

What can I do with an Arts degree?

An Arts degree opens up a broad range of career options; the difficulty is trying to work out which of these you wish to pursue. Many people wish to pursue a degree related to their majors while others would be quite happy with a career where they are utilising the skills acquired from their degree.

To choose a career, you need to consider the extent to which you would like to use the specialist knowledge gained through your major. You may choose to work in an area specific to your major; in a career where the knowledge of your major might be very useful; or in career that uses the general skills you have acquired whilst studying Arts.

Also, you have gained a high level of technical ability alongside general skills. Having an awareness of these skills and being able to give examples of them in applications and at interview will make you more employable (for more information go to [“Skills developed in an Arts degree”](#))

Careers for Arts graduates fall into three main categories:

- Careers using specialist knowledge gained from your majors
- Careers where the knowledge of your major is relevant and useful but where further vocational study or relevant work experience may be required
- Careers using the generic skills gained from your degree

Careers using your specialist knowledge of a particular field

For those of you who have thoroughly enjoyed studying your major at The University of Sydney you may like to continue to work in an area specific to your major. However you may find that you need more than a pass degree and more likely that you need a PhD, particularly if working in research areas.

Occupations which relate specifically to majors in the arts degree include:

- Research (eg. university academic, research assistant, research officer, social researcher)
- Arts/Culture/Heritage (eg. archaeologist, anthropologist, art historian, cultural heritage officer, historian, linguist, sociologist)
- Creative (eg. actor, art director, choreographer, film editor, film maker, playwright, set design, stage manager, writer)
- Technical (eg. translator, interpreter, phonologist)
- Community/Welfare (eg. community worker, counselor, psychologist, sociologist)

To find out more about occupations related to specific majors, go to the Faculty of Arts web site at <http://foucault.arts.usyd.edu.au/aapw0000r01/> where you can read about alumni that have gone into some of the occupations mentioned above.

You can download booklets on art history, Asian and European languages, classics, film & theatre, history, linguistics, psychology, religious studies and social science research from the Graduate Careers Council web site at <http://www.graduatecareers.com.au/content/view/full/25>

You should also have a look at various departments' or professional association web sites.

- For information on careers in Indonesian studies see <http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/departs/indonesian/about/faqs.shtml#6>
- For information on careers in Linguistics see <http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/departs/linguistics/index.php?page=alumni>
- For information on career options related to Philosophy see <http://aap.org.au/jobs/graduates.php>
- For information on career options related to Sociology <http://www.tasa.org.au/careers-study/careers-in-sociology.php>

Careers where knowledge of a particular field is an advantage

The following careers could be appealing to those of you who wish to use knowledge gained from your major but not to the extent required in the careers listed above. This list is not exhaustive. Some of these occupations require a relevant postgraduate qualification as your career focus is different from your undergraduate career. Others will require some relevant work experience and this would include any voluntary work experience.

- Teaching
- Law (may choose to specialize in areas of law related to arts such as media, human rights, discrimination)
- Museum/gallery work (eg. archivist, art valuer, art collection manager, museum/art gallery curator, gallery assistant, conservator, restorer)
- Library & Information Management
- Human Resources
- Publishing
- Media (eg. radio broadcaster, journalist, media research assistant)
- Government (eg. policy analyst, research officer)

To find out more about these occupations, you can go to Graduate Careers Australia's web site where you can download booklets on human resources, law, journalism, market research, marketing (including public relations and advertising), public sector and teaching.

You can also go to the Faculty of Arts web site at <http://foucault.arts.usyd.edu.au/aapw0000r01/> where you can read about alumni that have gone into some of the occupations mentioned above.

To search for postgraduate qualifications that are relevant to these areas, you can link to a course search guide from <http://www.graduatecareers.com.au/content/view/full/123>.

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Careers using your other skills

There are many options which do not require a specific academic degree background. Many employers are interested in the general skills you have gained through your degree so it is important that you are aware of these skills and in an interview situation, be able to give an employer examples that would demonstrate that you have them (go to the section on [Skills developed through an Arts degree](#)). Your academic results may be taken as an indication of how well you have developed certain graduate attributes so it is important to achieve good results and you may find that for some employers, an honours degree will be preferable.

The other thing employers are looking for are graduates who demonstrate a genuine interest in their organisation.

The types of occupations you can go into that are general and suitable for any graduate are quite broad and it would be difficult to list them all. However as a starting point, you could look for positions in:

- Administration (eg. tertiary administration, working in public or private sector)
- Business research
- Marketing
- Market research
- Management consulting
- Public relations
- Event management
- Hospitality and Tourism

The types of organisations which look for the right combination of skills and interest rather than a specific degree are also quite broad but they do include:

- Public Sector Departments (includes all level of government, some related to science)
- Management Consultancies
- Market Research Companies

How can I find out more about my career options?

