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Te Whare Pūrākau
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Sport and Recreation Management Careers



What is Sport and Recreation Management?

Sport and recreation management tailors management to the sport and recreation sectors. 'Sport' and 'recreation' encompass a wide range of activities which take place in a variety of settings. These sectors comprise not only indoor sport at managed facilities (i.e., recreation, sport and events centres), but also outdoor landscapes used for recreation (i.e., swimming pools, playgrounds, botanic gardens, sports fields, and open spaces, including parks and forests, national parks, harbours, beaches, rivers, and lakes). Sport and recreation professionals are passionate in their roles, they are inspired to share what sport and recreation has to offer to people of all ages.

A working knowledge of the key aspects of sport and recreation management that graduates attain at Lincoln University is highly valued across many sectors. The integrated theoretical and practical components equip graduates with the management skills necessary to excel in jobs related to sport, exercise, health and well-being, community recreation, outdoor recreation, resource management, and national parks. Furthermore, graduates gain a firm grasp on topics relating to psychology, sociology and social policy which furthers their employment potential.



Sport and recreation management in New Zealand and the world

Employment opportunities in the sport and recreation sector are diverse and constantly evolving. Jobs are available in workplaces from small firms to large multi-national corporations, from community sport to national sporting bodies, from volunteer roles to executive management, and from inside a stadium to outside in the backcountry.

Sport and recreation make important contributions to the health and well-being of populations. While the sector is characterised by seasonality of roles and large contributions from volunteers, there is an increasing trend towards higher levels of professionalism and accountability. Careers within governance, management and strategic planning require professionals with specific sport and recreation qualifications prior to employment. The projected increase in demand for managerial roles nationwide, coupled with the construction of several major sports facilities in post-earthquake Christchurch, as well as further afield, illustrates the significance of sport and recreation in New Zealand.

Alongside the urban facilities which provide city residents and visitors access to sport, outdoor recreation takes place in city fringes, rural townships and open spaces nationwide. Many New Zealanders consider access to 'the great outdoors' to be an important part of their national identity, and they enjoy being outdoors for walking, tramping, fishing, camping, and other recreational activities. The places and spaces where people have outdoor experiences need to be managed to ensure that future generations can also enjoy their use.

Skills and knowledge developed by studying sport and recreation management

The types of skills gained from studying sport and recreation management are highly valued by employers. The applied nature of the coursework at Lincoln University gives graduates a range of practical skills that are transferable directly to the workplace. Lincoln University staff work with potential sport and recreation employers in the region to provide students with work experience. Employers in the sector appreciate that Lincoln graduates come equipped with sector-specific knowledge in relation to policy issues and development as well as best practice experience in sport and recreation management.

Employers seek well-rounded, engaged graduates with a strong work ethic. As in any sector, employers typically value those who have a professional attitude to their work. This includes good communication (including the ability to communicate to groups, as well as effective interpersonal and written communication), respect, self-motivation, initiative, time management and flexibility. The importance of these basic skills cannot be underestimated, even in voluntary roles, as future job opportunities often arise from a good reputation and a varied network of contacts.

Skills and knowledge valued in sport and recreation management roles

- Effective public relations
- Team-leading
- Financial management
- Contract management
- Analytical and critical thinking
- Decision-making
- IT and report writing skills
- Time/stress management
- Public speaking skills
- People management
- Supervisory skills
- Strategic planning
- Problem-solving
- Negotiation
- Programme development
- Event management
- Health and safety
- Activity-specific knowledge
- First aid



Where can sport and recreation management graduates find work?

Throughout the first two years of study, students are encouraged to volunteer in their sector of choice to improve the self-awareness of their skillset and to complement their study. The third year internship offers students the opportunity for direct involvement in the industry, and the chance to develop work competencies, networking skills and the work experience that is desired by sport and recreation employers. Graduates often comment that their practical experience with a sport and recreation organisation was of huge benefit for building their professional network and improving their job prospects. It is not uncommon for Lincoln Sport and Recreation graduates to be offered jobs directly by their internship supervisor or someone they met during their internship.

Places of employment for sport and recreation management graduates include:

- City or district councils (e.g., Christchurch City Council, Selwyn District Council)
- Regional sport trusts (RSTs) (e.g., Sport Canterbury, Sport Otago, Sport Tasman)
- Incorporated societies and charitable trusts (e.g., Selwyn Sport Trust, Rawhiti Community Sports)
- Government bodies (e.g., Department of Conservation (DoC), Te Whatu Ora Health New Zealand (MoH), District Health Boards)
- Adventure tour operators (e.g., Hiking New Zealand, Active Adventures, Adventure South)
- National sporting organisations (e.g., Cricket New Zealand, New Zealand Rugby Union, New Zealand Football, Athletics New Zealand, Rowing New Zealand, Bowls New Zealand)
- Local/ regional sport clubs or associations (e.g., Canterbury Rugby Union, Canterbury Cricket, Canterbury Basketball, Touch Canterbury, Mainland Football, Netball Mainland, Halswell Hornets Rugby League Football Club)
- National sporting bodies (e.g., Sport NZ, High Performance Sport NZ, The Kind Foundation, NZ Institute of Health and Fitness, NZ Recreation Association)
- Sport or recreation management consultancies (e.g., Halo Sport| Visitor Solutions, Matter of Sport)
- Event management companies (e.g., Vbase, 360 Degree Events, Hororata Games, Koru Games)
- Private sport or recreation providers (e.g., Christchurch Adventure Park, Christchurch Football Centre, Camp America)
- Sport and recreation training organisations (e.g., Skills Active Aotearoa, Lincoln University)

