

## Wearing many hats in the international office

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Janice Tough thrives on the daily interactions with students in the International Programs Office.

Officially, Janice Tough is international programs assistant in the Queen's International Programs Office (IPO). Unofficially, she is the gatekeeper, the gel that holds the office together, a pseudo-mother to the scores of incoming and outgoing exchange students who visit the IPO, a motivator, a cheerleader — and traffic controller in Mackintosh-Corry Hall.

"I love my job. I thank my lucky stars every day," says Ms. Tough. "Every day is a challenge. It's never routine and downtime doesn't exist."

A self-described social butterfly, Ms. Tough sits at the front desk in the IPO and thrives on the daily interactions with students. She is the face they remember, and for many students attending Queen's from around the world, she is a much-needed advisor, helping them navigate a new city and new culture. Many of them, according to Ms. Tough's colleagues, get distressed if she's not there.

"The students are so lovely," Ms. Tough says. "It's amazing to see the change in them, both international students on campus and Queen's students who study abroad. I see them when they first get here or before they leave, and then again later, after their journeys, and they are so mature. These experiences are life-altering for them."

Ms. Tough began a permanent position in the IPO in 2007, but she knew the ropes, having covered a maternity leave 10 years prior. Coming back, a lot had changed but she felt she had never left.

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“It is hard to put into words the integral role Janice plays at the IPO,” says Jenny Corlett, Manager, IPO. “She is very intuitive about our students’ well-being and always makes the time to talk and make sure they are okay. She provides comforting words and reassurance, but also knows when to tell them to pull up their socks and get to it.”

In the day-to-day, Ms. Tough supports the team of exchange/study abroad coordinators, international managers, and the various programs they administer. She is constantly in contact with departments and faculty members and works steadily on background work for the Bader International Study Centre (BISC), the Semester in Shanghai program, and the Japan Cross-Cultural College, a study-abroad partnership with Kwansei Gakuin University. She also organizes the first-year orientation on Queen’s campus in July for students heading to the BISC in the United Kingdom.

[More on the IPO](#)

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