



VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF
WELLINGTON
TE HERENGA WAKA

**TOHU PAETAHI TAIAO
ME TE PĀPORI**

BACHELOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY

2026



THE PLANET

CRITICISE

DRIVE
CHANGE



NO
PLANET B

PEOPLE
> PROFIT

CHANGE
INDUSTRY



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Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington has an overall five-stars-plus rating in the QS Stars university rating system, one of only 23 universities worldwide to do so. The University gained a total score of 966 out of a possible 1,000 points across eight audited categories, including maximum points for the employability and inclusiveness categories. Maximum points were awarded for 25 of the more than 30 indicators, including overall student satisfaction; further study; graduate employment rate; international diversity, support, and collaborations; academic reputation; satisfaction with teaching; campus facilities; accreditations; art and cultural investment and facilities; disabled access; scholarships and bursaries; low-income outreach; and student cohort diversity.

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TOHU PAETAHI TAIAO ME TE PĀPORI

BACHELOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY

Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington's Bachelor of Environment and Society (BEnvSoc) is your gateway to understanding and addressing the world's most pressing environmental challenges. This degree will prepare you to tackle complex environmental issues by combining academic insight with practical, transformative skills that bridge social and scientific perspectives.

When you study with us, you'll work across traditional boundaries exploring environmental challenges through multiple lenses and exploring key concepts such as sustainability and justice. You'll ask how Indigenous environmental knowledge can guide our approach to environmental problems. You'll apply your knowledge across a range of scales—from local questions of how we live with our environment to global issues of climate change and inequality.

You'll engage with cutting-edge research, working alongside passionate staff and potentially collaborating with environmental organisations, policymakers, and community groups on projects with real-world impact.

Through the BEnvSoc, you'll learn to think critically about the causes and effects of environmental problems, developing an understanding of how the physical processes shaping our planet intersect with the social and political factors driving environmental change.

Whether you're passionate about global environmental justice or social and environmental issues, you'll gain the analytical and innovation skills to turn your passion into action.

 wgtn.ac.nz/benvsoc





CAREERS

A Bachelor of Environment and Society will equip you with specialist knowledge alongside highly sought-after skills in analysis, research, critical thinking, and collaboration. You'll gain a deeper understanding of environmental issues in their broader context, developing the skills to address their fundamental causes. These skills will set you up to contribute meaningfully through roles in a range of sectors.

There are many different career options, depending on your major. You'll have options across business, education, local, regional, and national government, ministries, or research institutes.

Potential jobs include:

- ▶ aid and trade adviser
- ▶ aid worker
- ▶ business sustainability consultant
- ▶ climate researcher
- ▶ community facilitator
- ▶ design strategist
- ▶ environmental adviser
- ▶ environmental consultant
- ▶ environmental designer
- ▶ environmental scientist
- ▶ geotechnical analyst
- ▶ meteorologist
- ▶ natural hazards adviser
- ▶ policy adviser
- ▶ project manager
- ▶ resource sustainability adviser
- ▶ science communicator
- ▶ scientific adviser
- ▶ service designer
- ▶ social designer
- ▶ sustainable supply chain manager
- ▶ social entrepreneur
- ▶ systems designer.



FURTHER STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

Completing the Bachelor of Environment and Society provides a great foundation for further postgraduate study in science, humanities, design, education, or business, depending on your chosen major.

MASTER'S DEGREES

The BEnvSoc offers clear pathways into postgraduate study in environment and society-related topics. There are many options available, including one-year (180-point) coursework degrees such as the Master of Climate Change Science and Policy, the Master of Development Studies, or the Master of Environmental Science, or two-year (240-point) coursework and thesis degrees such as the Master of Arts, Master of Design Innovation, Master of Environmental Studies, Master of Science, or the Master of Urban and Regional Planning.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

A Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is an internationally recognised degree for those who wish to pursue a career as a researcher or academic and involves a major piece of specialised original research. Supervision for PhD research is available in almost all subject areas we offer.

 wgtn.ac.nz/postgraduate



▼
“We’ve known about climate change for such a long time—people were saying in the ’60s and ’70s we can’t keep burning fossil fuels because it’s going to change the climate. We have this huge wealth of science and yet nothing has changed. We need to think about it differently, think about why we do things we do, how the systems of society work, and how social justice issues are inherent to environmental issues.”

