

# Best preparation for university study

## What subjects should I take at school?

This is a guide to the school subjects that are useful preparation if you want to study certain subjects at university.

Most subjects do not require a specific background from school. For other subjects it may take you longer to complete the degree without the suggested background.

For all subjects and qualifications at university, students need to be competent in the use and understanding of written and spoken English. Subjects such as English, Classical studies, History, Geography or Economics are useful in teaching these key skills.

Detailed information on each subject can be found in UC's Undergraduate Prospectus or

at [www.canterbury.ac.nz/future-students/qualifications-and-courses/subjects/](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/future-students/qualifications-and-courses/subjects/)

If you do not have a strong background in academic skills or certain science subjects, then Headstart Preparatory courses are available each summer prior to enrolment to help you. For more information visit [www.canterbury.ac.nz/future-students/qualifications-and-courses/preparatory-programmes/headstart/](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/future-students/qualifications-and-courses/preparatory-programmes/headstart/)

If you have any questions about preparing for university study, you should discuss them with your school careers adviser or a member of the University of Canterbury Liaison Team, email [liaison@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:liaison@canterbury.ac.nz)

### Bachelor of Arts (BA)

Any Arts subject can be started at first-year university level without previous study, but subjects such as Classical Studies, English, History, Geography or Economics are useful. In addition for the following majors:

- **Economics:** Statistics is useful. Calculus is only needed by students who wish to continue to honours in Economics.
- **English:** English is extremely useful.
- **Languages:** A background is useful, but not essential as beginner courses are available.
- **Mathematics:** Calculus is strongly recommended. Statistics is also extremely useful.
- **Music:** Music to NCEA Level 3 (or equivalent) is desirable but not essential.
- **Social Science subjects:** Statistics is useful.
- **Statistics:** Calculus and Statistics are strongly recommended.

A good standard of oral and written communication is important.

### Bachelor of Commerce (BCom)

Any Commerce subject can be started at first-year level.

- Previous study of Accounting, Economics and Business Studies is useful but not required.
- Statistics is recommended for all Commerce subjects.

In addition for the following majors:

- **Economics:** Statistics is useful. Calculus is only needed by students who wish to continue to honours in Economics.
- **Finance:** Calculus and Statistics are strongly recommended.
- **International Business:** A background in a foreign language is useful, but not essential as beginner courses are available.

A good standard of oral and written English communication is important for all Commerce subjects.

### Bachelor of Criminal Justice (BCJ)

- Any subjects at Year 13 that require you to write, think critically and research are extremely useful as Law requires excellent language skills (Art History, English, Drama, Geography, Economics, Te Reo Māori, Languages, History and Classical Studies).
- No prior knowledge of law is assumed.
- As there is a strong social sciences component, Statistics is useful.

A good standard of oral and written English is important.

### Bachelor of Education (Physical Education) (BEd(Physical Education))

- Physical Education, Maths (NCEA Level 2), Biology, English and Te Reo Māori are very useful but not compulsory.
- A good background in another academic subject is useful as students must also specialise in a second or possibly third teaching subject in their degree.
- Involvement and interest in physical activity and working with young people is helpful.

A good standard of oral and written communication is important.

### Bachelor of Engineering with Honours (BE(Hons))

- Calculus and Physics are essential.
- Chemistry is required for some specialisations.
- Direct Entry to either 200-level courses or First Professional Year (Year 2) is possible with excellent NCEA Level 3 results (or equivalent).

A good standard of oral and written communication is important.

### Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA)

- Excellent practical art ability is essential
- Two Practical Art subjects are strongly recommended.
- A background in Art Theory and Art History is useful.

A good standard of oral and written communication is important.

### Bachelor of Forestry Science (BForSc)

- Biology and Statistics are recommended.
- Chemistry to Year 12 is useful.

A good standard of oral and written communication is important.

### Bachelor of Health Science (BHSc)

Biology, Health Education and Statistics are recommended for all Health Science subjects

In addition for the following majors:

- **Environmental Health:** A background in Chemistry is required. Geography, Physics and Calculus are useful
- **Māori and Indigenous Health:** Te Reo Māori is useful
- **Public Health:** Geography is recommended.

A good standard of oral and written communication is important.

## Bachelor of Laws (LLB)

A good standard of oral and written English is important as Law requires excellent language skills.

- Subjects like Art History, English, Drama, Economics, Te Reo Māori, Languages, History and Classical Studies which give good writing, research and analytical skills which are extremely useful.
- No prior knowledge of law is assumed.

## Bachelor of Music (MusB)

- Music Studies to NCEA Level 3 (or equivalent) is desirable but not essential.
- Excellent academic skills are a significant advantage for all majors. In addition for the following majors:
- **New Music:** Previous experience in the writing of your own music is required to study Notated Composition or Song-writing. Notated Composition requires good musical literacy and notation skills. For other technology-based New Music courses prior knowledge of notation is not essential.
- **Performance Music:** A strong technique and repertoire in your performance area is essential. A strong theoretical knowledge is a significant advantage.

