

Undergraduate Courses 2025

Public Policy



School of Government

Te Kura Kāwanatanga

Location: Level 8, Rutherford House, Pipitea Campus

Email: sog-info@vuw.ac.nz

www.wgtn.ac.nz/sog

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WELCOME FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Nau mai, Haere Mai, ki Te Kura Kāwanatanga! Welcome to the School of Government! It gives me great pleasure to welcome to our school regardless if you are visiting us for the first time, or are returning after a break.

We are very proud of our contribution of to the wellbeing of the people of New Zealand and the world through

- equipping our students with the knowledge and skills necessary to articulate public policy challenges,
- contributing to knowledge and understanding in, and providing an independent forum for discussions on, public policy and management issues
- encouraging good governance

Whether it is through our undergraduate and postgraduate teaching programmes, our executive programmes, our affiliated research institutes or our sponsored Chairs, we seek to build bridges with both political and public sector leaders in a constructive way. Moreover, we are constantly hosting scholars and senior civil servants from jurisdictions around the world who are curious to learn more about the New Zealand public sector experience.

One of the true endowments that the School enjoys (and celebrates) is our location as part of being a capital city university. From our floor of Rutherford House we are overlooking some the central institutions of the New Zealand State – the legislature, a Beehive shaped building housing our political executive (and their staff), three of the central government agencies, and a number of other government departments and entities. The proximity to the machinery of government is a constant reminder of the imperative of relevance, and the importance of encouraging a culture of responsibility. We work hard to offer courses and programmes that are relevant to the needs of learners, and the organisations they work with, or aspire to work with in the future.

This document presents you with information about our study programmes, including both core and elective courses, and some more general information about the different parts of the student journey.

The environment in the School of Government is characterised by critical thinking, curiosity and engagement where you will be part of a community of not only academics and fellow students, but with representatives from the broader community of practitioners working in or with the public sector. Looking forward to seeing you here in Rutherford house!

Noho ora mai,
Dr Karl Löfgren
Head of School

SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

Te Kura Kāwanatanga

Programme: Public Policy
Location: Level 8, Rutherford House
23 Lambton Quay
Pipitea Campus
Email: sog-info@vuw.ac.nz
Website: www.wgtn.ac.nz/sog

INTRODUCTION

Victoria University of Wellington's location in the capital city of Wellington makes for an excellent place to study public policy.

This prospectus is designed to provide background information on the Undergraduate Programme offered by the School of Government. The information contained in this booklet complements other material available on the School of Government website (www.wgtn.ac.nz/sog) or issued by the university.

The courses offered by the University and listed in this prospectus may be cancelled by the University as a result of insufficient student demand or resources, or if other unforeseen circumstances arise.

What is Public Policy?

Public Policy is a field of study that focuses on what decisions governments must make on behalf of 'the people', and how they can best make these decisions. The field of Public Policy therefore extends to a wide variety of issues, from education and health, to economic development and environmental sustainability and the methods used to assist public policy decision makers.

The study of Public Policy also concerns governance issues, such as how governments raise their income, how they arrange their public administration, and how they inform the public about critical issues of the day. Many, if not most, decisions that governments have to make affect a wide range of interest-groups or 'stake-holders', and so the quality of public consultations and the transparency of decision-making are also topics for study.

Sometimes policy decisions require trade-offs between competing objectives, for example, economic growth and protection of the environment; providing assistance to the needy (sick, unemployed, etc.) and the deserving (pensioners) without creating overreliance or dependence on the state. There are also questions about the proper sphere of public activity. Whereas it was once thought that governments should provide all public goods such as roads, bridges, dams, and electricity, emphasis has shifted in recent years to privatisation of these and other services, including prisons, security, and health.

