Application FAQs

What do I need to know to APPLY?

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS
- Master’s degree in Cultural Studies or a related discipline from a recognized university.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS
- Writing sample
- Statement of Interest
- Video documentation of relevant work (if applicable)
- CV
- Demonstrated proficiency in a language other than English (if needed)

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 meet 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.

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 SOS 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.

What about FUNDING?
The minimum funding guarantee for Cultural Studies PhD students is $20,000 per year, throughout years 1-4. The funding package may be comprised of Queen’s Graduate Awards, Teaching Assistantships, and named internal Fellowships. The minimum funding guarantee for Cultural Studies PhD students is $20,000 per year,

- Notification of acceptance: March 31st.
- Application due: January 31st to qualify for funding.
- Before you start your application, please review the Graduate studies application process.

Why GRADUATE STUDIES in CULTURAL STUDIES?
Cultural Studies is graduate school reinvented for the 21st century. We are a self-governing, interdisciplinary graduate program for people who want to develop the tools to critically understand the world, and change it. The complexity of contemporary culture means that more than ever before society needs people trained in multiple disciplines, theories and practices. We work with communities throughout and beyond the university to create new forms and methods of research that could not be done in traditional departments. Our students write plays and curate exhibitions. They travel to Argentina, China and Turkey for their research. They win the highest academic accolades, including Fulbright and Vanier scholarships.

Why QUEEN’S?
Comprising over 100 students and over 90 distinguished faculty from 22 disciplines, Cultural Studies is an innovative and growing interdisciplinary research program. Our programs include opportunities for cultural production and community-activist fieldwork as options alongside traditional academic research. We are also committed to a diversity of students and faculty and to the global expertise that they bring to the cultural and academic fields. Students participate equally with faculty in the program’s governance.

RESEARCH Areas
- African Studies
- Asian Studies
- Critical Canadian Studies
- Critical Race Theory
- Environmental Humanities
- Europe and the Mediterranean
- Film, Media and Visual Arts
- Gender and Queer Theory
- Indigenous Arts and Politics
- Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies
- Law, Prison, and Justice Studies
- Museum Studies and Curation
- Music and Sound Art
- Postcolonialism and the Global South
- Religion, Culture and Spirituality
- Science, Technology and Society
- Theatre and Performance
- Urban Studies

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

Graduate Program
CULTURAL STUDIES
Graduate Assistant
(613) 533-3432
cs.adm@queensu.ca
queensu.ca/culturalstudies

Application Process
Visit the Cultural Studies Program website to read faculty profiles and learn more about faculty members’ research areas. When you find a faculty member with similar research interests to yours, contact him/her and tell them about your interest in graduate work, area of research interest and related experience. Consider meeting with your potential supervisor at program events for prospective students.

Program STRUCTURE
PhD (4 years): 4 full-term courses, qualifying exams, and thesis or project.
WHAT WILL I LEARN?
A graduate degree in Cultural Studies 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 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 PhD in Cultural Studies 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
- Non-profit agencies
- Media
- Museums
- Galleries
- Civil Service
- Publishing houses
- Social policy agencies

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

**ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS**
- Key priorities in the fall and winter include completing your coursework and attending the Cultural Studies Colloquium (CUST 802/902).
- Meet early with your supervisor to set expectations and discuss roles, responsibilities, program requirements, resources, research/occupational goals, and timelines.
- In the summer, form your supervisory committee and prepare for your qualifying exams.
- Consider studying abroad with an exchange partner.

**YEAR I**
- Complete your qualifying exams in the fall. Write and defend your thesis proposal in the winter. Embark on your substantive research in the summer.
- Find your way through the academic process with the help of Expanding Horizons or Student Academic Success Services.
- Set up regular meetings with your supervisor to discuss progress and obstacles to timely completion.
- Complete the annual Report Form for your supervisor.

**YEAR II**
- 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 III**
- Plan date of thesis submission for examination.
- Present your research to graduate students and faculty or at conferences and work with supervisor to prepare for defence.
- Review submission and examination guidelines.
- Archive your thesis or project on QSpace.
- Discuss career pathways, references letters, and publication options with your supervisor.

**YEAR IV & TRANSITIONING**
- Continue to attend conferences and connect with scholars in your field and with community partners.
- Continue public outreach through social media and the Queen’s Media Centre.
- 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.

**MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT**
- 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, OGS, and other funding.
- Attend conferences in your field.

**BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE**
- Serve on the Cultural Studies steering committee, faculty or university committees. Talk to the student caucus for tips on getting involved.
- Consider positions in student services, the SGPS or media outlets like the Queen’s Journal, CFRY and the SGSS Blog. Look in the AMS Clubs Directory.
- Check out the professional development workshops from Expanding Horizons and the Cultural Studies Colloquium.

**ENRICH WITH YOUR COMMUNITY**
- Consider volunteering with community organizations, museums, or cultural studies groups, such as Martha’s Table, or Loving Spoonful.
- Participate in the Cultural Studies Student Caucus to give input.

**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. Check out books like So What Are You Going to Do With That? or the Academic Job Search from the Career Resources Area for advice on various career options.
- Start networking through groups like Academic Socialization Network, connect with Queen’s alumni or find alumni in various careers through “Ask an Alum!”. For more information check out Queen’s Alumni Networking.
- Investigate requirements for professional positions or opportunities related to careers of interest.

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* This map is intended to provide suggestions for activities and careers, but everyone’s abilities, experiences, and constraints are different. Build your own Grad Map using our online My Grad Map tool.