

Required & Recommended Background Subjects



Each year we field many questions from students, teachers and parents regarding prerequisites for first-year courses. Students are keen to know which Year 13 subjects they should take in order to best prepare them for success in their chosen university programme.

Below is a list of programmes and major subjects offered by the University of Otago, and recommended school subjects. Most of these are not compulsory but are useful for best preparation.

Required Background Subjects (to year 13)

	Chemistry	Biology	Physics	Statistics	Calculus	Language-rich*	Other useful subjects
Oral Health 14 credits in Level 3 Biology 10 credits (5 reading and 5 writing) from Level 2 or Level 3 English		++				++	English
Dental Technology 14 credits in Level 3 Chemistry 14 credits in Level 3 Physics	++	+	++	+ or	+	+	Level 2 Biology recommended
Radiation Therapy 16 Level 3 credits in: Physics or Biology/Maths or Calculus or Statistics/English or Te Reo or History or Art History or Classics or Geography		++	++	++ or	++	++	

Recommended Background Subjects (to year 13)

Health Science First Year	++	++	++	++ or	+	+	
Biomedical Sciences	++	++	++	+		+	
Bachelor of Health Sciences (all Majors)		++		++		++	Sciences, Chem, Health
BSc Majors							
Anatomy	++	++		+			
Biochemistry	++	++		+			
Botany		++		+			Chemistry, Sciences
Chemistry	++			+	or		
Clothing and Textile Sciences		+		+		+	Social, Physical or Biological Sciences
Computer Science				+	++	+	Digi Tech
Ecology		++		++			Geography, Sciences
Economics				++	++	+	Economics
Electronics			++		or	++	Digi Tech; Electronics
Energy Studies			++		or	++	Geography
Food Science	++	++		+	or	+	Business Studies, Food Tech, Sciences
Genetics	++	++		++		+	
Geography				++	or		Geography, Sciences
Geology		+		+		++	Geography, Chemistry, Physics
Human Nutrition (Dietetics)	++	++		+		+	Food Tech
Information Science				++		+	Digi Tech
Land Planning and Development				+	++	+	Geography, Physics
Mathematics				++	++		Digi Tech
Microbiology	++	++		+			
Neuroscience	++	++		+			Physics
Oceanography	+	++	++	+		++	Geography
Pharmacology	++	++		+			
Physics			++			++	Electronics
Physiology	++	++		+			Physics
Plant Biotechnology	++	++		+			
Psychology		++				+	
Statistics				++	++		
Surveying Measurement				+	++	+	Geography, Physics
Zoology		++		++			

*category includes 'language rich' such as English, History, Classics and History of Art, etc.

(+) Background learning useful

(++) Background learning recommended

If you have questions about course requirements please contact the Liaison Office: liaison@otago.ac.nz

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Recommended Background Subjects (to year 13)

BAppSci Majors	Chemistry	Biology	Physics	Statistics	Calculus	Language-rich*	Other
Applied Geology		+		+	++		Geography, Sciences
Aquaculture + Fisheries	+	++		++ or	+		Geography, Sciences
Clothing & Textile Sciences		+		+	or	+	Social, Physical or Biological Sciences
Computational Modelling				+	++		Digi Tech, Physics
Consumer Food Science		++		+			Business, Food Tech, Chem
Energy Management			++		++		Geography
Environmental Management		+		++ or	++		Geography, Sciences
Forensic Analytical Science	++	++		++	+		Physics
Geographic Information Systems				+	or	++	Digi Tech, Geography
Molecular Biotechnology	++	++		+	or		
Software Engineering				+	++		Digi Tech
Sport & Exercise Nutrition	++	++		+			PE, Food Tech
Sports Technology		++	+	+	or	+	PE, Design, Digi Tech, Chem
Surveying (BSurv)				+	++	+	Geography, Digi Tech, Physics
Engineering Intermediate	++		++		++		
BPhEd all Majors		++		++			PE; Sciences, Chem

Bachelor of Arts & Science (BASc)

Refer to major requirements for Science subjects and notes for BA majors.

Humanities

Law (LLB)						++	Drama, Debating
Social Work (BSW)					or	++	Social Sciences
Theology (BTheol)						++	Social Sciences, R.E.
Music (MusB)						++	Music
Bachelor of Performing Arts (BPA)						++	Drama, Music, Dance
Teaching (Secondary)						++	Focus on teaching areas
Teaching (Primary) (ECE)						++	Y12 English, Maths and Science

BA Majors

It is possible to begin all BA majors without a background in those subjects – even languages. Students who enjoy subjects at school such as English, History, Classics, Media Studies and Drama are encouraged to consider the full range of BA majors as options for study. Music Performance students should have a background in music and are required to audition.

BCom Majors

Accounting				++	+	+	Accounting, Business Studies
Economics				++	+	+	Economics, Business Studies
Finance				++	++	+	Accounting, Economics, Business Studies
Human Resource Management				++		+	Business Studies
Information Science				++	+	+	Digi Tech, Business Studies
International Business				++		+	Economics, second language, Business Studies
Management				++		+	Business Studies
Marketing Management				++		+	Business Studies
Philosophy, Politics + Economics (PPE)				++		++	Economics
Tourism				++		+	Geography, Tourism, Business Studies

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