

# **All About the GRE**

**Presented by PUMP**

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# WELCOME!

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# P.U.M.P at York University

Psychology Undergraduate Mentorship Program  
*Empowering Underrepresented Students in Academia*

- A graduate student organization in collaboration with the Department of Psychology
- Provide mentorship to undergraduate students interested in graduate studies in Psychology
- Website: <https://www.yorku.ca/club/pump/>



# Outline

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## Today's Presentation:

1. How important is the GRE?
2. Intro to the GRE
3. Study Timeline
4. Study Tips
5. Test Day and Anxiety
6. Panel Discussion

**1.**

# **How important is the GRE?**

*Why it is necessary and the impacts it has on graduate apps*

## Why is the GRE important?

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- ◆ Required for many graduate programs
- ◆ Determine competitiveness of application
  - ◆ Programs often use GRE cut-offs
- ◆  $\frac{1}{3}$  of application



## Programs That Require The GRE

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- ◆ Clinical Psychology
- ◆ Experimental Psychology
- ◆ Accounting, economics, finance
- ◆ Some graduate science programs (i.e. MA or PhD programs)
- ◆ \*may/may not have been waived for 2023 admission

## Programs That Don't Require The GRE

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- ◆ Some clinical/experimental psych programs
- ◆ Medical school (require the MCAT)
- ◆ Law school (require the LSAT)
- ◆ Social work/counselling MA
- ◆ \*\*It varies by program and by school, so make sure to check the requirements!\*\*



## Where the GRE fits in the application

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- ◆ GRE scores
  - ◆ Psychology GRE scores (will come back to this)
- ◆ Statement of interest
- ◆ CVs
- ◆ Letters of recommendation (usually 2-3)

# **2.**

# **Intro to the GRE**

*Outline of the GRE*

## The General GRE: What is it?

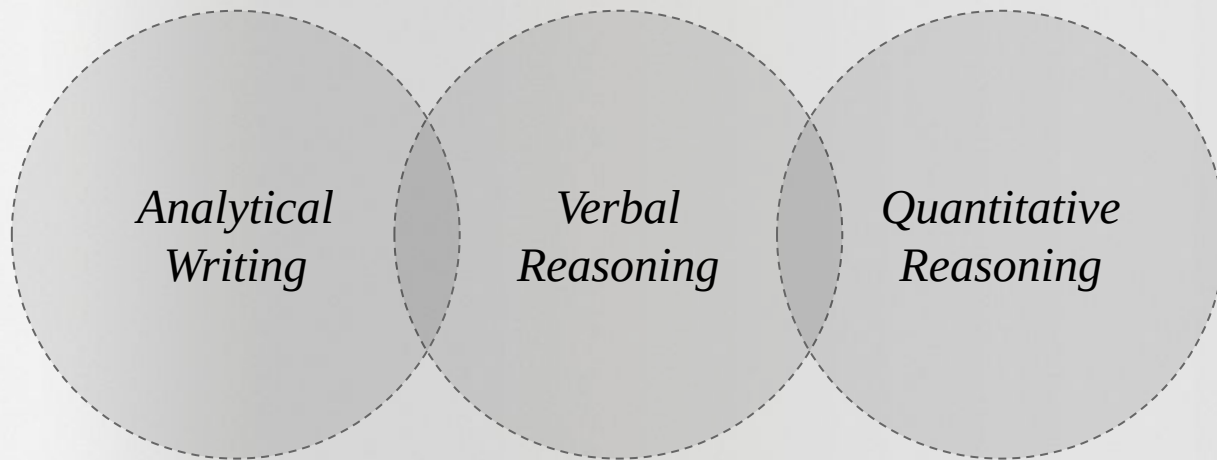
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- GRE = Graduate Record Examinations
- Standardized test for students applying to graduate programs
- In-person testing centres or at home
- Total of 3 hours 45 minutes
- Fee: \$205 USD
- Retake: once every 21 days



## GRE - Three Parts

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## Structure of the GRE

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- **Analytical Writing** — Measures critical thinking and analytical writing skills, specifically your ability to articulate and support complex ideas clearly and effectively.
- **Verbal Reasoning** — Measures your ability to analyze and evaluate written material and synthesize information obtained from it, analyze relationships among component parts of sentences and recognize relationships among words and concepts.
- **Quantitative Reasoning** — Measures problem-solving ability using basic concepts of arithmetic, algebra, geometry and data analysis.

