

What can I do with a degree in Youth and Community Leadership?

Youth and Community Leadership.



What is Youth and Community Leadership?

Mātātahi tū, hapori ora. When young people are strong the community thrives.

Youth and community leaders make positive and meaningful contributions to their community. Professionals and volunteers in the field use their leadership and people skills along with an understanding of policy to make an impact to national and global challenges faced by people, communities and the environment.

Youth and community leaders engage with a diverse range of people and communities to find sustainable solutions to problems they may face. They understand how to advocate for others and have knowledge of government policies, as well as the ability to start new initiatives locally and abroad.

Youth and Community Leadership students study the professional skills needed to create change in areas such as sustainability, human rights, equality, and humanitarian efforts. Youth and community studies are designed for those who want to make a difference in the world.

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

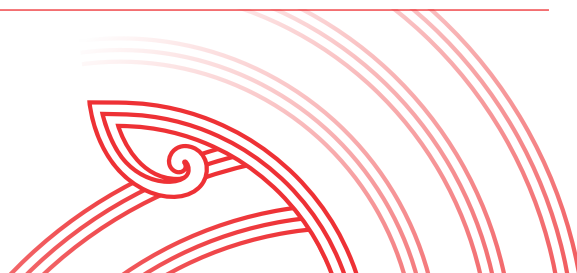
- Korowai Tupu – Professional Association for Youth Work in Aotearoa
<https://arataiohi.org.nz/korowai-tupu>
- Ara Taiohi – Peak Body for Youth Development
www.arataiohi.org.nz
- Canterbury Youth Workers Collective
www.cywc.org.nz
- Community Networks Aotearoa
www.communitynetworksaotearoa.org.nz
- International association for research on service-learning and community engagement
www.researchslce.org

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/youth-and-community-leadership
- Job profiles on career websites like
www.careers.govt.nz
- Job adverts/vacancy descriptions
- Industry professional bodies.





What skills can graduates gain?

Youth and Community Leadership graduates develop a valuable set of skills that can be utilised to address issues such as sustainability, human rights, equality, and humanitarian concerns. These skills can include:

- Professional leadership and resiliency for agile leadership
- Communication to a variety of audiences
- Project management skills
- Stakeholder engagement
- Youth work and development
- Entrepreneurial talents
- Problem-solving
- Research
- Planning and organisation
- Teamwork and collaboration.

Applied learning

These skills are cultivated through both theoretical study and hands-on learning experiences. Leadership and project experience from managing projects, volunteering, and community engagement builds connections and networks in the community to support career post-graduation.

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 and technological literacy.*

*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?

Youth and community professionals work in various organisations, from small grass-roots organisations right through to managing corporate responsibility projects for large corporations both locally and abroad.

Graduates with social enterprise interests might create their own work.

Employment opportunities can be found across:

- The not-for-profit sector and community agencies, including charities
- Local government and political parties
- Youth work and youth development organisations
- Humanitarian organisations
- Social enterprises
- Other established organisations working in social policy, humanitarian work, community development, youth work, politics, advocacy and activism.

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?'

Community development worker

- Recognise and raise awareness of local issues within communities e.g. mental health, access to resources
- Develop and monitor development initiatives

Advocate

- Support groups, individuals or environment to have their voices heard, and access channels of support
- Support people to achieve a fair outcome in negotiations

Youth worker

- Help youth to enhance their strengths/resilience
- Create and deliver youth specific programmes
- Support young people experiencing distress e.g. mental health, addiction, housing insecurity

Programme coordinator / facilitator

- Conduct research and plan programmes
- Assist in the implementation of programmes
- Evaluate programmes and developments

Policy analyst / advisor

- Identify and investigate issues and opportunities
- Interpret existing policies and advise leaders
- Prepare reports and policy recommendations

International aid worker

- Manage and assess projects
- Support long-term development
- Evaluate responses to emergency situations

Research analyst / advisor / assistant

- Organise and conduct research
- Develop/test theories and interpret results
- Offer services as a freelancer/consultant

Whānau Ora coordinator

- Plan and implement activities in the Whānau Ora context e.g. as a kaupapa Māori provider
- Place whanau at the centre of programmes
- Draw on a framework of values or customs

Corporate social responsibility manager

- Plan and implements social responsibility projects for corporations
- Research the needs/interests of communities
- Document the impact and reach of projects

Examples of other job titles and careers include:

- Case manager
- Advice worker
- Community education officer
- Education mental health practitioner
- Family support worker
- Probation officer
- Teaching assistant
- Learning coordinator
- Volunteer coordinator
- Fundraiser.

Further study options

Further study in complementary fields may benefit students looking to work internationally for large development agencies such as the United Nations, the Red Cross or UNICEF. Higher study in commercial areas such as business may be of benefit for students wishing to work in management of large organisations as there will often be a requirement to manage and source funding.

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



Ella

Loyalty and Social Media Coordinator,
Nutrient Rescue

Bachelor of Youth and Community Leadership

What led you to study the Bachelor in Youth and Community Leadership?

In my first year at UC, I was actually studying for a Bachelor of Music, but as I approached the end of that year I started to see the BYCL advertised around campus. And, if when I was leaving school I could have written down everything that I wanted to study, it was pretty much exactly what this degree offered me! I was drawn to the idea of being able to explore sociology, education, and the chance to work with people.

What did you enjoy most about your studies?

I loved that the degree was so flexible, which meant that I was still able to explore my passions in music and communication. There was a great community within our degree, and I truly felt like all of the lecturers wanted to see us succeed – whatever that looked like for each of us.

How did your studies prepare you for your current role?

Something that they really push with the degree is the development of transferable skills and employability skills (like communication, problem-solving and interpersonal relationships) that you can take wherever you go. Alongside this, some practical skills from my studies also play a major role in my day-to-day life – researching, writing, using different software, etc.

What do you do in your current role?

I get to do my two favourite things in my current role – connect with people and be creative! I look after the Loyalty program and Social Media presence, so I am constantly learning how to connect with a diverse audience. This involves not only understanding different demographics but also crafting content that resonates universally.

What has been a highlight in your career thus far?

One of the most rewarding aspects of my career so far is that I haven't stopped learning. I am constantly being exposed to new skills, experiences and people, which is amazing for my personal and professional development.

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

First year students – contact:

Kaitoko | First Year Student Advisors

T: +64 3 369 0409

E: firstyearadvice@canterbury.ac.nz

Continuing students – contact:

Ako | Education

T: +64 3 369 3333

E: educationadvice@canterbury.ac.nz

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

