

AUT

A FUTURE IN
**CONFLICT
RESOLUTION**



WHAT IS CONFLICT RESOLUTION?

Wherever there are people, companies or states, there are differences. Conflict resolution explores the methods and processes involved in the creation of peaceful settlement at an interpersonal, community, organisational and international level.

Societal pressures can place enormous stresses on families, and there are various successful conflict resolution interventions available to alleviate these. Effective conflict resolution is also essential for a company's wellbeing, as workplace disputes can be very damaging to productivity. Internationally, New Zealand participates in many peacekeeping operations with the United Nations and we are rated number four on the global peace index.

Professionals in this field can put their skills to work in organisations as diverse as the Police; trade unions; Child, Youth and Family, or regional and international peace groups and institutions. All of these groups attempt to positively influence individuals and society, and so the satisfaction gained from this work is evident. The results of effective conflict resolution really do change lives.

Conflict resolution is about compromise, negotiation and communication, and it draws on many different disciplines to arrive at positive solutions. If you see yourself as a peacemaker, a facilitator and a collaborator, then this could be the field for you.



OUTLOOK AND TRENDS

Mediation – With the recent reduction in the capacity of the Family Court to deal with disputes, mediation is increasingly being utilised as a practical option for families to resolve such issues out of court. There are numerous public and private services available to families looking to achieve equitable outcomes in their individual cases.

Source: New Zealand Law Society: NZLS

Global conflict resolution – As worldwide tensions continue to become more complex, the ability of skilled individuals to broker peaceful solutions becomes ever more valuable. Public, private and non-government organisations (NGOs) all work in this evolving space, and peacekeeping activities and employment opportunities internationally are growing.

Employment relations – Significant changes are taking place to employment law in New Zealand as a result of the Employment Relations Amendment Act of 2014. These include collective bargaining, good faith and flexible working arrangements, all of which could have a considerable impact on the workload and employment prospects of employment relations professionals.

Source: MBIE labour information

WORK SETTINGS

As conflict occurs in almost every walk of life, the work environments that practitioners operate within is extremely broad. Here is a list of organisations that may utilise conflict resolution skills.

- Child, Youth and Family
- International peace and justice organisations
- Local councils
- Ministry of Justice Crime Prevention Unit
- Ministry of Social Development
- New Zealand Peace Foundation
- New Zealand Police
- Aotearoa Peace Movement
- Political parties
- Trade unions

The work is mainly office-based, and often involves travel across multiple sites, regionally and possibly internationally. Workers deal with people and groups from all walks of life, from individual family disputes to high level political organisations

CAREER ROLE EXAMPLES

A conflict resolution graduate can aspire to a range of varied career roles because the transferable skills they acquire are applicable across diverse industries. Below is a small sample of prospective positions.

Mediator – Facilitates confidential and consensual negotiation between parties in order to assist them to resolve disputes. The mediator assists the parties to make their own decisions and agreements and guides the process so that the issues can be defined, the relevant information produced and options explored without undue delay or resorting to litigation. This role can be at a local, national or international level.

Source: www.aminz.org.nz

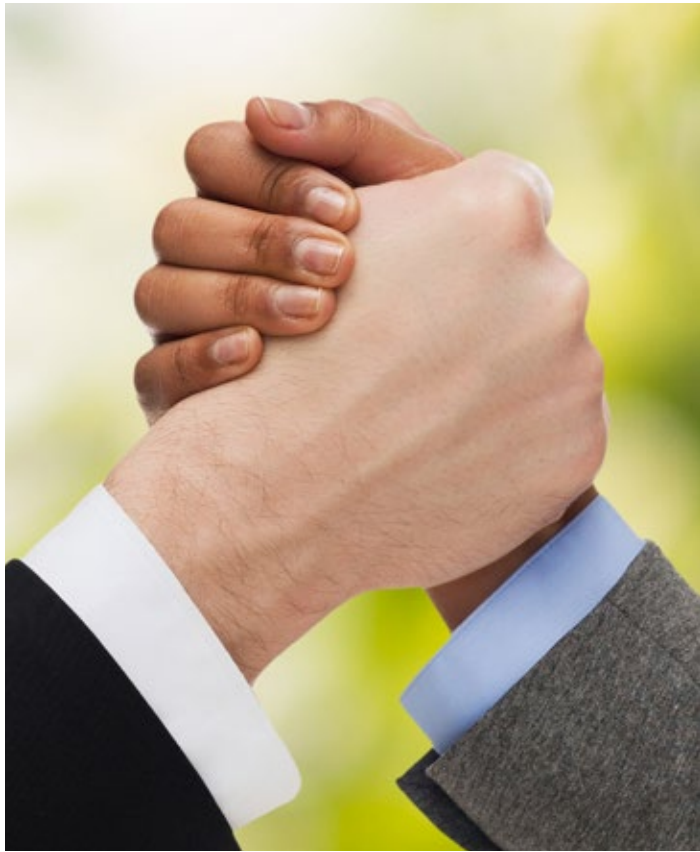
Case manager – Supports people into employment, training and development opportunities, as well as access to social housing and financial support. Engages with and works alongside clients as they plan and prepare to move towards sustainable employment. Works with clients to develop an individualised plan of actions and services to create opportunities to achieve agreed goals.

Source: www.msd.govt.nz

Workplace Relations Advisor – assists in the resolution of workplace disagreements on behalf of their organisation, attempting to arrive at acceptable compromise. Offers support and guidance for employees and employers on a one-to-one basis or in groups.

