Why GRADUATE STUDIES in ELECTRICAL & COMPUTER ENGINEERING?

As a PhD student in the important field of Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE), you can play a vital role in future developments in such areas as microchip design, bioelectronics, machine intelligence, autonomous vehicles & robots, next-generation Internet, fibre optics, communications & wireless networks, network security, power engineering, green energy, and thousands of other areas. Almost every aspect of modern life is impacted by electrical and computer engineering.

Graduate students and their work are an important part of an ongoing research process that provides the community with ways of understanding natural, cultural, imaginative, social and technological phenomena. Check out whygradstudies.ca for more reasons to choose graduate studies in engineering.

Why QUEEN’S?

As a PhD student in ECE at Queen’s you are part of one of the most research intensive universities in Canada. Our research program is internationally renowned with a wide range of research activities in all of the major specialization areas of electrical and computer engineering.

Queen’s ECE offers a number of cross-disciplinary opportunities in collaboration with the departments of Mathematics & Statistics, Physics, Computing, Mechanical Engineering, Mining, the School of Kinesiology and Health Studies, as well as the collaborative graduate program in Computational Science and Engineering.

Our students come from all over the world. At Queen’s, graduate students from all disciplines learn and discover in a close-knit intellectual community.

Program STRUCTURE

PhD (4 years): 4 courses and seminars, thesis background and proposal exams, and thesis defense.

"Thanks to Queen’s ECE, where my MASc and PhD study paved the way for my rewarding career as a professor. Besides my thesis supervisor, I also collaborated with student and faculty researchers at Queen’s and other universities. I presented my research at companies and government labs to cultivate connections, and I took stints as a visiting researcher at a university and a company in Europe."

— Tiago Falk, MASc, PhD

RESEARCH Areas

- Communications and Signal Processing
- Computer and Software Engineering
- Microelectronics, Electromagnetics and Photonics
- Power Electronics
- Biomedical and Intelligent Systems

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

Visit the Electrical and Computer Engineering website to read about research groups and faculty profiles. 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.
Electrical & Computer Engineering PhD MAP

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD)**

**YEAR I**
- Key priorities include your relationship with your supervisor, forming your committee, coursework and comprehensive exams.
- Meet early with your supervisor to set expectations and discuss roles, responsibilities, program requirements, resources, research/occupational goals, timelines, and any required accommodation plans.
- Look to Student Academic Success Services and Expanding Horizons for supports and workshops.
- Attend the Departmental Speaker Series (ELEC 891).

**YEAR II**
- Write and defend your thesis proposal.
- Embark on your substantive research.
- Set up regular meetings with your supervisor to discuss progress and obstacles to timely completion.
- Find your way through the academic process with help from Expanding Horizons professional development workshops, and the SGS Habitat.
- If an industry internship is of interest, consult your supervisor. Seek experiential/professional development opportunities.

**YEAR III**
- 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 IV & TRANSITIONING**
- Plan date of thesis submission for examination.
- Present your research to ECE graduate students and faculty or 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.
- Consider participating in the 3 Minute Thesis (3MT) competition.
- Consider patent filing, e.g., through Partex Innovations.
- Set up a meeting with the School of Graduate Studies for a Grad Chat to discuss your research interests.

**MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT**
- Think about audiences for your research.
- Apply to NSERC, OGS, and other funding.
- Apply for the Graduate Dean’s Travel Grant for Student Research and Engagement.
- Consider targeting your research outputs for innovation ventures: check out Queen’s Innovation Connector.
- Present your work at IEEE and other research conferences as often as possible.
- Expand your research audience through social media.
- Consider publishing elements of your research in (e.g., IEEE, ACM) journals. Learn from the Expanding Horizons Publishing workshop.

**BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE**
- Start keeping an ePortfolio of your skills, experiences and competencies.
- For help with teaching, get support from the Centre for Teaching and Learning. Enroll in SGS901 or the PBLU certificate for more professional development in teaching and learning.
- Look into the Queen’s University IEEE Student Branch.
- Find opportunities for extra training through CFI, Expanding Horizons, Mitacs, or other sources to boost your skills. Investigate internships from Mitacs and other sources.
- Take part in the various international, multidisciplinary opportunities, and collaborate with other departments, such as Geological, Mechanical, Chemical and Civil Engineering.
- 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.
- Prepare for work or studies in a multi-cultural environment by taking the OUCN and Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre’s Training Certificate.

**ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY**
- Consider volunteering with different community organizations, such as an Engineering Society Design Team.
- Connect to broader communities of engineers through the Queen’s University IEEE Student Branch.
- Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups.
- Do some targeted networking with people working in careers of interest, through the Queen’s University IEEE Student Branch’s networking drives, QueensConnects on LinkedIn, the Queen’s Alumni Association, professional associations, and at conferences. Get help from a Career Services workshop.
- Join professional associations like the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE).
- Join groups on LinkedIn reflecting specific careers or topics of interest.

**LAUNCH YOUR CAREER**
- Tune into IEEE messages and publications targeting student members and career building. Learn about the jobs and careers of other ECE graduates.
- Take a Career Services career planning workshop or meet with a career counsellor for help.
- Start reading publications like University Affairs and the Chronicles of Higher Education. Browse non-academic labour market websites.
- Stay on the lookout for special events like Graduate Student Career Forum to explore your career pathways.
- Start building your teaching portfolio including student evaluations, and seeking mentorship.
- 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”. For more information check out Career Counseling.
- Investigate requirements for professional positions or other opportunities related to careers of interest.
- 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.
- Participate in hiring committees and attend job talks. Research academic careers of interest. Craft your CV and job application materials.
- Build connections with faculty outside of your department. Pursue interviews for faculty positions and apply for post-doc fellowships and positions.
- 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.

**WHAT WILL I LEARN?**
A graduate degree in Electrical and Computer Engineering 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 social ethical issues, social responsibility, responsible research and research culture 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 Electrical and Computer Engineering can take your career in many directions. In Canada, less than 40% of all PhDs will work in post-secondary education.
Graduates from the PhD program have found careers with:
- Universities as professors
- Tech companies, such as Qualcomm, Cisco, Microsoft, Google, IBM, Cisco Systems, General Dynamics
- Startups in all sectors, such as wearable devices, intelligent apps
- Services such as financial, pension, actuarial, intellectual properties

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

*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.*
Application FAQs

What do I need to know to APPLY?

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS
- Master of Applied Science or Master of Science.
- Grades Required: minimum cumulative average of 75% or B from Canadian or US Universities, or 80% for international students.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS
- Statement of Interest/Statement of Research.
- Curriculum Vitae.
- English Proficiency Requirements as listed on the ECE graduate website.

KEY DATES & DEADLINES
- Application due: January 31 (international), March 1 (domestic).
- Notification of acceptance: usually before the end of April for international students, end of May for domestic students.

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

What about FUNDING?

Minimum funding guarantee for PhD students is $23,000 (domestic) and $30,000 (international) per year throughout years 1-4. Students are usually funded through a combination of research assistantships, teaching assistantships, and/or scholarships. Funding for international students offsets their higher tuition fees.

You are encouraged to apply for external funding from OGS, NSERC and other sources. Queen's will automatically issue a $10,000 award to incoming PhD students who have won federal government tri-council awards. For more information, see the School of Graduate Studies’ information on awards and scholarships.

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.

Debra Fraser, Graduate Program Assistant
(613) 533-2179
fraser.d@queensu.ca
ece.queensu.ca