COURSE INFORMATION INDEX

Course Code	CRN	Title
Undergraduate		
PUBL 113 / SPOL 113	13094 / 9512	Social and Public Policy: Values and Change
PUBL 201	2005	Introduction to Public Policy
PUBL 203	2085	Introduction to Public Economics
PUBL 209	18155	Introduction to Public Economics
PUBL 210	28263	Policy Analysis Methods and Practice
PUBL 211	28262	Introduction to Public Management
PUBL 303 / ECON 307	2092 / 19742	Public Sector Economics
PUBL 304	2093	Cabinet Government
PUBL 307	28290	Environmental Policy and Governance
PUBL 310	28264	Innovations in Public Policy
PUBL 311	28265	Emerging Perspectives in Public Management

building
capability in the
public sector

UNDERGRADUATE MAJOR AND COURSES

Requirements for Major

Public Policy for the Bachelor of Commerce (BCom) Degree

Study in Public Policy is an essential component for a capital city Commerce degree. Public Policy can be studied as a major or as a very useful component in a BCom degree, regardless of a student's particular area of specialisation.

The requirements for a Public Policy major in a BCom degree, in addition to the BCom core, are:

- (a) PUBL 113 or POLS 111
- (b) PUBL 201, 210; one further course from PUBL 200-299
- (c) Two courses from PUBL 300-399
- (d) One further course from PUBL 200-399

Public Policy for the Bachelor of Arts (BA) Degree

As with the BCom degree, Public Policy can be studied as a major or as a very useful component in a BA degree, regardless of a student's particular area of specialisation.

The requirements for a Public Policy major in a BA degree are:

- (a) PUBL 113 or POLS 111
- (b) PUBL 201, 210; at least 15 further points from PUBL 200-299
- (c) Two courses from PUBL 300-399
- (d) At least 15 further points from PUBL 200-399

Public Policy as part of study in other areas and disciplines

Public Policy draws on a number of different disciplines and because of this, it is usefully combined with a wide range of other courses. While it is anticipated that some students will wish to major in Public Policy for the BCom/BA, others may study Public Policy as part of a programme involving detailed study in other disciplines.

Public Policy draws predominantly, but by no means exclusively, on economics and politics. The following areas also provide natural complements to study in Public Policy:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Anthropology | <input type="checkbox"/> Law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Criminology | <input type="checkbox"/> Māori Business |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Development Studies | <input type="checkbox"/> Māori Studies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economics and Finance | <input type="checkbox"/> Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Studies | <input type="checkbox"/> Philosophy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geography | <input type="checkbox"/> Politics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> History | <input type="checkbox"/> Sociology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources and Industrial Relations | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Policy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> International Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Tourism |
| <input type="checkbox"/> International Relations | |

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE / GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN COMMERCE

The Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma in Commerce are flexible qualifications designed for Commerce graduates who want to move into a new area of specialisation, and for graduates in other disciplines who want to gain a Commerce qualification.

The **Graduate Certificate in Commerce (GCertCom)** is equivalent to one trimester of full-time study. The courses selected for the Certificate must total at least 60 points at 200-level or above, including at least 40 points at 300-level or above. A specialisation will be awarded if the courses all come from a particular commerce subject area.

The **Graduate Diploma in Commerce (GDipCom)** is equivalent to two trimesters of full-time study, although it may take longer depending on the sequencing of the courses chosen and the possible need to take prerequisites first (graduates are sometimes allowed to enrol in a course without the stated prerequisites – talk to the Undergraduate Coordinator about this possibility).

The courses selected for the Diploma must total at least 120 points from courses at 200-level or above, including at least 75 points at 300-level or above.

Your course of study can follow a specialisation within a Commerce subject area, as set out below, or you may choose your own combination of courses as long as it is approved by the Associate Dean (Students) as a coherent programme of study.

These programmes are open to graduates, though students near the end of their degree may take some courses for the Certificate or Diploma as long as their degree is completed before the Certificate or Diploma is awarded.

Diploma Specialisations

If you have already passed one or more of the courses required for a specialisation, you may substitute an approved course of equal or greater value if necessary to meet the total points requirements; for approval, contact the Undergraduate Coordinator.

