

Graduate/ Professional School Application Timeline



Well before applying:

- Determine if you want to attend graduate school- is it required for the career you want to pursue? Will you earn more money? Why do you want to attend?
 - Try using the Career Tools on Jobbank.gc.ca to examine Canadian data for careers that interest you, including what degree is required, median earnings, and employment outlook.
- When you know what degree(s) you are interested in it is time to research what schools offer these programs.
 - If the career you are interested in has a governing body, like the Canadian Psychological Association for Psychologists, take note of which schools are accredited, and avoid programs that are not.
- Focus on maintaining high grades and a good relationship with your professors.
 - Some graduate programs may require you to have taken certain prerequisite courses during your undergraduate degree, and these requirements may vary between schools. Make sure that you take note of these prerequisites and speak with your academic advisor if you need assistance fitting these courses into your schedule.
 - Start thinking about who you can ask to write you letters of recommendation when the time comes, and maintain a good relationship with them.
- If you have time, volunteer or get involved in extracurricular activities! It looks great on a CV and may help you to earn entrance scholarships when applying to graduate school. Many programs look for candidates with research experience so you may want to see what volunteer research assistant positions are offered through your department.

1 year- 3 months before application deadline:

- Take standardized tests required for applying to your program of choice like the LSAT, GRE, or MCAT
 - Give yourself plenty of time to study and prepare for the test, and leave yourself time to retake the test if necessary before your application deadline
 - Preparing for these tests can be expensive! You can often find prep books at your local library!
- Start researching the schools that offer the program that you are interested in and determine where you are interested in applying.
 - If you are applying to a program in which you need a research supervisor, you may want to look at the researchers working out of that school and contact those with similar research interests to your own to ask if they will be taking students.

2-3 Months before the deadline

- Now that you have decided which schools you will be applying to, make note of what documents you need to send in with your application, such as a CV or personal statement/ letter of intent, and start working on crafting these documents.
 - If you need help, make an appointment with a Career Peer Advisor at the Dalhousie Bissett Student Success Centre, or check out one of the many books or resource sheets on display!
- Reach out to your references and ask them to write you a letter of recommendation. Make sure you clearly explain what information the letter of recommendation is expected to say about you, when the deadline is and how it should be submitted.
 - Make it as easy as possible for your references! Make a time to sit down with them and explain your career goals, offer them insight into the graduate program and give them copies of your transcript, resume/CV and any other information they will need to write you a strong letter of recommendation.

1 Month before deadline

- Order copies of your transcript to be sent to the schools to which you are applying.
 - Many programs will also require transcripts from any study abroad or international learning experiences you have completed, allow for extra time if you require documents to be mailed from overseas
- Start filling out application forms

2 weeks before deadline

- Submit applications and pay application fee! Before sending in your application, double check that everything is correct, you haven't left anything blank and that the correct documents have been attached.
 - Keep track of any receipts or confirmation that your application has been received
- If your references have not yet submitted their letters of recommendation you may send a polite email reminding them of the deadline

After Submitting application

- If the schools that you have applied to use an interview process, start preparing for an interview.
- Make your choice!
 - You may be able to tour the campus or chat with a current student in the program that you have been accepted to, to help you decide if the school is right for you!
- If you don't get accepted reach out to the admissions committee and see if they can offer you advice about how you can become a more competitive applicant for the next application cycle