



Accountancy

The financial language of organisations

"An Accountancy degree from Otago can open a lot of doors for you. If you also qualify as a chartered accountant, this enables you to decide which doors you actually want to open."

Jared Le Roy BCom, DipGrad
Chartered Accountant, Crowe
Horwath

Everyone uses accounting in their everyday lives – whether they know it or not. Online banking, StudyLink and KiwiSaver all involve accounting concepts. Accounting is the art and science of measuring, interpreting and communicating financial information.

At Otago, we have a range of interesting and challenging study options in Accountancy, and as Accountancy is a professional course, you'll have the opportunity to join one of New Zealand's professional accountancy bodies.

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Why study Accountancy?

Accounting is the financial language of business and non-profit organisations. As such, it is probably the most useful tool you can have when entering the business or non-profit world. If you understand the concepts and terminology of accounting, you will have a good grasp of business problems and their solutions.

Accounting is about providing financial information, to help organisations plan and meet their various financial, tax or audit obligations. Creating user-friendly, flexible reports requires a team focus. Accounting analytics teaches students how to provide different views of firm financial data using information extracted from big data.

Otago Accountancy graduates gain decision-making roles within a very short time in the workplace. They have a dynamic, challenging role that uses their analytical and communication skills daily.

No matter what career you're aspiring to, you will find accounting skills invaluable.

Background required

There are no required subjects to study Accountancy – you don't even have to have studied it at school. The subject continues to evolve as technology advances to allow new financial insights to be explored. Subjects that collate, record and analyse data, and subjects using English communication, would be helpful.

Careers in accountancy

Many Otago Accountancy graduates start their careers in chartered accountancy firms, often working in taxation or auditing, or as advisers to a range of businesses. These roles are often stepping stones; within three or four years, they move on to larger organisations such as government departments, businesses and non-profit organisations and, within 10 years, their skills may have earned them a key management rather than an accounting role. New Zealand's leading accounting firms express a strong preference for Otago-trained graduates, so look out for our recruitment fairs held in early March each year.

Accountancy at Otago

Accountancy is a major of the Bachelor of Commerce, a three-year degree programme.

Accounting branches into three main areas:

- Financial accounting is about producing financial information for external users.
- Management accounting covers record-keeping, planning, monitoring and decision making within organisations.
- Accounting analytics trains students to extract information and present views of firm performance and financial data.

In your first year you will learn the basic concepts, principles and techniques of accounting and learn how to produce financial statements used by most organisations – the balance sheet, the profit and loss statement, and the cash flow statement – and how accounting systems meet the information requirements of organisations – plans, forecasts, results. We also provide opportunities to develop critical thinking and communication skills as these are attributes that are highly valued by employers and graduates.

Beyond first year, you'll develop analytical skills and learn more about the role of accounting in different contexts. Increasingly, accountants help to measure and provide advice on sustainable business practices with social, environmental and governance reports now common additions to traditional accounting reports.

Teaching style

The first year is lecture- and tutorial-based. In subsequent years, most teaching takes place in seminar groups. You'll also carry out case studies, practical work on computers – particularly using Excel and financial databases – and group sessions in which you and your colleagues organise your own projects and develop your communication skills.

Double major/degree options

Many students do a double major or double degree, such as a BCom in Accountancy and a Bachelor of Laws. Majors in Information Systems or Finance are other good combinations. Other students choose to study Accountancy papers to enhance their other degrees, such as Arts, Physical Education and Sciences. No matter what degree you're studying, Accountancy is invaluable.

Professional options

To enhance and add value to your Otago BCom in Accountancy, we recommend you become a member of one or more of the professional accounting associations. If you wish to work in New Zealand as a public practitioner or auditor, the Chartered Accountants of Australia and New Zealand (CAANZ), or Certified Practising Accountants (CPA Australia) are the pathways to take.

Otago's Department of Accountancy and Finance has connections with several professional associations to suit different career aspirations:

Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)
accaglobal.com

Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand (CAANZ)
charteredaccountantsanz.com

Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA)
cimaglobal.com

CPA (Australia)
cpaaustralia.com.au

For questions about
Accountancy
otago.ac.nz/accountancy



PROFILES

Holly Armstrong BCom, Accounting and Finance Investment Banking Analyst at Craigs Investment Partners

I found Finance the most interesting of the BCom majors, and Accounting the most practical, so I decided to major in them both. I also thought that they would give me a good base for the jobs I was interested in.

My experience studying at Otago was a very positive one. The study environment was very supportive, with plenty of academic staff available to answer questions. The Business

School also offered various extra-curricular opportunities. I was lucky enough to be involved in Ignite, a student-based organisation that does consulting work with local not-for-profits, and I also participated in a month-long exchange to the Shanghai University of International Business and Economics, a partner business school.

I couldn't recommend studying at Otago enough – it is truly the full student experience!



Jackson McDonald BCom, Accounting and Finance

Business, Accounting and Maths were subjects that I excelled at in high school. It was only upon taking the core Business papers that I discovered I also really enjoyed Finance, as it is a subject that tied together all of my interests.

Studying at Otago has been a great experience. The support from the Business School, the Māori centre, all the staff and my peers has been vital to my ongoing success. Whenever I've taken a paper in which initially I haven't known

anybody, I've found it extremely easy to interact with other students and the staff.

Seeing through my own research and recognising that the content we learn is applicable in the real world has been one of the most valuable aspects of my BCom. It is reassuring to believe that the knowledge and skills I am picking up will stay with me in my future endeavours. At the moment, I'm hoping these will involve a career in investment banking.