\*Sample questions for all sections can be found on [www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org)

# Structure of the GRE

- **Analytical Writing** - One section, 2 tasks: Analyze an Issue, Analyze an Argument. (Max score: 6)

Time: 30 per each task

- **Verbal Reasoning** — Two sections, 20 questions each section (Max score: 170)

Time: 30 minutes per section

- **Quantitative Reasoning** - Two sections, 20 questions each section (Max score: 170)

Time: 35 minutes per section

**Unscored** - Doesn't count towards your score, any time after the writing section, quality control

**Research** - Identified research section, may get instead of unscored, questions for research purposes

\*Analytical Writing always first, latter sections in any order, treat all sections as though they may be scored



## GRE Changes due to COVID

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- ◆ At-home version available
  - ◆ Proctored
- ◆ Proof of vaccination?
- ◆ Some additional COVID-related measures

## **Which Programs Have Not Waived the GRE?**

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- ◆ 2022 admission: Majority of programs have waived GRE
- ◆ 2023 admission: Some programs (but not all) have waived the GRE



[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1f6ZyVGn-opa\\_ijRyntHxfJJkaSNya4h-bwEDeDGInv4/](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1f6ZyVGn-opa_ijRyntHxfJJkaSNya4h-bwEDeDGInv4/)

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Canada list by Karen Tang (Twitter: @KarenTang_)					
2	IF YOU COME ACROSS A PROGRAM NOT ON THIS LIST, PLEASE SHARE AS A COMMENT WITH THE LINK (OR MSSG ON TWITTER) & I WILL ADD! THANK YOU AND GOOD LUCK WITH APPS :)					
3	Province	Institution	Program	GRE	Waiving for current (2022/2023) cycle or forever	Program Link
4	British Columbia	University of British Columbia – Okanagan	Clinical Psychology/all psych programs			<a href="https://psych.ok.ubc.ca/graduate/psychology/">(https://psych.ok.ubc.ca/graduate/psychology/</a>
5	Ontario	Ryerson University	Clinical Psychology/all psych programs	Not accepted at all	Forever	<a href="https://www.ryerson.ca/psychology/programs/gradu">https://www.ryerson.ca/psychology/programs/gradu</a>
6	Ontario	York University	Clinical Psychology/all psych programs	ed for 2022 admission, required for 2023 admis	Current only	
7	Quebec	McGill University	Clinical Psychology/all psych programs	Waived		
8	Ontario	Queen's University	Clinical Psychology/all psych programs	Waived for 2022, required for 2023 admission		
9	Ontario	Lakehead University	Clinical Psychology	WAIVED	Current only	<a href="https://www.lakeheadu.ca/programs/graduate/progr">https://www.lakeheadu.ca/programs/graduate/progr</a>
10	Ontario	University of Guelph	Clinical Psychology/all psych programs	Unknown for 2023		
11	Ontario	University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC)	Clinical Psychology	Unknown for 2023		
12	Ontario	University of Windsor	Clinical Psychology/all psych programs	Waived		
13	Alberta	University of Calgary	Clinical Psychology	Not accepted	Forever	<a href="https://grad.ucalgary.ca/future-students/explore">https://grad.ucalgary.ca/future-students/explore</a>
14	New Brunswick	University of New Brunswick	Clinical Psychology/all psych programs	Not accepted		
15	Ontario	Western University	Clinical Psychology/all psych programs	Not required		
16	British Columbia	University of Victoria	Clinical Psychology	Not accepted	Forever	<a href="https://www.uvic.ca/socialsciences/psychology/grac">https://www.uvic.ca/socialsciences/psychology/grac</a>
17	Quebec	Concordia University	Clinical Psychology/all psych programs	Not required	Forever	<a href="https://www.concordia.ca/artsci/psychology/progra">https://www.concordia.ca/artsci/psychology/progra</a>
18	Ontario	University of Ottawa	Clinical Psychology/all psych programs	Not required	Forever	<a href="https://socialsciences.uottawa.ca/psychology/progr">https://socialsciences.uottawa.ca/psychology/progr</a>
19	Saskatchewan	University of Regina	Clinical Psychology/all psych programs	GRE General required		<a href="https://www.uregina.ca/gradstudies/current-student">https://www.uregina.ca/gradstudies/current-student</a>
20	British Columbia	University of British Columbia	Clinical Psychology/all psych programs	Not required but General + Subject preferred		
21	Ontario	University of Waterloo	Clinical Psychology/all psych programs	Waived for Clinical (not for Experimental)	Current	<a href="https://uwaterloo.ca/graduate-studies-postdoctoral-">https://uwaterloo.ca/graduate-studies-postdoctoral-</a>
			Clinical Psychology/all psych programs			