Sport and recreation management job titles

Academic Lecturer

Communications Officer

Community Engagement Advisor

Community Sports Advisor

Conference Manager

Defence Forces Physical Training Instructor

Event Manager

Health Promoter

High Performance Coach

Holiday Programme Leader

Injury Prevention Specialist

Marketing and Promotions Coordinator

Operations Coordinator (for specific sports)

Outdoor Instructor

Park Ranger/ Field Worker

Planner (e.g., Parks, Sports and Recreation Planner)

Policy Analyst

Programme/ Club/ Activities Coordinator/ Manager

Project Manager

Recreation Advisor/ Assistant

Recreation Manager

Regional Development Manager

Researcher

Risk Assessment Coordinator

Schools Sports Coordinator

Sport Development Officer

Sport Management Consultant

Sports Coaching

Sports Facility Manager

Strength and Conditioning Coach

Tourism/ Adventure Tourism Guide



Pay rate Indications: full time equivalent (FTE) \$NZ per annum¹

Most starting salaries for graduates of bachelor degrees fall between 50,000 - 70,000. Entry level jobs are stepping stones to roles with increased responsibilities and remuneration. Your employability is enhanced by all of your life experiences, be they employment related, or the transferable skills and competencies gained from community involvement, volunteer work, or previous work or study - all of which can grow competency, expand networks, and demonstrate enthusiasm to future employers.

¹Rates sourced from SEEK, MBIE, Careers NZ, Universities NZ, PayScale, PQOS survey data

Job title	Indicative rate
Programme/ Club Activities Coordinator	40,000 - 85,000
Recreational Coordinator	45,000 - 85,000
Sport Development Officer	50,000 - 80,000+
School Sports Adviser/ Coordinator	40,000 - 70,000
Health Promoter	55,000 - 120,000
Planner (Parks, Sports, Recreation)	60,000 - 120,000
Defence Force Officer	50,000 - 130,000+
Outdoor Instructor	45,000 - 60,000
Tourism/ Adventure Tourism Guide	45,000 - 50,000
Event Manager	45,000 - 75,000
Community Engagement Advisor	60,000 - 80,000
Sports Coach	45,000 - 80,000
Sports Facility Manager	55,000 - 150,000



Sport and recreation management tasks

Sport and recreation sector managers are expected to wear many hats in their day-to-day work. The following list indicates tasks one might encounter as a coordinator in the sport or recreation sector.

Facilitate opportunities for people of all ages to engage in social activities through sport and recreation programmes

Engage one-on-one with elite or aspiring athletes, coaches and officials

Develop and/or implement strategies to recruit sport or club members

Coordinate staff and/or volunteer recruitment, rosters, training, duties, meetings

Communicate with community groups and local authorities (verbal and written)

Design and implement recreation or training and coaching programmes

Clerical support for registration, database management and other administrative duties

Manage projects, contracts, events, and budgets

Collect, collate and record results, achievements of teams/participants

Elicit community or organisational sponsorship for programmes and initiatives

Evaluate effectiveness of programmes, events or sponsorship

Manage marketing communication including publicity and advertising across a range of platforms (e.g., social media, press releases, newsletters)

Prepare reports

Liaise and network with industry contacts via email, meetings, conferences and symposiums

Serve as spokesperson for your institution, facility or sport club

Job tasks are role-specific, so the above is an indication only. For more information on roles, registered Lincoln University students can search LU Career Centre (online) for job titles similar to those they are interested in. Job descriptions, including tasks and skills required, are often available.



Industry bodies

Membership of an industry specific body enhances the professional status of graduates. By joining a professional body, members can research career options, access training and events, and network and collaborate with industry colleagues at all levels. Industry bodies can provide opportunities for professional development and sometimes list sector vacancies.

In some roles, registration with or membership of a professional body is compulsory.

Examples of sport and recreation industry bodies include:

The New Zealand Recreation Association (NZRA)
www.nzrecreation.org.nz

Generate Network
www.generatenetwork.org

Women in Sport
www.womeninsport.org

Sport and Exercise New Zealand (SESNZ)

www.sesnz.org.nz

Sport and Exercise Research Lab. (SERL)

www.education.canterbury.ac.nz/research_labs/sport/index.shtml

New Zealand Association of Event Professionals (NZEAP)

www.nzaep.co.nz



Find out more:

Career Centre

Learning, Teaching and Library
E: lucarecentre@lincoln.ac.nz



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