



Bachelor of Social Services (with specialties in Career Practice, Counselling, Disability Support and Coordination or Mental Health Support)



Domestic fee: \$7,041 (first year)

International fee: \$24,650 (first year)

Compulsory student levy >
StudyLink >

*Fees are approximate, subject to change and exchange rates

Location	Dunedin
Duration	Three years full-time; up to six years part-time
Delivery	On campus with fieldwork placements

Credits	360
Level	7
Start	February
Apply	Until start date

Want to be a counsellor or career practitioner, or work in social services, disability or mental health?

Study the Bachelor of Social Services and help people improve their quality of life. This applied degree gives you the choice of a range of social services careers, specialising in:

- > Counselling
- > Career Practice
- > Disability Support and Coordination
- > Mental Health Support.

Skills required to succeed

- > Objectivity, responsibility, positivity and approachability
- > Excellent communication skills
- > Patience and a calm manner
- > A genuine interest in helping people
- > Ability to be responsive to clients.

Entry requirements

- > NCEA Level 3
- > 14* credits at Level 3 in each of three NZQA approved university entrance subjects, and
- > 10 Literacy credits at Level 2 or above, made up of:
 - > 5 credits in reading and 5 credits in writing, and
- > 10 Numeracy credits at Level 1 or above, made up of:

- > specified achievement standards available through a range of subjects OR
- > package of three numeracy unit standards (26623, 26626, 26627- all three required)

*Due to Covid-19 disruption, if you studied and achieved NCEA Level 3 during 2020 you only need 12 credits per Level 3 subject (i.e. a total of 36 credits).

- > OR a minimum of 60 credits at Level 3 or higher on the National Qualifications Framework.
- > You must demonstrate relevant life/work experience.
- > You must submit references and a health declaration.
- > You must declare any criminal convictions and give permission for a police check.
- > International students will be individually assessed to ensure they meet degree-level entry requirements.
- > If English is not your first language, you must provide:
 - > New Zealand University Entrance OR
 - > Overall Academic IELTS 6.5 with no individual band score lower than 6.5 (achieved in one test completed in the last two years), OR
 - > Acceptable alternative evidence of the required IELTS (see here for NZQA proficiency table and here for list of recognised proficiency tests).

If you need to improve your English Language skills, we offer a wide range of English programmes.

Bridging options

If you don't have the academic qualifications required to enter the Bachelor of Social Services, our New Zealand Certificate in Health and Wellbeing (Social and Community Services) (Level 4) can help you meet the minimum academic criteria for application. This year-long programme is replacing the Certificate in Human Services (Level 4) from February 2018.

Alternatively, our health bridging certificate is another bridging option to the Bachelor of Social Services. This year-long programme is replacing the Certificate in Health (Level 4) from February, 2018. It consists of two separate Certificate qualifications - the New Zealand Certificate in Study and Career Preparation (Level 3) and the New Zealand Certificate in Study and Career Preparation (Level 4). You will be enrolled in both of these qualifications at the beginning of the year.

Both of these bridging qualifications can be studied at Otago Polytechnic.

Please note: Due to the high demand for places, successful completion of either the New Zealand Certificate in Health and Wellbeing (Social and Community Services) (Level 4) or our health bridging certificate will not automatically guarantee entry to this degree.

Completing your application

You can enter information and upload documents directly into the application form. You may wish to prepare some of the required documentation beforehand.

To begin your application, click the Apply button at the top of this page.

You will need to provide:

1. academic records
2. written statements (approx. 300-500 words each) about:
 - > your life experiences and motivations for wanting to study this programme
 - > your relevant professional experiences
 - > how the te Tiriti o Waitangi might underpin your work in the social sector
 - > issues facing New Zealanders.
3. your Curriculum Vitae
4. a mental health and substance history status.
5. police vetting and declaration of any criminal convictions. (Applicants who have lived in countries other than New Zealand need to provide a Police Clearance from each country.)
6. contact details for two referees
7. certified copies of proof of identity
8. proof of residency (where appropriate).

You will also need to attend an interview. We will contact you to arrange this.

Selection procedure

Eligible applicants will be selected based on academic entry criteria and evidence of personal suitability demonstrated in written work and an interview. Numbers in this programme are limited. Should the number

of applicants exceed the places available, a waitlist will be compiled in date order of application.

In addition, the number of students accepted into each specialty will be determined by the number of placements available. Please note that we unfortunately cannot guarantee your choice of specialty.

Additional costs

You will undertake work placements during this qualification and will need to budget for these accordingly. You will be expected to pay for your travel expenses to and from your placement and any meals/accommodation.

Further study options

Our Graduate Diploma in Social Services pathway enables you to gain a further specialty with one year's additional study. Increase your career prospects with postgraduate study at Waikato, Massey or Auckland universities.

