

What can I do with a degree in Operations and Supply Chain Management?

Operations and Supply Chain Management.



What is Operations and Supply Chain Management?

Operations and Supply Chain Management (OSCM) involves coordinating people, financial assets, materials, and infrastructure, to facilitate the production and delivery of goods and services. Fundamentally, OSCM aligns the capabilities and efforts of the workforce with market demand to ensure the timely provision of goods and services.

OSCM is applicable to most organisations and is concerned with the design, planning and management of all processes and activities required to transform resources into goods and services to meet customers' expectations.

Operations and supply chain managers make sure the processes are smooth, efficient, and sustainable, and are always thinking of ways to make improvements.

To be a successful in OSCM, knowledge of marketing, human resource management and finance is also helpful.

Learn more

It is important to do some research when planning for your future career. Speak with, ask questions of, and follow relevant professional bodies, organisations, companies, thought leaders and industry professionals.

This will help you learn about career options, work environments, education and training requirements, and salary information..

Examples of professional bodies

- The Association for Operations and Supply Chain Professionals www.nzpics.org.nz
- Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply www.cips.org
- Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport www.cilt.co.nz
- Project Management Institute New Zealand www.pmi.org.nz
- The Institute of Management New Zealand www.imnz.co.nz

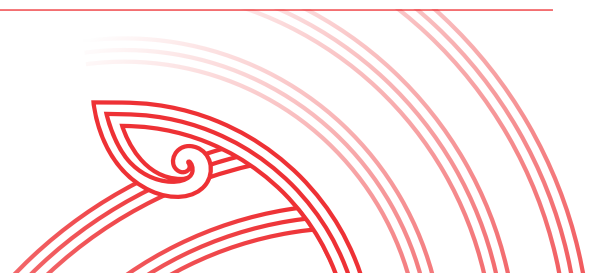
Career and study information

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 information from:

- Operations and Supply Chain Management study details
www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/academic-study/subjects/operations-and-supply-chain-management
- 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 OSCM, graduates develop a valuable set of skills transferable to a range of careers. These skills can include:

- Practical application of knowledge
- Business judgement and initiative
- Modelling complex problems for decision making, problem solving and critical thinking
- Ability to solve complex business problems
- Ability to measure and evaluate systems and processes
- Effective communication in various contexts
- Logical and quantitative thinking
- Interpretive and analytical thinking
- Planning and organisation
- Teamwork and collaboration
- Positive attitude, self-management, resilience and adaptability.

Applied learning

Opportunities to apply your learning are available through consulting projects, internships with potential employers, and international study tours. These experiences deepen your 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 is important.

Skills that are likely to grow in importance include analytical and creative thinking, systems thinking, and technological literacy.*

*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?

Every organisation, whether a company or a not-for-profit organisation, has some operations function to it, so the skills learnt in OSCM courses are widely applicable.

Graduates are employed across various industries, including:

- Manufacturing and retail trade
- Transport and warehousing
- Management consultancies
- Agriculture, forestry and fishing
- Scientific services
- Information media and telecommunications
- Construction
- Education and training
- Government and local councils
- Energy
- State-owned enterprises.

Students in other disciplines often find it valuable to include some OSCM courses in their degree programme, as exposure to OSCM has become an assumed part of the training of managers as well as accountants, computer specialists and engineers.

What jobs and activities might graduates do?

Due to their transferable skills and knowledge of supply chains and business processes, OSCM graduates can take on a wide range of roles from logistics to risk management — 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?'

Operations manager

- Improves ongoing business effectiveness
- Ensures health and safety adhered to
- Builds an engaged and skilled team
- Manages day-to-day operations and budgets

Purchasing officer, procurement analyst

- Manages internal stakeholder and external supplier relationships
- Researches current market trends
- Negotiates beneficial supplier contracts
- Purchases goods and services for a business
- Records all documentation for activities such as orders and deliveries

Production manager

- Sets production goals, schedules and budgets
- Supervises and assesses the production process
- Maintains equipment

Supply chain / operations consultant

- Analyses an organisation's supply chain operations and processes
- Develops strategies to enhance these processes
- Recommends strategic and process improvements