Claire Grant

Student, Master of Environmental Studies

Read their full profile: wgtn.ac.nz/claire-grant

YOUR BEnvSoc

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

There are no specific entry requirements for the Bachelor of Environment and Society. University Entrance (or equivalent) is all you need. However, an interest in social studies or science will go a long way to helping you during your degree. If you need specific advice on planning your degree, our student advisers can give you more information.

CHOOSING YOUR MAJOR

A major is the main subject you'll focus on in your degree. Choose a major that suits your passions and future ambitions. You can also add a minor, which is an optional additional area of focus for a degree. There is also the option to do a double major—you can find more information about this below.

DOUBLE-MAJOR DEGREES

Many students add a second major to their degree. Your first major must be a BEnvSoc subject, and your second major can be a BEnvSoc subject or a subject from another undergraduate degree. There are many combinations to choose from.

CONJOINT DEGREES

Some students enrol in two degrees at the same time in a conjoint degree—it takes less time than completing two degrees separately. You could combine a BEnvSoc in Environmental Studies with a Bachelor of Laws to become an environmental lawyer, or a BEnvSoc in Sustainability and Ethics in Business with a Bachelor of Commerce in Management to work in sustainable business leadership. Our student advisers can help you make a plan that will work for you.

DEGREE STRUCTURE

Your first year


In the first year of the BEnvSoc, you'll take core courses across a range of topics in environment and society. You'll also get a broad introduction to te reo Māori, tikanga Māori, and te Tiriti o Waitangi. This will give you a comprehensive set of skills to build on throughout the rest of your degree, giving you a solid foundation with just enough flexibility to follow what sparks your curiosity.

Your second year

This year, you'll build on the skills you learnt in your first year as you focus on your major.

Your third year

In your third year, you'll undertake an interdisciplinary project that addresses real-life challenges on environmental and societal themes. You'll work as part of a team to hone your communication and collaboration skills. Alongside this, you'll complete your major requirements.

 wgn.ac.nz/course-planning



SAMPLE DEGREE PROGRAMMES

Example: BEnvSoc majoring in Cultural Anthropology

YEAR 1		YEAR 2		YEAR 3	
Trimester 1	Trimester 2	Trimester 1	Trimester 2	Trimester 1	Trimester 2
GEOG 114 Sustainability: People and Environment (15 points)	GEOG 112 (Re)Making Places: Geographies of Development, Equity and Social Change (15 points)	ANTH 210 Environmental Anthropology (20 points)	GEOG 214 Environmental Futures for Aotearoa New Zealand (20 points)	GEOG 326 Research Project: Design and Methods* (20 points)	GEOG 327 Research Project: Fieldwork and Analysis* (20 points)
GEOS 101 Our Dynamic Earth and Environment (15 points)	MAOR 126 He Herenga Tāngata/ Engaging with Māori in Professional Practice (20 points)	Elective course (20 points)	GEOG 217 Human Geography: Approaching Our World (20 points)	Elective course (20 points)	ANTH 302 Anthropology for Liberation (20 points)
EHUM 101 Green Humanities: Humanities and the Land (20 points)	ANTH 102 Social and Cultural Diversity (20 points)	Elective course (20 points)	ANTH 208 Human Rights, Humanitarianism and Development (20 points)	Elective course (20 points)	ANTH 308 Anthropology in Oceania (20 points)
ANTH 101 Foundations of Society and Culture (20 points)					
70 POINTS	55 POINTS	60 POINTS	60 POINTS	60 POINTS	60 POINTS
125 POINTS		120 POINTS		120 POINTS	

Total points required: 360

Total points completed: 365

*Trimester not yet confirmed.

