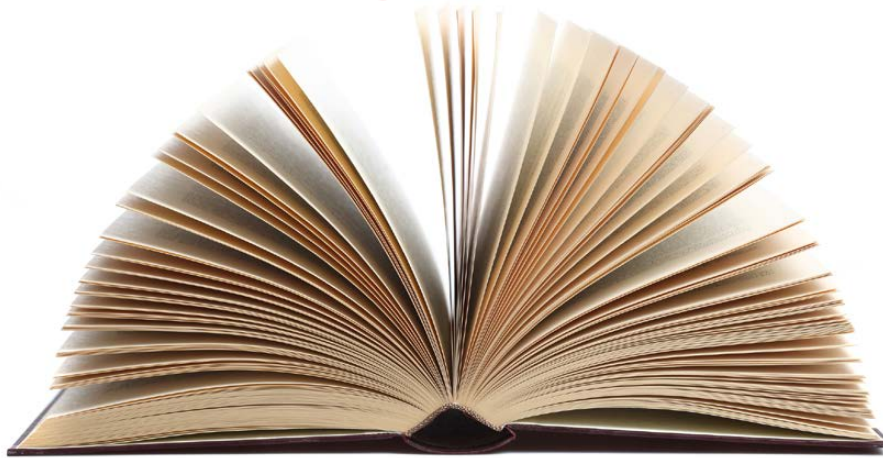


What can I do with a degree in English?

English.



What is English?

English studies help us to think about what it means to be human. Novels, plays, short stories, poetry, non-fiction and films help shape and reflect our individual identities and collective culture. Studying English opens up worlds and times beyond our experience. It also helps us understand – and question – our own social, natural and technological environments. By testing ideas we foster open debates about power, knowledge and identity.

Students of English also develop skills in research, interpretation, analysis, and formulating an argument. You will learn to write clearly, precisely and creatively. This skillset is useful for a huge range of occupations, including journalism, law, communications, business, government and creative writing.

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

- NZ Writers Guild www.nzwg.org.nz
- Commercial Communications Council www.commscouncil.nz
- Te Puni Kaituhi o Aotearoa The New Zealand Society of Authors www.authors.org.nz
- Te Rau o Tākupu Publishers Association of New Zealand www.publishers.org.nz

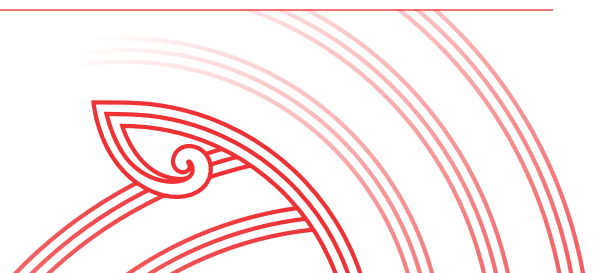
Career and study information

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/english
- 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?

The skills learned in studying English are essential to success not only in education, but also in a wide range of work. These skills can include:

- Ability to write and read with insight, attention to detail, and accuracy
- Analysing social and cultural phenomena
- Close reading and careful analysis of texts
- The ability to write clearly, concisely, creatively and persuasively
- Ability to communicate to a variety of audiences
- Making and critiquing arguments
- Research and computing skills
- Interpretive and analytical thinking
- Thinking critically and challenging ideas
- Problem solving
- Time management, planning, and organisation.

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?

English graduates are found in the public and private sector, in non-governmental and not-for-profit realms, and as self-employed freelancers.

Graduates have been employed in:

- Education
- Government ministries, departments and agencies
- Libraries
- Communications, media, marketing, and journalism — broadcast and print
- Filmmaking
- Museums
- Event organisation
- Cultural development
- Art galleries
- Theatres
- English language tuition
- Community liaison
- Customer services
- Technology and digital services.

Alumni work in Aotearoa New Zealand and around the world.

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?'

Author / writer

- Research and write stories, scripts, poems, instructions or plays to entertain/inform
- Consult with a publisher or producer to promote and disseminate work

Copywriter, content writer

- Understand clients or colleagues' objectives
- Research the product and the market
- Develop advertising ideas
- Write, proofread and coordinate the production of work

Digital marketing executive, digital content analyst / advisor

- Develop a digital communications strategy
- Increase web traffic and social media engagement
- Oversee online marketing campaigns and search engine optimisation

Journalist / reporter

- Research and gather information
- Interview relevant people
- Write reports/stories across media platforms

Librarian

- Categorise and catalogue library materials
- Select materials for library use
- Help customers find and use materials

Secondary / primary school teacher

- Prepare and deliver learning experiences
- Understand the learning needs of rangatahi, observe progress to personalise support
- Promote the wellbeing of rangatahi

Communications advisor

- Develop information, media and communication strategies
- Research, write, edit and produce content for various audiences and mediums

Publisher / editor

- Plan and commission content for publication
- Edit and organise online and print materials
- Liaise with other staff to oversee production

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

Teacher of English for speakers of other languages

- Assess a student's reading, writing, speaking and listening skills and needs
- Design and prepare learning materials
- Present lessons or tutorials

Research assistant, market researcher

- Organise and conduct research surveys
- Test theories and interpret the results
- Write reports and make recommendations

Examples of other job titles and careers include:

- English teacher
- Marketing assistant
- Community partnerships administrator
- Immigration officer
- Learning advisor / specialist
- Admissions officer
- Analyst
- Arts facilitator
- Business support consultant
- Technical writer
- Court registry officer.

Further study options

English graduates can progress their studies from honours through to master's and PhD level in the subject. Postgraduate study can also lead to an academic career in teaching and research.

Some Arts graduates do further study or training to enter into a career. For example, UC offers a variety of higher study programmes such as Teaching and Learning, Journalism, International Relations and Diplomacy, Policy and Governance, Business, Linguistics, or TESOL.

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



Emily

Senior Consultant, Great Scott
Graduate Diploma in Journalism
Bachelor of Arts in English and Media and Communication

What motivated you to study your degree?

My passions have always been in the Arts. English, drama, public speaking and an interest in the news took centre stage for me at high school. For me, there seemed no point in studying something I wasn't going to wholeheartedly enjoy. Over the course of my years at Canterbury, my enthusiasm for the media has only continued to grow. Studying English alongside Media and Communication seemed a logical choice for me in order to improve my writing skills and general analytical skills – all so relevant and beneficial to journalism.

What skills did you gain from studying the Arts?

My studies in Media and Communication and English encouraged me to follow my passions. English gave me the skills to think outside the square, while honing my writing skills.

And how did you get to apply them?

The advice and support I received from lecturers and tutors gave me the confidence to take advantage of every opportunity and put myself out there for work experience. I was then able to apply all the valuable skills and knowledge from my degree to the practical working environments of newsrooms and magazine publications.

How was your exchange to Seattle?

It was the perfect opportunity to enjoy and complete my BA in an exciting and new environment. Learning ideas and issues from new national perspectives helped open up my own views of the world. I left with only incredible memories, lifelong friends and no regrets.

What motivates you in your career?

As a reporter I'm privileged to be able to connect with people and places that would normally be beyond my reach. As a people person, journalism combines this part of me with my passion for writing. Being able to shed light on the issues affecting readers and viewers around the country every day is what drives me in my work.

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

