

# What can I do with a degree in Information Systems?

# Information Systems.



## 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, study abroad, 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/informationssystem](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/subjects/informationssystem)

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](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers)

## What is Information Systems?

We live in an “Information Age” where access to information, information systems and digital technology plays a major role in organisations and in delivering products and services. With Information Systems (IS) we can change how we work, how we communicate, and how we do business.

IS is about how businesses use information technology to become smarter, better, faster, and achieve their strategic goals. By providing access to information, IS enable organisations to create value, provide solutions to problems, and use technology to innovate and to create new opportunities.

The subject of Information Systems covers the practical problem of how to access information, and how to design, develop and deliver IT solutions to organizational problems, as well as the management of IS projects, personnel and resources. It takes more of a business perspective than Computer Science or Software Engineering



## AT A GLANCE

99k

the Aotearoa New Zealand technology sector employs nearly 99,000 workers<sup>\*</sup>

5.2%

growth in the employment of business and systems analysts, and programmers is expected by 2020<sup>\*</sup>

29k

over 29,000 people in Aotearoa New Zealand work in computer systems design<sup>†</sup>

## What skills have UC graduates gained?

Through their Information Systems degree graduates will develop valuable transferable skills including:

- Practical skills in the application of computers and information systems knowledge to organizations and society
- Programming and design skills
- Teamwork, leadership and people skills
- Planning and coordination skills
- Communication and collaboration skills
- Logical and quantitative thinking
- Interpretive and analytical thinking
- Analytical and interpretive skills
- Research and problem solving skills
- Creative thinking and innovation skills
- Commercial and business awareness.
- Data analysis and digital skills
- Cultural awareness and ethical knowledge

Opportunities to apply your learning outside the classroom are available through work-integrated learning (eg. internships) and international study tours. These experiences deepen your skillset, working knowledge and employability.

## Where have UC graduates been employed?

IS graduates are in high demand particularly those who combine IS knowledge and skills with business knowledge or computer science (for a more technical focus). IS graduates are to be found in a wide range of sectors, be it commercial, public or not-for-profit. Recent IS graduates have been employed in:

- Consulting & Advisory services eg. Assurity, Accenture, Ernest & Young (EY), Deloitte, KPMG, Intergen
- Financial & Insurance services e.g. BNZ, ANZ, WestPac, Rabobank, AMI, IAG
- Agriculture & Food Services eg. Fonterra, Farmlands, Foodstuffs, Primary/ITO
- Professional & Admin Services, eg MYOB, Cin7
- Information, Media & Technology services, e.g. Google, hairyLemon, Spotify, SnapIT, Vodafone, Slingshot,
- Software companies, eg Planit Testing, JADE Software, Soul Machines, CadPro
- Healthcare eg. Canterbury District Health
- Government eg. Christchurch City Council, CityCare, Oranga Tamariki/Ministry of Children
- Business Enterprises/Startups in Tourism, Manufacturing, Transportation, Retail, Music, Tourism, Transportation, etc

<sup>\*</sup> 2017 MBIE Occupational Outlook

<sup>†</sup> NZ Tech, 'Digital Nation New Zealand, From Tech Sector to Digital Nation' June 2016

## What jobs and activities do graduates do?

Information Systems graduates are employed in a wide variety of jobs — see some examples below.

*Note: Some of the jobs listed may require postgraduate study. See the 'Further study' section.*

### Information systems analyst

- Works with organisations' stakeholders to assess needs, goals and requirements
- Designs IS strategies and solutions that align with organisations' needs and goals
- Analyses business processes and workflows and recommends improvements and automations
- Oversees design, selection and implementation of IT systems

### Business intelligence, Data analyst

- Analyses the information and intelligence needs of organisations and the data needed to make decisions
- Develops business intelligence solutions and interprets outputs to gain insights
- Identifies and communicates trends and patterns in data
- Gathers data to help organisations address their goals

### Project manager

- Manages an information system project plan, budget and schedule
- Supervises project progress and manages risks
- Liaises with project staff, contractors, clients

### Programmer, software developer

- Determines specifications and writes code
- Builds prototypes of software programs
- Tests and fixes computer programs/systems
- Maintains and upgrades programs and systems
- May develop and integrate technical aspects of websites/mobile apps along with other workers

### IS / IT consultant

- -Works with clients and business leaders to reduce, manage, and mitigate risk
- -Helps clients improve business processes
- -Recommends programs and systems to use
- -Designs implementation and disaster recovery plans and processes

### IS/IT Manager

- Sets objectives and develops strategies for IT services to align with organization goals
- Plans, organizes and monitors IT services for organisations

- Assesses current IT, recommends upgrades to help optimize benefits for organisations
- Manages IT teams

### Programmer, Software Developer

- Determines specifications and writes code
- Builds prototypes of software programs
- Develops and maintains computer programs/software, websites and apps
- Tests and fixes computer programs/systems

### User Experience/UX Designer, Digital Designer

- Researches website/app design and trends
- Works with clients to determine their needs and website/app requirements
- Designs how websites/apps should look and feel
- Tests designs with users

### 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](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/uce)

## What professional organisations can I engage with?

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.

