What can I do with a degree in Fine Arts?

Fine Arts.

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, 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/arts/fine-arts
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.

What is Fine Arts?
Fine Arts has an interdisciplinary focus on the study and conception of creative art. It forms a broad base of practical and conceptual skills in visual arts, multimedia and design. This allows for opportunities to work in a range of art and media roles and industries.

Fine Arts students at UC work in purpose-built studios, workrooms, darkrooms and computer labs, and have access to technician workshops and the Ilam Campus Gallery.

Fine Arts programmes revolve around basic teaching disciplines which are divided up into five specialisations:
• Film
• Graphic Design
• Painting
• Photography
• Sculpture.
What skills have UC graduates gained?
Fine Arts graduates develop a range of practical and creative skills, gain valuable experience of holding exhibitions, and build up a portfolio of work. Graduate skills include:

- Capacity to think and work creatively and quantitatively
- Observation and critical analysis
- Cooperation, teamwork and leadership
- Advanced communication, with an ability to convey messages in a range of ways
- Adaptable and flexible approach
- Technical skills and knowledge relevant to the specialisation chosen
- Excellent time management and organisation.

Applied learning
Opportunities to apply your learning outside the classroom are available in this degree, including:

- Volunteering at local art galleries / arts organisations
- Undertaking an internship
- Exhibiting your work publicly
- Contributing to an industry project.

These experiences can deepen your skillset, awareness of others, working knowledge, and employability.

Where have UC graduates been employed?
Graduates who have taken courses in Photography, Film and Graphic Design have clear career prospects in these areas, whether it’s working for:

- Your own business
- A specialised agency
- A larger organisation as an in-house professional.

Painting and Sculpture graduates have access to a wide range of vocations and networks within the art world in Aotearoa New Zealand and overseas. A number are self-employed, running their own business, studio or freelance consultancy.

Digital influences
The rise of the internet, digital marketing, social media, globalisation and e-commerce has created even more demand for the:

- Visual skills of photographers, video production and editors, and online marketing/web design
- The accessibility and mass production of art, allowing people to search for, and purchase art from afar.

Potential employer destinations
Career destinations for Fine Arts graduates include:

- Art galleries
- Photography studios or image providers
- Film industry
- Design studios or agencies

**Autumn 2020**

*If design were treated as one industry, its economic contribution would be larger than agriculture ($8.1b) and on-par with retail ($10.6b). ‘The value of design to New Zealand’ June 2017, PwC for DesignCo.
**Immigration NZ 2017 long-term skill shortage list
+ 2013 and 2015 Graduate Destinations Surveys combined

AT A GLANCE

$10b
Design contributed over $10 billion (4.2% of GDP) to the NZ economy in the year to March 2016*

MORE

Multimedia specialists (film animators) needed in Aotearoa New Zealand**

1/4
Of Fine Arts graduates undertook an internship as part of their studies†

† If design were treated as one industry, its economic contribution would be larger than agriculture ($8.1b) and on-par with retail ($10.6b). ‘The value of design to New Zealand’ June 2017, PwC for DesignCo.
** Immigration NZ 2017 long-term skill shortage list
† 2013 and 2015 Graduate Destinations Surveys combined
• Multimedia content producers
• Arts management
• Marketing and communications
• Fine arts auctioneers
• Publishing
• Education.

For examples of recruiting employers go to www.canterbury.ac.nz/recruitingemployers

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.

Artist
• Researches and implements creative ideas
• Produces art work for exhibitions and commissions in specialist medium
• Liaises with clients and art galleries

Graphic designer
• Meets with clients to identify requirements
• Creates new graphic ideas/solutions
• Uses creative-based software to design print and online materials

Photographer
• Takes photos to meet a client’s brief
• Edits and supplies finished photos
• Develops and promotes their portfolio

Illustrator
• Interprets a client’s requirements
• Produces new illustrative ideas and storyboards
• Uses creative-based software to create illustrations and graphics for multiple mediums

Film director
• Markets the storyline or script to producers
• Directs scene set-up and people in a tv series, feature, documentary, video, news story etc
• Sets technical aspects eg, length/angle of shot

Librarian
• Categorises and catalogues library materials
• Selects materials for library use
• Helps customers find and use materials

Secondary school teacher
• Plans and delivers instructional lessons
• Evaluates performance and provides feedback
• Sets and marks assignments and tests

Art gallery manager / director / assistant
• Assesses and selects art
• Plans and presents exhibitions, events, seminars, outreach activity
• Works with artists and negotiates purchases

