

“What should I consider before applying to a graduate school program?”
Karima Williams, Director of Financial Aid, School of Social Policy & Practice

“One of the first things that students should think about is their personal finances and resources when considering graduate studies. Students should determine what they are personally able to contribute to their graduate school education and also see what family support may be available.

“I strongly suggest that students also review their credit report. This is something that should be done once a year at minimum. It is possible to have incorrect information on your credit report and it can be time consuming to correct misinformation. It’s a really good idea to check your credit report and confirm that all of the information provided is correct well in advance of applying to graduate school. You can receive a free credit report from each of the three major reporting agencies once a year at annualcreditreport.com.

“Students should also think about where they’re applying and what the cost of living is like in that area. For example, the city of Philadelphia is relatively inexpensive for a Northeast city. If you were to compare Philadelphia’s cost of living to that of schools in New York or San Diego, you would generally find living expenses to be a lot higher in the other cities.

“I recommend that students document their current monthly expenses to get an idea of how much they spend month to month. This will allow students to accurately estimate how much they will need to budget for on a monthly basis while graduate school.”