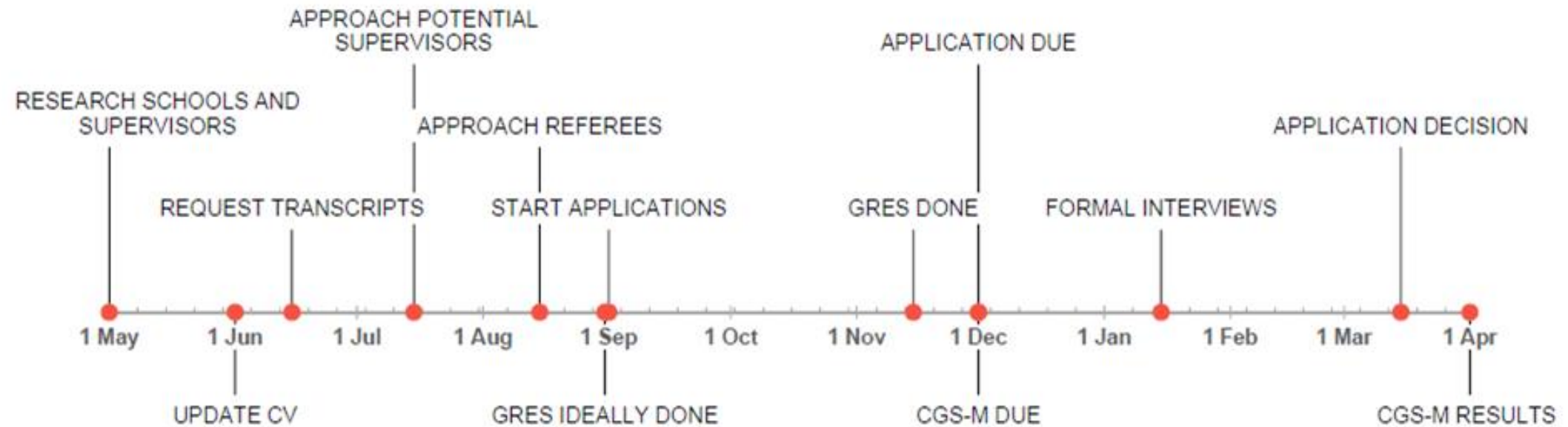


Applying to Graduate School in Psychology



PUMP Workshop: Applying to Graduate School in Psychology

Application Process Timeline



Research Schools and Supervisors

- What type of degree do you want to do?
- Which schools offer this?
- Research supervisors whose research aligns with your interests
- Make a list of who you will apply to

Types of Degrees in Psychology

- Clinical PhD
 - Experimental PhD
 - PsyD (Doctor of Psychology)
 - Social work, counselling
-
- If interested in clinical, make sure the program is accredited by APA or CPA:
 - CPA accredited (30) <http://www.cpa.ca/accreditation/CPAaccreditedprograms>
 - APA accredited (240) <http://www.apa.org/ed/accreditation/programs/index.aspx>

Organize Yourself

- EXCEL is your best friend!
- Create multiple sheets for:
 - Information on different graduate programs
 - Referees
 - Funding information for each school

Organize Yourself

University	Degree	Potential Advisors	Documents	Deadline & Fee	Reference Letters - #, how to submit	Tests	Notes
York U	Clinical Psychology	Dr.____	1) Personal Statement 2) CV 3) Online Forms	Dec. ____, \$____	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2• Submit online	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• GRE General• Psychology GRE	

Organize Yourself

Referee	Universities	Earliest Deadline	Initial Ask	Made Package
Dr.	York University	Dec. 1	August 15 th	October 1 st
Dr.				

CV and Transcripts

- Transcripts
 - Most schools don't require official copies unless you are accepted
 - Check requirements of where you are applying
 - Order to yourself if possible
- CV
 - Customize for each school (e.g. research interests)
 - Resources: Career Centre at York, Career Foundations
- CCV: <https://ccv-cvc.ca/loginresearcher-eng.frm>

Approaching Potential Supervisors

- Introduce yourself, mention you will be applying
- Outline your interests (be specific)
- How do your interests fit with theirs?
 - Make it clear you've read their work

Reference Letters

- Admission committees want a personal outside look at your work from someone experienced in the field to get a better sense of you as a person

Reference Letters

- Very important part of application!
- Most schools ask for **academic references**
 - Some give you the option of adding a **professional reference**

Reference Letters

- Someone who can comment on your:
 - Writing skills, presentation and communication skills, research potential
- Who knows you WELL
 - Who understands what you have done in psychology, what you strive to become
 - Work hard at forming a strong relationship with them, show them what you can do

Reference Letters

- Important: making the request for letters!
 - Be organized (schools have different deadlines and requirements for letters)
 - Be respectful of referee's time (ask way **IN ADVANCE**)
 - Be appreciative
 - Ask if they can write you a **STRONG** letter

GREs

www.ets.org

- “Graduate Record Examination”
- Standardized test used for many graduate and business schools
- A general and a subject test (psychology)
- **Make sure the program you’re applying to actually requires it
 - not many programs require the subject test
- Good to get these done early in case you need to rewrite
- **NEED** to be done by November 15th if applying for Dec 1st
- Check admission requirements and statistics for ideal scores

\$205 US

GRE - General

-
- Measures “general intelligence” in 3 areas
 - Analytical writing (essays)
 - 2 essays, 30 minutes each
 - ex. “Do you think there are modern day superheroes? Give your reasoning.”
 - Verbal reasoning (vocabulary)
 - 2 30 minute section, 20 questions each
 - Fill in the blanks, applying vocabulary to context
 - Quantitative reasoning (Math)
 - 2 35 minute sections, 20 questions each
 - high school level math

Sample Vocab Question

2. Vain and prone to violence, Caravaggio could not handle success: the more his (1)_____ as an artist increased, the more (2)_____ his life became.

