

# INFORMATION SHEET

## Master of Planning (MPlan)

# Master of Planning

*Planning the Future*

Otago's Master of Planning (MPlan) is a professionally recognized planning qualification that prepares students for exciting socially, economically and environmentally relevant careers.

The MPlan is known internationally for its excellence and many students go on to work abroad. Planning is a growing, practical and relevant profession. The MPlan has an outstanding record of graduate employment rates.

We welcome students from a range of disciplines including: Māori Studies, Commerce, Geography, Law, Surveying, Zoology, Politics, Ecology and Sociology.

Planning issues range from global concerns, such as poverty, climate change and deforestation, to national, regional and local issues including pollution, waste management, transport, employment and the delivery of social services. Planners consider these issues from a range of scientific and social perspectives, while taking into account the particular values of different groups within the community.

## POSTGRADUATE



YOUR PLACE IN THE WORLD

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As our society becomes increasingly complex, the need for professional planners has become even greater. There is now widespread demand for trained individuals capable of taking a strategic, policy-orientated view of the social and environmental issues facing New Zealand and the world. Job prospects for qualified planners are excellent around the world.

## Planning at Otago

Otago's Master of Planning (MPlan) is an opportunity to gain an internationally recognised professional qualification, focused on planning and resource management. During the programme, you will gain in-depth knowledge of the political and legal context underlining planning internationally and in New Zealand. You will also be introduced to issues including conservation, environmental planning and community development, while gaining professional skills for work in these domains. You can explore your own area of interest, by undertaking a research project or major thesis in your second year.

The MPlan has an outstanding record of graduate employment rates with past students taking up positions both within New Zealand and overseas. Otago's MPlan is very highly regarded by the New Zealand Planning Institute. Planning is a great career for people from all sorts of backgrounds.

## Background required

To enter this programme, you should hold a degree in a relevant field, such as Geography, Economics, Geology, Ecology, Forestry, Law, Science, Surveying or Tourism, Sociology, and Māori Studies.

Alternatively, you will need to have other qualifications or experience acceptable to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Humanities. A number of students attending the programme in recent years have come from a diverse range of backgrounds. Some have spent time working as landscape architects, teachers, geologists, foresters, environmentalists, surveyors and civil engineers.

Whatever your background, you should be able to demonstrate an interest in planning and resource management issues, and a desire to work in the planning profession.

## Course structure

The MPlan is a two-year, full-time interdisciplinary programme, with options available for part-time study. Each student follows a personally prescribed course of study, designed to accommodate their strengths, interests and professional goals.

The programme is taught through a combination of lectures, field experience, projects, and research, with considerable emphasis placed on practical experience.

## International and Broad Scope

The MPlan is well-recognised internationally and graduates are eligible to work in many countries including Australia, Canada, South Africa and the United Kingdom.

The exceptionally wide range of skills and broad scope encompassed by this degree prepares you for careers in a number of different areas.

There are increasing career opportunities in the private sector, often within consultancy firms. This work tends to be varied, and could see you working on a range of environmental, community and development projects for a number of clients.

These might include community consultation, assisting with development proposals or undertaking environmental impact assessments.

Recent graduates have been employed in planning roles for: the Department of Conservation, Fish and Game (Otago), Parliamentary Commission for the Environment, Ministry for the Environment, Tourism Department (Papua New Guinea), Design Consultants (Melbourne, Australia), city and regional councils, Montgomery Watson (Dunedin), Connell Wagner (Auckland), Historic Places Trust (Wellington), South Gloucester Council (Bristol – UK), Wellington Regional and City Council.

## PROFILE

**CLAIRE LINDSAY** CANTERBURY EARTHQUAKE RECOVERY AUTHORITY (CERA) – PLANNER

My decision to apply for a place in the MPlan programme was influenced by an interest paper, 'Urban Geography', I took as part of my Bachelor of Commerce. I am very happy with my decision!

I really loved my time in the Planning programme, most of all because of the wonderful people. It was great being in a course that had such a close-knit community. Some of the most memorable moments from my first year were: presenting a redevelopment idea for an old raceway course to the Dunedin City Council staff, attending a hui in Rotorua, the final end of year dinner, and the many laughs we had while trying to complete assignments in the Planning Studio.

I was presented with a unique opportunity when I was granted a student contract to undertake a research project for the Christchurch City Council, "Who's in charge? Who will lead the urban design for the Christchurch Central City?"

In semester 2 of my second year I undertook a university exchange to the Queen's University School of Urban and Regional Planning in Kingston, Ontario, Canada. As part of the course we took field trips to Toronto, Montreal and the Ottawa Planning Institute Annual Conference. If you have the chance to undertake an exchange I highly recommend it.

On returning from Canada I took up a role as Graduate Planner for Beca, Christchurch where I was involved in a diverse range of projects: the Card-board Temporary Cathedral for Christchurch, the Christchurch Southern Motorway consultation process, monitoring water supply capacities in new subdivisions, and irrigation for quarries and dairy farms. Planning is really about getting on with people, looking at the bigger picture and how the planning rules fit into this. I am now working for CERA (Canterbury Earthquake Recovery) as a planner.



For questions about  
Planning  
[otago.ac.nz/planning](http://otago.ac.nz/planning)