## **Psychology GRE**

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- Some programs also require the **Subject Test in Psychology**
- Fee: \$150 USD
- Approx. 205 multiple choice questions
- Time: ~2 hours 50 minutes, no breaks
- Offered: September, October, April

## Psychology GRE

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- Questions meant to draw from core knowledge from courses commonly encountered throughout undergraduate psychology
  - Biological (17-21%)
  - Cognitive (17-24%)
  - Social (12-14%)
  - Developmental (12-14%)
  - Clinical (15-19%)
  - Measurement/Methodology/Other (15-19%)

## Psychology GRE Sample

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Consider the sentence “The dishwasher is running.” Which of the following is true?

- A. It can have more than one surface structure.
- B. It can have more than one deep structure.
- C. It is grammatically incorrect.
- D. It can have more than one syntax.
- E. It violates the rules of bottom-up processing.



# **3.**

# **Study Timeline**

*When to start studying and when to take the GRE*

## When to Take the GRE?

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- ◆ Decide when you want to take the exam:
  - ◆ Oct. of application year is latest
  - ◆ Earlier is much better (especially if want option to retake)
  - ◆ Also depends on how long you plan to study for the exam

## How Much Time Studying?

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- ◆ How long can you study for the exam?
- ◆ Ideally from 1-6 months
  - ◆ 1 month: short but focused
  - ◆ 3 months: middle ground
  - ◆ 6 months: more time but can forget later



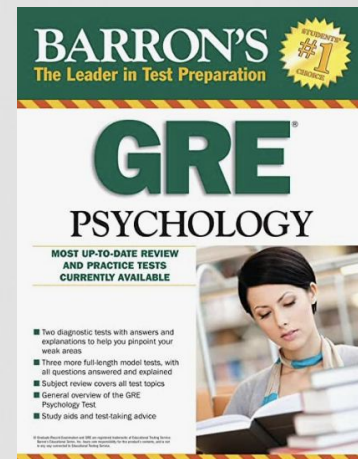
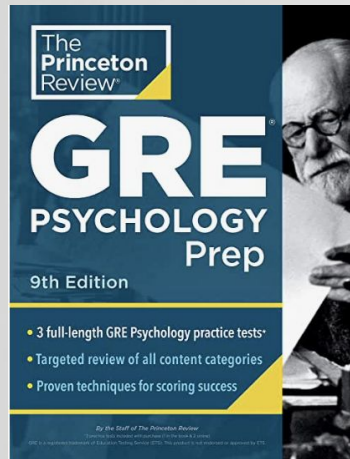
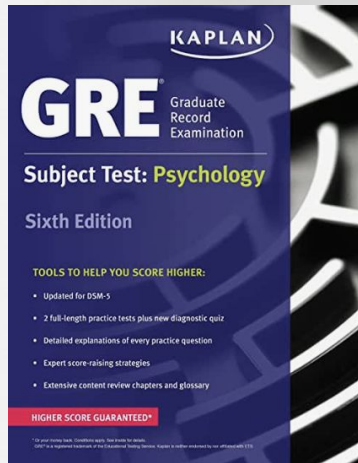
## How Much Time Studying?

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- ◆ Help deciding how long to spend?
  - ◆ Short quiz on Magoosh
- ◆ Timelines for studying 1 week, 1 month, 2-3 months, and 6 months from Magoosh
  - ◆ Verbal or Quantitative focus too
- ◆ All materials free:  
[gre.magoosh.com/study-plans](https://gre.magoosh.com/study-plans)

# Preparing for the Subject GRE

- Workbooks
- Practice Tests (books and ETS site)





# 4. Study Tips

*How to make the most of your studying*



## Practice Test

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- ◆ ETS has a practice test online that looks the exact same as the real test
- ◆ Start with a timed practice exam
  - ◆ Gauge what you need to focus on
- ◆ Take practice exams, but make sure to also focus on specific sections, subsections, and types of questions you have trouble with

## General Test-taking Tips

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- ◆ Outline your essays before writing them
- ◆ Work backwards on math problems
- ◆ Try to answer math questions without doing math!