Programme specific risks

If you have had experiences of trauma, mental illness, abuse or life events causing emotional harm, you may experience some emotional risk during this programme. Otago Polytechnic and the College of Community Development and Personal Wellbeing have services available to support you.

You will study

The Bachelor of Social Services degree is made up of 20 courses in career practice, counselling, mental health and disability studies for each major completed over three years of full-time study (or up to six years of part-time study). Each year of the degree is made up of courses worth 120 credits.

During year one, the required foundations across all major subject areas are laid down.

You will choose one area of specialisation from counselling, career practice, disability or mental health at the end of your first year. Your chosen area of specialisation is designed to build on the concepts and knowledge developed in the core courses during year one and to re-focus your learning into that area of specialisation. This enables you to develop a sound knowledge base before applying that knowledge in the workplace.

In workplace practice, you have the opportunity to integrate the theory you have learnt into practice.

During year three (Level 7), you will undertake a further placement where you will work within the scope of the agency and gain valuable experience that will increase your employment potential. Upon successful completion of all required courses, you will graduate with either a Bachelor of Social Services (Career Practice), a Bachelor of Social Services (Counselling), a Bachelor of Social Services (Disability), or a Bachelor of Social Services (Mental Health).

This overall programme structure allows you to progressively enhance and deepen your understanding which in turn enables you to gain mastery in professional practice and theory. This ensures that, by the completion of the degree programme, you are able to incorporate the knowledge and skills gained into an integrated and intentional model of practice in the area of your specialty.

REAL-WORLD PREPARATION

Gain current and industry-relevant training, along with industry placements during this programme so you know exactly what to expect when you enter the workforce. You will have placement opportunities during your progression through the programme. For example, if you are a counselling student, through studying our approved programme of New Zealand counselling courses you will have the opportunity to work through the Kowhai Centre with clients during your second year, and go on external placement in your third year.

Placements are an exciting opportunity for students to work with people in supervised settings, and the Bachelor of Social Services programme appreciates all the support from the community that enables us to provide quality placements to students.

THE KŌWHAI CENTRE

The Kōwhai Centre is a social service that was established in 2001 to provide counselling support to the community and provide Bachelor of Social Services students with the opportunity to work with people who require supportive counselling or supervision in a learning environment. Students are supported by lecturing staff and counsellors within the community to provide a counselling service which is professional, respectful and accessible.

CAREER SUCCESS CENTRE

The College of Community Development and Personal Wellbeing established the Career Success Centre in 2013. This was set up to provide a career service to all Otago Polytechnic students with strategies to support effective career decision-making, previous training and diversity. Career Guides offer advice and assistance to all students; these Guides are current Bachelor of Social Services students who are in their second or third year of the Career Practice specialty training. The Career Guides are supported by lecturing staff and career practitioners within the professional career counselling service community.

Courses in the Social Services degree

YEAR ONE

Personal and Academic Effectiveness

Provides you with academic, reflective and self-management skills needed for working as an effective professional in social services.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Ethics and Law

Explore the relationship between Te Tiriti o Waitangi and international, customary and New Zealand law and ethics, through a lens of social justice.

Applied Communication 1

Develop skills that enable you to communicate in effective, safe and professional ways within collaborative relationships in the context of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Theories of Human Behaviour

Be introduced to theories of social psychology and human development, in the context of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Careers, Specialties and Pathways

Gain knowledge about the changing world of work and career options relevant to social services. Explore your own career resources and aspirations and make informed decisions and plans for your career journey.

Diversity

Explore the notion of social construction of self and the concepts of social justice and social change and how this impacts on relating to others.

YEAR TWO

Applied Communication 2

Integrate group work theory and practice and demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to facilitate groups based on the presenting needs of the group.

Research for Social Services

Develop an informed understanding of research paradigms and methodologies, and the current uses and practices of research within your chosen specialty area of social services.

Safe and Ethical Practitioner

Become a safe practitioner who understands and recognises abuse, and is able to make sound ethical decisions for those at risk.

Addictions, Substance Use and Co-existing Problems

Explore an overview of substance use 'addictions' and co-existing problems and develop useful and culturally appropriate responses for helping people address these problems.

or

Contemporary Issues in Career Practice

Investigate and develop expertise in significant and challenging areas of contemporary career practice. Broaden your knowledge and helping strategies by examining key issues and their impact on career development.

Wanaka

Gain knowledge and skills necessary for working with Māori in social service, counselling, career practice, disability support and mental health support contexts.

