

What can I do with a degree in Art History and Theory?

Art History and Theory.



Career planning: what do I need to know?

Knowledge of yourself is important for career decision making. Start by looking at your personal goals, abilities, values and interests to explore study and career options that are relevant to you. Some of these may change over time, so it is important to self-reflect and evaluate your career on an ongoing basis.

What do employers look for?

Many employers look for generic skills such as communication, customer-focus, bicultural competence, cultural awareness and teamwork. With technology and globalisation changing the nature of society, skills such as resilience, problem solving and adaptability are valuable at work as well as in life.

How can I develop these skills?

- Some skills are developed through your degree

- Extra-curricular activities can help, for example getting involved in clubs, mentoring, cultural groups, part-time work or volunteering
- Be open to professional and personal development opportunities. Whether it is undertaking an internship, overseas exchange, skills seminar, or joining an industry group – these activities will enhance your employability.

What else should I know?

The career options in this brochure are examples only and the list is not exhaustive. Some careers may require further study beyond a first degree or additional work experience. Some pathways and degrees have a recommended school background. Find more subject details at

www.canterbury.ac.nz/subjects/arth

If this brochure does not answer your questions, talking to an expert such as a career consultant can help you to identify the next steps in your career decision making journey.

www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers

What is Art History and Theory?

We are constantly surrounded by objects and images: these things have meanings, and affect our experiences. Art History helps you to find messages encoded within the visual world, and to think about the effects they have in and on society. In our courses, we study a range of artworks and objects – including paintings, moving images, crafts and everyday things – and these provide insights into a variety of places, histories and cultures.

The 'visual literacy' Art History courses develop is an extremely useful skill – highly applicable to many other subjects of study, and to a range of different career paths. Studying Art History also offers students the chance to develop expertise in how to look at things in detail, and to get the most out of what can be seen.



AT A GLANCE

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museum for every 9,500 people in Aotearoa New Zealand, one of the world's highest per capita*

160k+

is the number of architectural drawings, from the 19th century to today, held by UC's Macmillan Brown Library

\$100k

is a standard salary for Sales and Marketing Managers*

What skills have UC graduates gained?

Through their Art History and Theory degree, graduates develop a valuable set of skills that are transferable to a range of careers. These skills include:

- Highly developed skills in visual analysis and interpretation
- Knowledge of history, literature, philosophy, and religion as it relates to works of art and architecture
- Interpretive and analytical thinking
- Understanding of the influences on contemporary society
- Thinking critically and creatively, and challenging received ideas
- Logical and qualitative thinking
- Problem solving skills
- Oral and written communication
- Research and computing skills.

Opportunities to apply your learning outside the classroom are available, for example undertaking an internship can deepen your skillset, awareness of others, working knowledge and employability.

Where have UC graduates been employed?

Career destinations related to Art History and Theory include organisations and sectors such as:

- Museums
- Art galleries
- Governance and policy
- Arts management
- Fine arts auctioneers
- Archives and libraries
- Heritage and conservation
- Journalism, media and public relations
- Publishing
- Event management
- Education
- Tertiary sector
- Marketing and advertising
- Tech industry and start-ups
- Databases and image libraries.

Career possibilities are diverse. UC graduates are found in a variety of organisations ranging from: art galleries to government departments, art suppliers to power companies, libraries to schools, alumni relations to health boards.

* www.teara.govt.nz/en/museums

* www.careers.govt.nz

What jobs and activities do graduates do?

Graduates with this degree are employed in a range of jobs — see examples below with key tasks.

Note: Some of the jobs listed may require postgraduate study. See the 'Further study' section.

Curator

- Designs and coordinates exhibitions
- Manages collections
- Conducts research and communicates information

Art gallery manager / director / assistant

- Assesses and selects art
- Plans and presents exhibitions, events, seminars, outreach activity
- Works with artists and negotiates purchases

Librarian, library assistant

- Categorises and catalogues library materials
- Selects materials for library use
- Helps customers find and use materials

Policy analyst / advisor

- Identifies and investigates issues and opportunities eg, in society, law or governance
- Interprets existing policies and briefs leaders
- Prepares reports and recommends changes

Editorial assistant

- Proofreads material and coordinates changes
- Adds elements in production eg, graphics
- Answers publication queries

Secondary school teacher

- Plans and delivers instructional lessons
- Evaluates performance and provides feedback
- Sets and marks assignments and tests

Digital content analyst

- Develops a brand's digital marketing strategy
- Increases web traffic and online engagement
- Oversees social media and search optimisation

Manager, project manager

- Oversees the effective use of resources
- Responsible for certain aspects or overall operation of an organisation, unit or project
- Plans, budgets, supervises, instigates, solves

Marketing assistant / associate

- Collects and analyses market insight
- Prepares and implements marketing plans
- Works with others to promote goods or services

Sales manager

- Identifies and develops new markets or business
- Manages client relationships and presentations
- Implements sales and marketing strategies

Arts administrator / manager

- Manages logistics, budgets, schedules for events, venues, managers
- Contributes to marketing materials and media
- Develops new projects and initiatives

Research officer / assistant

- Organises and conducts research
- Develops and tests theories, interprets results
- Writes reports and publishes research

Database assistant

- Administers data infrastructure
- Maintains an organisation's database
- Provides analytical support to others

Entrepreneur & self-employment

Entrepreneurship and innovation are an increasing part of the working landscape. Through generating a business idea, or getting involved in a start-up/business venture, you have the potential to create a work opportunity that aligns with your knowledge, skills, values and risk profile. To get started on how to establish, run and grow a new business, go to Te Pokapū Rakahinonga, Centre for Entrepreneurship at the University of Canterbury www.canterbury.ac.nz/uce



What professional organisations can I engage with?