Sources: Electricity and Gas Complaints Commission/Careers NZ





Union advocate – Provides advice, support and advocacy on a range of issues relevant to union members as part of a national team. Represents the union and/or members in various jurisdictions, and assists in the further development of the union.

Source: www.union.org.nz

SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- Excellent negotiation skills
- Ability to relate to people from different backgrounds
- Flexible in approach to work
- Ability to use initiative as well as collaborate as part of a team
- Good planning, organisational, analytical and decision-making skills
- Resourcefulness, problem-solving skills and good attention to detail
- Numeracy skills suitable for working on financial matters
- Strong awareness of equality and diversity issues

PERSONAL QUALITIES

- Caring, sensitive and non-judgemental manner
- Ability to cope with stress and emotionally charged issues
- Tact and diplomacy to deal with sensitive and confidential information
- Ability to seek compromise and common ground

SALARY GUIDE

	Salary (per year)
Case manager	\$44,000-\$62,000
Workplace relations advisor	\$45,000-\$55,000
Senior workplace relations advisor 3-5 years' experience	\$65,000 - \$75,000
Senior Mediator 10 years' experience	\$100,000

Sources: HRINZ and Careers NZ. Ministry of Social Development, Hudson NZ 2015 Salary Guides.

Salary range is indicative of the New Zealand job market at the time of publication and should only be used as a guideline.

FURTHER STUDY OPTIONS

Conflict Resolution is most frequently taken as a double major in a Bachelor of Arts alongside Psychology, Criminology, Policy Studies and Human Resources and Employment Relations.

For those wanting more specialised study, postgraduate-level programmes include Master of Arts in Conflict Resolution, Master of Arts in Policy Studies and Master of Human Rights. Master and Doctor of Philosophy in Social Sciences and Public Policy options also exist.

Recent research in the school includes topics on peer mediation, the International Criminal Court and the language of friendship in international treaties.

THE AUT APPROACH

All students are required to complete 150 hours co-operative education (co-op), where they test their learning and ideas in a real world industry environment.

Organisations where conflict resolution students have worked are:

- Peace Foundation
- Aotearoa NZ Peace and Conflict Studies Centre Trust
- Human Rights Foundation
- Community organisations

EVE CAHILL

Determinations Officer, Department of Internal Affairs

Bachelor of Arts in Conflict Resolution and Criminology

"I have always been interested in people, and so understanding others and having the ability to communicate effectively is a skill that is important to me. I was trained as a Peer Mediator at my high school through the Peace Foundation's Cool Schools Programme. This inspired me to further my skills and study Conflict Resolution at AUT.

I worked at the Peace Foundation as an intern for co-op in my third year. Here I was given the opportunity to co-facilitate the Cool Schools programme to train teachers and students of various schools around Auckland. It was rather special to go back to the root of my inspiration and advocate for positive communication skills and techniques, the Cool Schools Programme, the Peace Foundation, and the concept of peace on a national and international stage.

The role of a determinations officer is incredibly diverse, and no two days are the same. The majority of our work involves assessing a body of evidence to determine if a person has a claim to New Zealand citizenship by descent through birth or adoptive parents. This means we have to be familiar with a variety of legislation including overseas adoption laws, the Status of Children Act 1969, the New Zealand Citizenship Act 1948, and the Privacy Act 1993. We have to be risk-aware and be diligent in processing citizenship by descent applications. A New Zealand passport is a highly secure identity document that is extremely sought after. Therefore, the work we do is very important in terms of identity and connecting New Zealanders with government.

In the future I am interested in developing leadership skills and enhancing the communication skills I already have. I would also enjoy exposure to a role that involves investigations or compliance & regulations."

EMPLOYER COMMENT

"A determinations officer requires analysis, assessment and problem-solving skills to determine a person's entitlement to New Zealand citizenship. A determinations officer is also required to have a good basis of relationship management skills, because they have to deal with a diverse range of people and interact with government agencies both in New Zealand and abroad. They also need to be confident in dealing with legislation and to treat people with respect in each individual case.

Eve's ability to analyse complex information, obtain information to support an assessment and understand and apply legislation are real strengths. Eve also has well-grounded relationship management and communication skills, which are critical as she needs to receive and convey information to a diverse range of applicants and agencies both here in New Zealand or overseas. She deals with a lot of personal identity-based information around New Zealand citizenship, and she displays personable and professional approach to the role."

Craig Shatford

Team Leader, Department of Internal Affairs



USEFUL WEBSITES

Resolution Institute

www.resolution.institute

Arbitrators and Mediators Institute

www.aminz.org.nz

Human Resources Institute of New Zealand

www.hrinz.org.nz

New Zealand Council of Trade Unions

<http://www.union.org.nz/>

Peace Foundation

<http://www.peace.net.nz/>


FURTHER INFORMATION

For the most up-to-date information on Conflict Resolution studies and the BA, please visit our website: www.aut.ac.nz/conflictresolution

FUTURE STUDENTS

Contact the Future Student Advisory team for more information: www.aut.ac.nz/enquire

futurestudents@aut.ac.nz

 @AUTFutureStudents


CURRENT AUT STUDENTS

Contact the Student Hub Advisors team for more information:

0800 AUT UNI (0800 288 864)

www.aut.ac.nz/enquire

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EMPLOYABILITY & CAREERS

For other Future Career Sheets visit:

www.aut.ac.nz/careersheets


For employability and career support, AUT students can book an appointment through

<https://elab.aut.ac.nz/>


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The information contained in this career sheet is correct at time of printing, August 2019.

