

Supporting
people to
improve their
quality of life



OTAGO
POLYTECHNIC
Te Kura Matatini ki Otago

**Social
Services**

0800 762 786

www.op.ac.nz/social-services



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* Subject to final approval



Social Services

Embark on a career in Social Services and make a difference. This profession involves understanding and working directly with people to improve their quality of life.

Are you interested in working with, and supporting others, while contributing to social wellbeing and justice? Future-proof yourself with a qualification Social Services – an area that is in growing demand.

Social Services professionals:

- > Work with individuals, families, groups, communities and organisations
- > Improve quality of life and provide advice, advocacy and support
- > Work with people to manage their careers and career transitions
- > Provide individual, group and family counselling
- > Support people with disabilities to run their lives
- > Support people with mental health issues and addictions to live meaningful lives.

We deliver two Social Services programmes:

New Zealand Certificate in Health and Wellbeing (Social and Community Services) (Level 4)* – three career options:

- > Community Facilitation
- > Mental Health and Addiction
- > Social Services

Bachelor of Social Services – career specialties:

- > Career Practice
- > Counselling
- > Mental Health
- > Disability



Sustainability at Otago Polytechnic

Sustainability plays a major role at Otago Polytechnic, influencing both our day-to-day operations and our future decision making. Otago Polytechnic integrates sustainable practice into all its educational programmes.

Our goal is that every graduate may practise sustainability and make a difference in the world. Our teaching and learning opportunities will ensure that every student graduates with the skills and knowledge to act as a sustainable practitioner.

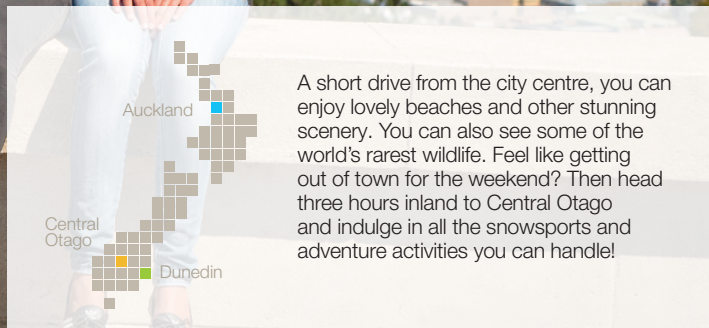
Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Te Tiriti o Waitangi is upheld at Otago Polytechnic through our memorandum of understanding with Kā Papatipu Rūnaka, our Kaitohutohu office and staff, our Kōmiti Kāwanataka, the Māori Strategic framework and ongoing cultural audits.

Otago Polytechnic are committed to ensuring success for Kai Tahu and Māori students. We aim to provide an inclusive learning environment and are committed to ensuring that Kai Tahu and Māori tikaka and te reo are woven throughout our programmes.

All students graduating from this programme will be aware of the implications of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in social service work. They will also be knowledgeable about the bicultural context and multi-ethnic makeup of Aotearoa New Zealand society.





A short drive from the city centre, you can enjoy lovely beaches and other stunning scenery. You can also see some of the world's rarest wildlife. Feel like getting out of town for the weekend? Then head three hours inland to Central Otago and indulge in all the snowsports and adventure activities you can handle!

dunedin

www.DunedinNZ.com

Dunedin is a safe, friendly and vibrant city. It is the best place in New Zealand to study with 30,000 students in residence during the academic year.