Theory for Practice A (Career Practice, Counselling, Disability, Mental Health)

Gain the knowledge and skills required to articulate a theoretical value base for your chosen specialty

area, and select and apply models, tools and skills suitable for work in this area in the context of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Integrated Practice A (Career Practice, Counselling, Disability, Mental Health)

Develop the skills, knowledge and experience to become a reflective practitioner who is able to work in a way that is values based, safe, informed and intentional in providing support in your chosen specialty context.

YEAR THREE

Working with Families

Become acquainted with theoretical approaches to working with families including Family Development Theory, Narrative Therapy and Systems Theory. The influence of family in relation to clients in the practice domains of social service, counselling and career practice will be explored through experiential and reflective learning.

Practitioner Inquiry

Undertake a systematic review of relevant research material and literature in order to answer a question which has direct relevance to practice in your chosen major.

Supporting Safe Practice

Develop understanding of situations of disempowerment and consider the processes and strategies for identifying and responding to issues of abuse, neglect and violence.

Sustainable Practitioner

Examine issues of sustainability in relation to practice as a counsellor, career practitioner or social service worker and explore how to develop a sustainable practice. You will also have the opportunity to learn how to manage a small business as a self-employed practitioner. The course will include legislative small business responsibilities and Inland Revenue Department (IRD) services.

Theory for Practice 2 – Major: Social Service, Career Practice, Counselling

Further develop your understandings of the underpinning theories, research and models of practice relevant to social service, career practice and counselling. Build on the skills and strategies which inform your practice and further develop a framework which supports safe professional practice.

Integrated Practice 2 – Major: Social Service, Career Practice, Counselling

Engage in further supervised practice with clients and peers within community fieldwork placements, and participate in individual, small group and peer supervision of your integrated practice. Demonstrate your application of theory into practice and your ability to meet the membership requirements of relevant professional bodies.

Exit Qualifications

After three years of successful full-time study (or up to six years of part-time study), you will graduate with a social services degree. You can choose to graduate with a:

- > Bachelor of Social Services (Career Practice)
- > Bachelor of Social Services (Counselling)
- > Bachelor of Social Services (Disability)
- > Bachelor of Social Services (Mental Health).

Your workload

A full-time programme consists of 120 credits per year. Courses are either 15 or 30 credits. A 15-credit course equates to 150 hours of work, and a 30-credit course equates to 300 hours of work. This is spread across 32 weeks which works out at an average of 37.5 hours per week.

Qualification structure

	Courses	Credits
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YEAR 1 (Level 5) 120 Credits	Personal and Academic Effectiveness	30
	Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Ethics and Law	30
	Applied Communication 1	15
	Careers, Specialties and Pathways	15
	Theories of Human Behaviour	15
	Diversity	15
YEAR 2 (Level 6) 120 Credits	Applied Communication 2	15
	Research for Social Services	15
	Safe and Ethical Practitioner	15
	Wanaka	15
	Addictions, Substance Use and Co-existing Problems	15
	or	
	Contemporary Issues in Career Practice	15
	Theory for Practice A (Career Practice)	15
	Theory for Practice A (Counselling)	15
	Theory for Practice A (Disability)	15
	Theory for Practice A (Mental Health)	15
	Integrated Practice A (Career Practice)	30
	Integrated Practice A (Counselling)	30
	Integrated Practice A (Disability)	30
	Integrated Practice A (Mental Health)	30
YEAR 3 (Level 7) 120 Credits	Working with Families	15
	Practitioner Inquiry	15
	Supporting Safe Practice	15
	Sustainable Practitioner	15
	Theory for Practice 2 (Career Practice)	30
	Theory for Practice 2 (Counselling)	30
	Theory for Practice 2 (Social Services)	30
	Integrated Practice 2 (Career Practice)	30
	Integrated Practice 2 (Counselling)	30
	Integrated Practice 2 (Social Services)	30
	Please note: From 2019 the Social Services specialty will be offered as both Disability or Mental Health specialty.	

Student loans/allowances

Student loans and allowances are for domestic students only. For information about student loans and allowances please visit the Studylink website. It is important to apply for your student loan/allowance at the same time as you apply for this programme, due to the length of time Studylink take to process.

Loan/allowance applications can be cancelled at any time if you decide to withdraw your programme application or if it is unsuccessful.

Recognition of prior learning

If you have extensive knowledge and skills due to practical experience in this area, enquire about our recognition of prior learning process at Capable NZ. You may have already gained credits towards this

qualification through work experience in age support, disability support, mental health, social work or youth work or other relevant community services.

Disclaimer

While every effort is made to ensure that this sheet is accurate, Otago Polytechnic reserves the right to amend, alter or withdraw any of the contained information. The fees shown in this document are indicative ONLY. Both domestic and international fees are subject to change and are dependent on the development and implementation of Government policies. Please note that additional fees may from time to time be required for external examination, NZQA fees and/or additional material fees.

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