

What can I do with a degree in Sport?

Sport.



What is Sport?

Sport is a significant part of local and global culture, businesses, the fitness industry, recreation, and daily life. It is diverse, and ever-changing.

Sport explores the intersection between sport and society, and how to boost physical performance, fitness, and inspire future athletes, individuals, and communities towards rewarding and more fulfilling experiences. It covers topics from sport psychology and exercise science through to coaching and sport business management.

Students can choose to major in the following sport related disciplines:

- Performance Data Analysis
- Physical Activity and Wellbeing
- Sport Coaching and Physical Education
- Sport Marketing and Management
- Strength and Conditioning
- Te Ao Hākinakina.

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

- Sport and Exercise Science New Zealand
www.sesnz.org.nz
- High Performance Sport New Zealand
<http://hpsnz.org.nz>
- Physical Education New Zealand
<https://penz.org.nz/>
- Sport New Zealand | Ihi Aotearoa
www.sportnz.org.nz

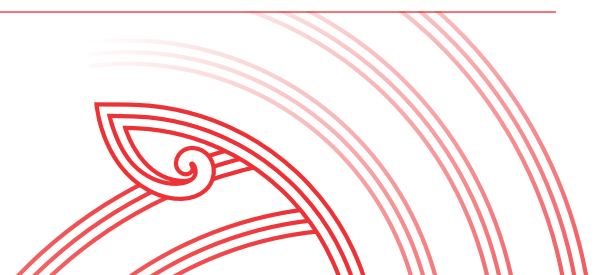
Career and study information

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/sport
- 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 Sport, graduates develop specialised knowledge from a major and/or minor, and a valuable set of skills and competencies, which can include:

- Knowledge of how the human body functions
- Understanding of holistic health principles and well-being
- Leadership and people development / management
- Coaching and teaching skills
- Presentation techniques
- Oral and written communication
- Interpretive and analytical thinking
- Project management
- Team building
- Patience and perseverance.
- Problem solving.

Hands-on learning

Practical hands-on learning opportunities mean students gain experience in the sport and wellbeing industries. Along with hands on opportunities throughout the degree, students undertake a 120-hour internship during their final year of study.

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, 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?

Sport graduates gain skills that are useful for roles in sport industries, government, community, policing, teaching, private enterprises and not-for-profit organisations. Examples of organisations where graduates might look for work include:

- National organisations e.g. Sport New Zealand, New Zealand Rugby, High Performance Sport New Zealand
- Regional organisations e.g. Christchurch City Council, Canterbury Metro Cricket, Sport Canterbury, Canterbury Hockey, Canterbury Rugby, Christchurch School of Gymnastics, Primary Sports Canterbury
- Local organisations e.g. Mainland Football, Sport clubs
- Educational institutions e.g. Primary / Secondary Schools, Tertiary Institutions
- Sporting franchises e.g. Wellington Phoenix, Crusaders, Hurricanes, Tactix, Rams
- Private businesses e.g. City Fitness, Selwyn Swim School, Sporting Edge Indoor Centre.

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?'

Community sports developer / operations manager

- Grow participation of players, coaches, officials and administrators
- Design and deliver skill development programmes and workshops
- Provide professional development opportunities for coaches and umpires

Sport marketing manager

- Develop sports marketing plans and campaigns focusing on brand, fan engagement, and event promotion
- Manage sponsorships and partnerships for increased visibility and revenue

Sports manager

- Negotiate contracts and endorsements for athletes
- Manage public image and career strategy of athletes

Sports coach

- Assess strengths and weaknesses of a person or group and identify areas for development
- Provide training advice to optimise physical and psychological performance
- Inspire confidence, self-belief, discipline, teamwork and trust

Coach educator

- Plan and provide coach education programmes
- Foster wider participation and improve standards within a sport or recreation sector
- Mentor and develop coaches to progress

Strength and conditioning coach

- Develop goals and fitness strength plans with athletes and coaches
- Provide lifestyle and diet advice to athletes, teams and coaches at all sporting levels
- Work with coaches, athletes or clients during training to enhance nutrition and performance

Performance optimisation analyst / coordinator

- Analyse skill performance in team and individual settings
- Gather and assesses data
- Support and advise coaches and athletes

School sports director / coordinator

- Develop and manage school sport and fitness programmes
- Promote high participation
- Recognise progress and achievement

Personal trainer, fitness instructor

- Help people to improve their fitness
- Explain and demonstrate exercises, weight training or class routines
- Design programmes to achieve personal goals

Whānau Ora coordinator

- Plan and implement activities in the Whānau Ora context e.g. at a kaupapa Māori provider
- Place whānau at the centre of the programme
- Integrate sport into a framework of values or customs, and with other services such as education and health

Examples of other job titles and careers include:

- Kaiārahi
- Game analysis strategist
- Physical activity and wellbeing coordinator
- Health coach
- Community health educator
- Sport and recreation manager
- Physical education teacher
- Sports events manager
- Sports fundraising coordinator
- Exercise physiologist
- Functional movement specialist.

Further study options

Sport graduates can progress their studies to a master's level in sport science. Further study can allow for greater specialisation and lead to an academic career.

One year's extra training can open other career possibilities e.g. as a physical education or primary school teacher, or in the business world.

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

Professional Rugby Athlete

Bachelor of Sports Coaching majoring in Physical Education

What did you enjoy most about your studies?

I loved the emphasis on learning as if we were the students we might one day teach. Often we would learn the theory of teaching in the lectures and then get the opportunity to teach each other as if we were in a physical education class. We then saw first-hand the impact our new knowledge had on those we were teaching. It was an incredibly rewarding way of seeing the theory in action.

How did you become a Professional Athlete?

I grew up playing rugby from age 4, where I continued following my passion all the way through the grades. In my final year of high school at Christchurch Girls high I was greatly honoured by being selected for the Canterbury Women's FPC team. The following year, the same time I started University at Canterbury, I got contracted into the Black Ferns. The two devotions coincided until I managed to get my degree.

What is it like being an Athlete, what does this involve?

Being an athlete is the best job in the world. It is extremely rewarding while also being constantly tough. Every day is dedicated to being better physically and mentally, through a series of training on the field and in the gym accompanied by classroom learning such as leadership or mental fitness. It also includes touring the world playing the sport I love alongside some incredible people.

How have your studies helped you in the pursuit of your goals?

Sports coaching has given me a good insight into how people learn, allowing me to not only explore the best ways I learn but the best way I can share knowledge. It has also given me a good understanding of the human body in an anatomical and physiological sense. This has given me a base knowledge of how to get the most improvement out of my body.

Do you have any advice for those interested in studying Sports?

Listen, learn and explore. Sometimes the best learning comes from things that aren't planned. Take on what is taught but have fun with it and challenge the typical ways of learning. You never know what discoveries might come from it.

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

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