

EXPLORING GRADUATE STUDIES: Anthropology

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Office of Academic Advising and Student Success

After students finish their undergraduate degree, they can pursue professional development or further studies (or both). In either case, it is important to make an informed decision as soon as possible. With regards to the latter, **the earlier students can decide that they might want to go for graduate studies, the more they can do to improve their chances of admission**, therefore this handout has been designed to facilitate the process for candidates wishing to pursue graduate studies.

This is a summary document outlining **what students need to do during their undergraduate degree and what fresh graduates may need to do** to be better prepared for applying to graduate school. Please note this resource was last updated on **1/07/2022**, and some information may be outdated, therefore after closely reviewing the information below we encourage readers to consult with faculty, alumni from your field of interest, and other people who have pursued this graduate degree to learn more. **For in-depth information on graduate programme exploration, career prospects, graduate school application process, funding, and more, please check out the detailed doc [here](#)(under development).**

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SECTION 1: ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

- A. Are there any Degree requirements?
- B. Are there any Coursework requirements?
- C. Are there any GPA requirements?
- D. What does this mean for LUMS Students?

Are there any Degree requirements?

Note: Below are some general requirements and guidelines -- students should research or make sure to contact their prospective programmes in advance and find out what the exact degree requirements/guidelines are for those specific programmes.

- **For Masters:**
 - **A bachelor's degree in Anthropology is not required for admission for Master's admission**, but having an undergraduate degree in Anthropology or any other related social science (For e.g. Sociology, Political Science, Philosophy, Economics, etc.) can increase the chances of admission. Nonetheless, whichever major students decide on, it is important that they have a demonstrable interest in the field (either by taking Anthropology courses, doing research work, or through their personal statement)
- **For Ph.D.:**
 - **Usually, an undergraduate degree in Anthropology (or a cognate subject) is required.** Students have to demonstrate a strong interest in Anthropology and should have a history of research training. programmes may also require applicants to have a relevant Master's degree in Anthropology or a related field.

Country-Specific considerations

- **For the UK:**
 - Candidates are expected to have a UK-equivalent bachelor's degree with a [First or Upper Second classification or the overseas equivalent](#), in any discipline for entry to the Master's programme.
 - Candidates applying for Ph.D. programmes are also expected to have the equivalent of a UK Master's degree with a similar qualification as their undergraduate degree in a relevant discipline.
- **For Canada:**
 - Students applying to Master's programmes are highly recommended to have a bachelor's in Anthropology or a closely related Social Science discipline (Sociology, Geography, Political Science, Economics, History, etc.) with demonstrable research experience in Anthropology.
 - Ph.D. candidates typically hold a Master's-level degree in Anthropology along with an undergraduate degree in Anthropology or a closely related field, with a strong academic/research record from a recognized university. Some universities offer a Master's/Ph.D. track where students who successfully complete their Master's degree with a demonstrable interest in Anthropology are directly admitted into their postgraduate study programme.
- **For the US:**
 - Masters candidates are expected to have a US-equivalent bachelor's degree in any discipline.
 - Ph.D. candidates are expected to have an undergraduate background in Anthropology or a related field. Ph.D. programmes do not require students to have a Master's degree as the only requirement is having an undergraduate degree since the Ph.D. programmes also award a Master's degree. However, candidates having a Master's degree in Anthropology are also encouraged to apply.

Are there any Coursework requirements?

Note: Coursework requirements for graduate study are the reason why early planning is important for graduate school in Anthropology -- because many courses may have prerequisites, and it may take advance planning to fit this sequence of courses in undergraduate studies. Therefore, students should reach out to their faculty and make sure to contact their prospective programmes in advance and find out what the exact course requirements are.

General Information

The Anthropology courses listed below can be considered useful for a Master's degree in this field.

For students interested in pursuing a Ph.D., the courses listed below are highly recommended to be taken as part of their undergraduate degree. Students should also plan on taking as many courses relevant to the subfield in Anthropology that they wish to pursue

Anthropology Courses:

- Introduction to Anthropology
- Theory and History of Anthropology
- Sociocultural Anthropology
- Cultural Anthropology
- Topical courses such as Anthropology of the family, Gender and Race, Religion and Culture, Economic Anthropology, Anthropology of Gender, Medical Anthropology, etc. could be good to have if that is one of the fields students would like to specialise in.