Connecting with professional bodies and organisations can help you to establish professional networks and learn more about different career options in your area of interest. Gaining valuable insight into a profession can assist in making informed career decisions.

- The Art Association of Australia and New Zealand www.aaanz.info
- Te Hāpori o Ngā Toi Arts Online Association www.nztahta.org.nz

Having a professional presence on social media networks such as www.linkedin.com and Facebook can help you to keep up to date with important industry developments and trends, networking opportunities, events and job vacancies. Following relevant professional bodies, organisations, companies and thought leaders is a great way to gain a deeper awareness of the industries that interest you. Social media presents an opportunity to build and enhance networks as well as to display your involvement in projects and any academic successes.

Why do further study and what are my options?

Postgraduate study can facilitate career benefits such as specialist skills, entry into a specific occupation, and advanced research capability. It is important to determine which, if any, further study will help you in your future career.

Art History and Theory graduates can progress their studies at honours, master's and PhD level. These degrees provide advanced research, project and writing skills. Postgraduate study can also lead to an academic career in teaching and research.

Many Arts graduates do additional training, for example in Teaching and Learning, Policy and Governance, Librarianship, Journalism or Digital Humanities. UC offers a popular Postgraduate Diploma in Art Curatorship. For listings and prerequisites visit www.canterbury.ac.nz/courses

Useful links

- Te Rōpū Rapuara UC Careers www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers
- Careers New Zealand www.careers.govt.nz
- The Big Idea www.thebigidea.nz/work
- Creative NZ www.creativenz.govt.nz
- The Arts Foundation www.thearts.co.nz

Petrena



Bachelor of Arts in Art History and Theory and English
Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Art History
Master of Arts in Art History
Collection Curator, Aigantighe Art Gallery, Timaru

How did your experience at UC help your career?

The study itself has been wonderful, but the people that you meet and work with are even more so. I have been really impressed by the support of lecturers at Canterbury who have been part of my journey and I think that an Arts degree is the sort of qualification that establishes you personally and professionally – whichever career path you choose. It was through the contacts I made at UC, what I learnt, and the opportunities that I gained, which has got me to where I am now.

Things really began to solidify for me when I did the BA internship. At the Macmillan Brown Library I experienced working in a professional team, and I learnt that my ideas and voice were valid in professional situations. Through the internship I made contacts and gained skills that have directly empowered me for what I am now. Furthermore, through my work for the AA Deans Trust, I gained experience in handling of, cataloguing and caring for artworks – these are skills which lead to a similar job for another New Zealand artist, Philip Trusttun, and then gave me the experience for the role that I now hold today at the Aigantighe Art Gallery. I always wanted to be an Art Gallery Registrar.

What do you find satisfying about your work?

What I really enjoy about what I am doing is that there is such a nice balance between research or seeking information, while at the same time building relationships with those involved in Canterbury's art scene. With my own research I really enjoy the opportunity to document part of Christchurch's history.

What advice do you have for those interested in Art History and Theory?

My advice would be trust your ideas of interest, take opportunities that come your way, and go for it!

Read more online

Read more stories about our students' university experiences online. UC alumni make a difference in varied ways around the globe. To find out where graduates are now visit www.canterbury.ac.nz/getstarted/whyuc/student-profiles

The information in this brochure was correct at the time of print but is subject to change.

More information

UC students seeking study advice.

Te Kura Mātāpuna Tangata | School of Language, Social and Political Sciences

At UC we take a broad view of Art History; this is reflected in the variety of objects we look at and the ways we discuss them. We also consider the mechanics of the art world, as practices such as collecting, display, patronage, art education, art criticism, and community engagement all affect how we understand art and objects.

Our lecturers cultivate research interests that connect to other disciplines. This interdisciplinary aspect is woven into a number of our courses.

T: +64 3 369 3377

E: artsdegreeadvice@canterbury.ac.nz

www.canterbury.ac.nz/arts/schools-and-departments/art-history-and-theory

University-of-Canterbury-Art-History-and-Theory-Department

Anyone seeking careers advice.

Te Rōpū Rapuara | UC Careers

UC offers intending and current students and recent graduates a wide range of services, including individual career guidance, seminars, career resources and student and graduate employment opportunities.

T: + 64 3 369 0303

E: careers@canterbury.ac.nz

www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers

Prospective students seeking study advice.

Te Rōpū Takawaenga | Student Liaison

The liaison team provide advice to future students who are starting their degree for the first time. They can assist with information on degrees, scholarships, accommodation, and other aspects of university life. We have offices in Christchurch, Auckland and Wellington.

Ōtautahi | Christchurch

T: 0800 VARSITY (0800 827 748)

E: liaison@canterbury.ac.nz

Tāmaki Makaurau | Auckland

T: 0800 UCAUCK

E: auckland@canterbury.ac.nz

Te Whanganui-a-Tara | Wellington

T: 0800 VARSITY (0800 827 748)

E: wellington@canterbury.ac.nz

www.canterbury.ac.nz/liaison

