic studies
- Consulting
- Geographic information systems
- International development
- Government
- Policy research
- Taking time to explore career options, build experiences, and network can help you have a smooth transition to the world of work after graduation.

Fall of Year 1
- Start with key priorities like developing your relationship with your supervisor, and doing your coursework.
- Consider how your course papers can contribute to your thesis.
- Find your way through the academic process with the help of departmental and Expanding Horizons professional development workshops, the department Grad Chair and the SGS Habitat.
- Begin to research and write your thesis proposal as part of GPHY 857.

Summer of Year 1 / Fall of Year 2
- Complete your coursework.
- Start research with goal of completing most of your research by January of your second year.
- Attend or present at a graduate conference such as the Canadian Association of Geographers Canada and the SGS Blog, look in the AMS Clubs Directing for more ideas.
- Attend and participate in graduate seminars in our department and in other departments such as the Policy Speakers Series and the Environmental Studies Speakers Series.
- Consider participating in the 3 Minute Thesis competition.
- Expanding your research audience through social media.

End of Winter Term Year 2
- Complete your thesis.
- Publish elements of your research if possible. Learn from the Expanding Horizons Publishing workshop.
- Present in departmental and Geography Graduate Student Council Emerging Research Seminar series.
- Consider publication options for your research.
- Attend a major conference in your field, such as the American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting, or GeoConvention.
- Set up a meeting with the School of Graduate Studies for a Grad Chat to discuss your research interests.
- Consider putting an article in The Conversation.

Achieve Your Academic Goals
- Start to think about the audiences for your research.
- If you will be continuing graduate studies, apply for SSHRC, NSERC, OGS and any other award funding for which you are eligible.
- Attend departmental and Geography Graduate Student Council Emerging Research Seminars.
- In second term, complete ROMEO online module on research ethics if doing research with living people or sensitive topics.

Maximize Research Impact
- Start keeping an ePortfolio of your skills, experiences and competencies.
- Use a Research Assistant, Research Fellow, or Teaching Assistant position to develop your research or teaching skills.
- For help with teaching, get support from the Centre for Teaching and Learning. Enroll in S05902 or the PULT certificate for more professional development in teaching and learning.
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Build Skills and Experience
- Consider positions in student services, the SGPS, or media outlets like the Queen's Journal, CKRI, Studio Q and the SGS Blog. Look in the AMS Clubs Directory for more ideas.
- Serve on departmental, faculty or university committees. Join the departmental Graduate Student Council and seek ways to get involved.
- Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups.
- Prepare for work or studies in a multi-cultural environment by taking the Intercultural Awareness Training Certificate offered by Queen's and Four Directions Indigenous Student Centre.
- If you are an international student interested in staying in Canada, consider speaking with an International Student Advisor.

Engage With Your Community
- Consider volunteering with different community organizations, such as Sustainable Kingston, Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve, and Kingston Community Health Centres.
- Take advantage of the numerous facilities and laboratories and learn what research is occurring in the various departmental research groups.
- Get involved in student or young researchers organizations (e.g. through the Canadian Geophysical Union, the Canadian Association of Geographers, or the Association of Polar Early Career Scientists).
- 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, and interviews.

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. Check out books like So What Are You Going to Do With That? or The Academic Job Search 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.
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Expanding your research audience through social media.
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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.
- Check out opportunities for extra training through CTL, Expanding Horizons, Mitacs, or other sources to boost your skills.
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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.
- Consider joining professional associations like the Canadian Association of Geographers if you have not already.
- Engage in professional groups such as GoGeomatics.

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