CORE COURSE	MAJOR COURSE	MINOR COURSE	ELECTIVE COURSE
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Example: BEnvSoc with a major in Climate Science and minor in Science Communication

YEAR 1		YEAR 2		YEAR 3	
Trimester 1	Trimester 2	Trimester 1	Trimester 2	Trimester 1	Trimester 2
GEOG 114 Sustainability: People and Environment (15 points)	GEOG 112 (Re)Making Places: Geographies of Development, Equity and Social Change (15 points)	GEOS 205 Introductory Atmospheric Science* (20 points)	GEOG 214 Environmental Futures for Aotearoa New Zealand (20 points)	GEOG 326 Research Project: Design and Methods* (20 points)	GEOG 327 Research Project: Fieldwork and Analysis* (20 points)
GEOS 101 Our Dynamic Earth and Environment (15 points)	MAOR 126 He Herenga Tāngata/ Engaging with Māori in Professional Practice (20 points)	COMS 201 Approaches to Communication Research (20 points)	SCIS 213 Principles of Science and Science Communication (15 points)	GEOS 311 Topics in Climate Science* (20 points)	GEOS 303 Ice, Oceans, Atmosphere* (20 points)
PHYS 145 Practical Skills for Scientists: Applications in Physics (15 points)	GEOG 115 Digital Worlds: Environmental and Social Insights Through Data Analysis (15 points)	Elective course (20 points)	GEOS 201 Hydrological Science and Freshwater Management (20 points)	SCIS 311 Science Communication (15 points)	GEOS 306 Past, Present and Future Environmental Change* (20 points)
COMS 101 Introduction to Communication Studies (20 points)					SCIS 314 Science Communication Portfolio (15 points)
65 POINTS	50 POINTS	60 POINTS	55 POINTS	55 POINTS	75 POINTS
115 POINTS		115 POINTS		130 POINTS	

Total points required: 360

Total points completed: 360

*Trimester not yet confirmed.

- Core:** Core courses are a requirement of the degree.
- Major:** A major is the main subject you'll focus on in your degree.
- Minor:** A minor is an optional additional area of focus for a degree.
- Elective:** Elective courses are courses in other subjects you're interested in and they don't necessarily need to be related to your major or minor subjects.

MAJORS

Climate Science

This major will give you an overview of the climate system and explain the impact of climate—and climate change—on Aotearoa New Zealand. You'll delve into climate modelling, learn the skills to effectively communicate about climate change, and master how to interpret data, explore scientific questions, and work effectively in teams. You'll have career options as a climate researcher, meteorologist, policy adviser, or science communicator.

Cultural Anthropology

In Cultural Anthropology, you'll study how different communities around the world understand and interact with their environments. You'll explore how diverse societies arrange themselves and their ecologies, looking at human and more-than-human social organisation and questioning commonplace understanding of the lines that divide nature and culture. Courses examine pressing contemporary issues such as Indigenous engagement with land, the politics of conservation, capitalism, development, climate change, food, the body, and the ways science, technology, and design are transforming our material and social worlds.

Design for Social Innovation

Become an agent of change. Join the forefront of design's evolution as a part of an expanding discipline reshaping Aotearoa New Zealand and the global landscape through design. In Design for Social Innovation, you'll explore pressing global and local issues such as ethical practice, sustainability, equity, disability rights, cultural diversity, social justice, and kaupapa Māori framed approaches to co-designing systems, services, experiences, and products.

By aligning Design for Social Innovation with the Bachelor of Environment and Society, you will gain an expansive design toolkit of collaborative and empathetic approaches to enable positive environmental and societal change.



“I understand how important it is to have people from various backgrounds working together to help the community, the natural environment, and different fields. I am willing to use design to help others achieve their dreams and improve society.”

Jinkeng Lei
Student, Bachelor of Design Innovation
in Design for Social Innovation

Development Studies

Global inequality and poverty are not just the problems of other countries—they affect the future of all nations. Development Studies explores the ways that societies are changing economically, socially, and culturally, and the problems these changes can create. Learn about development challenges associated with inequality and injustice, as well as strategies to generate solutions to address them. Prepare yourself to make a meaningful difference to people's lives within Aotearoa, Oceania, and beyond.

