

Timeline to Follow When Applying to Graduate School or Professional Programs

Please note, this is only a proposed timeline based on how soon you should start preparing your applications. Admission requirements vary depending on the school and some program applications require more preparation time than others. Regardless of when you would like to apply, your main priority should be giving yourself enough time to meet eligibility criteria and bolster the competitiveness of your applications.

Goal Setting and Research

- 24-36+ months prior to applying:
- Establish your short and long-term career goals
 - Reflect on your motivation to pursue further education
 - Start researching labour market info, exploring relevant schools, comparing admission requirements/statistics, confirming application deadlines, and deciding when you will eventually apply
 - Attend info sessions at various schools of interest to ask questions

Academic Requirements

- 18-24+ months prior to applying:
- Verify you are on track to complete any required prerequisite courses
 - Ensure you are maintaining high academic standards to have a competitive admission average
 - To learn about good study strategies, consult the [Centre for Student Academic Support](#), your [Departmental Program Advisor](#), or the [Academic Advising Centre](#)

Work Experience

- 18-24+ months prior to applying:
- Start gaining relevant work experience that will bolster your applications
 - Seek relevant paid, volunteer, co-op, summer internships, and/or placement opportunities
 - Participate in student clubs, competitions, conferences, and community activism

Standardized Admission Tests

- 12-18 months prior to applying:
- If needed, begin preparing for any required standardized admission tests (e.g., LSAT, MCAT, OAT, DAT, GMAT, GRE)
 - Consult any preparation resources such as manuals, courses, or tutors
 - Register and write your test(s)
 - Upon completion, reflect on whether you need to re-attempt a test to improve your score

Academic and Professional References

- 6-12 months prior to applying:
- Start engaging with past or current employers to secure professional references
 - Start engaging with your professors from upper year courses to secure academic references

Application Documents

- 6-12 months prior to applying:
- Start preparing your application documents including drafts of your resume/CV, autobiographical sketch (if applicable), and personal statements/letters of intent
 - Meet with a staff member at Career Services to review your preliminary drafts

Faculty Supervisor and Funding

- 6-12 months prior to applying:
- If needed, network with relevant faculty members who work at your schools of interest to secure a faculty supervisor
 - Research different funding opportunities associated with your schools of interest and establish different contingency plans for how you will finance your further education

Final Review

- 2-6 months prior to applying:
- Meet with a staff member at Career Services to review your final application documents
 - Finalize your academic and professional references
 - Obtain the correct versions of your transcripts
 - Secure your faculty supervisor (if needed) and finalize how you plan to finance your further education

Submit and Monitor

- Prior and post-application deadline(s):
- Submit your applications by following all instructions on the respective admission website
 - Monitor the status of your applications and prepare for any post-submission requirements (e.g., interviews or sending updated transcripts)
 - Confirm the approximate time period for when the school(s) will make their decision

Review Offer(s) and Accept

- Post-application deadline(s):
- Periodically check for any offers
 - If a school sends you an offer, establish whether it is official or conditional
 - Review your offer(s) carefully and confirm when you need to make a decision
 - After cross-comparing your options, decide which offer you will accept

