

What can I do with a degree in Social Work?

Social Work.



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/sowk

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 Social Work?

Social workers help people to overcome personal and institutional barriers to well-being and achieve their full potential. They work with individuals, families, groups and organisations in a wide range of contexts.

The Bachelor of Social Work with Honours (BSW) is a great option to consider if you are interested in working in a people-focused career. Professionally trained people are needed in increasing numbers to work in the social services, nationally and internationally.

Students develop a strong academic foundation by studying a variety of courses from the social sciences and Māori studies, as well as specialist Social Work topics and a fieldwork internship in the community. Combined, this academic and practical foundation prepares students for employment in the social work profession, as well as in people-related, social policy and research occupations



AT A GLANCE

400%

increase in children accepted into the Ministry for Vulnerable Children's 'Children's Teams' in the year to June 2016[^]

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biggest employers of social workers are the Ministry for Vulnerable Children | Oranga Tamariki, and District Health Boards*

30%

of social workers are over 55-years-old, and their retirement should cue demand for new social workers*

What skills have UC graduates gained?

Through their Social Work degree, graduates develop a set of valuable skills such as:

- Self-awareness and a non-judgemental attitude
- Techniques for interviewing
- Bi-cultural awareness and understanding
- Critically thinking and the ability to challenging ideas
- Advanced listening and verbal communication skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Negotiating and advocacy
- Interpretive and analytical thinking
- Awareness of discriminatory and inequitable systems/practices
- A framework for values and ethics.

Opportunities to apply your learning outside the classroom are available, including undertaking an internship in a community setting. This can deepen your skillset, awareness of others, working knowledge and employability.

Where have UC graduates been employed?

In Aotearoa New Zealand, social workers are employed in the public and private sectors, providing both direct and indirect services. Graduates are employable overseas, particularly in the UK and Australia.

Direct services

Direct services include those for children, families, older people, those who have committed offences and people with disabilities. Employers may be:

- District Health Boards
- Department of Corrections or Justice
- Healthcare and disability eg, CCS Disability Action
- Oranga Tamariki
- Church missions eg, Methodist Mission, Presbyterian Support
- Supporting families experiencing family violence eg, Women's Refuge, Aviva
- Education and welfare providers
- Not-for-profit agencies eg, The Salvation Army,
- Community work eg, Canterbury Men's Centre
- Addiction services eg, Alcohol Drug Helpline, Christchurch Central Service
- Rehabilitation eg, Laura Fergusson Trust
- Advocacy and representation eg, Q-topia
- Ethnic specific and migrant organisations
- Community psychiatric services.

[^] Ministry of Social Development 2015–2016 Annual Report
^{*} 2017 MBIE Occupational Outlook

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.

Social worker

- Provides support and guidance to communities, individuals, and whānau
- Develops policy
- Conducts research
- Builds relationships and links people to resources, services, groups and events
- Advocates with and on behalf of people
- Mediates and resolves conflict
- Writes reports case notes

Community development worker / consultant

- Recognises problems and concerns within communities eg, mental health, youth facilities
- Raises awareness of local issues and works with other groups
- Develops programmes and seeks funding to address issues

Residential / social worker

- Cares for clients and their whānau in a residential setting eg, emergency shelter/refuge
- Manages interactions and ensures safety

Mental health social worker

- Provides interventions for people who are experiencing mental health issues
- Assesses their needs, supervises progress
- Aids independence and intervenes if needed

Social policy researcher

- Researches social issues eg, housing, poverty
- Investigates ways to promote family, organisational or community initiatives
- Publishes reports and communicates findings

Addiction clinician

- Supports a client to voice their feelings, stories
- Listens to and reflects upon the client's issues
- Raises self-awareness and understanding
- Helps client identify options and make choices

Hospital / medical social worker

- Works with people who are ill or suffer a trauma
- Develops support plans for clients in their home
- Supports the whānau and carers of clients

Youth worker

- Keeps young people informed and supported
- Nurtures relationships with youth and networks
- Supports adolescent parents
- Plans activities and connects to resources

Care and protection social worker

- Gathers information and is involved in working with families to better protect children
- Ensures children are protected, safe and well
- Contributes to family group conferences
- **Probation officer**
- Manages and supervises offenders
- Makes offender risk assessments to identify the chance of recidivism and suitability for parole
- Monitors access to services and programmes

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?

Registration

In Aotearoa New Zealand all social workers need to be registered by the Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB). The purpose of registration is to ensure the safety of the public and to enhance professionalism by ensuring social workers adhere to a Code of Conduct and understand their professional obligations.



Professional and industry organisations

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 Rōpū Tauwhiro i Aotearoa Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers www.anzasw.org.nz
- Kāhui Whakamana Tauwhiro Social Workers Registration Board www.swrb.govt.nz
- Social Services Providers Aotearoa Inc www.sspa.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.

Social Work graduates can progress into the Master of Social Work (by thesis) and the Doctor of Philosophy in Social Work. These degrees provide advanced research and writing skills and allow the chance to specialise. Postgraduate study can also lead to an academic career.

For those who have a degree in another subject, they can enter the social work profession via the Master of Social Work (Applied).

www.canterbury.ac.nz/courses

Useful links

Te Rōpū Rapuara UC Careers
www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers

Careers New Zealand
www.careers.govt.nz

Community Matters
www.communitymatters.govt.nz

Do Good Jobs
www.dogoodjobs.co.nz

Runanga Whakapiki Ake i te Hauora o Aotearoa Health Promotion Forum of New Zealand
www.hauora.co.nz

Rachel Allan



Bachelor of Social Work with First Class Honours
Social Worker, Canterbury District Health Board, Christchurch Hospital

Why did you choose Social Work?

My older brother died seven years ago from a brain tumour and I think this life experience lead me to Social Work. I wanted to use my experience to support other people facing adversity and oppression. My dad is a Social Worker too so this influenced my decision as well.

I have always liked people and been passionate about making a difference and helping people.

What do you like about being a Social Worker?

The fact that every day is different. Even if you are working with a person who has the same injury as another patient, their needs and therefore the social work role to assist them is ever-changing. There are always so many different ways you can approach a situation.

What does it involve?

Much of my role is working with the Multi-Disciplinary Team (doctors, nurses, physios, occupational therapists, speech language therapists, etc) to coordinate the best treatment possible for our patients.

What are your career goals?

I would like to utilize my Social Work training and my interest in governance to be a director on a board.

Another dream of mine is to be the CEO of a not-for-profit or charitable organisation one day.

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.

Tauwhiro Hapori | School of Social Work

UC offers one of Aotearoa New Zealand's longest-established Social Work programmes. Qualifications offered are internationally regarded and recognised by the New Zealand Social Workers Registration Board (NZSWRB).

Staff are friendly and accessible with interactive classes, a specially designed blended learning programme, and a strong practice orientation.

Students are likely to work with diverse communities and there is the opportunity to pursue special interests.

T: ++64 3 369 3377

E: artsdegreeadvice@canterbury.ac.nz

www.canterbury.ac.nz/arts/social-work

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

