

What can I do with a degree in Japanese?

Japanese.



What is Japanese?

Japan is one of the most influential nations in the Asia-Pacific region – culturally, diplomatically and economically. It is a key player in Aotearoa New Zealand's import and export, tourism and education markets and continues to be an attractive destination for graduates.

Aspects of Japanese culture have become popular in much of Asia, Australasia and America. These include animation, computer games, fashion, art, sport and spirituality. Learning the Japanese language helps you to do business with Japanese people and multinational companies, equips you for a job in Japan and opens up an understanding of a proud people with a long history and fascinating culture.

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 Kaiwhakamāori ā-waha, ā-tuhi o Aotearoa The New Zealand Society of Translators and Interpreters www.nzsti.org
- Te Rōpū Kaiwhakaako Reo Ingarihi Ki Iwi Reo Kē TESOLANZ www.tesolanz.org.nz
- Export New Zealand www.exportnz.org.nz

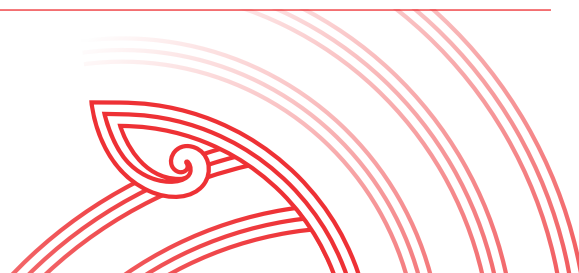
Career and study information

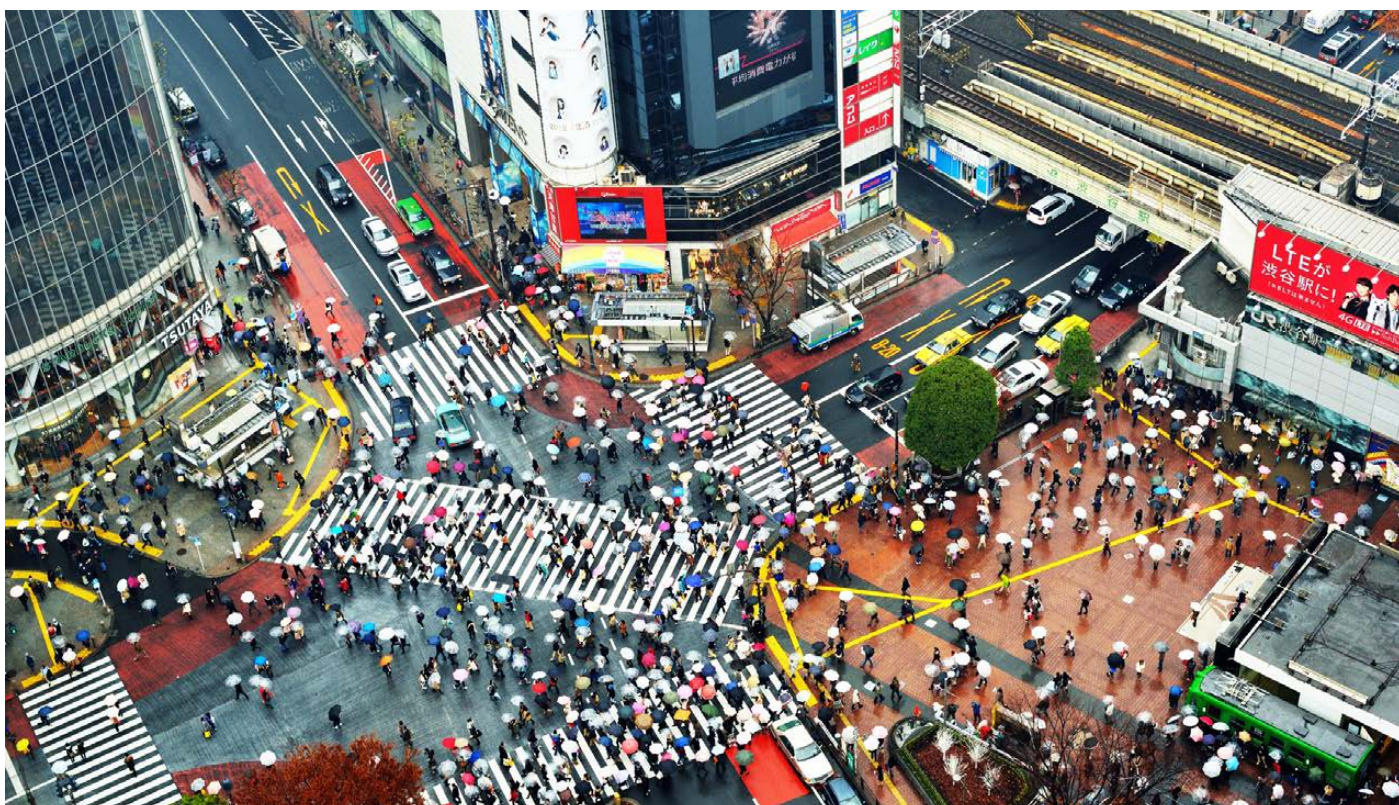
Some study pathways and degrees have a recommended school background, and some careers may require further study beyond a first degree or additional experience.

