

What can I do with a degree in Political Science and International Relations?

Political Science and International Relations.



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/pols

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 Political Science and International Relations?

Are you interested in making a difference to the world around you? Does the future of Aotearoa New Zealand's democracy interest you? Does news about politics and elections in other countries capture your interest? Are you concerned about major issues in international politics and international security? How about issues such as human rights, health, environment, foreign policy or conflict? Do you want to critically analyse these questions and pursue a career based on your interest? If so, you should study Political Science and International Relations.

Political Science is often called the study of who gets what, where, how and why. Political scientists use a variety of theories, ideas, tools, and methods to conduct an independent and informed study of our communities.



AT A GLANCE

571k people were employed in Aotearoa New Zealand's public services in 2020*

49 countries that Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade staff work in around the world

17 Sustainable Development Goals set out by the United Nations**

What skills have UC graduates gained?

Through their degree in Political Science and International Relations, graduates develop a valuable set of skills that are transferable to a range of careers. These include:

- Political analysis
- Understanding the ways that laws and economic policies are developed
- Interpretive thinking
- Thinking critically, creatively and challenging ideas
- Logical and quantitative reasoning
- Understanding globalisation and its effects on our politics and economy
- Policy formulation and analysis
- Understanding international relations, international law and diplomacy
- Problem solving skills adaptable to differing contexts
- Oral and written communication
- Research and computing.

Opportunities to apply your learning outside the classroom are available in this subject, through internships and field trips. These experiences deepen your skillset, awareness of others, working knowledge, and employability.

Where have UC graduates been employed?

Political Science and International Relations students gain skills that can be applied in a wide range of exciting careers within politics and in areas such as law, business, education and journalism.

UC graduates have been employed in:

- Aotearoa New Zealand government agencies such as the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Health, Economic Development, Defence, Environment, and Justice as well as the Treasury, Te Puni Kōkiri, Immigration New Zealand, Parliament, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Office of Treaty Settlements, and the Security Intelligence Service
- Iwi and Māori governance bodies for example Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu
- Regional councils
- Tertiary institutions
- International agencies such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
- Not-for-profits like St John and the Red Cross
- Private companies in banking, insurance, media, legal, finance, recruitment, and education sectors
- Public and private organisations in other countries such as Australia, Singapore, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

* www.publicservice.govt.nz

** www.sdg.un.org/goals

What jobs and activities do graduates do?

Graduates with this degree are employed in a range of jobs. See some examples below.

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

Policy analyst / advisor

- Identifies and investigates issues and opportunities eg, in society, law or governance
- Interprets existing policies and consults with stakeholders or briefs in leaders
- Prepares and presents reports and recommendations for policy development

Governance manager / support officer

- Supports and advises appointed leaders such as councillors or members of parliament
- Ensures compliance with public sector and/or local government legislation
- Manages many relationships and interactions

Parliamentary officer

- Keeps and maintains records
- Assists in the development of policies
- Prepares reports and recommendations to support senior members

Executive Assistant / legislative aide to an MP

- Liaises with constituents, other politicians, the media, lobbyists, community groups
- Awareness of local, regional, national and international issues, and drafts materials
- Promotes the politician's work

Immigration officer / manager

- Examines documentation such as passports
- Approves or rejects entry into a country
- Organises the removal of people who have broken immigration law

Communications / media advisor, journalist

- Develops information, media and communication strategies
- Researches, writes, edits and produces content for various audiences and mediums

International aid worker

- Manages and assesses projects
- Supports long-term development
- Evaluates responses to emergency situations

Advocate

- Advises and represents individuals, groups or a cause
- Examines and drafts contracts
- Provides relevant information to clients

Diplomat

- Promotes Aotearoa New Zealand's interests overseas
- Reports on affairs and develops foreign and trade policies
- Liaises with local authorities and negotiates agreements with other countries

Export / customs coordinator

- Specialises in domestic and international markets or laws
- Inspects or coordinates mail, imported and exported goods
- Administers documentation and ensures adherence to the law

Research analyst / advisor / assistant

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

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.

- Te Kāhui Tātai Tōrangapū o Aotearoa The New Zealand Political Studies Association www.nzpsa.com
- Australian Political Studies Association www.auspsa.org.au
- New Zealand Studies Association www.nzsa.co.uk
- International Political Science Association www.ipsa.org

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, higher starting salary, faster progression rate, and advanced research capability. It is important to determine which, if any, further study will help you in your future career.

Political Science and International Relations graduates can undertake further study from honours through to PhD-level, which can lead to a career in tertiary teaching and research. UC offers a Master of Policy and Governance, and a Master of International Relations and Diplomacy. Many Arts graduates go on to study teaching, journalism or management. www.canterbury.ac.nz/courses

Useful links

- Te Rōpū Rapuara UC Careers www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers
- Careers New Zealand www.careers.govt.nz
- New Zealand Political Studies Association www.nzpsa.com
- State sector jobs www.jobs.govt.nz



Clive



Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with
a minor in Philosophy
Master of Business Management
Director, Mates Social Media

What do you enjoy about your work?

I get to meet different people on a daily basis and help to solve commercial marketing problem with a creative lens. Every day is just totally different.

How does your degree relate to your work?

If you love what you are studying, you'll be that much more motivated to find a way to use your degree. Political Science has lots of traditional pathways but the skills you learn are also extremely transferable into other industries.

My social media specialisation is in the political sphere. I'm lucky enough to speak to political organisations and consult them on how to further promote democracy!

How did the PACE course impact your career?

It was a good way to get to know Christchurch businesses better and learn in a more practical environment.

In a full circle moment, my business took on a PACE student over the summer. It was such a good way to give back to the University, and this particular student provided so much value to the company she's now coming on as part-time employee!

What are your goals for the future?

I'm really privileged to be an employer ensuring that my team has a really good environment to work in and that I'm creating a culture and business that they continually want to be a part of.

I want to keep growing my business to reach a stage where we get to work on flagship, high production advertising material.

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.

Mātai Tōrangapū, Hononga Tāwāhi | Political Science and International Relations

The Department of Political Science and International Relations at UC is recognised for its strength of research, teaching and mentoring networks, field trip teaching, and real-world problem solving.

T: +64 3 369 3377

E: artsdegreeadvice@canterbury.ac.nz

www.canterbury.ac.nz/arts/political

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