Public Management

- (a) PUBL 211, 311; and
- (b) At least 80 further points, of which at least 60 are at 300-level, in courses selected from PUBL 203, PUBL 205, PUBL 300-399, MGMT 200-399

Public Policy

- (a) PUBL 201, 210
- (b) PUBL 310; three further courses from PUBL 300-399

If you are putting together your own programme, talk to the Undergraduate Coordinator and see the Associate Dean (Students) for approval of your programme before you enrol.

GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN ARTS

The **Graduate Diploma in Arts (GDipArts)** is a qualification enabling students to specialise at an advanced level in areas not included in their BA. It may be used as a transitional qualification providing a pathway from a BA to the BA (Hons) degree in a specific area.

The Diploma is a one year full-time or up to four years' part-time programme of study. Courses within the specialisation of Public Policy are chosen in consultation with the Undergraduate Coordinator.

For more information on programme requirements and how to enrol, contact the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (www.wgtn.ac.nz/fhss).

OFFICIAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

Official notices of the School are communicated via your ITS email account and Canvas.

COURSE MATERIALS

Course Readings

Textbooks may either be bought from Campus Books (Student Union Building, Kelburn Campus) or from other bookshops. A second-hand book sale is also held by VUW Student Association. Course materials are also available from the Student Notes Distribution Centre in the Student Union Building or the Talis System in Nuku. Course Coordinators will advise you which outlet has the reading material for their course.

Course Outlines

At the beginning of each course students receive via Nuku an electronic Course Outline. This contains all the necessary information about the course including the number of class meetings, their types and times, booklists, assignments, tests and examinations and mandatory course requirements (minimum class work in order to complete the course).

Course outlines from previous years can be accessed on the course finder on the VUW website at: www.wgtn.ac.nz/study/programmes-courses/courses

CLASS FORMATS

Lectures

Each course usually includes weekly lectures at which new material is presented. In addition, courses usually also include discussion and reinforcement sessions, such as tutorials, seminars, or audio-visual classes. Some classes involve practical work such as fieldtrips or Noho Marae.

Tutorials

These generally last 50 minutes and involve small groups of students meeting with a staff member, or graduate student tutor. Tutorials provide the opportunity to discuss course content, course work and readings, and to exchange ideas and become acquainted with other course members. Oral tutorials focus on practising speaking skills.

Seminars

A seminar is a class discussion group that centres on set readings or on courses prepared and presented by students.

EXAMINATIONS

Please note that students enrolled in courses that have a final examination are expected to be available in the relevant examination period. In 2025, these are: 3 – 21 June and 13 October – 8 November. Exam timetables are normally published in mid-April and mid-August.

Wellington Global Exchange (Overseas Exchange for Victoria University of Wellington Students)

As a Victoria University of Wellington student, you have the chance to complete part of your degree at a world-class institution overseas while paying domestic fees. Victoria University of Wellington has exchange agreements with a number of universities in other countries, including Canada, Greece, Japan, the Netherlands, Singapore, Sweden, Tahiti and the United States. Under these agreements it is possible to spend up to a year overseas taking courses that will be credited to your degree (Note that 300-level courses for any BCom major should normally be taken at Victoria University of Wellington unless authorisation is given by the School and approved by the Associate Dean (Students) or Faculty Manager).

Wellington Global Exchange students are expected to meet their own travel/living expenses, but are eligible for Study Link loans and allowances. The International students office will provide some grant funding to all successful applicants. For more information, please go to the Victoria Aboard website at: www.wgtn.ac.nz/exchange

SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

For details on scholarships and awards, please consult the *VUW Awards Handbook* (available from the Scholarships Officer) and keep an eye on school noticeboards.

Students should also check out the Prizes and Scholarships database, accessible at: www.wgtn.ac.nz/study/student-finance/scholarships

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