Earth Science

Earth Science helps us unravel the mysteries of our planet's past, present, and future. You'll learn about the processes and systems that influence natural hazards, resources, the environment, and climate—from the effects of shifting tectonic plates to the power of volcanic eruptions, to the importance of ancient climates. This major will also take you outside the classroom. You'll work in the lab and out in the field to collect, analyse, and evaluate data. You'll have career options as a geophysicist, geologist, geotechnical analyst, scientific adviser, natural hazards adviser, researcher, or consultant.

Education for the Environment

In the current climate crisis, and with increasing concern about environmental degradation, education for the environment is a key to equipping people with the dispositions, knowledge, and skills to work towards environmental sustainability. This major will give you a deep understanding of different perspectives and approaches to promoting and evaluating sustainability, kaitiakitanga, and climate education in Aotearoa New Zealand and in the global context.



“I study because I want to be able to connect people to the natural environment. I think it's important that native fauna are allowed to thrive in their natural habitats, giving people a chance to learn from and interact with our native species.”

Juanita Fauatea

Student, Bachelor of Architectural Studies in Landscape Architecture

Environmental Design

In Environmental Design, you'll learn to master concepts in environmental, urban, architectural, and landscape design. You'll be equipped to apply resilience principles in the design of indoor and outdoor spaces while sustaining existing environments. You'll confidently tackle complex challenges, making informed decisions to address environmental issues and embrace opportunities for positive change. Study Environmental Design and shape a future where design enhances both human wellbeing and planetary health.

Environmental Humanities / He Aronui Aotūroa

The Environmental Humanities draw on the methodologies and insights of all arts disciplines to study how the arts help us better understand our relationship with the planet. By studying art, film, history, literature, media, politics, and philosophy, we consider how cultural beliefs and values shape our interactions with nature. We examine te Tiriti-led responses to environmental change. Our hands-on classes explore how we can cultivate a deeper understanding of relationships between people, culture, and the environment. Environmental Humanities offers a holistic understanding of the complex environmental issues of our time, while nurturing the ability to respond critically and imaginatively to environmental issues in today's world.

Environmental Science

The state of the planet is one of the biggest issues facing humankind today. Learn to assess environmental problems and find solutions. Explore possible ways to manage and lessen our impact on the environment. Get hands-on experience developing your own projects, analysing your own data, and presenting your results. This practical approach ensures that as an Environmental Science graduate, you'll be equipped for diverse careers in the field. You'll have career options as an environmental adviser, researcher, or manager, applying your skills in data analysis, project management, and communication.

Environmental Studies


The environmental problems we face can feel overwhelming and confusing. Environmental Studies allows you to understand the underlying causes of these problems and develop solutions. In learning about social, cultural, and economic perspectives on the environment, you'll explore human-nature connections and how healthy environments and communities are made. Study a range of topics from climate justice to sustainability, and from Māori conservation and environmentalism to social influence for pro-environmental behaviour change.

Geography

Expand your knowledge of the forces that drive our ever-changing planet—from the biophysical processes that shape Earth's landscapes to the socio-political processes that shape people's lives and opportunities in different places. Acquire the knowledge and skills about how to think geographically and make positive differences for people and the planet. Studying Geography with us develops your problem-solving skills and critical thinking through interactive classes, geospatial tools, lab work, team projects, and field trips. When you graduate with a Geography major, you'll have the skills to become part of positive solutions to major societal challenges—from climate change and natural hazards to migration and urbanisation.

Sustainability and Ethics in Business

Explore how sustainability and ethics are transforming the world of business and how we can harness the power of business for positive societal impact. With a focus on leadership, sustainability management, and organisational ethics, this major prepares you to tackle real-world challenges and to apply sustainability and ethical principles in private, public, and not-for-profit sectors across Aotearoa New Zealand and globally.



"We go on field trips that take us to the greatest places in the country—if not the world—to do earth science. When I finish a field trip, I always leave with new friends and a wealth of knowledge you simply can't get by just sitting in a lecture theatre or laboratory."

Henry Naish

Student, Bachelor of Science in Geology
(now Earth Science) with a minor in
Science Communication





FIND OUT MORE

i wgtn.ac.nz/benvsoc

i wgtn.ac.nz/apply

ADMISSION AND ENROLMENT

You can apply for admission up to two years in advance of the year you plan to start studying. Apply through our student portal, Pūaha. Once you have met the requirements, you will receive either a conditional or an unconditional Offer of Place.

