

Graduate Profiles for University of Otago Postgraduate Research Degrees

Background

This paper contains the generic graduate profiles approved by the Board of Graduate Studies in April 2015 – and revised in 2019 – for Honours, research Master’s, and PhD candidates. For each graduate profile there is first a description and then a set of attributes, which are customised from the generic University of Otago Graduate Profile. Adjectives are used to differentiate the level of attainment for each of the qualifications:

- ‘Enhanced’ for an Honours degree
- ‘Well developed’ for a research Master’s degree
- ‘Highly developed’ for a PhD degree

The attribute for research is progressively developed for each level of qualification, and for research Master’s and PhD degrees, a new attribute of specialist knowledge is included. Also an attribute for leadership is included for the PhD.

Each discipline is encouraged to customise these profiles, including defining what is meant by ‘enhanced’, ‘well developed’ and ‘highly developed’.

The graduate attributes are the knowledge, skills and qualities that graduates should have upon graduation – i.e. they should be realised, rather than aspirational. Although some of the attributes will be fostered to progressively higher levels with higher qualifications, others may remain at the level expected for an undergraduate; the extent to which these are fostered at a higher level than stated will be dependent on the discipline.

The attributes that are increasingly developed in higher qualifications include:

- Global perspective
- Lifelong learning
- Scholarship
- Communication
- Critical thinking
- Ethics
- Information literacy
- Research
- Self-motivation

The remaining attributes – interdisciplinary learning, cultural understanding, environmental literacy and teamwork – have the same description as for the generic Otago undergraduate profile. These attributes may be customised further to a higher level by disciplines, to reflect expectations of their graduates.

Although this document does not address taught Master’s and professional Doctorate degrees, the graduate profiles given here should provide a template that can be customised for these degrees.

Graduate Profiles for University of Otago Postgraduate Research Degrees

1. Attributes of an Honours Graduate

Description

A graduate who has qualified for a Bachelor's degree with Honours will demonstrate the ability to explore new and emerging fields of study, to acquire further specialist knowledge and theory, and have the capacity to design and undertake research under supervision.

Graduate Attributes

- **GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE:** Appreciation of global perspectives in the chosen discipline(s) and the nature of global citizenship
- **INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVE:** Commitment to intellectual openness and curiosity, and awareness of the limits of current knowledge and of the links amongst disciplines
- **LIFELONG LEARNING:** Commitment to the on-going acquisition of new knowledge and new skills, and an enhanced ability to apply these to an ever- changing environment
- **SCHOLARSHIP:** Commitment to the fundamental importance of the acquisition and development of advanced knowledge and understanding
- **COMMUNICATION:** Enhanced ability to communicate information, arguments and analyses effectively, both orally and in writing
- **CRITICAL THINKING:** Enhanced ability to analyse issues logically, to challenge conventional assumptions, to consider different options and viewpoints, make informed decisions and act with flexibility, adaptability and creativity
- **CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING:** Knowledge and appreciation of biculturalism within the framework of the Treaty of Waitangi; knowledge and appreciation of multiculturalism; and an ability to apply such knowledge in a culturally appropriate manner.
- **ETHICS:** Knowledge of ethics and ethical standards and an ability to apply these with a sense of responsibility within the workplace and community
- **ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY:** Understanding of the principles that govern natural systems, the effects of human activity on these systems, and the cultures and economies that interact with those systems
- **INFORMATION LITERACY:** Enhanced ability to apply specific skills in acquiring, organising, analysing, evaluating and presenting information, in particular recognising the increasing prominence of digital-based activity
- **RESEARCH:** Ability to design and undertake research under supervision, and to report on this in an appropriate form
- **SELF-MOTIVATION:** Enhanced capacity for self-directed activity and working independently
- **TEAMWORK:** Ability to work effectively as both a team leader and a team member

2. Attributes of a Research Master's Graduate

Description

A graduate who has qualified for a research Master's degree will demonstrate mastery of specialist knowledge and theory, and have a well developed ability in the planning, execution and completion of a piece of original research.

