

Applying to Brock's MA in Classics: Guidelines and tips for the supporting documents required for your application

Detailed information on how to [apply to the MA in Classics](#) can be found through the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs' website, including step-by-step instructions for submitting the online application. Part of the application involves supporting documents as listed below. Some helpful suggestions and recommendations follow for each of the required components.

Supporting documents required:

- 2 letters of reference
- a statement of interest/intent (maximum 2 pages)
- a writing sample (maximum 20 pages)

Letters of reference

- Ask professors who know you and are familiar with your academic work (i.e., you've taken at least one course with each professor and ideally 3rd or 4th year courses in which you completed a project that involved research and writing since your letter writers will be asked to speak to your potential for doing graduate-level research and writing).
- Provide your letter writers with as much information as possible to assist them in writing strong recommendations on your behalf: a cv or résumé; a copy of your unofficial transcript (i.e., a 'marks inquiry' from your student account that shows all courses you have taken and are registered in at your current institution); an email containing details about your research interests and what you might want to focus on in Brock's MA program, plus why you're applying to Brock and feel it would be a good fit for your interests (e.g., which professors you would like to work with, specific resources or opportunities in the department).
- Ask professors well in advance of the deadline (i.e., no later than the first week of January) and send a polite reminder by email 2 weeks before the application deadline of January 31.
- Your letter writers cannot upload their letters until they have received an email prompt to do so; this won't occur until you have started the on-line application so keep that in mind.

Statement of intent/interest (maximum 2 pages)

- Your online application and transcript(s) only tell an admissions committee part of the story of who you are and why you would be a good candidate for its MA program. The statement of intent/interest is your opportunity to provide important details that can help the committee assess your application.
- Begin your statement with a paragraph that introduces you and grabs the reader's attention (e.g., you might explain how you became interested in studying the ancient Mediterranean world or a particular text you read or experience that set you on the path of further study). End the statement with a paragraph that reminds the reader why you would be a good fit for this program (i.e., review your interests and goals).
- In your statement, you need to outline your research interests and propose one or two particular topics you would want to focus on for your research project if accepted. Be specific! Rather than saying you are interested in Greek art or Roman history, tell readers *which* aspects of those fields

of study are especially interesting to you and why (e.g., time period, specific historical actors and problems or issues). Students often change their minds once in an MA program and after completing some courses, so you won't necessarily end up working on the project proposed in your application or might pursue a variation of it.

- Identify which professors in the department you want to work with and why, and link this to your research interests and proposed project(s). Read through [faculty profiles](#) on the department website and [past projects MA students have completed](#). Look at what professors list as their teaching and [research interests](#), publications, conference papers, and other scholarly and professional activities. Feel free to email those professors you'd want to work with and ask about setting up a virtual call to talk about research interests.
- Outline your objectives or goals in pursuing graduate studies in Classics and specifically at Brock. Why do you want to enrol in Brock's MA in Classics? What do you hope to gain from graduate studies? Here is an opportunity to address future goals and plans: do you want to pursue a PhD or another graduate or professional program after the MA? Are you interested in gaining specific skills and experience that would be helpful for a particular career such as working in CRM (Cultural Resource Management)?
- This is also a place where you can address your choice of writing sample to help contextualize it for the admissions committee. Does this reflect your research interests? Is the sample part of a bigger project such as an Honours thesis or capstone project, and if so, why have you selected these pages specifically?
- The statement also gives you a chance to expand on your preparation in Latin and/or Greek. Course codes on a transcript are not very informative, so if you are applying to work on a literary or historical topic for which your skills in working with Latin and/or Greek are especially relevant, this is your opportunity to tell readers which ancient texts you've studied and how they fit with your research interests.
- Finally, make sure you edit and proofread your statement carefully! You want to put forward the best impression to the admissions committee by submitting your best work. Show a draft of your statement to others such as a professor in your department or friend to get valuable feedback you can use to strengthen and improve it.

Writing sample (maximum 20 pages)

- This should be a representative piece of work that reflects your research and writing skills. An essay from a 3rd or 4th year course is a good choice, especially if it connects to your particular research interests. Choose an essay you're proud of and that shows your strengths.
- An essay of 8-10 pages is often a good length. If you're selecting from a larger project, such as an Honours thesis, adding a couple of sentences that contextualize what you've submitted can be helpful for readers (e.g., identify which part of the project the excerpt is from and what the other sections cover that you haven't included).

Questions?

Contact the current Graduate Program Director, Dr. Fanny Dolansky (fdolansky@brocku.ca).