

**Poul Christoffersen – Scott Polar Research Institute, Cambridge University, UK  
Semester 1 2017.**



*Dr Christoffersen and his family enjoying some of the beautiful beaches the West Coast has to offer*

**Where you have come from and what do you teach?**

*I am a glaciologist and senior staff member of the Scott Polar Research Institute at the University of Cambridge. My research focuses on glaciers and ice sheets and specifically their interaction with atmosphere and ocean. I have lived in Cambridge since 2007 and am half Danish and half 'kiwi'.*

**What interested you in the Erskine Programme/Why did you want to come to UC?**

*I know UC really well. I have a Diploma in Engineering Geology from UC dating back to 1997 but have returned to Christchurch quite a few times since, both for work and holidays. As Cambridge Fellow funded by Erskine, I can develop my Antarctic studies by linking them with related work at Gateway Antarctica and other departments at UC. Christchurch is one of only a few gateways to Antarctica, so I am also here to learn about Antarctica New Zealand's operation at Scott Base, the New Zealand Antarctic Research Institute and the UC system in general.*

**What have you been doing at UC?**

*I interact a lot with Wolfgang Rack and the members of his research group. We share common interests and use similar techniques in our glaciological research. They run weekly meetings and paper discussions, and I have already learned a lot from participating in these regular events. In February, we all went to a conference in Wellington, which was a nice way to get to know each other and our work. To introduce myself, I gave a talk at Gateway Antarctica after my arrival, but I will also present my work in seminars at other departments (Physics, Geography, Geological Sciences).*

*My lectures focuses on ice sheet dynamics and I am currently preparing a public talk with the title "Antarctic glaciers on the move". The talk is arranged by The Antarctic Office at the Christchurch City Council.*

**What have you most enjoyed about your time here at UC/Christchurch?**

*I really enjoy the atmosphere at Gateway Antarctica, where I am fortunate to have an office with a wonderful view. It is next to Waterways so I am meeting people who are experts on watershed hydrology, which we know only a little bit about in Antarctica where rivers and lakes are deeply buried beneath a thick layer of ice. The interaction with Bryan and Wolfgang and their groups is a highlight and I also enjoy being able to dedicate quite a lot of my time to research and writing papers.*

*This is my twelfth or thirteenth trip to New Zealand, but the scenery of the South Island is no less impressive as the first time I visited. I am having a great time travelling during weekends with my wife and kids, who are 10 and 8 years old. So far we have enjoyed exploring the Banks Peninsula, West Coast beaches, soaking in hot springs in Hanmer and spotting whales off the coast at Kaikoura. My kids attend Ilam Primary School, which they both enjoy.*