



Career benefits of postgraduate study



What are the career benefits of postgraduate study?

Postgraduate level qualifications could give you more career options, enable you to work alongside academic staff and advance your learning and development in a chosen field of study.

What do employers say?

Surveys and interviews with employers (material collected from New Zealand, Australia and the UK) consistently show they look for good academic qualifications – but more importantly they seek graduates with a varied background of project work, related work experience, interpersonal and communication skills and a flexible attitude. The University of Auckland can help you recognise and market the skills you develop during your studies to potential employers.

Will I earn more money?

Statistics NZ publication “What do students earn after their tertiary education?” indicates that those leaving university with postgraduate qualifications are more likely to earn higher salaries than those with a bachelors level qualification. The relationship between higher earnings and a postgraduate qualification is complex, so the key is to align your higher qualification with the skill requirements of your intended profession and skill shortages in the labour market.

Should I do a PhD?

If you want an academic career you most certainly should do a PhD. If you want a career in research a PhD is also highly recommended, but if you want to work in the private/public non-research sector in New Zealand, Australia or the UK a PhD may not be necessary. Non-academic employers recruit for skills and not necessarily high level academic qualifications.



How does The University of Auckland support postgraduate students in their career development?

Once enrolled, students can make individual appointments with a qualified Careers Consultant to discuss any aspects of their career development or can attend any of the free career development workshops on offer. You will find the staff at University Careers Services can also help you to identify your skills, develop and strengthen your CV, and help you with career research and interview skills. For more information go to www.auckland.ac.nz/careerplanning

Some tips for choosing postgraduate study

1. Choose a field of study you are interested in and passionate about.
2. Choose a course that helps you to develop skills in research, analysis, communication and making presentations, and enables you to do interesting project work.
3. Always combine study with extracurricular activities to develop skills valued by employers. If you can, do some part-time work to develop knowledge of New Zealand workplaces and on-the-job training.
4. Learn how to find information about the New Zealand labour market and how to identify, document and market your skills to an employer.

To view the full range of career services and online resources on offer to all University of Auckland students visit www.auckland.ac.nz/careerplanning

What is the benefit of doing a research-focused postgraduate degree?

If you are thinking about a research degree, it can be helpful to read about employer attitudes to recruiting research trained postgraduates both locally and abroad. The reading list below contains research that can assist with understanding employer perspectives.

Graduate longitudinal study. Baseline survey report. (2012). Dunedin: National Centre for Lifecourse Research, University of Otago.

Hunt, Will et al. (2010). What do researchers do? : doctoral graduate destinations and impacts three years on. [Cambridge]: Vitae® / The Careers Research and Advisory Group.

Neumann, Ruth & Tan, Kim Khim. (2011). From PhD to initial employment: the doctorate in a knowledge economy. *Studies in Higher Education*. v36 n5 p601-614.

The Rugby Team (2007). Employers' views of researchers' skills: a comprehensive view of the existing literature into employers' views of the skills of early career researchers. UK: The UK GRAD Programme.

Victoria University of Wellington (2006). Employment skills survey. Wellington: Career Development and Employment, Victoria University of Wellington.

Scott, D (2009). What do students earn after their tertiary education? Wellington: Statistics New Zealand.

Most of these publications are available on the Internet.



**THE UNIVERSITY
OF AUCKLAND**

NEW ZEALAND

Te Whare Wānanga o Tāmaki Makaurau

Contact:

University Careers Services
Private Bag 92019
Auckland 1142
New Zealand
Phone: 0800 61 62 63
(+64 9 373 7999 if calling from overseas)

Fax: 0800 61 62 64

Email: careers@auckland.ac.nz
www.auckland.ac.nz/careerplanning