Application FAQs

What do I need to know to APPLY?

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS
- A Master's degree in Geological Sciences or Geological Engineering, Mining Engineering, or Civil Engineering is acceptable. Degrees in related fields such as Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Environmental Sciences or Geography are considered, but may require additional Geology courses.

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 School of Graduate Studies requires the following minimum scores: TOEFL (paper-based): 550, (internet-based): 80. Writing (23/30); Speaking (23/30); Listening (22/30); Reading (22/30). For the TOEFL iBT test, a minimum score of 90 is required, with a minimum of 20 on each section.
- IELTS: 7.0 overall score, with a minimum of 6.5 in each section.

Funding

The graduate assistantship is a competitive employment opportunity. You can apply for graduate assistantships and teaching assistantships. Check the School of Graduate Studies website for more information on Graduate Assistantships and Teaching Assistantships.

Why GRADUATE STUDIES in GEOLOGICAL ENGINEERING?

Geological Engineering is the application of geological knowledge to working with earth materials – whether for sustainable development of resources including water, oil, gas and minerals, for construction of projects on, in or of soil and rock, or to safeguard the public from geohazards. At Queen's, students in these fields will be exposed to geology from the field to the laboratory scale, and to analysis and decision-making in Earth Sciences, enjoying multiple field trips, and utilizing world-class labs for chemical and physical characterization of Earth materials, and numerical modelling of their behaviour.

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.

Why QUEEN'S?

As a PhD student in Geological Engineering 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 geological engineering. The Department of Geological Sciences and Geological Engineering provides opportunities for advanced studies and research in the Earth Sciences. Faculty interests span disciplines in Applied Geoenvironmental Sciences, Geophysics, Geochemistry, Economic Geology and Mineral Exploration, Petrology and Structural Geology, Sedimentology, Geomicrobiology and Paleobiology often in a multi-disciplinary fashion and including applications to economic and environmental problems.

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# Geological Engineering PhD MAP *

## YEAR I

**ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS**
- Key priorities include your relationship with your supervisor, forming your research 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 for a variety of supports.

**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 NSERC, OGS, and other funding.
- Apply for the Graduate Dean's Travel Grant for Doctoral Field Research.

**BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE**
- Serve on faculty or university committees. Talk to the Society of Graduate and Professional Students (SGPS) for tips on getting involved.
- Consider positions in student services, the SGPS, or media outlets like the Queen's Journal, CFRE, and the SGS Blog. Look in the AMS Club Directory.
- Use a Teaching Assistant or Research Assistant position to develop your skills and experience.

**ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY**
- Consider volunteering with different community organizations, such as Sustainable Kingston.
- Connect to broader communities of engineers by joining an Engineering Society Design Team.

**LAUNCH YOUR CAREER**
- Finding career fit starts with knowing yourself. Take a Career Services career planning workshop or meet with a career counselor for help. Check out books like So What Are You Going to do With That? for advice on various career options.
- Start reading publications like University Affairs and the Chronicle for Education. Browse non-academic labour market websites.
- Stay on the lookout for special events like Graduate Student Career Forum to explore your career pathways.

## YEAR II

**ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS**
- Priorities include completing your comprehensive examination and pursuing 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 the help of Expanding Horizons, and the SGS Habit.
- Seek experiential/professional development opportunities.

**MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT**
- Attend or present at a graduate conference such as the Advances in Earth Science Research Conference.
- Expand your research audience through social media such as Twitter or a blog.
- Consider publishing elements of your research. Learn from the Expanding Horizons Publishing workshop.

**BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE**
- Honed skills for non-academic employment by continuing involvement on committees and in community.
- 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 SGSS 2400 the PUTL certificate for more professional development in teaching and learning.

**ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY**
- Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups.

**LAUNCH YOUR CAREER**
- 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 QueenConnects on LinkedIn to connect with Queen’s alumni, or find alumni in various careers through “Ask an Alum.” For more information check out Career Cruising.
- Investigate requirements for professional positions or other opportunities related to careers of interest.

## YEAR III

**ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS**
- Continue to meet regularly with your supervisor, review progress research, 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 examiner.

**MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT**
- Continue to present at conferences.
- Consider participating in the 3 Minute Thesis (3MT) competition.
- Contact the Queen’s Media Centre for guidance on speaking to news outlets about your work. List yourself on the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science research website.

**BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE**
- Find opportunities for extra training through CTL, Expanding Horizons, Mitacs, or other sources to boost your skills. Investigate internships from Mitacs and other sources.
- Prepare for work or studies in a multi-cultural environment by taking the Quad and Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre’s Training Certificate.

**ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY**
- Do some targeted networking with people working in careers of interest, through QueenConnects on LinkedIn, the Queen’s Alumni Association, professional associations, and at conferences. Get help from a Career Services workshop.

**LAUNCH YOUR CAREER**
- 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 & TRANSITIONING

**ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS**
- Plan date of thesis submission for examination.
- Present your research 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.

**MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT**
- 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.
- Attend a major conference in your field, such as Canadian Geotechnical Society Annual Meeting.

**BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE**
- Practice articulating the skills you have been developing in settings outside the university, such as cultural conversation, networking, and interviews. Get help from a Career Services workshop.
- Prepare for work or studies in a multi-cultural environment by taking QCIC or Intercultural Competency Certificate.

**ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY**
- Consider joining professional associations like the Canadian Geotechnical Society. Join groups on LinkedIn reflecting specific careers or topics of interest.

**LAUNCH YOUR CAREER**
- Build connections withfaculty 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 job search, resumes, or interviews.
- 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 Geological 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 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 Geological Engineering 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. Graduates from the Geological Engineering PhD program have found careers within:
- Academia and Research
- Consulting
- Mineral and oil exploration
- Mining and hydrocarbon extraction
- Environmental policy analysis
- Surface and underground construction
- Environment assessment
- Protection and rehabilitation
- Resource management

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