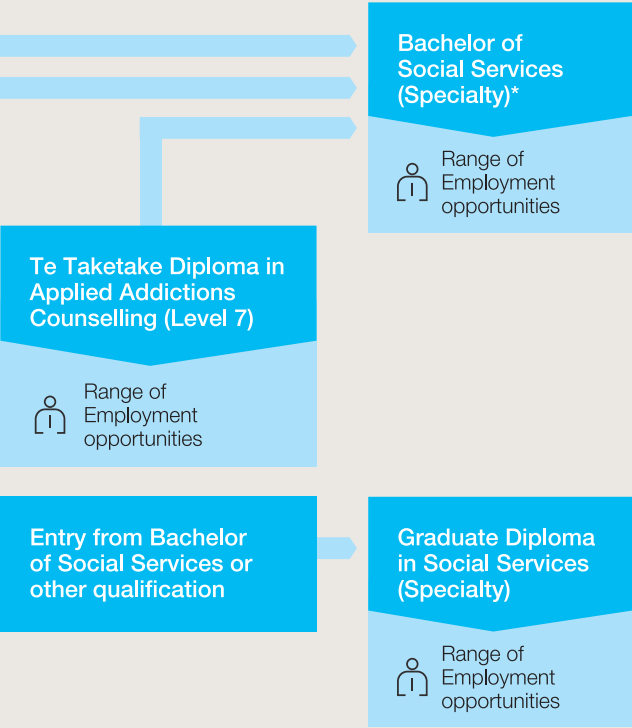
Otago Polytechnic is based within the hub of student education facilities, activities and accommodation. It is situated in North Dunedin, just five minutes' walk from the city centre.

Social Services pathways diagram

Level 3 and 4 Certificates



Level 7 Diploma, Degree and Graduate Diploma



^ Offered through the Otago Secondary-Tertiary College (OSTC) * Subject to final approval

Please note: Successful completion of the Health Bridging Certificate or the the New Zealand Certificate in Health and Wellbeing (Social and Community Services) (Level 4)* will not automatically guarantee entry to the Bachelor of Social Services.

Please check all entry requirements carefully at www.op.ac.nz

Graduate stories

Read stories from our graduates throughout this booklet and discover some of the areas and roles those with a qualification in Social Services, work in – from social services agencies to career practice, counselling, and disability, mental health and addictions support.

The demand for skilled people in the community services industry is likely to remain strong – New Zealand faces a growing and ageing population and many agencies exist to address a wide range of social issues.

A career in Social Services includes offering support and guidance to clients; planning activities; working directly with families, groups and organisations; and running educational workshops.

Attributes, values and qualities of our graduates:

- > Respect for people, their diverse values and their human rights
- > Belief in the capacity of all people to live a full and meaningful life
- > Desire to foster positive and authentic relationships with others
- > Honest, genuine, compassionate, caring, sensitive, optimistic and empathetic
- > Non-discriminatory, open-minded, culturally-aware and validating
- > Professional, reliable, responsible and resilient.







New Zealand Certificate in Health and Wellbeing (Social and Community Services) (Level 4)*

Are you a positive and patient person who really wants to make a difference in the community? Do you have a genuine interest in supporting others to improve their quality of life? If so, choose to pursue a career in human service work.

What will you learn?

Use this qualification to gain the practical knowledge and skills you will need to work in the human services field. Aligned with local industry needs and national strategies, this Certificate will allow you to develop specialty knowledge alongside general human service and academic skills; choose to specialise in mental health, disability or social services support work. This qualification also provides a perfect springboard into further study. Within a supportive environment, develop the skills and confidence to progress into higher learning and undertake a degree in social services or in an area such as nursing or occupational therapy.

Our graduates have a high employment rate and many are offered work during or after their fieldwork placements in the second semester. Fieldwork placements are an important aspect of your learning experience and, as much as possible, we aim to position you in a work placement that will enable you to pursue and meet your career and life aspirations. Depending on your specialty strand, you may find yourself supporting clients for the Special Olympics, working in a kaupapa Māori service, running a baking group or art activity in a day programme, working on a ward at a hospital, participating in an afterschool or holiday programme, working in elderly care or playing indoor football with a group of troubled youth.

Your Workload

Although this is a full-time programme, in general you will attend campus from 9.00am-4.00pm on Thursdays and Fridays, and some Wednesdays throughout the year.

There are several presentation weeks or workshop intensives throughout the year where you will be required to attend a full day on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 9.00am-5.00pm. You are also expected to attend a three-day orientation in mid-February. On campus, contact is reduced in the second semester to allow for fieldwork placements.

In addition to classes on campus, you will be required to access material and work through learning activities and assessment tasks independently. All courses, course material and a range of optional resources are available online to support your learning.