## General Test-taking Tips

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- ◆ Go through each section twice:
  - ◆ First answer all you know immediately
  - ◆ Second go back to items you are not as sure about
- ◆ Cover answers with your hands and try to answer the question without looking at the possible answers



# Analytical Writing

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- ◆ Two Essays
  - ◆ Issue
  - ◆ Argument

## Analytical Writing - Analyse an Issue

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- ◆ “Task assesses your ability to think critically about a topic of general interest and to clearly express your thoughts about it in writing.”
  - ◆ Makes a claim
    - ◇ Many perspectives and situations/conditions
  - ◆ You need to present a case for your own position about this claim
    - ◇ There is no right or wrong response

## Analytical Writing - Analyze an Argument

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- ◆ “Task assesses your ability to understand, analyze and evaluate arguments according to specific instructions and to convey your evaluation clearly in your writing.”
- ◆ Read brief passage which makes a case for some course of action or interpretation of events by presenting claims
- ◆ Assess the logical soundness of this case
  - ◆ Critically examine line of reasoning and use of evidence
  - ◆ There are often “key” fallacies to pick up on



## Analytical Writing

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- ◆ Practice and get feedback
  - ◆ Use pool of prompts on ETS website
    - ◇ [Pool of Issue Topics](#)
    - ◇ [Pool of Argument Topics](#)
  - ◆ Have a friend review/critique

## **Verbal Reasoning (Reading/Vocab)**

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- ◆ Types of questions
  - ◆ Reading comprehension
  - ◆ Text completion
  - ◆ Sentence equivalence

## Verbal Reasoning (Reading/Vocab)

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- ◆ Practice HOW to answer these questions and what answers they look for
- ◆ Often, there may be specific types of questions you tend to struggle with
  - ◆ Focus on these/practice them
  - ◆ Look for “formulas”



# Verbal Reasoning (Reading/Vocab)

## CRAVEN

- Lacking Courage
- synonyms: timid



## ABERRANT

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



## Quantitative Reasoning (Math)

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- ◆ Basic math skills and concepts
- ◆ Qualitative reasoning/methods
- ◆ Algebra
- ◆ Geometry
- ◆ Data Analysis

## Quantitative Reasoning (Math)

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- ◆ Can use a basic calculator, but aim to do least amount of “math” (time)
  - ◆ Focus on learning shortcuts and quick mental math
- ◆ There is a pattern to the type of questions here, pay attention to which types you typically get wrong



## GRE Prep Courses

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- ◆ Different programs use different structures
  - ◆ In-class (e.g. Kaplan, Oxford, Princeton Review)
  - ◆ Self-directed online (e.g. Magoosh)
- ◆ Are they worth it?

# **5.**

# **Test day and anxiety**

*Planning for exam time and dealing with stress*

## Test Day

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- ◆ Take the day off before the exam
- ◆ Do a few easy warm up verbal and quantitative questions in the morning before the exam
- ◆ Wear comfortable clothes
- ◆ Do something active beforehand if possible
- ◆ Eat beforehand, bring snacks/water
- ◆ Bring photo ID
- ◆ Get a good night's sleep! Research shows that it reduces anxiety and helps consolidate information :)



## Test Day

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- ◆ Be mindful that you will not be allowed to remove sweaters in the test room (would have to step out)
- ◆ Walk around and have snacks/water on breaks, but have to keep in a locker (not in test room)
- ◆ Use washroom during breaks

## Test Anxiety

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- ◆ Prepare for the exam by doing practice tests modeled EXACTLY like the real one
- ◆ Mindfulness meditation
- ◆ Exercise
- ◆ Have a friend take you to the test center
- ◆ Can apply for test accommodations

## Test Anxiety

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- ◆ You do NOT have to send your scores to any schools if you don't want to
- ◆ You can always take the GRE again
  - ◆ Very common
- ◆ Listen to yourself/circumstances
  - ◆ Can cancel the GRE if necessary



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*This information and these tips are not one size fits all, and based on our own experience and knowledge. Be flexible and find what works for you!”*

# 6. Q&A Discussion

*Ask us about our own experience with the GRE*

**Good Luck!**