



Economics

A framework for thinking

"After leaving school, I wanted to contribute to society in a practical way. At Otago I saw how an Economics degree could lead to a career in policy making and advising, and by challenging me to increase my understanding of statistics and calculus it helped me secure my current job."

Amber Wadsworth BCom, BA(Hons)
Senior Economic Analyst,
Reserve Bank of New Zealand

Economics is about choice and is at the heart of decision-making. Governments, businesses and individuals are all faced with making choices in situations where resources are scarce.

Economics is not just a subject, it is a way of thinking, and provides a logical way of looking at a variety of issues. That's why Otago Economics graduates are so well regarded – they are leading problem solvers and think outside the square.

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Why study Economics?

Economics is an exciting, dynamic, contemporary field. Economics affects everyone and applies to a range of disciplines including business, politics, history, law, health sciences and biotechnology. It deals with unemployment, economic growth, inflation, poverty, income, resource allocation, the environment, and international trade. You name the field, Economics plays a part.

Studying Economics teaches you how to examine people's ideas and come to your own soundly-based conclusions. No matter what career you're aspiring to, you will find Economics invaluable.

Background required

There are no prerequisite subjects to study Economics – you don't even have to have studied Economics at school. However, you might find English, Mathematics or Statistics useful subjects to study – especially if you want to major in Economics.

Careers in Economics

Otago Economics graduates are well known for their wide range of analytical, problem solving and decision-making skills, and are in high demand by employers. There are literally countless jobs for Economics graduates. You could be a policy analyst, a business consultant, an economics researcher, a financial adviser, a diplomat, a teacher, a bank manager or a journalist. An Economics background would also be invaluable for someone contemplating setting up his or her own business.

Our graduates can be found in jobs across the public and private sectors, for example:

- Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- OECD
- Infometrics
- PwC
- EY
- Reserve Bank
- Treasury
- Statistics New Zealand
- Inland Revenue
- Banking – national and international
- Health authorities
- Local governments and planning authorities

Student exchange

The University of Otago has exchange agreements with more than 100 institutions in over 30 countries. If your marks average B or better, you may qualify to attend one of these institutions for one semester or for a year. You pay only your New Zealand fees and complete your qualification within the same timeframe as if you'd never been away. Commerce students are also encouraged to participate in one of the more than 50 specific business exchanges the Otago Business School offers.

Economics at Otago

Economics is all about choice. This also applies to how you study the programme.

Economics can be studied as a major of a Bachelor of Arts (BA), Bachelor of Commerce (BCom), or Bachelor of Science (BSc), all three-year degree programmes. It can also be studied as part of a degree in Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE), a multidisciplinary major in the BA and BCom, or as a second major within the Bachelor of Applied Science (BAppSc) – the choice is yours.

Teaching style

Each paper is taught in a lecture format and most papers include weekly tutorials where you'll have the opportunity to discuss the lecture topics in more detail. Just like at secondary school, assessment will include assignments, tests, essays and exams.

Double major/degree options

Economics complements a range of other majors and degree programmes such as Finance, Accountancy, Marketing Management, Management, Law, Political Studies, Philosophy, History, Geography, Psychology, Mathematics and a range of languages. The options are endless.

PROFILE

Finn Robinson BSc, BA, MEcon

Economic Analyst, Forecasting, Reserve Bank of New Zealand

Studying Economics is an eye-opening experience, says Finn Robinson.

"Doing an Economics degree at Otago exposes you to many interpretations and explanations of how the world works. You'll find you are able to understand the behaviour of businesses, governments and households, and critically evaluate their actions.

"It's more than just numbers and graphs. It's a framework for thinking about the world in a rational way."

Finn, who has a Bachelor of Arts in Politics, a Bachelor of Science in Economics and has recently completed a Master of Economics, is a firm believer in students trying papers outside their major discipline.

"I started taking Economics in my second year after realising how well it complemented what I was learning in my Politics papers. If I hadn't tried Economics, I wouldn't have the job or knowledge I have today."

During his studies Finn also completed a three-month summer internship at the

Reserve Bank of New Zealand where he is now employed as an Economic Analyst in the forecasting team.

"My degree is essential to being able to do this job. To be able to carry out forecasts and rationalise the results, you need a degree with a strong quantitative focus that gives you a solid understanding of macroeconomics," he says.

"The University of Otago has a great reputation. I expected to learn a lot and be pushed to achieve a lot, and my expectations were far exceeded. I've learned more than I ever imagined and have gone in directions I never conceived of whilst at high school."



For questions about
Economics
otago.ac.nz/economics