You will Study

This programme is made up of seven courses. You will complete six compulsory courses and choose one specialty strand:

- > Community Facilitation
- > Mental Health and Addiction
- > Social Services

If you choose to complete one specialty at the Certificate level, you are not restricted to that specialty should you choose to progress to the Bachelor in Social Services.

Compulsory Courses

- > Self and Cultural Awareness
- > Aotearoa New Zealand Society
- > Group Work, Networking and the Service Industry
- > Health and Safety in Human Service Work
- > Theory, Models and Practice Skills
- > Workplace Practice

Elective Specialties (select one)

- > Specialty Practice: Mental Health and Addictions
- > Specialty Practice: Social Services
- > Specialty Practice: Community Facilitation

Entry requirements

Open entry, but you must:

- > disclose any criminal convictions before commencing the programme, and
- > give permission for a police check before going on your work placement.

You will also take part in an informal discussion with the Programme Manager to check your readiness to engage with the programme.

- > International students will be individually assessed to ensure you are ready for this study.
- > If English is not your first language, you must also demonstrate English language skills equivalent to an IELTS overall band score (academic) of 5.5.



New Zealand Certificate in Health and Wellbeing (Social and Community Services) (Level 4)* pathways diagram

Open entry

This qualification is suitable for people:

- > Working in human services who want to upskill
- > Wishing to enter or re-enter the workforce
- > Who want to change careers
- > Wanting to build a career
- > Wanting to explore a career in human services.

Students graduating from this programme receive the following qualifications:

1. New Zealand Certificate in Health and Wellbeing (Social and Community Services) (Level 4)* PLUS
2. One of the following National Certificates depending on your chosen speciality:
 - > National Certificate in Social Services (Level 4): Version 1
 - > National Certificate in Community Support Services Disability Information Provision (Level 4): Version 2
 - > National Certificate in Mental Health and Addiction Support (Level 4): Version 1

Employment opportunities

- > Mental Health, Disability and Social Service fields
- > Day programmes
- > Activity centres
- > Residential services
- > District Health Boards
- > Forensics ward
- > Dual Diagnosis ward
- > PACT Group
- > Idea services
- > Pacific services
- > Child care
- > Elderly care
- > Community support work
- > Addictions
- > Youth work
- > Employment services

Further study options at Otago Polytechnic

Bachelor of Social Services

- > Career Practice
- > Counselling
- > Disability
- > Mental Health

Health Bridging Certificate*

Bachelor of Nursing

Bachelor of Occupational Therapy

Physical Health and Wellbeing

- > Sport and Exercise
- > Adventure and Snowsports
- > Health and Wellness
- > Massage Therapy

School leavers

Recommended study and experience:

- > Social Studies, History or Geography
- > Economics
- > Tikaka and Te Reo Māori
- > Cultural Studies
- > Multicultural groups
- > Community and human service work experience
- > Art, Hard Materials, Food Technology, Textiles, PE and Outdoor Education
- > Health and Wellbeing studies
- > Peer Support

Study elsewhere

Students graduating from this programme have gone on to study:

- > Social work
- > Psychology
- > Education
- > Early childhood
- > Sociology
- > Māori studies




My job as a full-time counsellor for Anglican Family Care is very rewarding. I've worked in this position for a few months now, since graduating with a Bachelor of Social Services (Counselling) from Otago Polytechnic. I see a mix of self-referrals, and referrals from other team members – and my caseload is steadily growing.

Anglican Family Care offers a range of services and programmes to support people to identify strategies that will help them manage life's challenges and reach towards an increased sense of wellbeing for themselves and their families. In addition to counselling, we offer services such as home-based family support, our Family Start and Social Workers in Schools programmes, emergency assistance and budgeting advice.

I've always wanted to be a Social Worker but ended up working in the insurance industry after leaving school. Then, after some big life events, I decided the time was right to follow my passion for helping people and so I enrolled at Otago Polytechnic to begin my journey.

It wasn't always easy returning to study. I put high expectations on myself and it was hard to juggle full-time study with being a mum. The biggest challenge was finding the right balance.