Blank (1)	Blank (2)
temperance	tumultuous
notoriety	providential
eminence	dispassionate

Correct Answer: eminence and tumultuous

https://www.ets.org/gre/institutions/about/general/verbal_reasoning_sample_questions/

\$150 US

GRE - Psychology

- Measures undergraduate psych knowledge (ex. memory, personality, methodology...)
- Pencil + paper test, only offered 3 times a year
- 205 m/c questions
- ex. Object relations therapy is most closely related to..
 - a) cognitive behavioural techniques
 - **b) psychoanalysis**
 - c) client centered therapy
 - d) modeling
 - e) gestalt therapy

Studying for the GRE

- How you study / how much you study depends on the person
- They suggest giving yourself 1-3 months to study
- Use multiple resources
 - Practice exams online
 - GRE prep books (*Kaplan has a weak quantitative section)
 - Kaplan will give feedback on a practice essay
 - Apps (Magoosh - good vocab flashcards)
 - Prep courses (but very expensive)
- Practice doing questions under time constraint

GRE- General- Verbal

CRAVEN

- Lacking Courage
- synonyms: timid



ABERRANT

- Deviating from what is normal/expected
- Synonyms: abnormal, deviant, divergent, errant



Personal Statement

- Is this important?
- Should I use the same one for all applications?
- What should I cover and what should I not?

Personal Statement

- Very important! (May be the first thing admission committees look at)
- **Determines:** your match to program, clarity and focus of it, your writing skills
- **Basic goal:** convince your potential advisor to offer you an interview
 - Remember, they will be reading many other statements !

Personal Statement

- Same one for all programs? NO- customize for each school
- Every school has different requirements: length, topics, format, etc.
- Make sure to follow these requirements! If not, may tell the person reading you cannot follow instructions, or not that interested in the program

Personal Statement: **How do I start?**

- Create word document where you outline all your experiences (e.g. research, volunteering, thesis and or independent study, relevant work experience)
 - What were your responsibilities?
 - Outcome of the project?
 - What did you like/dislike?
 - What did you learn?

Personal Statement: **Identify Focus**

- Identify your focus for graduate study: be very specific!
- Not just “I want to get a doctoral degree”, but e.g. “I want to pursue advanced study dealing with autistic children and particularly the new types of therapy that I think will be useful with these children...”
- Know what research you are interested in focusing on

Personal Statement: **Research Experience**

- Describe several major experiences. E.g. research experience, clinical experience
- **Detail!** i.e. I participated in this research project, here is what the project was about, here are the kinds of things that I did as part of the research project, here is the outcome from the research project, what you learned

Personal Statement: **General Tips**

- DO NOT include: i.e. “I just want to help people” – became a terrible cliché
- Explain why you are applying to this particular program. Show you know the program
- Identify a few faculty members you would want to work with

Personal Statement: **General Tips**

- Write a story, BUT be professional
- Ask to read personal statements of successful applicants
- Ask current graduate students and a professor to read your statement

Applying for Funding

- Getting money to conduct your research
- Very important to apply – may increase your chances of being admitted!

Funding

- Writing a proposal for a potential research study
- Can be based on your thesis/research project you conducted
 - E.g. coming up with an improved version of your thesis

Types of Funding

Internal

- By the university

External

- Tri-Council (Federal funding; CGS-Master's: SSHRC, CIHR, NSERC)
- OGS (Provincial funding- Ontario)
- Other: e.g. Alzheimer's society, Autism scholars (usually PhD level)

External: Master's SSHRC

- \$17,500 for a year
- Topics: Social, developmental, personality, educational psychology. DOES NOT support clinically oriented research with an intent to improve health, or research involving clinical trials

External: Master's NSERC

- \$17,500 for a year
- Related fundamental psychological processes, their underlying neural mechanisms e.g. sensation and perception, learning and memory, cognition and language- DOES NOT support clinically oriented research

External: Master's CIHR

- \$17,500 for a year
- Research that has direct relevance to, or ultimate impact on, human health

External: OGS

- Apply to each university
- Different deadlines for each
- Proposal required: can use the Tri-Council proposal if you applied to it

External Funding: What is the Decision Based on?

Academic Excellence		
Academic record, scholarships and awards held, duration of previous studies	50%	Transcripts and awards
Research Potential		
Quality of contributions to research and development, relevance of work experience and academic training to field of proposed research, merit and significance of proposed research, ability to think critically, ability to apply skills, judgement, originality, etc.	30%	Publications and research contributions, Reference letters, research proposal
Communication, Interpersonal and Leadership Abilities		
Ability/potential to communicate scientific concepts clearly, professional and relevant extracurricular interactions and collaborations	20%	Quality of application, publications, awards for oral presentations, CV experiences

Funding: Tips

- Ask to read successful applicants' proposals
- Ask professors/graduate students to read your proposal
- Write proposal in professional but simple terms, minimize jargon, be clear and concise

Submitting Applications

- Online application portal
 - Transcripts
 - CV
 - Personal statement
 - Referee information
- Most due between December 1st and 15th

Resources

- Speak to people in your program of interest, professors, people who have completed the program
- LinkedIn, Ten Thousand Coffees: email and talk to or meet with people who are in your area of interest
- Visit thegradcafe.com discussion forum or results page to see when admission decisions begin for your schools

Frequently Asked Questions

- 1.If I don't get in, should I reapply?
- 2.If I re-apply to a supervisor, does it make me look bad?
- 3.How much clinical experience do I need for Clinical Psychology?
- 4.Do I need to complete a thesis?
- 5.Do I need to have a publication?