A good standard of oral and written communication is important.

## Bachelor of Science (BSc)

- **Astronomy:** Physics and Calculus are essential. Chemistry and Statistics are useful.
- **Biochemistry:** Chemistry is required. Biology is recommended. Physics, Calculus and Statistics are useful.
- **Biological Sciences:** Biology, Chemistry and Statistics are recommended. Physics and Calculus are useful.
- **Chemistry:** Chemistry is required. Biology, Physics, Calculus and Statistics are useful.
- **Computer Science:** Digital Technologies (especially Programming and Computer Science), Calculus and Statistics are strongly recommended.
- **Economics:** Statistics is useful. Calculus is only needed by students who wish to continue to honours in Economics.
- **Finance:** Calculus and Statistics are recommended.
- **Geography:** Geography at NCEA Level 2 or 3 (or equivalent) is useful. Any science subject at NCEA Level 3 is also useful.
- **Geology:** Calculus is recommended. Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Physical Geography and Statistics are also useful.
- **Linguistics:** English is recommended. Statistics is useful. Any science subject at NCEA Level 3 (or equivalent) is also useful.
- **Management Science:** Calculus and Statistics are recommended.
- **Mathematics:** Calculus is essential. Statistics is also useful.
- **Philosophy:** Any science subject at NCEA Level 3 (or equivalent) is useful.

- **Physics:** Physics and Calculus are essential. Biology and Statistics are useful.
- **Psychology:** Biology and Statistics are useful
- **Statistics:** Calculus and Statistics are recommended.

A good standard of oral and written communication is important.

## Bachelor of Social Work (BSW)

- Any Arts or Social Science subject such as English, Classical Studies, History, Geography or Economics is useful.
- Statistics is useful for advanced study.

A good standard of oral and written communication is important.

## Bachelor of Speech and Language Pathology with Honours (BSLP(Hons))

- Biology is recommended and Statistics is useful.
- Study in another language (eg. Te Reo Māori) is recommended.
- A science background to at least NCEA Level 2 (or equivalent) is strongly recommended.

A high standard of oral and written communication is important.

## Bachelor of Sport Coaching (BSpC)

- Biology and Physical Education are useful.
- English or another subject demonstrating good communication skills is very useful.
- Community involvement, coaching, refereeing, people skills and experience in dealing with young people is very useful.

A good standard of oral and written communication is important.

## Bachelor of Teaching and Learning (Early Childhood) (BTchLn(EarlyChildhood))

Early Childhood teaching is a full academic degree that requires excellent preparation

- English, Mathematics and Te Reo Māori is extremely useful.
- A wide range of subjects to at least NCEA Level 2 (or equivalent) are useful.
- Community involvement, people skills and experience in dealing with children is very useful.

A good standard of oral and written communication is very important.

## Bachelor of Teaching and Learning (Primary) (BTchLn(Primary))

Primary teaching is a full academic degree that requires excellent preparation.

- English and Mathematics are key areas.
- A good standard of oral language and personal written communication skills are critical.
- Te Reo Māori is extremely useful.
- Science to at least NCEA Level 2 (or equivalent) is useful

Experience in dealing with children and /or young adolescents, community involvement and very good people skills are important.

## University Entrance

University Entrance (UE) is the minimum requirement to go to a New Zealand university.

To qualify via NCEA you will need:

- NCEA Level 3
- Three approved subjects at Level 3, with a minimum of 14 credits in each
- UE Literacy requirements (10 credits at Level 2 or above from a specified list of standards)
- UE Numeracy requirements (10 credits at Level 1 or above)

To qualify via CIE (gained in New Zealand) you will need:

- A minimum of 120 points at A or AS level across your top three approved subjects achieved over the last two years of study.
- D grade or above in each of at least three of those subjects
- UE CIE Literacy requirements (E grade or above in AS Level English Language, Literature in English or Language and Literature in English)
- UE CIE Numeracy requirements (D grade or above in IGCSE or GCSE mathematics, or E grade or above in AS Level mathematics)

To qualify via IB you will need:

- the IB Diploma with a minimum of 24 points

## Preferential Entry

Students who gain Preferential Entry to UC (subject to gaining University Entrance) will have first choice of qualifications and courses. Students who don't meet the requirements for Preferential Entry will be offered places subject to priority and availability.

For information on the criteria for Preferential Entry see [www.canterbury.ac.nz/future-students/apply-and-enrol/apply-for-undergraduate-qualifications/preferential-entry/](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/future-students/apply-and-enrol/apply-for-undergraduate-qualifications/preferential-entry/)

## Contact

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*This information was correct at the time of printing (January 2015) and may be subject to change.*

*Check [www.canterbury.ac.nz/liaison](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/liaison) for the most up-to-date information.*