- New Zealand Technology Industry Association [www.nztech.org.nz](http://www.nztech.org.nz)
- Te Pou Hangarau Ngaio IT Professionals New Zealand [www.itp.nz](http://www.itp.nz)



- International Institute of Business Analysis <https://newzealand.iiba.org>
- Project Management Institute [www.pmi.org](http://www.pmi.org)

Having a professional presence on social media networks such as [www.linkedin.com](http://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?

Many IS graduates will continue to study and gain new skills and knowledge while on the job.

Postgraduate study can facilitate many 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 will help you in your future career.

Information Systems graduates are able to progress through to PhD level in the subject, including doing a Master of Commerce. Both of these degrees include a research component.

UC also offers a Postgraduate Diploma in Information Systems and Technology which is an ideal advanced qualification for graduate IT/IS specialists. IS graduates with some work experience can also undertake an MBA. Non-IS graduates can gain IS knowledge and skills through the Master (or Postgraduate Diploma) in Business Information Systems.

For UC listings and prerequisites visit [www.canterbury.ac.nz/courses](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/courses)

## Useful links

Te Rōpū Rapuara UC Careers [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers)

Careers New Zealand [www.careers.govt.nz](http://www.careers.govt.nz)

Future in Tech [www.futureintech.org.nz](http://www.futureintech.org.nz)

IT Jobs in Christchurch [www.cdc.org.nz/christchurch/it-jobs](http://www.cdc.org.nz/christchurch/it-jobs)

## Henry



Bachelor of Commerce with an endorsement in Information Systems  
Managing Director, Corvecto, Christchurch  
Executive Director, EPIC Innovation

### What motivated you to study Information Systems?

I was motivated by a mixture of my interest in high-level computing and business. Information Systems is an exciting and continually growing industry with multiple directions for potential career paths, especially right now here in Christchurch.

### What are you doing currently?

As the Executive Director of EPIC Innovation, I work with my three business partners to manage and grow the 4000sqm EPIC technology campus on Manchester Street in the centre of town where we house 20 innovation-focused companies with around 300 full time employees between them, whilst we foster a global network of industry leaders, entrepreneurs, SMEs, financiers and governments who are excited to connect with New Zealand.

### Did you have any exciting job opportunities before EPIC Innovation?

At CerebralFix Ltd which is one of New Zealand's largest video game development studios, I was fortunate to work on a day-to-day basis with some of the world's most influential and experienced executives, engaging with multi-million to multi-billion dollar brands.

My role at CerebralFix as President of Business Development included seeking out new business whilst maintaining contact and building relationships with our existing business partners such as Disney, DreamWorks and Sony Pictures to name a few.

### How has your study prepared you for what you are doing now?

My degree has helped to nurture and solidify my ability to commit to completing and executing the goals I set for myself, no matter how ridiculous they may look from afar.

### What do you aim to achieve with your career?

I seek to reinforce the international perception that New Zealand companies are capable of not only meeting but exceeding expectations when performing on the global stage. I believe it's realistic that we can grow New Zealand into the Silicon Valley of the Southern Hemisphere.

### 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](http://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.

Department of Accounting and Information Systems

The Department is made up of enthusiastic and knowledgeable staff with a wide range of international experience. Their offices are located in the Business and Law Building. Often staff are busy conducting research, which they build into their teaching and tutoring, and presenting at seminars and conferences. Come and speak to a Business degree advisor if you are interested in taking up Information Systems courses.

T: +64 3 369 3888

E: [studybusiness@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:studybusiness@canterbury.ac.nz)

[www.canterbury.ac.nz/business/departments/department-of-accounting-and-information-systems](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/business/departments/department-of-accounting-and-information-systems)

### Anyone seeking careers advice.

Careers, Internships & Employment  
Te Rōpū Rapuara

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](mailto:careers@canterbury.ac.nz)

[www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers](http://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](mailto:liaison@canterbury.ac.nz)

Tāmaki Makaurau | Auckland

T: 0800 UCAUCK

E: [auckland@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:auckland@canterbury.ac.nz)

Te Whanganui-a-Tara | Wellington

T: 0800 VARSITY (0800 827 748)

E: [wellington@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:wellington@canterbury.ac.nz)

[www.canterbury.ac.nz/liaison](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/liaison)

