

### **The Basics**

- Be prepared! Set up a calendar with timelines and deadlines for each program
- Consider whether you would prefer a course-based MA or a thesis based MA
- Find out whether your program requires standardized testing (e.g. GMAT) for admission
- Consider whether you want to apply in Canada only, or in the US and abroad

### **Inquiring about Schools**

- Inquire about the program (e.g. what courses will be offered? What facilities does the school offer?) Consider both your academic and personal needs when selecting schools.
- Book a tour / campus visit
- Contact 1-2 potential faculty advisors about supervision (have your draft statement of interest ready before you contact faculty, and inquire whether they will be on sabbatical on your year(s) of study)
- Consider your professional goals: does this program offer internships or co-ops?
- Self-assessment: Be honest with yourself. Look at your GPA, examine your interests, areas of academic strength

## **Components of an Application**

### **1. A Statement of Interest**

- Talk through your research question with a member of the King's faculty in your field of interest
- Prepare a draft research statement according to the application guidelines (usually no more than 1-2 pages). Write with intention and clear focus on your subject. Don't speak generally about a topic
- Aim to captivate with your *introduction*. Start directly with your research question (which is a specific question that can be answered) and why it is important.
- Use one paragraph for a *short literature review* of the area that includes specific ideas and authors whose work is relevant in the field
- Describe which *methods* / school of thought / framework you propose to further explore the subject area
- End with a short *conclusion* about why this program is the perfect fit for you and why you are an ideal candidate for the program
- Respect the word/page limit. Applications that do not follow guidelines may be disqualified

### **2. Transcripts**

- Order transcripts in advance from Western Student Services. Inquire about the processing time
- Online Transcript Ordering is available online via the [Student Center](#) under Academics > Documentation > Transcripts.
  - Online payment can only be made by Visa or Mastercard through our secure ecommerce system (Note: Visa Debit Cards are not accepted)
  - **Online orders cannot be changed or cancelled once submitted**
  - You can also go into the Student Center in person to order transcript
- Find out whether the institution requires the school to send the transcript directly to them (most will expect transcripts by mail only – you may have to courier/Express Post the transcript)

### 3. Reference Letters

- Ask (usually 2-3) professors for at least 3 weeks in advance; send reminders
- References from full-time faculty members tend to be preferred by schools
- Ask if they would be willing to write you a strong, positive reference letter (don't be discouraged if they cannot; find someone who can)
- Provide faculty with clear instructions about how to submit their letter (i.e. is there a link for online submission? Should the letter be mailed with King's letterhead and signature over the envelope closure?) This is essential information as applications can be disqualified if these conditions are not met

### 4. Academic CV

- List your educational credentials (BA, BA Hons, other degrees/diplomas), any conferences, publications or experiential education trips you've been on
- You can also list your employment, volunteer history, but these won't be primary considerations for the admissions committee

### 5. Standardized Tests (Program-Dependent)

- Some graduate programs (MA, Law School, MBA) require some form of standardized test (GRE, LSAT, GMAT). These tests are offered through central testing bodies (not the university) and only tend to be offered a few times a year
- Check online where tests are offered and how much they cost. You may want to leave yourself enough time to write the test more than once to achieve the score you require for admission to your preferred program

## Post-Acceptance

- Draft an appropriate response to admission offers / the graduate director
  - You do not have to accept an offer immediately, but you should immediately thank the school for your admission and say you will get back to them on your decision within the allotted time
- Negotiate your admissions package (i.e. ask for funding through TA- or RA-ships). Ask for help from King's faculty members with this step.
- Follow-up with prospective supervisors again; arrange a phone call or Skype meeting
- In the case of multiple acceptances, don't forget to write to those schools whose offers you are declining. Write a polite note thanking them for the opportunity and letting them know you've decided not to take up their offer. Don't write "I chose to go to [other school] because I thought it was better".