Graduate Attributes

- **SPECIALIST KNOWLEDGE:** Capacity to assimilate information at depth in a field of study, and to impart to others a clear understanding of it
- **GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE:** Well developed appreciation of global perspectives in the chosen discipline(s) and the nature of global citizenship
- **INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVE:** Commitment to intellectual openness and curiosity, and the awareness of the limits of current knowledge and of the links amongst disciplines
- **LIFELONG LEARNING:** Commitment to the on-going acquisition of new knowledge and new skills, and a well developed ability to apply these to an ever- changing environment
- **SCHOLARSHIP:** Commitment to the fundamental importance of the acquisition and development of advanced scholarship and understanding
- **COMMUNICATION:** Well developed ability to communicate information, arguments and analyses effectively, both orally and in writing
- **CRITICAL THINKING:** Well developed ability to analyse issues logically, to challenge conventional assumptions, to consider different options and viewpoints, make informed decisions and act with flexibility, adaptability and creativity
- **CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING:** Knowledge and appreciation of biculturalism within the framework of the Treaty of Waitangi; knowledge and appreciation of multiculturalism; and an ability to apply such knowledge in a culturally appropriate manner.
- **ETHICS:** Knowledge of ethics and ethical standards and a well developed ability to apply these with a sense of responsibility within the workplace and community
- **ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY:** Understanding of the principles that govern natural systems, the effects of human activity on these systems, and the cultures and economies that interact with those systems
- **INFORMATION LITERACY:** Well developed ability to apply specific skills in acquiring, organising, analysing, evaluating and presenting information, in particular recognising the increasing prominence of digital-based activity
- **RESEARCH:** Well developed ability to initiate, design, conduct and report independent and original research from a defined project, an ability to apply research skills to new situations, and a willingness to seek continuous improvement in research skills and quality of research
- **SELF-MOTIVATION:** Well developed capacity for self-directed activity and working independently
- **TEAMWORK:** Ability to work effectively as both a team leader and a team member

3. Attributes of a Doctor of Philosophy Degree Graduate

Description

A graduate who has qualified for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) will demonstrate highly developed and independent skills in the definition, management and communication of original research in a specialist area. A PhD graduate will have made a significant contribution to knowledge in the particular field. On completion of their studies, PhD graduates will be able to:

- (i) Undertake further advanced research of the highest quality that contributes to knowledge and exhibits authoritative international standing in their own subject field
- (ii) Continue developing personally and professionally in their careers
- (iii) Make potentially innovative, and important contributions to the communities and societies in which they reside.

Graduate Attributes

- **SPECIALIST KNOWLEDGE:** Capacity to assimilate information at depth in a field of study, and to impart to others a clear understanding of it. Appreciation of the relevance and value of his or her original contribution to facts, theories and practices of the national and international knowledge community.
- **GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE:** Highly developed appreciation of global perspectives in the chosen discipline(s) and the nature of global citizenship
- **INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVE:** Commitment to intellectual openness and curiosity, and the awareness of the limits of current knowledge and of the links amongst disciplines
- **LIFELONG LEARNING:** Commitment to the on-going acquisition of new knowledge and new skills, and a highly developed ability to apply these to an ever- changing environment
- **SCHOLARSHIP:** Commitment to the fundamental importance of the acquisition and development of highly advanced scholarship and understanding
- **COMMUNICATION:** Highly developed ability to communicate information, arguments and analyses effectively, both orally and in writing
- **CRITICAL THINKING:** Highly developed ability to analyse issues logically, to challenge conventional assumptions, to consider different options and viewpoints, make informed decisions and act with flexibility, adaptability and creativity
- **CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING:** Knowledge and appreciation of biculturalism within the framework of the Treaty of Waitangi; knowledge and appreciation of multiculturalism; and an ability to apply such knowledge in a culturally appropriate manner.
- **ETHICS:** Knowledge of ethics and ethical standards and a highly developed ability to apply these with a sense of responsibility within the workplace and community
- **ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY:** Understanding of the principles that govern natural systems, the effects of human activity on these systems, and the cultures and economies that interact with those systems
- **INFORMATION LITERACY:** Highly developed ability to apply specific skills in acquiring, organising, analysing, evaluating and presenting information, in particular recognising the increasing prominence of digital-based activity
- **RESEARCH:** Highly developed ability to initiate, design, conduct and report independent and original research, a willingness to seek continuous improvement in research skills and quality of research, and an awareness of the application of knowledge

- **SELF-MOTIVATION:** Highly developed ability for self-directed activity and working independently
- **TEAMWORK:** Ability to work effectively as both a team leader and a team member
- **LEADERSHIP:** Demonstrates leadership within the discipline and within a workplace