Logistics / distribution manager

- Manages customer accounts
- Oversees order fulfillment activities
- Manages inventories and coordinates movement of goods
- Oversees transportation activities
- Liaises with marketing/sales and operations managers to meet customer demand

Project manager

- Manages a project plan, budget and schedule
- Supervises project progress and manages risks
- Liaises with project staff, contractors, clients

Pricing / retail analyst

- Researches pricing information
- Analyses production costs to set sale prices
- Advises how to lower costs and increase profits

Marketing analyst, sales executive

- Collects, analyses and presents market insight
- Builds client relationships
- Makes and executes marketing and sales plans
- Works with others to promote goods or services

Risk manager

- Identifies and manages strategic, operational and other (eg, credit or regulatory) risks
- Develops risk management policies, procedures
- Oversees staff engagement and compliance

Quality assurance manager

- Sets product quality standards with managers
- Ensures these standards are met
- Develops strategies to prevent/detect deficiency

Examples of other job titles and careers include:

- Business consultant / analyst • Demand and production planner • Dispatcher • Fleet controller • Emergency communicator • Financial administrator • Store person • HR business coordinator • Import and export operator • Inventory controller • Project management trainee • Operations administrator • Procurement manager.

Further study options

OSCM graduates can progress their studies in Management, from honours, master's to PhD level.

UC also offers conversion programmes in Applied Data Science, Business Information Systems, Strategic Communications, Māori and Indigenous Leadership and more.

Postgraduate 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 will help you in your future career.

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

Ngāti Raukawa

Graduate Logistics, Mainfreight Ltd

Bachelor of Commerce in Operations and Supply Chain Management, Strategy and Entrepreneurship, and Management

Why did you choose your degree?

I've always been interested in how things go from nothing to something, the processes surrounding this and how they can be improved. I chose my majors so I get an overall picture of the process and could learn more about strategy and innovation in a management context. I wanted to make the world a better place through efficiency and innovation.

What does your job involve?

I am responsible for monitoring all outgoing freight for a large client — I process all incoming orders and ensure they are despatched on time and in full to meet demand, with all the appropriate labels and invoices.

How did your studies prepare you for it?

My studies help me better understand the overall picture and why my job is important as part of the process. It has taught me time management, organisation, efficiency and accuracy are key, as well as adaptability and forward thinking in the supply chain context.

What was one of your favourite experiences at UC?

I was part of the SDS Case Study competitions. It was absolutely awesome and was the cherry on top of my time at UC — the knowledge I gained, the friends I made both nationally and internationally were amazing! Working with some of the biggest businesses in NZ is definitely scary, but worth it for anyone up to the challenge!

What are your career goals?

I would like to progress into an operations or branch manager role, and would be very interested in spending time in IT or Training and Development (or both!). After that I'd like to be a National Manager or even CEO!

What else should I know? Where can I seek help?

The value of experiences

Learn what experiences graduates attribute to helping them transition into work:

www.canterbury.ac.nz/life/jobs-and-careers/graduate-destinations

Effective job search strategies

- Speaking with employers is key to finding opportunities; not all jobs are advertised.
- Developing an online presence is useful as employers can approach you online.
- Learning about recruitment patterns and where to find opportunities is important.

Need careers advice?

Career guidance services are available for intending and current students, and recent graduates. Contact:

Te Rōpū Rapuara | Careers

T: +64 3 369 0303

E: careers@canterbury.ac.nz

www.canterbury.ac.nz/life/jobs-and-careers

Need study advice?

Student Advisors help you with any questions you have about starting, planning and changing your studies. Visit:

www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/study-support-info/study-support

• If you are considering UC contact:

The Future Students team

T: 0800 VARSITY (0800 827 748)

E: futurestudents@canterbury.ac.nz

• If you are a current UC student contact:

Kaitoko | First Year Student Advisors

T: +64 3 369 0409

E: firstyearadvice@canterbury.ac.nz

Te Kura Umanga | UC Business School

T: +64 3 369 3888

E: studybusiness@canterbury.ac.nz

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

