

What can I do with a degree in German?

German.



What is German?

The German language is a leading world language, mother tongue of more than 110 million speakers. The German-speaking countries – Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Luxemburg, and Belgium (and South Tyrol, Italy) – form the largest language area in Central Europe. German is an important language of trade, with Germany being the fourth largest economy in the world, and an important EU trading partner for New Zealand.

Germany's influence has been growing steadily since the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989. German is a commonly used language in Eastern European countries and its influence has increased since the enlargement of the European Union (EU). There are about 15.5 million learners of German in the world and Germany is the third most popular destination for international students.

Knowledge of German can be vital to international work in the areas of science, engineering, business and tourism.

Learn more

It is important to do some research when planning a future career. Speak with, ask questions of, and follow relevant professional bodies, organisations, companies, thought leaders and industry professionals to learn more about:

- Career opportunities, work environments and salary information
- Education and training requirements.

Examples of professional bodies

- Te Rōpū Kaiwhakaako Reo o Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Language Teachers www.nzalt.org.nz
- Te Rōpū Kaiwhakamāori ā-waha, ā-tuhi o Aotearoa The New Zealand Society of Translators and Interpreters www.nzsti.org
- Te Rōpū Kaiwhakaako Reo Ingarīhi Ki Iwi Reo Kē TESOLANZ www.tesolanz.org.nz
- Export New Zealand www.exportnz.org.nz

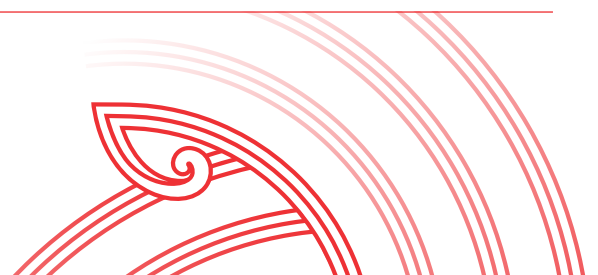
Career and study information

Some study pathways and degrees have a recommended school background, and some careers may require further study beyond a first degree or additional experience.

Gather helpful information from:

- Subject-specific content at www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/academic-study/subjects/german
- Job profiles on career websites like www.careers.govt.nz
- Job adverts/vacancy descriptions
- Industry professional bodies.

This resource is part of a set of brochures focused on subject majors; many can also be studied as minors.





What skills can graduates gain?

Through studying a degree in German, graduates develop a valuable set of skills transferable to a range of careers. These skills can include:

- Reading, writing, listening and speaking German
- Well-developed communication skills
- Interpretive and analytical thinking
- Understanding of the global interactions which shape contemporary society
- Thinking critically and creatively, and challenging ideas
- Problem solving
- Research and computing
- Time management, planning and organisation.

Practise your skills at work or in Germany

Applied learning opportunities are available through:

- Internships with potential employers
- Immersive experiences in German language and culture, including study exchange partnership programmes.

These experiences can deepen graduates' skillset, working knowledge, and employability.

What do employers look for?

Many employers look for generic skills such as communication, client/customer-focus, bicultural competence, cultural awareness, teamwork and initiative.

With technology, globalisation, and other drivers changing society, skills such as resilience, problem solving, and adaptability are important.

Skills that are likely to grow in importance include analytical and creative thinking, systems thinking, technological literacy, AI and big data.*

*World Economic Forum: www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/05/future-of-jobs-2023-skills

How can these skills be developed?

- Some skills are gained through studying
- Extra-curricular activities can help, such as getting involved in clubs, mentoring, cultural groups, part-time work or volunteering
- Be open to professional and personal development opportunities, whether it is undertaking work experience, overseas exchange, skills seminar, or joining an industry group.

Where have graduates been employed?

A degree in German can lead to a variety of career options, for example:

- Focusing on language or linguistics-related fields such as immigration, sales, language teaching, interpreting/translating
- Entering a vast array of sectors that value the transferable skills of graduates, such as recruitment, librarianship, policy and governance, marketing, international relations

- A popular combination is the study of a European language such as German with that of a professional degree such as Law, Accounting or Teaching and Learning.

As one of the world's important languages, German opens doors to careers in:

- Diplomacy
- Journalism
- Media and communications
- Education
- Trade
- Tourism
- Research
- Culture
- Legal services
- Business.

What jobs and activities might graduates do?

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

Note: This list is not exhaustive, and some jobs may require further study, training or experience. It is recommended to start with the section 'How can I gain a sense of career direction?'

