



# Sport and Exercise Nutrition

From health and well-being to elite performance

"I focussed on the thing I loved best which was sports nutrition. There's more and more work available in sports nutrition, as people's awareness of the importance of it increases."

Fiona Simpson HPSNZ  
Sports Dietitian

There is growing interest in the relationship between nutrition, physical activity and sporting performance, with two major foci:

1. physical activity and health
2. sporting performance

The Bachelor of Applied Science in Sport and Exercise Nutrition is the only degree programme in New Zealand that combines Physical Education and Nutrition. This degree will allow you to study the role nutrition plays in both sporting performance and health.

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## What is Sport and Exercise Nutrition?

Sport and exercise nutrition is a rapidly expanding area requiring a combined knowledge of the roles of human nutrition and physical activity in health.

The Sport and Exercise Nutrition (SPNU) programme combines human nutrition, sports science and physical education. In addition several minor programme options are available, broadening the career opportunities upon completion of your degree.

## Some reasons for studying Sport and Exercise Nutrition

This is the first qualification in New Zealand that focuses on sport and exercise nutrition, giving a thorough grounding in all aspects of human nutrition and relevant areas of exercise and sport science. The Applied Science degree requires a second major or a minor from a list of approved options. These will give you a set of complementary skills making your Sport and Exercise Nutrition degree even more relevant to today's working world.

## Background required

High school students are recommended to take Biology, Chemistry, Maths and English in Year 12 and preferably Chemistry in Year 13.

## Career opportunities

There is a growing need for individuals with a combined understanding of the principles of nutrition, health and physical activity. This means there are many career paths available, depending on the minor chosen to complement SPNU, and the individual's areas of interest. Some examples include:

- Sports nutrition consultancy
- Roles in public health, physical activity and nutrition
- Research
- Product development
- Dietetics

## What is the Bachelor of Applied Science?

The strength of the Applied Science programme is its outward focus – developing market-ready graduates with wide-ranging skills and practical experience in the workplace.

Applied Science is a three-year undergraduate degree with open entry at 100 level. An Honours year is offered to those students who achieve an appropriate academic standard. This will be offered at the end of the undergraduate degree.

Every Applied Science degree has a compulsory minor or second major, in a subject area that's directly relevant and will deliver complementary skills. The programme encourages real-world business awareness, enabling you to apply what you have learned to any organisation you work for.

## What will I be learning about?

A broad understanding of the principles of nutrition and exercise science will be obtained from Human Nutrition and Physical Education papers in the 2nd and 3rd years.

### First Year

In your first year of study you will be required to take papers in human body systems, cell and molecular biology, biochemistry, and chemistry.

### Second Year

In your second year Human Nutrition and Physical Education become the mainstay of your study.

### Third Year

The third year sees further specialisation in the selection of Human Nutrition papers, and Physical Education papers. Research areas of particular interest can be built into the honours programme.

### Fourth Year

The Honours year is research-focused with project work and case studies being a major part of your study.

## Teaching style

As well as lectures to learn the theory of Human Nutrition and sport and exercise science, there's a large practical component in both the Physical Education and Human Nutrition papers. Labs and practical sessions give you hands-on experience and regular tutorials give excellent small group learning opportunities.

## PROFILE Marewa Kraak

"I completed my Applied Science degree in Sport and Exercise Nutrition in 2010. I came down from Christchurch to study because Otago was the only place that offered this particular specialisation. I have a rowing and cycling background, so this is my particular passion ... The researchers and teachers in the programme are really impressive as well – they were names that I knew from my sporting fields, so I knew I'd get really good teaching.

Since I completed my degree I've established a business with my brother – he has a real flair for business and has always had an entrepreneurial view. I have the science background, so together we saw a real gap in the market for top quality natural-based nutrition products and started our business.

Our products are made from New Zealand ingredients wherever possible, and production is based in Christchurch. You can have a look at our website if you like! It's [drinkpure.co.nz](http://drinkpure.co.nz) We've gone back to basics, making sports nutrition that's a more natural product... the real flavours and palatable taste are what make the products so usable, the science behind it all is really

solid. We spent the first year just developing the range of products, making sure they would deliver results.

So we launched the business at the end of 2013, and it's growing really fast. We're just making the move into supermarkets, we've launched into Australia, and we're exploring the wider global market. We're fortunate that we've been able to sponsor some great events, get some good profile among key sportspeople.

So my Sport and Exercise Nutrition degree is the backbone of my work now... that's what's good about the Applied Science programme – it prepares you for real world work, it's really relevant."



For questions about  
Sport and Exercise Nutrition  
[otago.ac.nz/spnu](http://otago.ac.nz/spnu)