I'm currently working towards my full New Zealand Association of Counsellors (NZAC) membership. At the moment, I help individuals, but I would like to expand my expertise so that I can work with couples and families too. Counselling really is a journey – every client teaches you something – and it's also a personal journey of discovery into your own life!



“Life can throw you curveballs and challenges and my role is give others the support they need.”

MELANIE

Bachelor of Social Services (Counselling)



“Social Services is a great career option. You learn so much about New Zealand, social issues, people... and yourself.”

CHRISSIE

Bachelor of Social Services

I've been busy since graduation – and currently hold two jobs. It's fantastic working as a teacher aide, where I help young people to engage with education. I also work in an alcohol and drug rehab centre for young people.

My Bachelor of Social Services degree from Otago Polytechnic taught me a lot – and working in the field you are always learning new skills. My current roles are challenging, but when you see students actively engaging in their education, all your hard work and effort pays off.

I chose a career in Social Services as I grew up around a lot of people with issues in the areas of mental health, alcohol, drugs and poverty. I first completed the National Certificate in Mental Health, which helped me hugely. I learnt to put my ideas on paper, and gained an understanding of how the Polytechnic operates. Initially, I doubted my own ability to complete the degree – but with the support and encouragement of one of my lecturers, I decided to give it a go.

When I started studying at Otago Polytechnic, I could hardly read or write, after struggling right through school. I never imagined in a million years I would be capable of achieving a degree in anything! Despite the difficulties, I refused to give up. I took advice from my study mates and lecturers, and did my own research into study methods to find out what worked best for me.

In the future, I would like to work with young Māori and their whānau, preferably in the community. I really enjoy helping people with everyday life, helping them decide what they would like to become, and teaching them life skills. I greatly value learning, as I didn't have an education myself as a child.

What advice would I give to anyone considering embarking on a career in social services? The same advice I give to the students – just go for it! It's not the easiest job in the world, but it is very rewarding.



Bachelor of Social Services

The Bachelor of Social Services is a three year degree programme, delivered on campus in Dunedin, which includes fieldwork placements. Embark on a degree that will open doors for you as a social services professional in New Zealand.

Year 1

Develop personal, professional, interpersonal and micro-counselling skills to enable you to work safely and effectively with clients. Gain knowledge about research practice, social development and social psychology. At the end of this year, you will choose an area of specialisation from career practice, counselling, disability support or mental health support.

Year 2

Explore the key principles and theories of group work, social issues and policy, and develop your research skills. Those specialising in social services, mental health recovery, and disability support or counselling will gain an overview about working with people with addictions; while

those specialising in career practice will investigate the contemporary issues surrounding this area.

Fieldwork placements in each speciality begin in Year 2.

Year 3

Learn about the theoretical approaches to working with families, carry out a review of research relevant to your major, and develop an understanding of safe practice. Undertake a further placement where you will work within the scope of the agency.

Upon successful completion of all required courses, you will graduate with a Bachelor of Social Services with a specialty in either Career Practice, Counselling, Disability or Mental Health.

Why a career in Social Services?

A career in Social Services is much more than a job – it's a vocation. This is an incredibly rewarding field, ideal for those who love working with people.

Gain a solid foundation in various aspects of the field before choosing your area of specialisation and working with real-life clients.

Support others to help them achieve their full potential – and make a valuable contribution to social and personal change.

What industry opportunities are there?

Choose from a wide range of Social Services careers and focus on working with people to improve their quality of life. The demand for qualified individuals in the community services industries remains strong, as the world faces a growing and ageing population and a general increase in social problems.

Consider employment as a mental health recovery advocate/worker, disability support advocate/worker, community/social services worker, counsellor or career practitioner. Alternatively, you could continue with postgraduate study and pursue a career in academia or policy development.