After receiving your Offer of Place, you will be invited to select your courses once course enrolment is open. You select courses for one academic year at a time.

We'd love to see you at one of our information events—check our website for dates.

i wgtn.ac.nz/puaha

i wgtn.ac.nz/information-evenings

CONTACT US

Student Service Centre
Room CO144, Level 1, Cotton Building, Kelburn Campus

📞 0800 04 04 04

✉ info@vuw.ac.nz

@ [instagram.com/vicuniwgtn_STEM](https://www.instagram.com/vicuniwgtn_STEM)

i wgtn.ac.nz/science

COURSE PLANNING

For help with course planning, contact
Te Kahupapa—Future Students.

📞 0800 04 04 04

✉ future-students@vuw.ac.nz

i wgtn.ac.nz/courses

OTHER STUDENT RESOURCES

Disability support

i wgtn.ac.nz/disability

Māori student support

i wgtn.ac.nz/awhina

Pasifika student success

i wgtn.ac.nz/pasifika

Rainbow student support

i wgtn.ac.nz/rainbow

Refugee-background student support

i wgtn.ac.nz/refugee-background-students

Scholarships

i wgtn.ac.nz/scholarships

Student services and support

i wgtn.ac.nz/student-support

OTHER AVAILABLE SUBJECTS

As part of your Bachelor of Environment and Society, you may be able to choose a second major from another degree at the University. A full list of your second major options can be found below.

ARTS	
Art History	Japanese
Asian Studies	Kaitiakitanga
Chinese	Language Sciences
Classical Studies	Latin
Criminology	Māori Studies
Cultural Anthropology	Mathematics
Data Science	Media Studies
Development Studies	Modern Language Studies
Economics	Music
Education	Pacific Studies
Educational Psychology	Philosophy
English Literature	Political Science
Film	Psychological Science
French	Public Policy
Geography	Samoan Studies / Matā'upu tau Sāmoa
German	Sociology
Greek	Spanish
History	Study of Religion
International Relations	Te Reo Māori
Italian	Theatre

BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE	
Human Genetics	Molecular Pharmacology and Medicinal Chemistry
Molecular Pathology	
BUILDING SCIENCE	
Building Surveying	Smart Cities and Digital Built Environments
Built and Natural Heritage Conservation	Sustainable Engineering Systems
Project Management	
COMMERCE	
Accounting	Information Systems
Actuarial Science	International Business
Commercial Law	Management
Data Science	Marketing
Economics	Public Policy
Finance	Taxation
Human Resource Management and Employment Relations	Tourism Management

COMMUNICATION	
Intercultural Communication	Marketing Communication
Language Sciences	Media Studies
Literary and Creative Communication	Political Communication

CONSTRUCTION	
Construction Health and Safety	Sustainable Construction
Construction Management	


DESIGN INNOVATION	
Animation and Visual Effects	Industrial Design
Communication Design	Interaction Design
Fashion Design Technology	Media Design
Game Design	

HEALTH	
Health Informatics	Health Psychology
Health Policy and Innovation	Physical Activity and Hauora
Health Promotion	

POPULAR MUSIC	
Audio Production and Recording	Popular Music Studies
Electronic Music	Songwriting

PSYCHOLOGY	
Brain Sciences and Mental Health	Māori Psychology
Cognitive Science	Mental Health Principles and Applications
Criminal Justice and Psychology	Psychological Science
Educational Psychology	Work and Organisational Psychology
Health Psychology	

SCIENCE	
Actuarial Science	Geographic Information Science (available only as a minor)
Artificial Intelligence	Information Systems
Biology	Marine Biology
Biotechnology	Mathematics
Cell and Molecular Bioscience	Physics
Chemistry	Psychological Science
Computer Science	Science Communication
Data Science	Science in Society (available only as a minor)
Ecology and Biodiversity	Space Science
Electronic and Computer Systems	Statistics

For more details about these majors, see our website.
 wgtn.ac.nz/flexible-study



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