

What can I do with a degree in Fine Arts?

Fine Arts.



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.

Artwork engages audiences, cultivates emotional responses, and creates a universal visual language that transcends cultural and linguistic boundaries. Fine arts is a powerful medium for cultural expression, social commentary, and historical documentation.

Studies in fine arts support aspiring artists to convey ideas, emotions, or perspectives through their chosen medium. Through brush strokes on canvas, moulding clay into three-dimensional forms, capturing moments in time with a camera, or employing other artistic techniques, creative individuals strive to communicate their vision to their audiences.

Fine Arts specialisations include Graphic Design, Moving Image, Painting, Photography, and Sculpture.

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

- 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

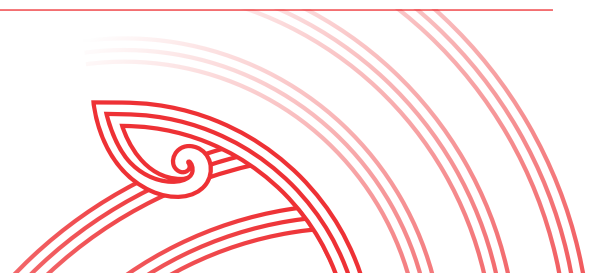
Career and study information

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/fine-arts
- 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?

Fine Arts degree graduates can develop a range of practical and creative skills and competencies. These can include:

- Technical skills and knowledge relevant to the specialisation chosen
- Capacity to think and work creatively; generating various ideas and perspectives to one situation
- The ability to convey messages in a range of ways to diverse audiences
- Problem solving and adaptability
- Analytical and critical thinking
- Cooperation, teamwork and leadership
- Time management and organisation.

Applied learning

Graduates can gain experience holding exhibitions to build up a portfolio of work.

Applied learning opportunities are available through:

- Volunteering at local art galleries and arts organisations
- Undertaking internships in the film sector, design studios, archives, and arts organisations
- Exhibiting work publicly
- Contributing to and/or being commissioned to generate creative projects.

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?

Fine Arts graduates might pursue opportunities in:

- Running their own business, studio or freelance consultancy
- A specialised agency
- A larger organisation as an in-house professional.

Potential employer destinations include:

- Arts management, art galleries and museums
- Fine arts auctioneers and valuers
- Photography studios or image providers
- Film and game industries
- Design studios or agencies
- Media, marketing and communications
- Publishing
- Education
- Government bodies.

Digital influences

The internet, digital marketing, social media, globalisation and e-commerce shapes the demand for:

- 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
- Creatives to control the dissemination, ownership and financial benefits of their work.

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?'

Artist

- Research and implement creative ideas
- Produce artwork for exhibitions and commissions in specialist medium
- Liaise with clients and art galleries

Graphic designer

- Meet with clients to identify requirements
- Create new graphic ideas/solutions
- Use creative-based software to design print and online materials

Photographer

- Take photos to meet a client's brief
- Edit and supply finished photos
- Develop and promote their portfolio

Film professional, cinematographer

- Capture/create the visual elements of a project
- Contribute to the final product production

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

Art gallery manager / director / curator

- Assess/select art, negotiate purchases
- Plan and present exhibitions, events, seminars, outreach activity

Digital content analyst

- Develop multi-channel communications strategy
- Increase web traffic and digital engagement

Product designer

- Research a client's brief or a gap in the market
- Prepare designs and prototypes for products

Arts administrator / manager

- Manage logistics, budgets, schedules for events and venues
- Contribute to marketing materials and media

Illustrator

- Interpret a client's requirements
- Create new illustrations and graphics for multiple mediums

Examples of other job titles and careers include:

- Arts advisors and funding coordinators for government and local body agencies
- Design and marketing coordinator
- Marketing assistant
- Video editor
- Social media content creator
- Exhibitions officer
- Designer
- Technical writer
- Librarian
- Graphics Administrator
- Visual Merchandiser
- Community arts worker
- Collections services coordinator
- Art therapist.

Further study options

Depending on career goals, graduates can do additional training in, for example, Teaching, Librarianship, Business or Digital Humanities. 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.

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



Caitlin

Kaiwhakahaere, Ōtautahi Kōrerotia
Artist

Bachelor of Fine Arts in Sculpture

What is it like being a professional artist?

I enjoy the ability to move throughout intellectual divisions eg, I can be a geologist, historian, weaver, and potter all in one day. Working towards big ideas, but also towards defining new ways of making work, being my own boss, following what I am interested in, and getting to collaborate and share my knowledge in my own way; no other vocations give you that flexibility.

What inspires your art?

My work always has a strong personal element, as I often centre this complex around my own experience and understanding of the world. I am a collector of stories for my family and a large portion of my work is working towards understanding my place, and love for this landscape as a Pākehā in New Zealand.

How did UC help grow your artistic identity?

Because in the BFA I was able to work on my own interests, I was able to learn things that would be relevant for my current job. Anthropology and Māori and Indigenous Studies papers were super helpful as a way of bursting that 'bubble' and being able to bring the world and all its things into my art. Here, I was able to properly situate myself in the New Zealand context. Being able to be this flexible and take my studio outside was awesome.

What led you to Ōtautahi Kōrerotia?

I have a strong interest in curation. I am one of three UC graduates and kaiwhakahaere of an artist-run space in Christchurch. We occupy a Community Cottage in Ōtautahi as an exhibition, performance, and education space. We provide material, curatorial, and organisational support for artists and community groups to create and develop works and projects within and beyond the walls of our space.

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

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T: +64 3 369 3377

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