Immigration officer / migration consultant

- Understand immigration instructions
- Assess clients to establish their eligibility for visas or help navigate migration processes
- Write submissions and file applications

Customs officer

- Specialise in domestic and international markets or laws
- Inspect or coordinate mail, imported and exported goods
- Administer documentation and ensure adherence to the law

Diplomat, foreign policy officer

- Promote New Zealand's interests overseas
- Report on affairs and develop foreign and trade policies
- Liaise with local authorities and negotiate agreements with other countries

Recruitment consultant

- Advertise vacancies and recruit staff
- Advise on workplace policies and procedures
- May oversee staff development, health and safety, pay and reward etc

Secondary school teacher

- Prepare and deliver learning experiences in specialised subjects
- Understand the learning needs of rangatahi, observe progress to personalise support
- Promote the wellbeing of rangatahi

Sales assistant

- Help develop new markets or business
- Support client relationships and presentations
- Implement sales and marketing strategies

Interpreter

- Translate spoken language from one language to another, often simultaneously
- Keep abreast of up-to-date meaning of words
- Research specialist topics, travel with groups and present to different audiences

Translator

- Convey source text into the target language
- Research terminology, technical words and language trends
- Work with other translators

Teacher of English for speakers of other languages

- Assess a student's reading, writing, speaking and listening skills and needs
- Design and prepare learning materials
- Present lessons, including on local knowledge and skills for coping in a new place

Examples of other job titles and careers include:

- International and domestic business roles – sales, marketing, trade, supply chain, finance and HR
- Journalism – foreign correspondent, reporter, news editor, multimedia specialist
- Tourism – travel agent, tour guide, flight attendant, travel insurance
- Government agencies and departments – diplomat, foreign policy officer, analyst, case manager
- Education and research – tertiary lecturer, research assistant, language teacher.

Further study options

Graduates can prepare for a career through further study e.g. in Teaching and Learning, Applied Data Science, or in other areas such as Business.

German graduates can progress into many higher programmes, from honours through to PhD level. UC also offers master's degrees in Linguistics, Translation and Interpreting, and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. Many allow you to carry out research or project work.

Further study may 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 options align with future career aspirations.

For further UC study options visit:

www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/academic-study

How can I gain a sense of career direction?

Understanding yourself and others is important to gain a sense of direction. This grows with experience; therefore, trying new things and reflecting on an ongoing basis is important.

Career planning checklist

❑ Discover and reflect on:

- Your values, interests, strengths, abilities, and aspirations
- Your connection to whānau, people, and places
- Lifestyle preferences and location
- The skills you want to gain, use, or enhance

❑ Engage in a variety of experiences to learn about:

- How you want to contribute to society, the environment, and global challenges
- The tasks, responsibilities and work environments you prefer
- Your work values, priorities and interests

❑ Learn more and gather career and study information

(refer to page one of this resource)

- Speak with people working in careers that interest you; check the realities of a job/career
- Gather information from various sources

❑ Identify your next steps

- Talking to a career consultant can help you to identify your next steps. Visit: www.canterbury.ac.nz/life/jobs-and-careers



What have other students and graduates done?

Explore career stories of students' university experiences and UC alumni who make a difference globally in varied ways.

Visit: www.canterbury.ac.nz/about-uc/why-uc/our-students/student-stories



Jason

Studying towards a Bachelor of Arts in German with minors in History and European and European Union Studies, and a Bachelor of Music

What are your career goals?

To be recruited into the New Zealand Police.

Why study a degree first?

University is not just about finding a degree to get a job. It's also about finding yourself and seeing what you are capable of as an independent individual. As a young adult, you can take the initiative to balance your study and social life during your time at university.

What motivated you to study German?

I took it in high school and wanted to pursue and increase my knowledge in it and study it at a more advanced level. I also chose to study at university as a back-up, meaning that should anything happen to me in the line of duty (as the Police is not the safest job), I have something to fall back on such as teaching German or Music.

What or who have you found helpful?

The facilities are fantastic. The online database of articles, books and journals is very useful and easy to use for assignments. The staff in the libraries and the lecturers are very helpful and keep the students' interest up.

Any advice for others to achieve success?

I think it's best to take papers that you are genuinely interested in. It's important as a student to enjoy your time at university. Have fun and play around, but also make time to study hard and keep yourself grounded.

Career guidance

Career services are available for future and current students, and recent graduates. To learn more, contact:

Te Rōpū Rapuara | Careers

T: +64 3 369 0303

E: careers@canterbury.ac.nz

www.canterbury.ac.nz/life/jobs-and-careers

Helpful career insights

- Speaking with employers is key to finding opportunities; not all jobs are advertised
- Developing an online presence is useful as employers can search for future employees online
- Learning about recruitment patterns and where to find opportunities is important.

Study advice

Student Advisors at UC help with questions focused on starting, planning and changing studies. To connect with Student Advisors, visit:

www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/study-support-info/study-support

Future students – contact:

The Future Students team

T: 0800 VARSITY (0800 827 748)

E: futurestudents@canterbury.ac.nz

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