

What can I do with a degree in Chinese?

Chinese.



What is Chinese?

China is one of the world's oldest civilisations and is, in the twenty-first century, the second most heavily populated nation in the world, with over 1.4 billion people. China has been Aotearoa New Zealand's fastest growing market for international visitors.

Mandarin Chinese is the most widely spoken first language in the world. It is an official language in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao, Singapore and a common community language in Malaysia and Indonesia.

By developing competency in the Chinese language, students will gain insight and access to Chinese culture. Understanding the society and culture of this historic yet modern nation is becoming increasingly important as China overtakes more traditional western nations in terms of economic power, cultural relevance and international influence.

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 kaiwhakaako reo ingarihi ki iwi reo kē tesolanz www.tesolanz.org.nz
- Te Rōpū Kaiwhakamāori ā-waha, ā-tuhi o Aotearoa New Zealand Society of Translators and Interpreters Inc www.nzsti.org
- NZ-China Trade Association www.nzcta.co.nz
- Export New Zealand www.exportnz.org.nz

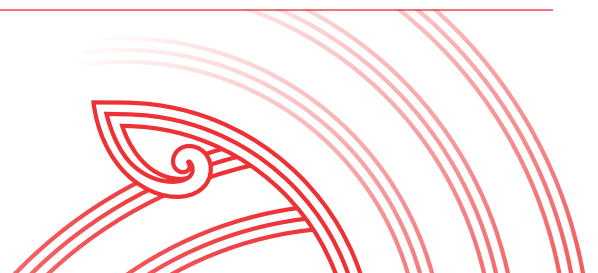
Career and study information

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/chinese
- 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 Chinese, graduates develop a valuable set of skills and competencies. These can include:

- Reading, writing, listening and speaking Chinese
- A better understanding of the global interactions which shape contemporary society
- Oral and written communication skills
- Interpretive and analytical thinking
- Thinking critically and creatively, and challenging ideas
- Problem solving skills
- Research and computing skills
- Time management, planning and organisation.

Applied learning

Applied learning opportunities are available through internships and study tours with international partners in locations such as China and Taiwan. These experiences can deepen graduates' skillset, awareness of others, 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?

Learning about influential languages and cultures is advantageous for many careers around the world as graduates are increasingly required to be culturally competent, globally aware and ready to work internationally. Chinese graduates can be employed by:

- Local and central government e.g. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Professional and research-based organisations
- Tourism, transport and related industries
- Educational institutions
- International traders, import/export businesses
- Business, finance and law firms.

Lawyers, accountants, engineers, managers, teachers and other professionals with Chinese skills and knowledge can find work in Aotearoa New Zealand, China and other Asian countries.

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?'

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 the content of the source text into the target language
- Research terminology or technical words and language trends
- Often works collaboratively as part of a team of translators

Teacher of English for speakers of other languages (TESOL)

- 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 adapting to a new place

Policy analyst / advisor

- Identify and investigate issues and opportunities e.g. in society, law or governance
- Interpret and consult on existing policies
- Prepare reports and recommend changes

Tourism marketing officer

- Research consumer market and interests
- Manage customer networks and relationships
- Create and maintain corporate brands and advertising media

Immigration officer / migration consultant

- Understand immigration instructions
- Assess client eligibility for visas
- Help navigate migration processes for individuals or organisations
- Write submissions and file applications

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

Import / export broker

- Assist with marketing and sales activities
- Investigate overseas demand for goods
- Build networks and customer relationships

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.

Chinese 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



Sam

Business Lending Specialist, ANZ

Bachelor of Arts in Chinese and Political Science and International Relations
Bachelor of Commerce in International Business

Why did you choose your degree?

Business is such a flexible and versatile degree in many sectors around the world. I also studied Chinese language to combine the two, making the most of China's growing influence in the world. UC's focus on shaping graduates to be more bicultural and globally aware was also a big drawcard for me.

How was your exchange to China?

I was fortunate enough to be awarded a Prime Minister's Scholarship for Asia valued at \$12,000 to cover the costs of a semester-long academic exchange at Shanghai University of Finance and Economics. Whilst living there, I had the opportunity to be immersed in a culture so different to ours and to learn how the Chinese live, learn and work. I was also able to build my then very basic Mandarin skills into a more rounded and confident conversational tool.

How did it inspire you?

I developed a passion for China and learned how its future is very much a big part of New Zealand's future. Upon returning I was appointed President of a student-run, non-profit organisation at UC called Global China Connection, which essentially aims to build New Zealand-China relations through professional and networking initiatives.

Do you have any advice for new students?

Go on exchange! Anywhere around the world. But in particular I'd encourage them to choose somewhere outside their comfort zone. Go somewhere with a different culture and different language to New Zealand because you'll learn so many new skills and an appreciation for different cultures.

What are your career goals?

In the area of business, I'd love my career to involve acting as a bridge builder between Chinese and New Zealand business culture, either based here or in China.

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:

Toi Tangata | Arts

T: +64 3 369 3377

E: artsdegreeadvice@canterbury.ac.nz

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