Digital content analyst
• Develops a brand’s multi-channel communications strategy and online presence
• Increases web traffic and digital engagement
• Oversees digital marketing and online search

Product designer
• Researches a client’s brief, an organisational or social need, or a gap in the market
• Prepares drawings, models and proposals for new products or product improvements
• Designs and produces a prototype

Sales consultant
• Identifies and develops new markets or business
• Manages client relationships and presentations
• Implements sales and marketing strategies

Curator
• Chooses display items at museums or galleries
• Manages collections and exhibitions
• Conducts research and communicates details

Entrepreneur and CEO
• Develops an idea to form their own business
• Offers services as a freelancers/consultant

Get started at www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers/Entrepreneurship/getting_started.shtml

What professional bodies can people link to?

As they progress, students and graduates often join professional bodies or organisations relevant to their area of interest. These organisations can provide regular communications and offer the chance to network with others in a community.

• Artists Alliance www.artistsalliance.org.nz
• Pacific Arts Association www.pacificarts.org
• Designers institute of New Zealand www.designersinstitute.nz
• Ngā Aho Māori Design Professionals www.ngaaho.maori.nz
• New Zealand Institute of Professional Photography www.nzipp.org.nz
• Screen Production and Development Association www.spada.co.nz

Social media networks such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter can provide avenues to keep up-to-date with industry knowledge, networking opportunities, events and job vacancies.

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.

At UC Fine Arts graduates can progress to a Master of Fine Arts or the popular Postgraduate Diploma in Arts Curatorship. Advanced study can lead to an academic career in teaching and research.

Depending on career goals, graduates can do additional training in, for example, Teaching, Librarianship, Business or Digital Humanities. For listings visit www.canterbury.ac.nz/courses

Useful links

Careerhub — jobs, internships, career tips www.careerhub.canterbury.ac.nz
Careers New Zealand www.careers.govt.nz
UC School of Fine Arts www.canterbury.ac.nz/arts/fine-arts
The Big Idea www.thebigidea.nz/work
CreativeNZ www.creativenz.govt.nz
Toi Māori Aotearoa | Māori Arts NZ www.maoriart.org.nz
Clara Wells

Why did you choose Film?
When I started my degree I had my eyes set on majoring in Painting but after trying out all the different disciplines I fell in love with filmmaking. I was really attracted to the idea of motion, music and art all in one as it really brought together most of my passions quite neatly. Filmmaking combines so many things that have been a part of my life since I can remember so I get a real sense of satisfaction from my work.

What did you enjoy about studying it?
I really enjoyed my tutors and fellow students and how open the academic environment is to all kinds of ideas at the School of Fine Arts.

What opportunities have you had at UC?
I was awarded the Ethel Susan Jones Fine Arts Travel Scholarship in 2014 which funded a trip to New York where I was involved in several workshops and critique groups. This helped develop my technical skills and exposed me to some excellent international art and artists, including peers I can now look to for support and critique.

In 2013 I won the Select Award, which meant that UC bought one of my works for their permanent art collection. That was probably one of the highlights of my time at UC so far. To know that my work is represented with so many other respected artists was such a confidence boost.

How did this prepare you for working as a professional artist?
I think having so much exposure to the art world while I was studying helped me to have the confidence to just go for it and not be scared of being turned away. I knew from the start what the realities of this career involved so I have felt more or less completely prepared.

Read more online
Read Clara’s full story about her university experience online. UC alumni like Clara make a difference in varied ways around the globe. To find out where Fine Arts graduates are now visit www.canterbury.ac.nz/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.
School of Fine Arts
Te Kura Kōwaiwai
With a high teacher/student ratio, the School of Fine Arts offers a boutique-style education in both the practical field of fine arts and the wider liberal arts. The ability to specialise in one of the five disciplines is unique within Aotearoa New Zealand. Staff are all practising designers or artists with established reputations. Our graduates are highly employable with lateral thinking skills as well as solid organisation skills.
T: +64 3 369 4416
E: artsdegreeadvice@canterbury.ac.nz

www.canterbury.ac.nz/arts/fine-arts

Anyone seeking careers advice.
Careers, Internships & Employment
Te Rōpū Rapuara
CIE 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 3 364 3310
E: careers@canterbury.ac.nz

www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers

UCCareersEmployment

Prospective students seeking study advice.
Student Liaison
Te Rāngai Toi Tangata
Student Liaison provides intending students with information about the university system in general and the courses, qualifications, support and facilities available at UC.
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) ext 93231
E: wellington@canterbury.ac.nz

www.canterbury.ac.nz/liaison