For Top-Tier programmes

Note: If students are interested in admission to a top-tier programme in Anthropology, then in addition to the above, they should consider the following suggestions as well.

- **Top-Tier Master's programmes** expect students with a degree in a different discipline to complete at least one year of senior-level undergraduate coursework in Anthropology before applying for a graduate degree programme.
- **Top Tier Ph.D. programmes** expect students to show a demonstrable interest in Anthropology and the subfield they want to specialise in. Furthermore, candidates are also required to show familiarity with intellectual issues in current anthropological theory and method in their personal statements.

Are there any GPA requirements?

Note: The following requirements are averages -- it is possible that universities may have higher or lower standards for entry.

Also note: Requirements vary according to country and programme -- it is recommended that students contact their prospective programmes and check the requirements of their shortlisted programmes.

General Information

Note: For more tips on coursework and GPA, check out these [general tips \(under the tab of "Transcripts"\)](#)

• For Masters:

Note: Generally, an undergraduate CGPA greater than 3.0+ is required.

- **For the US:** An undergraduate GPA of 3.2+ is preferred.
- **For Canada:** An undergraduate GPA of 3.0+ is recommended.
- **For the UK:** Candidates are required to have a bachelor's degree with a First or Upper Second classification. Generally, a GPA of 3.2/4.0 or 75% in a four-year Bachelor's degree in any subject is comparable to an Upper Second classification.

• For PhD.:

Note: Ph.D. programme GPA requirements generally exceed that of their Master's programmes.

- **For the US:** An undergraduate GPA of 3.3+ is preferred.
- **For Canada:** An undergraduate GPA of 3.3+ is preferred. Students are also expected to have a Master's degree or its equivalent from a recognized institute
- **For the UK:** First Class or Upper Second Class (2:1) Honours degree from a UK university or its overseas equivalent. Generally, having a GPA of 3.3+/4.0 or 70-75% in a 3 year Bachelor's degree with a one-year Master's degree is comparable to 2.1. Students are also expected to have a good Master's degree from a reputable institute with a significant component in Anthropology.

For Top-Tier programmes

• For Masters:

Note: Generally, an undergraduate CGPA greater than 3.5+ is required for Top-Tier programmes. Research/Thesis-based Master's programmes will have higher GPA requirements.

- **For the US:** An undergraduate GPA of 3.6+ is strongly recommended. However, top tier programmes do not have GPA cut offs and always admit students with weaker GPAs if they have stellar statements, projects, and letters of recommendations.
- **For Canada:** Candidates are expected to have an undergraduate GPA of 3.5+. Students are encouraged to secure As in their Anthropology courses and maintain a CGPA of 3.6+ in the last two years of their undergraduate degree.
- **For the UK:** It is recommended to have an undergraduate GPA of 3.7+ or the equivalent of a first-class or strong upper second-class undergraduate degree with honours.

- **For Ph.D.:**

Note: Top-Tier Ph.D. programme GPA requirements generally exceed that of their Master's programmes.

- **For the US:** An undergraduate GPA of 3.7+ is strongly recommended. However, top tier programmes do not have GPA cut offs and always admit students with weaker GPAs if they have stellar statements, projects, and letters of recommendations.
- **For Canada:** Candidates should have a Master's in Anthropology (or a closely related field) and have obtained a minimum GPA of 75 percent (B+).
- **For the UK:** Master's degree with a high pass (2.1) or distinction; and a first-class or strong upper second-class undergraduate degree with honours.

If you are weak in an area (needed/useful for entry into this programme) you should

- **If you don't have a bachelor's degree in Anthropology or a related field:** If you have a more non-traditional academic background, you should still have strong evidence of a sophisticated grasp of Anthropology concepts. For example, taking [highly recommended Anthropology courses](#), pursuing relevant research experiences, or relevant extracurricular experiences that show passion for the field of Anthropology, etc.
- **If you have graduated and could not take relevant coursework in your undergraduate/Master's, you can:** Take online courses on the subject (if available) and/or audit relevant courses. Otherwise, you can compensate through other application components, e.g. showing interest in your personal statement, strong GPA, work/research experience, letters of recommendation supporting your capabilities for graduate studies in this field, etc. If the coursework is a requirement of the programme and for some reason, you are unable to take it (online/audit), then you should contact the programme and ask for relevant pathways (sometimes they may allow you to take the course in their university or may offer alternatives). Furthermore, applicants who have a demonstrable interest in Anthropology but were unable to take some of the prerequisite courses in their undergraduate degree may be admitted to a qualifying semester or year during which they may be able to take the prerequisite courses.
- **If you do not meet the minimum GPA requirements:** Contact the programme and ask them if there are any actions you can take to still be considered. If you have a good amount of relevant work/research experience in the field, then that can effectively compensate for a low GPA. You must understand that admission programmes assess candidates holistically which means that a student with an excellent statement and recommendations but average grades can get admission above a student with excellent GPA and a poor statement