- Find out more about options for graduates from all disciplines by going to the Graduate Careers Australia web site at <http://www.graduatecareers.com.au/content/view/full/25> and downloading their booklet for “All Graduates”.
- You can also go to the Faculty of Arts web site at <http://foucault.arts.usyd.edu.au/aapw0000r01/> where you can read about alumni that have gone into some of the occupations mentioned above.
- Check out which companies are interested in graduates from all disciplines at http://www.careers.usyd.edu.au/students/newsevents/events_gradrecprog.shtml. Look in the table under ‘disciplines’ to see which companies list ‘all’ (some of these will be management consulting firms).
- Find out more about employment in the public service at http://www.careers.usyd.edu.au/students/jobsearch/finyear_pubservice.shtml
- The Careers Centre receives a number of vacancies throughout the year where the employer is looking for graduates from any discipline with a specific set of skills. To look at vacancies listed on the Careers Centre web site, go to http://www.careers.usyd.edu.au/students/jobsearch/finyear_curvacancies.shtml
- Use the internet to search for other options related to your major. There are some good UK and USA sites that would be helpful. For example, the official graduate careers web site in the UK, Prospects UK, has a section on “Options with Your Subject” at http://www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Options_with_your_subject/plXbLc. While it is a UK site, the information is quite relevant and helpful. The same applies to the web site of Purdue University, USA. If you go to <https://www.cco.purdue.edu/student/Major/Welcome.shtml>, you’ll see some information on career options for various majors.
- Check out relevant professional associations. You can check out our links to professional associations online at <http://www.careers.usyd.edu.au/students/resources/profassoc.shtml> or go to the Occupations information at <http://www.myfuture.edu.au/services/default.asp?FunctionID=5002&Action=Advanced> and you’ll find the relevant professional association listed under each specific occupation.
Some of the professional associations have a lot of information on their web site about careers. For example, if you go to the web page of the Australian Society of Archivists at

http://www.archivenet.gov.au/Resources/ASA_docs/professional.htm/, you'll find information about the role of the Professional Archivist.

If you go to the Advertising Federation of Australia at <http://www.afa.org.au/> and look at the section on "Careers in Advertising", you'll see they have information about the careers offered in various parts of an advertising firm as well as information about a Graduate Training Program.

The NSW Branch of the Australian Institute of International Affairs <http://www.aiiansw.org.au/> has information about an International Careers Conference which was held in 2006. Conferences and events organized by professional associations offer great opportunities to network with others working in areas that interest you.

If you go to the web page of the Institute of Public Administration Australia <http://www.nsw.ipaa.org.au/>, you will see that they have a Young Professionals Group which members can join (this may be relevant to a student interested in the public sector).

The above are examples of the types of things a professional association might offer. It is worth consider joining a relevant association as a student member for the networking opportunities that it can offer as some employers prefer to recruit graduates they have met through the professional association activities rather than advertising a vacancy.

- You can also go to myfuture.edu.au which is a unique, comprehensive, online career information service. myfuture.edu.au has a career exploration tool and careers information about occupations, education and training etc. as well as links to other resources. Alternatively, for a list of occupation descriptions go to the Job Guide
- You may find some of the books in the Careers Library helpful. See <http://www.careers.usyd.edu.au/students/resources/index.shtml> for more info on careers resources.
- If you need help with job search strategies and finding potential employers, go to our section on Job Search at <http://www.careers.usyd.edu.au/students/jobsearch/jobsearch.shtml/>

Skills developed in an Arts degree

The University aims to develop the following attributes in all students by the time they graduate:

- Scholarship
- Lifelong Learning
- Global Citizenship

For more information on Graduate Attributes go to www.itl.usyd.edu.au/GraduateAttributes/about.htm

The Faculty of Arts has listed the specific attributes of its graduates as:

- Research and Inquiry
- Information Literacy
- Personal and Intellectual Autonomy
- Ethical, Social and Professional Understanding
- Communication

For more information on these contextualized Graduate Attributes go to <http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/GraduateAttributes/facultyGA.cfm?faculty=Arts/>

Remember that embedded in these attributes are the more practical skills that employers look for when selecting employees. Consider how you can demonstrate these skills through your degree:

- Team work
- Time management
- Logical thinking
- Accuracy
- Presentation
- Decision making

You might also be able to demonstrate these skills through your involvement in student societies, work experience, voluntary work and travel.

Graduate Employment & Salaries

Download a Graduate Profile at http://www.careers.usyd.edu.au/students/forms/GRADUATEPROFILES_Lisa.pdf for Lisa Thompson, an Arts Advanced graduate now working in Market Research.