Entry Requirements^

Minimum of 60 credits at Level 3 or higher on the National Qualifications Framework

NCEA Level 3 including:

- > 14 credits at Level 3 or higher in three NZQA approved subjects, and
- > Literacy – 10 credits at Level 2 or higher, made up of 5 credits in reading and 5 credits in writing, and
- > Numeracy – 10 credits at Level 1 or above, made up of specified achievement standards available through a range of subjects OR package of three numeracy unit standards (26623, 26626, 26627 – all three required)
- > If English is not your first language = Entry IELTS: 6.5 (no band score less than 6.5)

Other requirements

- > Demonstrate computing skills and relevant life/work experience.
- > Submit a curriculum vitae, essay, two referee reports demonstrating your academic and personal suitability for social services training, and a health declaration.
- > Declare any criminal convictions and give permission for police vetting.
- > You will have to undertake an interview.

^An application pack will be sent to you and you must indicate which specialty area(s) you are most interested in.





Gain valuable experience, increase your work-readiness and enhance your employment potential. Working with clients is a core component of both the New Zealand Certificate in Health and Wellbeing (Social and Community Services) (Level 4)* and the Bachelor of Social Services. Your placement will be organised by the staff in your programme or specialty.

Fieldwork placements

The Bachelor of Social Services[^]

Fieldwork placements give you the chance to put social services theory into practice.

During semester two, you will carry out 100 fieldwork placement hours, spread out over approximately ten weeks. This fieldwork placement will be in a service relevant to your specialty. It will require you to:

- > Participate in the life of the service – attend staff meetings, networking opportunities, and any training prospects that may arise
- > Clarify your role, boundaries and ethical responsibilities, and work in a way which is informed by these
- > Support clients to achieve personal goals and carry out day to day activities.

Bachelor of Social Services[^]

All Bachelor of Social Services students undertake fieldwork placement during their second and third years of study within their specialty.

Year 2 – Integrated Practice 1

Engage in supervised practice with clients and peers through fieldwork placements in your area of specialisation.

Participate in individual, small group and peer supervision of your integrated practice. Fieldwork will demonstrate your application of theory into practice to provide professional and effective support to people.

Counselling students undertake placements within the School of Social Services Kowhai Counselling Clinic. Career Practice students do their placement in the Otago Polytechnic Career Success Centre.

Year 3 – Integrated Practice 2

Build upon your experience and take part in further supervised practice with clients and peers within a community fieldwork placement. Display your advanced application of theory into practice and work towards meeting the requirements of professional bodies. Examples of past third year placements include: Anglican Family Care, Probation Service, high school counsellor, Adventure Development Limited, Youth Grow at Presbyterian Support, Dunedin Community College, PACT, Idea Services and Methodist Mission.

[^]**Please note:** You must declare any criminal convictions and give permission for Police vetting before commencing fieldwork placement. You will also be expected to pay for your travel expenses to and from your placement and any meals/accommodation, so please budget accordingly.

My role as Career Adviser at the University of Otago's Career Development Centre is incredibly varied. I help with everything from CV preparation and cover letter writing skills, to job search strategy and interview coaching.

I also design and run workshops to help students improve their interpersonal communication and networking skills.

My Bachelor of Social Services (Career Practice) was instrumental in helping me launch my career in Dunedin. I worked in the print media industry in Germany, before moving here, and was ready for a career change. I wanted a New Zealand qualification that would help me find meaningful work – and the degree programme at Otago Polytechnic was exactly what I was looking for!

The programme was both fun and practical. It was a great way to make connections in Dunedin and build a network of friends and contacts. It also provided a fascinating introduction to Māori culture.

My degree definitely helped me gain employment. It connected me to work placements, giving me plenty of space to hunt out my own opportunities.

This career requires a high level of commitment and is very rewarding. It's important to enjoy working with people and to have a good knowledge of the employment market. In the fast-paced and constantly changing labour environment, a willingness to learn and to keep up-to-date is essential!

"It's great to see others benefit from my guidance and advice."

PETRA

Bachelor of Social Services (Career Practice)





About blended learning

Blended learning means that you will do some learning in the classroom and access some learning online.

Blended learning enables you to arrange your learning when it suits you. It fosters independent learning and enables you to identify and use opportunities outside the classroom environment – a valuable skill once you enter the workplace.

