

What can I do with a degree in Music?

Music.



What is Music?

Music expresses emotions, thoughts, and ideas through sound; it shapes and is shaped by social, cultural and political contexts. It serves as a shared means of communication across cultures, fostering connections among people.

Skills in, and a deep understanding of music is useful in a wide range of professional settings, including creative arts fields (film, gaming, multimedia arts), education, health, cultural heritage, and home-based music production.

Areas of Music that can be studied include learning to create music (Composition), to play and to sing, both individually and in groups (Performance), to use recent technologies to make, record, and disseminate music (Creative Music Technology), and to understand the role of music in culture, history, and our communities (Music Studies).

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

- Ako Puoro Institute of Registered Music Teachers of NZ www.irmt.org.nz
- New Zealand Musicological Society www.nzmusicology.org
- SOUNZ – Centre for New Zealand Music www.sounz.org.nz
- Australasian Performing Rights Association www.apraamcos.co.nz
- Te Rōpū Kaitito Pūoro o Aotearoa Composers Association of New Zealand <https://canz.net.nz>

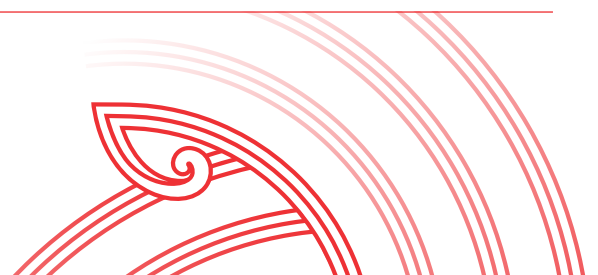
Career and study information

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/music-studies
- 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 their Music degree, graduates develop a valuable set of skills transferable to a range of careers. These skills can include:

- Technical skills needed to write, produce, perform and record music
- Creative skills such as composing, arranging, song writing, and music production
- Use of sophisticated software to create, record, manipulate and develop musical outputs
- Creativity, initiative and enterprise
- Thinking critically and challenging ideas
- Resilience and adaptability
- Self-management, planning and organisation
- The ability to receive and apply feedback
- Communicating and collaborating effectively in groups of people from diverse backgrounds
- Analysing complex textual and cultural phenomena.

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?

Music graduates can find work in:

- Professional ensembles (instrumental and vocal, including orchestras, choruses, and bands) and theatre productions
- Cultural heritage institutions such as libraries, archives, and museums
- Community music and music therapy settings including in hospitals, rest homes, and prisons
- Educational institutions from early childhood to tertiary in Aotearoa New Zealand and overseas
- Communication fields such as journalism, publishing, TV and radio
- The technical or digital departments of any type of organisation, looking after such aspects as recording, instruments, technology, audio-visual, digital content, e-resources
- Organisations such as Creative New Zealand, Toi Māori Aotearoa and local and national government bodies

Graduates can also pursue work as a freelance performer, composer, arranger, producer, technician, or event manager.

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?'

Musician, performer

- Creates, records and/or performs musical works

Secondary / primary school teacher

- Prepares and delivers learning experiences
- Understands the learning needs of rangatahi, observes progress to personalise support
- Promotes the wellbeing of rangatahi

Private music teacher / tutor

- Plans and teaches music lessons
- Communicates student progress to whānau
- Arranges public performances and recitals

Music director

- Fosters development of performers
- Recruits and auditions new members
- Arranges and directs performances and events

Sound technician / engineer

- Creates sound effects or alters sounds
- Records and balances sounds
- Assembles and operates sound equipment

Sound designer

- Uses technology to provide sound for moving images in a range of mediums, including film, games and theatre

Composer

- Creates new musical works by writing scores, collaborating with others and using computers.

Arts administrator / manager

- Plans logistics, provides office support, and manages budgets/schedules for events, venues, performers, managers
- Contributes to marketing materials and media

Music therapist

- Uses music creatively to help people express themselves and effect positive changes
- Devises and monitors therapeutic strategies

Event manager

- Develops and plans events
- Co-ordinates the performers, technical staff, venue hire and publicity
- Creates and maintains an event budget

Music Leader

- Runs music organisations
- Leads community music making

Community arts worker, arts development officer

- Promote artistic activities to groups and individuals to support their development and quality of life

Examples of other job titles and careers include:

- Music producer
- Acoustic consultant
- Talent agent
- Education/outreach coordinator
- Theatre stage manager

Further study options

Many graduates add a professional qualification to their degree, such as a journalism, music therapy, teaching and learning, or management degree.

For those interested in further research, UC students can study an honours, master's and doctoral qualification in Music. Postgraduate study can also lead to an academic career pathway 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



Grace

Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Kahungunu

Musical Play Specialist, Champion Centre Support Coordinator, Hōhepa

Bachelor of Music in Performance
Bachelor of Music with Honours

What has your career looked like so far?

Studying music, I knew I'd never have one job as such, instead I have a career rich in variety and experiences. Currently I work as a Musical Play Specialist, a Support Coordinator and a Programme Delivery Contractor. My work life is never boring and I get to impact peoples lives in a positive way by doing something I'm passionate about. The difference I am making in my career is really satisfying I work as a Musical Play Specialist at Tamariki Toiora, The Champion Centre, helping provide multi-disciplinary early intervention to young children experiencing multi-developmental disabilities. As a Support Coordinator at Hōhepa I support adults with disabilities to access the community in meaningful ways. The clients I work with have a special interest in music and one client has just finished their second studio album! My work doesn't really feel like a job and I've really learned the value that people with disability have in our society.

What is the relationship between your identity and your music career?

Music is such a big part of Māori culture and it's important we are represented in the music landscape. Sol3 Mio are a great example of this, showing Māori and Pacific people that it's possible to have a successful career in classical music. While studying at UC I experienced challenges from my personal life that impacted my mental health. The music facility really

wrapped around me and empowered me to discover my identity not only as a musician, but as a person. My life experience and culture has helped shape who I am and it helps me to connect with my clients in a holistic way. I bring my culture into my workplace through using Te Reo and singing Waiata. Tamariki Toiora, The Champion Centre really promote this.

What classes stood out to you during your study?

We had a lot of master classes and guest lectures which allowed us to hone our skills. The world music class was amazing for learning about music across the globe. Music is a big part of cultural identity as it really is a language of the emotions. This class specifically inspired me to travel and I did a Contiki Tour after my studies. I ended up singing in a beer hall in Munich and alongside a professional opera singer in a monastery in Florence!

What did you gain from studying at UC?

UC taught me to stay on top of research in my field so I can keep current. Canterbury has become my home and the services and connections I built while studying really helped cement that! I would love to return to complete further study at UC.

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

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