



French

Study Languages: make the world your place

“Learning the French language is a really powerful step to take. It opens pathways. You can match a language with many other subjects, it adds that extra special something to a degree that employers find really impressive.”

Philippa Kruger BA(Hons) French and Linguistics
Head of Languages, St Hilda's Collegiate School

In our world of global travel and communication, language graduates are in short supply. French has traditionally been the language of international relations between countries which speak different languages, and it still represents a major link within the organisation of the European Union. With an understanding of French, you have an extra advantage in business, tourism or any organisation with an international marketing strategy. The cultural heritage of France has been a strong influence in the development of the political history, literature, philosophy, arts, architecture and music of the modern world. Your French studies at Otago will give you insights and perspective on the world beyond New Zealand.

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Why study French?

French is a major international language. It is the first language of many people living in several European and African nations and Canada. It is an official language of Pacific territories within three hours flying time from New Zealand. With an understanding of French, you have an extra advantage in business, tourism or any organisation with an international marketing strategy.

You will be sought after in such areas as Foreign Affairs and Trade, Tourism and Treasury. You may be involved in furthering New Zealand's interests overseas and there will be plenty of opportunities for travel. You may even find yourself interpreting at international conferences, translating books or subtitling films.

Background required

If you have studied French at school or elsewhere, you will be able to build on your knowledge and skills, and the Department will determine which paper will best suit your level of French. Otherwise, an intensive and popular programme is available for the complete beginner.

Career opportunities

Recent Otago graduates who have included French in their degree now work as teachers, librarians, consultants, marketing managers and journalists all around the world. The analytical skills, communicative abilities and international perspectives that you'll have gained by studying French at Otago will give you an edge, and a pathway into a wide range of occupations.

Student exchange

In order to maximise students' contacts with the language, culture and society, Otago University has established exchange relationships with a number of French universities. If your marks average B or better, you may qualify to attend one of these institutions for one or two semesters. You pay only your New Zealand fees, and complete your qualification within the same time-frame as if you had never been away.

French at Otago

French is a major of the Bachelor of Arts, a three-year degree programme. An Honours degree in French requires a year of post-graduate study, the first semester of which is usually spent at a partner University in France or Canada. We also offer the Diploma in Language or the Diploma in Language and Culture for students who major in other subjects. Minors in French Language or French Culture are available too. Students who are interested in conducting further research on French language and culture can join our MA or PhD programmes.

Teaching style

In the French programme at Otago we get to know our students individually. Our classes are small and this helps us tailor our approaches and materials to meet the interests of our students. Active use of French is the essence of our courses and we will give you plenty of opportunities to improve your language skills using the latest text, audio and video resources and internet materials.

Apart from studying the French language, you can also choose papers which will give you perspectives on the social values and cultural life of France and other French-speaking countries. Some of these will explore French literature of a particular period, others will focus on further expressions of France's culture such as cinema and popular music. You'll be eligible to join the Alliance Française de Dunedin for regular social and cultural activities involving the French-speaking population of the city.

Majors and minors

There are two main entry points for a major in French: one for beginners and one for students with an appropriate level of French language. The major comprises 10 papers in French that include a mix of language and culture papers at all levels.

If you plan to graduate with a major in another subject, you can still include papers in French in your degree. The minor comprises five papers in French. We offer minors in French language or in French culture that can be combined with any Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Performing Arts, Commerce, Theology or Science degree. If you are considering teaching French, a minor in Linguistics can help you understand the mechanics of languages and how we learn them.

PROFILE

Alice Milne

BA (Hons 1) French, minor in TESOL

Enrolling as a French student at the University of Otago opened a lot of doors to places that I would otherwise never have had the chance to see or visit. My degree and the amazing professors and tutors at Otago helped me to become fluent in French, and to experience the rich culture and history of France.

During my studies, the Department of Languages and Cultures helped me to secure scholarships from the University of Otago and the French Embassy which enabled me to travel to both Paris and New Caledonia on separate exchanges. These experiences were amazing and opened up my eyes to other cultures and people. The connections that grew with my host families and my French friends are lifelong, and they are relationships that I value greatly as I continue into working life.

While a student at the University of Otago and after graduating, I was involved in the Dunedin branch of the Alliance Française and was given the opportunity to be a private French tutor for some local families. I was also approached to translate the Otago Museum's guidebook for

French visitors to the city. The language skills and knowledge I had gained from my lecturers and from my minor in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) gave me the confidence to not only understand difficult aspects of the French language but to also teach them to others and translate complicated texts.

My background in languages and exchanges at the University of Otago has helped me to achieve my current job in international education, which involves travelling around the world and helping international students to New Zealand.



For questions about
French
otago.ac.nz/french