What does this mean for LUMS Students?

- **LUMS students should reach out to [Anthropology faculty](#)** for graduate programme guidance, letters of recommendation, and other graduate studies application tips. It would also be helpful to reach out to possible Sociology/Economics/Political Science/History/Statistics-specialists in the other schools like [MGSHSS](#), [SBSASSE](#), etc. LUMS students could also benefit in a similar manner, from reaching out to Teaching Fellows that have Master's in Anthropology or a related degree and are often aspiring for Ph.D. programmes in Anthropology themselves.
- **Students should learn more about the Anthropology and Sociology Major offered at LUMS**, by exploring the [BSc \(Honours\) Anthropology and Sociology information webpage](#) and the [Anthropology and Sociology Major Exploration Document](#). The Major Exploration Handout will guide undergraduate students on how they can make the most of their Anthro & Socio Undergraduate degree, help them decide whether to transfer or not into the programme or how students can get exposure to the Anthropology field without majoring in it.
- **For students interested in transferring into the Anthropology and Sociology programme**, they should check out the [Inter-School Transfer Handout](#) and contact advising units of both their school and MGSHSS
- **LUMS students should reach out to their respective Academic Advising Unit (AU) staff and faculty early** for careful course planning given the recurring issues in enrollment at LUMS.

- **For information regarding majors offered at LUMS**, students should check the [Undergraduate Student Handbook](#) (please download the handbook relevant for your academic year).
- **LUMS students should refer to the [course memos](#)** (courses being offered in a specific semester and their requirements) for a more updated list of courses **and the [course outlines](#)** (resources to help students understand the course) to know the topics being taught within those courses.
- **For information regarding the various academic/non-academic related support services at LUMS**, please check [here](#).

SECTION 2: Non-Academic Background

- A. Are there any Research Experience requirements?
- B. Are there any Work Experience requirements?
- C. Are there any Extracurricular Experience requirements?
- D. What does this mean for LUMS Students?

Are there any Research Experience requirements?

Note: Students should reach out to their faculty and contact their prospective programmes in advance and find out what the exact research experience requirements are.

- **Research experience in Anthropology at the undergraduate level is not required for Master's admissions but is highly encouraged** as it gives students an edge in the eyes of the admission committee.
- **Research experience may be required for Ph.D. admissions and some universities may require a sample of a research paper in anthropology or related-social sciences, written by the student.** This can be any research-based paper that students may have written but it is recommended that the paper be relevant to the field that they are applying for (it could also be a paper written for some course).
- **Applicants can pursue research experience through fieldwork or independent study.** This refers to primary research done through Qualitative/Quantitative Research methods used in Anthropology. Both fieldwork and independent study can be done on any topic and/or area that interests the student but it is recommended that it is relevant to the research they plan on undertaking for their Ph.D.
 - In an independent study, students would be guided by an Anthropology professor on doing research on a relevant topic and this usually does not take place as part of regular classes.
 - Fieldwork (Ethnography) is important for any student who wishes to pursue Anthropology academically or professionally after college or graduate school. During fieldwork, students are required to stay at their respective research sites at least for a period of four months, gather data, perform archival research, and open-ended interviews. It will reflect on their research skills and give the university a fair idea of their work abilities as well. Thus, even if it is not a requirement, it is highly recommended to take up actual fieldwork.
- **Students that are pursuing a Bachelor's or Master's degree in Anthropology, generally do carry out research as part of their coursework** but if students are pursuing another discipline then they are encouraged to do a Senior Project or Thesis with an Anthropology instructor on their campus.
- **Students can also apply for a research assistant post at an NGO or prominent think tanks in Pakistan** as these institutions are most likely to be involved in carrying out research on topics relevant to Anthropology.
- **Students are highly encouraged to seek out ways to distinguish themselves as researchers.** If they do find themselves in a research group, ask your advisor (Professor, graduate student, or postdoc) if they can present their research at a local, regional or national conference.
- **Publications are not a requirement but can certainly catch the eye of the admissions committee members, but the first authorship is not a necessity.** As a researcher, students will learn how Anthropology is practised, experience the challenges of asking anthropological questions and designing experiments, and gain important skills and experience working in the field as part of a research team.