You can also go to the Faculty of Arts web site at <http://foucault.arts.usyd.edu.au/aapw0000r01/> where you can read other graduate profiles.

Check out where University of Sydney Arts graduates have found employment and their starting salaries. Graduate destinations for those who graduated in 2005 can be found at <http://www.careers.usyd.edu.au/students/forms/GDS2005arts.pdf>

Check out where Humanities graduates from across the country have found employment and their starting salaries. Go to <http://www.graduatecareers.com.au/>

For information on salaries, go to <http://www.gradsonline.edu.au/gradsonline/>. Also,

relevant professional associations can often provide information about salaries in specific fields of employment.

Useful links

Career Links

- Graduate Careers Australia's website
<http://www.graduatecareers.com.au/>
- National graduate destination statistics
<http://www.gradsonline.edu.au/gradsonline/>
- Information on postgraduate study at
<http://www.careers.usyd.edu.au/students/pgrad/index.shtml>

For more Career Links, go to

<http://www.careers.usyd.edu.au/students/resources/careerslink.shtml>

Professional Association Links

- Advertising Federation of Australia
<http://www.afa.org.au/WebStreamer/index.html>
- Australasian Historical Archaeology
<http://www.asha.org.au/>
- Australasian Institute for Maritime Archaeology
<http://www.aima.iinet.net.au/>
- Australia ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites)
<http://www.icomos.org/australia/>
- Australian Archaeological Association Inc
<http://australianarchaeologicalassociation.com.au/>
- Australian Association of Consulting Archaeologists Inc
<http://www.aacai.com.au/>
- Australian Association of Philosophy
<http://aap.org.au/>
- Australian Human Resources Institute
<http://www.ahri.com.au>
- Australian Institute of International Affairs
<http://www.aiia.asn.au>
- Australian Institute of Training and Development
<http://www.aitd.com.au>
- Australian Library and Information Association
<http://www.alia.org.au>
- Australian Linguistic Society
<http://www.als.asn.au/>
- Australian Marketing Institute
<http://www.ami.org.au/>

- Australian Psychological Society
<http://www.psychology.org.au/>
- Australian Screen Editors Inc.
<http://www.screeneditors.com/index.php>
- Australian Society of Archivists
<http://www.archivenet.gov.au/resources.html>
- Australian Society of Authors
<http://www.asauthors.org/cgi-bin/asa/information.cgi>
- Australian Sociology Association
<http://www.tasa.org.au/home/index.php>
- Centre for Community Welfare Training
<http://www.acwa.asn.au/CCWT/>
- Community Broadcasting Association of Australia
<http://www.cbaa.org.au>
- Institute of Management Consultants
<http://www.imc.org.au/htm/default.asp>
- Institute of Public Administration Australia (NSW Division)
<http://www.nsw.ipaa.org.au>
- Law Society of NSW
<http://www.lawsociety.com.au/page.asp?partid=66>
- Market Research Society of Australia
<http://www.mrsa.com.au>
- Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance
<http://www.alliance.org.au>
- NSW Psychologists' Registration Board
<http://www.psychreg.health.nsw.gov.au>
- NSW Teachers Federation
<http://www.nswtf.org.au>
- Public Relations Institute of Australia
<http://www.pria.com.au/>
- Sydney University Law Society Careers page
<http://www.unswlawsoc.org/index.php>
- World Archaeological Congress
<http://www.worldarchaeologicalcongress.org/site/home.php>

For more professional associations, go to

<http://www.careers.usyd.edu.au/students/resources/profassoc.shtml/>

Job Vacancy Databases

- AcademicCareers.com
<http://www.academiccareers.com>
- Arts and Cultural Industry Jobs
<http://www.artshub.com.au/ahau1/default.asp>

- Australian Job Search
<http://jobsearch.gov.au>
- Australian Public Service Departments - Graduate Jobs
<http://www.apsc.gov.au/index.html>
- Encore Magazine(jobs in Film, Radio and TV industry)
<http://www.encoremagazine.com.au/jobs.asp>
- ESL Jobfinder(ESL Teacher Recruitment)
<http://www.esljobfinder.com>
- NCOSS (jobs in the NSW Community Sector)
<http://www.ncoss.org.au/jobs/index.html>
- NSW Government Jobs
<http://www.jobs.nsw.gov.au/Start.asp>
- PsychXchange (jobs for psychologists)
<http://www.psychxchange.com.au/JobSearch.aspx>
- Screen Hub
<http://www.screenhub.com.au>
- Zenith Management Services (Information and Library jobs)
<http://www.zenman.com.au>

For more Job Vacancy Databases, go to

http://www.careers.usyd.edu.au/students/resources/jobvacancy_australia.shtml/