Gather information from:

- Subject-specific content at www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/academic-study/subjects/japanese
- 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 Japanese, graduates develop a valuable set of skills and competencies. These can include:

- Reading, writing, listening and speaking Japanese
- Translation and facilitating connections between individuals and/or groups
- A better understanding of the global interactions which shape modern society
- Familiarity with both modern and traditional culture and society
- Well-developed communication skills
- Analytical and critical thinking
- Thinking creatively, challenging ideas, and problem solving
- Familiarity with the Japanese online environment and language-related software technologies.

Practise skills at work or in Japan

Applied learning opportunities are available through:

- Internships – there are opportunities to do a full-immersion Japanese internship with a Christchurch-based company
- Immersive experiences in Japanese language and culture, including study exchange partnership programmes with Japanese universities.

This experience can deepen graduates' 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?

A degree in Japanese can lead to a variety of career options.

- Some graduates have gained Japanese Government Scholarships for study and research in Japan.
- There are a number of programmes that employ graduates to teach English in Japan. Many Japanese alumni join the Japanese Government's Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme.
- Others have been employed by government departments such as the Japanese Embassy or Consular Office, the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Government Communications Security Bureau.
- Some graduates have gained jobs at tertiary institutions in New Zealand and Japan, and as teachers of Japanese in New Zealand secondary schools.
- Other graduates enter banking, import/export and legal industries or find jobs in multinational companies that have links with Japan. Some become translators or enter the tourism industry.
- Scientists, engineers, and computer science graduates who have achieved advanced Japanese language abilities have taken up research and employment opportunities in Japan and/or worked on Japanese-related projects.

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
- Work collaboratively with other translators

Tourism marketing officer

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

Language officer / consultant

- Outline the sounds, words, structure, and vocabulary of a language spoken for organisational purposes
- Lead engagement and information sessions
- Translate and interpret

Immigration officer / consultant

- Understand immigration instructions
- Assess clients to establish their eligibility for visas or help navigate migration processes
- 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

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, including on local knowledge and skills for coping in a new place

Sales manager, key account manager

- Identify and develop new markets or business
- Manage client relationships and presentations
- Implement sales and marketing strategies

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.

Japanese 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



Brennan

Ngāi Tahu

Coordinator of International Relations (CIR),
JET Programme, Japan

Past experience: Internship, Kijijana Ltd

Bachelor of Arts in Japanese with minor in
Linguistics

What motivated you to study your chosen subjects?

I was an exchange student in Japan and loved the language but also found I loved language in general. I originally set out for a Japanese and English double major, but have also found Linguistics and picked up Chinese.

What do you enjoy most about learning languages?

I love language learning because you can see the results easily and with each week I have new tools with which to communicate with a broader group of people. Linguistics has given me a better understanding of my English and helped me learn foreign languages with more ease. It has helped my communications skills; I feel I can get my point across to people more clearly.

Are there any benefits available?

I won the JSANZ national tertiary level Japanese speech contest in my first year where I spoke about my karate training. I'm a keen martial artist and have been doing Kyokushin karate for 15 years. I was awarded a free flight to Japan so I spent a couple of months there before my second year started.

Have you had any experiences that you would recommend?

I did an ARTS internship working for Tony Oikawa's Kijijana Ltd which is a company that provides educational and business experiences for Japanese and New Zealand university students. I found the experience to be incredibly enriching but very busy. I did lots of translation and interpretation work for Oikawa and got a good taste for how it will actually be in the workforce. I would definitely recommend an internship to other students. It will be hard work but it will most definitely be worth it.

What is most important to you in your career?

I like to do something that involves language and making people's lives better somehow.

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)

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