You will have access to all your learning material online. This means you can view material prior to attending classes and refer back to learning materials when revising. Online material is varied and may include lectures, readings, quizzes, discussion forums, video clips and group activities.

You will need to access this information on a computer and work your way through it.

The New Zealand Certificate in Health and Wellbeing (Social and Community Services) (Level 4)* blends online (via Moodle) and on campus learning. There is also a distance option for this programme.

The Bachelor of Social Services has mixed delivery methods, on campus, experiential and online Moodle material.



How can you prepare for being a self-directed learner?

There are some key strategies that can help you prepare to manage your own learning.

When you start the programme, we will help you think about these and give you ways to use them in your everyday learning. However, it will be easier if you have already thought some of this through.

Points to consider:

How do you learn best?

For example, are you an oral learner or a reader/writer? What strategies do you use to enhance your learning style?

Time management

You will be expected to manage your own time and complete tasks and activities prior to attending class as this will integrate and consolidate your in-class learning.

What strategies will you use to do this effectively?

We recommend you plan out your study using a diary.

A laptop and broadband are essential. You will have access to computer suites on campus but ideally you should have access to your own computer. You need to have some familiarity with computers, however support staff are available to assist. If it has been some time since you have used a computer, then do please consider attending introductory computing courses.





“One of the highlights of my learning was the work placement. It was amazing.”

LINLEY

Bachelor of Social Services (Mental Health Support)

I’ve always wanted to work alongside people. Initially, I was interested in a career in counselling but after my interview at Otago Polytechnic’s School of Social Services I realised that Mental Health Support was the right path for me. It was a light-bulb moment!

I started my learning at the Polytechnic as an adult student. After completing the Certificate in Human Services (Level 4), I embarked on the two-year Diploma in Mental Health Support and graduated with a Bachelor of Social Services. I now work for PACT as a support worker in women’s mental health, providing community and outreach support. I’m also about to start a part-time position as a Tutorial Assistant in the Certificate of Health (Level 4) at Otago Polytechnic.

Right from the beginning of my studies, I utilised the Learning Centre and asked for help when I needed it. I’m a single-mum so I had to be organised and stick to a budget. The School of Social Services is a supportive environment and I met some incredible people along the way.

One of the highlights of my learning was the work placement. In my first year, I did a placement at PACT. This led to a one-day a week position that continued over the duration of my studies. It fitted perfectly with the Bachelor of Social Services, giving me hands-on experience and allowing me to apply what I was learning. The work placements are amazing. If you’re about to embark on the Certificate or Bachelor programme, I suggest making the most of the placements and treating them like a job!

I'm currently employed as a Case Manager at The Ministry of Social Development. My role is Work Focus Health and Disability Case Manager.

I work one-on-one with clients to support them in preparing for work, and later in finding and transitioning into a job. I also do some other work around Supported Living Payment and Child Disability Allowance.

My approach is very strengths focused. I use a lot of tools, like goal and aspiration planning, to help others overcome their barriers and empower them to achieve.

I grew up with a passion for helping and supporting others, in an environment where I watched people struggle. I wanted to make a career of this passion, and so I enrolled at Otago Polytechnic, firstly in the Certificate in Mental Health. I then went on to complete the Diploma in Social Services (Mental Health).

Honestly, I walked into the Polytechnic for the first time, without even knowing how to write an essay – everything I did was a challenge. The confidence I gained from studying for the Certificate led me on to complete the Diploma. It was really hard work at times, but I had lots of great support from teachers, students and other services available. I'm really proud of my achievements.

I gained a lot through my study – professionally and personally. I learned how to assist those with disabilities*, as well as how best to empower others. I also learned heaps about myself. Now, as I look back, I am amazed at all the skills, contacts, and confidence I gained – and how they help me in my everyday work and home life.

Note: Students can choose a Disability support stream as part of the Bachelor of Social Services.

Please note: The Certificate in Mental Health and the Diploma in Social Services (Mental Health) have been replaced by new programmes. Please see page 5 for more information.

“It feels great to help others to achieve their employment and life goals.”

KEIRON

Diploma in Social Services (Mental Health)*



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