Are there any Work Experience requirements?

- **Work experience is not a requirement for admission but can be good to have depending on the candidates' research proposal they are planning on pursuing.** If the research is such that professional experience in that area will give them a better insight into the research, then it is recommended. For example, in Archaeology, prior experience in a digsite is recommended. It can be pursued through field schools in Pakistan which recruit students to assist Professors in on-site dig work.
- **Students can also take a job or research internship with an ongoing anthropological project or institution** (i.e. an archeology consulting firm, a development consulting firm, etc.) or become a research assistant to a professor. Research assistantships with professors can be valuable as they allow students to build long-term connections with the faculty who can later provide letters of recommendation for graduate school admissions.

Are there any Extracurricular Experience requirements?

- **Extracurricular experiences are not required for both Master's and Ph.D. programmes but students are highly encouraged to join relevant clubs and societies, take part in volunteering experiences, attend workshops, or just take some time off to further their research goals.**
- **Students can attend conferences, lectures, and workshops at other regional schools** to get a sense of where the discipline is moving and meet people.
- **Students can also find a gap year where they can gain relevant experience good to have.** This might be a good time to further their research goals, apply for a Fulbright grant, attend a field school, work on foreign language skills, or find work as a research assistant on a relevant project.
- **Students should also get affiliated with Anthropology associations/organisations/clubs.** For example, the [Pakistan Association of Anthropology](#) is the largest membership-based professional network of Pakistani Anthropologists, building local, regional, provincial, national, and international alliances with Anthropologists and other social scientists and organisations.

What does this mean for LUMS Students?

- **LUMS students should reach out to the [Anthropology faculty](#)** for graduate programme selection guidance, letters of recommendation, Research/Teaching-Assistantship guidance, and other graduate studies application tips.
- **LUMS students should contact the [Career Services Office](#) to get assistance in areas of career planning and work experience opportunities.** Students should also reach out to alumni using online platforms such as the [LUMS discussion forum](#).
- **For an updated list of clubs and societies** operating under the LUMS Office of Student Affairs (OSA), please check [here](#).
- **For information regarding undergraduate research opportunities**, please check [here](#).

SECTION 3: Appendix

- A. Sources you should consult for more information
- B. Online Resources Consulted

Sources you should consult for more information:

- [Graduate School Handbook - Anthropology](#) by the University of Texas, Austin - Department of Anthropology
- [A Basic Guide to Graduate School Admissions in Anthropology](#) by Luis A. Vivanco
- [So You're Applying to Graduate School in Anthropology](#) by Matthew Wolf-Meyer
- [Getting into Graduate School in Anthropology - What an Admission Committee look for in applicants?](#) by Savage Minds
- [Advice for Prospective Students](#) by University of Tennessee - Department of Anthropology
- [Archeological and ethnographic field schools](#) to have an idea of how students in the US participate in a wide range of field works and activities that enhance their college experience.
- [Graduate School Information Packet](#) by Queens College
- [Quaid-e-Azam University - Department of Anthropology](#) to check out fieldwork opportunities in Pakistan.
- [Pakistan NGOs Directory & Guide](#) for a complete list of NGOs categorised according to the area of interest as well as geographical locations.
- [Research Conference Calendar](#) for conferences happening year-round in Pakistan.
- [Get Research experience as an undergraduate](#) by American Anthropological Association (AAA)
- [Anthro-Tutorials](#) a good study companion website

Online Resources Consulted

- [What is a Master's in Anthropology?](#)
- [Masters in Anthropology programmes in Pakistan](#)
- [Graduate Schools for Anthropology in the UK](#)
- [Anthropology programmes World Ranking - 2021](#)
- [Anthropology Graduate School programmes in the US](#)
- [Anthropology Departments in Canada](#)

Contributors

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