

Bachelor of Youth and Community Leadership

Changing the world through social action and innovation



School of Educational Studies and Leadership
Te Kura Ārahi Ako

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



The Bachelor of Youth and Community Leadership (BYCL) degree will empower you to make a positive and meaningful contribution to communities – both local and global. In its focus and its approach to teaching and learning, this degree is like no other in Australasia.

Become an agile leader

The BYCL builds professional leadership and entrepreneurial skills for anyone passionate about issues such as sustainability, human rights, social innovation, and humanitarian efforts. It will develop you as a resilient and agile leader in our changing world, qualified to lead yourself and others toward beneficial social change. You will have flexibility to build a degree that fosters your passion and combines leadership skills with content that is relevant to you. When enrolled in this degree, you can also take a minor in a discipline of your choosing.

Connect for change

UC is the ideal university to offer such an innovative degree. The service learning course, CHCH10: Strengthening Communities through Social Innovation, was introduced in 2011 and was inspired by the international acclaim that our UC Student Volunteer Army received for their dedicated work in the Christchurch community post-quake. The BYCL degree builds

on this history. You will be learning alongside and working with leaders of social change. Alternatively, you can begin your journey as a leader for change by enrolling in our Certificate in Youth and Community Leadership that is available on campus or online through our virtual learning environment.

Do something that matters

As a BYCL graduate you will be equipped for the world of the future. Some of you will create your own work through developing social enterprises; others will make an impact through working with established organisations in social policy, humanitarian work, community development, youth work, politics, advocacy and activism. Those who choose to focus on youth work can gain recognition from Korowai Tupu, the professional body for youth workers in Aotearoa. Whereas once university might have seemed to have nothing to offer those who want to make a difference in the world, this qualification will prepare you for that journey.

‘Our School is excited to premier this democratically-based, theoretically-informed and action-oriented degree, to young people as leaders and to established change-agents who wish to formalise their expertise. This degree foregrounds the transferable skills needed for the future of work: leadership, teamwork and digital literacy, bicultural competence, global awareness, and community engagement. At the same time, you can choose a minor from another discipline, thereby gaining specialist content skills to support your world-changing enterprise.’

Associate Professor Annelies Kamp

Head of School – School of Educational Studies and Leadership | Te Kura Ārahi Ako



Design your degree

The degree has a small set of core courses, including the heritage course, CHCH101: Strengthening Communities through Social Innovation. From there, you have the ability to design your own cross-discipline degree to match your career aspirations, may they be in Iwi or Pasifika concerns, activism or humanitarianism, social entrepreneurship, or youth work.

Recommended preparation

The programme is open to students from a range of interests or experience in leadership roles. No particular background study is required. A passion for social change, community work, and volunteering is desirable.

What courses can I choose?

You will design your degree with compulsory courses, electives and independent course choices.

All students will study the compulsory courses in Youth Leadership: Leading the Self (YACL101); Leading with Others (YACL 201); Leading for Change (YACL301); and the Youth Leadership Project (YACL302).

Students focused on leading in iwi and Pasifika contexts will be drawn to select from the options in Māori and Indigenous Studies, Political Science and Te Reo. Students with an interest in making their own work through social entrepreneurship are encouraged to select from the options in Entrepreneurship, Marketing, and Media and Communication. If social activism is your passion and you wish to change the world, you may select the options from Cultural Studies, Political Science, and Sociology. Students who aspire to work with youth, and who would like professional endorsement, will undertake a set range of courses from Education, Health and Arts.

Combining with other qualifications

UC offers a minor in Youth and Community Leadership within the Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Commerce, Bachelor of Science, or Bachelor of Sport Coaching. If you wish to do a minor, make sure you select your optional courses to meet the minor requirements. The Bachelor of Youth and Community Leadership also combines well in a double degree with Arts or Commerce.

COVID-19 vaccination

While vaccination against COVID-19 is not mandatory for enrolment and completion of a Youth and Community Leadership qualification, many opportunities in the community sector include working with vulnerable populations. We strongly encourage full vaccination to protect yourself, the vulnerable youth and communities we work with and to allow you to access the full range of options available to you during and after your study.

Bachelor of Youth and Community Leadership– example degree structure

Year 1

YACL 101	CHCH 101	EDUC 101 or EDUC 102 or POLS 103	100 Level				
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Year 2

YACL 201	EDUC 206	CULT 202 or EDUC 204 or INOV 290	200 Level	200 Level	200 Level	200 Level	100 or 200 Level
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Year 3

EDUC 302 or EDUC 339	YACL 301	YACL 302	300 Level	300 Level	200 or 300 Level	200 or 300 Level
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■ Compulsory courses
 ■ Elective courses
 ■ Courses from Arts or other degrees

Each small block represents a 15-point course. However, some courses may be 30 points or more. This diagram is an example only – other combinations are possible. For specific course requirements, go to www.canterbury.ac.nz/regulations

Your elective courses at each year should be chosen to suit your interests and aspirations. Here are some suggested potential course combinations depending on your career pathway.

For those who choose the Youth Work and Development Pathway, the recommended courses form part of the criteria for registering as a professional youth worker with Korowai Tupu.

Make sure you talk to a Student Advisor when course planning. This will ensure that you are selecting the right combination of courses and meeting any prerequisites for advancing to 200-level and 300-level in any particular subject.

Activist pathway You aim to bring about political or social change in your community.	Humanitarian pathway You aim to enhance human wellbeing.
<p>Compulsory courses:</p> <p>POLS103 Introduction to New Zealand Politics and Policy</p> <p>CULT202 Cultural Politics/ Cultural Activism</p> <p>EDUC339 Globalisation, Social Justice and Education</p> <p>Suggested courses:</p> <p>COMS101 Media and Society</p> <p>EDUC103 Education, Culture and Society</p> <p>SOCI112 Global Society</p> <p>COMS207 Social Media</p> <p>HSRV211 Community Development: Concepts, Practice and the Dynamics of Change</p> <p>COMS305 Media and Social Change or</p> <p>COMS320 Strategic Campaign Development</p>	<p>Compulsory courses:</p> <p>EDUC101 SPARK – How and What People Learn</p> <p>CULT202 Cultural Politics/ Cultural Activism</p> <p>EDUC339 Globalisation, Social Justice and Education</p> <p>Suggested courses:</p> <p>COMS101 Media and Society</p> <p>EDUC103 Education, Culture and Society</p> <p>HSRV104 Youth Realities</p> <p>POLS105 Comparing the Politics of Nations: A Global Introduction</p> <p>COMS207 Social Media</p> <p>POLS202 International Relations and Humanitarian Ideals</p> <p>SOCI363 Investigating Social Worlds</p>
Social entrepreneur pathway You aim to innovate for community good	Youth work and development pathway You aim to use your leadership skills to empower youth and their whānau.
<p>Compulsory courses:</p> <p>EDUC101 SPARK – How and What People Learn</p> <p>INOV290 Enterprise in Practice</p> <p>EDUC339 Globalisation, Social Justice and Education</p> <p>Suggested courses:</p> <p>MGMT100 Fundamentals of Management</p> <p>MKTG100 Principles of Marketing</p> <p>TREO110 Conversational Māori for Absolute Beginners</p> <p>MGMT230 Business, Society and the Environment</p> <p>MGMT223 Innovation Management</p> <p>PACE295 Internship</p> <p>MGMT335 Business and Sustainability</p> <p>MGMT343 Social Entrepreneurship</p>	<p>Compulsory courses:</p> <p>EDUC102 Child and Adolescent Development</p> <p>EDUC204 Promoting Child and Adolescent Wellbeing and Health</p> <p>EDUC302 Researching Development: Opportunities and Risks in Adolescence</p> <p>Suggested courses:</p> <p>YACL102 Introduction to Professional Youth Work in Aotearoa</p> <p>HLED122 Building Resilience</p> <p>HSRV104 Youth Realities</p> <p>HSRV202 Human Behaviour and Human Systems</p> <p>SOWK206 Communication for Practice</p> <p>PACE295 Internship</p> <p>SOWK304 Indigenous Practice</p> <p>YACL303 Professional Youth Work in Practice</p>

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

The BYCL is designed for the future of work. Graduates will be equipped with the transferable skills and disciplinary knowledge to thrive in rapidly changing employment contexts.

Career Opportunities

Students will find work as community leaders, iwi development advisors, community development officers, advocacy and youth workers, social entrepreneurs, policy advisors and researchers. Additional employers include the not-for-profit sector, community agencies, local government and humanitarian organisations and political parties. Many graduates will aim to be self-employed, applying their skills and knowledge to set up social enterprises. Successful graduates who complete the youth work and development pathway gain membership with Korowai Tupu, the professional association for Youth Workers in Aotearoa.



‘I saw a great opportunity to explore both my love for music and my passion towards youth and community engagement. One of the main aspects of the BYCL degree that appealed to me so greatly was the flexibility and freedom that came with it. You are developing so many transferable skills that are applicable to a massive range of roles. The landscape of the world is changing so quickly and is heading in a direction where we have to be adaptable, and the BYCL prepares you to have this versatility.’

Ella Guillemot-Mene

Studying towards a Bachelor of Youth and Community Leadership



‘Our students be they young or the young at heart have the potential to advance change toward a fairer, kinder and more just world. Our job is to provide opportunities for learning and support our students to achieve their goals. It is my hope that they and society will benefit from the opportunity for authentic participation, service and leadership that this degree represents.’

Dr Bernadette Farrell

Lecturer | Pūkenga
School of Educational Studies and Leadership | Te Kura Ārahi Ako

Future pathways

- Community workers earn up to \$75K per annum (Source: Careers New Zealand)
- The not-for-profit sector comprises some 115,000 organisations; social enterprises employed a further 112,000 people in 2018. (Source: Research First)
- Careerforce estimates the youth work sector needs a further 730 staff, immediately. (Source: Research First)
- Social entrepreneurs interested in starting up their own business have access to the UC Centre for Entrepreneurship, and local business incubators and accelerators.

More information

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