

AUT

A FUTURE IN
ASIAN
LANGUAGES





THE VALUE OF ASIAN LANGUAGES TO A CAREER

Globalisation opens up diverse career opportunities for multi-lingual people who are strong communicators and understand diversity and cultural difference.

Fluency in more than one language and an ability to understand cultural differences and customs are becoming essential skills for people chasing roles in an increasingly global and digital world.

Asian languages play an important part in global communication. Mandarin Chinese is the most commonly spoken language in the world, English is third and Japanese is ninth. According to Internet World Stats, Chinese is the second most frequently used language online; English is first and Japanese is sixth. With China and Japan both major NZ trading partners, there is a demand for people with Asian language skills and cultural knowledge. Graduates find work with international companies in Japan, China, Singapore and Hong Kong etc.

As well as mastery of a second or third language, graduates from Asian languages and studies are also likely to have developed intercultural competency – the ability to build relationships and communicate effectively and empathetically across cultures.

Intercultural competency is predicted to become an essential work skill in the future as employers realise they need employees who are open to difference and diversity and able to demonstrate cultural intelligence (CQ); the ability to be resilient and open to change.

Are you curious about Asian languages and cultures? Are you a communicator and a conceptual thinker who enjoys new experiences and stepping outside your comfort zone? Then a career in Asian languages could give you a competitive edge and open up many career options for you.

OUTLOOK AND TRENDS

Global economy – According to NZIER principal economist Shamubeel Eaqub, trade and investment ties New Zealand to the global economy. “It is not enough to close our eyes to the world and still expect to sell them our products. We need mutual flows of trade and capital to fully enjoy the effects of globalisation – particularly in the current Asian century.”

Source: Asia NZ Foundation

Security and trust – Foreign language skills and intercultural competency are critical to building and establishing trust among nations. A monolingual public service and population limits a nation's security and capacity to have global influence.

NZ language learning – The Government is increasing funding and professional development support for Asian language learning in schools to bridge the current cultural and linguistic gap (\$3.3 million between 2015–2018). There are also new tertiary scholarship opportunities to study abroad in Asia.

Language of trade – Globally, engineering, computing and technology industries are keen to employ people who can communicate clearly in more than one language about technical issues, manage projects with international workforces and create software and apps with an understanding of the needs of culturally diverse customers.

Sources: careerbuilder.com and commonpurpose.org

NZ tourism – Asian tourists are a major source of tourists to New Zealand. China is currently New Zealand's second biggest source of tourists (2014 statistics) and over 73,000 Japanese tourists visit New Zealand each year. Staff who can communicate in Mandarin or Japanese, whether to discuss itineraries and accommodation or run marketing campaigns etc, are increasingly valuable to travel and tourism businesses.

Immigration growth – Strong Chinese population growth in New Zealand is increasing demand for English/Chinese bilingual speakers in education, legal and medical services and the social sector. The public sector, including libraries and health care, also need staff who can read, write and speak Chinese.

Japan opportunities – The 2019 Rugby World Cup and 2020 Olympic Games are to be held in Tokyo, creating many job opportunities for people who speak Japanese and English. The Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme offers ongoing opportunities for graduates to work in Japan as assistant language teachers, co-ordinators for international relations or sports exchange advisors.



WORK SETTINGS

Graduates find work in the private sector where knowledge of Asian languages and intercultural competency is becoming increasingly important, eg banking, retail, import and export, hospitality, tourism, media and marketing. Knowing another language can give you an advantage when applying for jobs in multi-national organisations that market products in many countries, such as software and gaming.

Fluency in English and Asian languages is desired by many government agencies, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Department of Customs, NZ Trade and Enterprise, Tourism New Zealand and Department of Immigration.

Language teaching, from primary to tertiary, is another area of employment. A popular option for graduates is teaching English as a foreign language here in New Zealand, in China and in Japan. As well as teaching in schools and tertiary institutions, foreign language teachers also get jobs teaching business people in the private sector.

CAREER EXAMPLES

Translator: Involves professionally translating information from one language into another. Specialist areas can be developed in law, health and politics. Freelancing and contracting is common. A relevant translation qualification is needed.

Interpreter: Involves professionally translating speeches or conversation from one language to another, in context and using an appropriate manner, as the speech/conversation is underway. Usually occurs in health, business, politics or law settings. Freelancing and contracting is common. A relevant interpreting qualification is needed.

Export marketing manager: Involves planning and co-ordinating the delivery of shipments of goods overseas. Includes finding buyers for domestic products and negotiating with vendors, shippers and agents. Need wide-ranging knowledge of the culture and language of the destination involved.

Foreign affairs officer: Includes writing briefing papers on political, economic development and trade issues, arranging official visits, hosting visitors, attending international meetings or negotiations. Can include overseas postings requiring the ability to manage diverse cultural and social environments. Language ability plays a significant part staff postings.

Immigration consultant/officer: Involves providing information about immigration laws, policies and procedures, assessing applications for residency or entry into New Zealand, interviewing applicants, issuing permits and visas, investigating breaches of immigration laws and advising on immigration policy and operations.

Sources: www.study.com, www.careers NZ, www.mfat.govt.nz, www.nzsti.org

SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

- Communicate confidently in Chinese/Japanese orally and in writing
- Possess a good reading ability in Chinese/Japanese
- Demonstrate a sound knowledge of Chinese/Japanese society, culture and business etiquette
- Know how to interact appropriately with Chinese/Japanese nationals in various situations
- Operate effectively in a work environment involving Chinese/Japanese language
- Use a variety of computer software, including Chinese/Japanese software and multimedia
- Analyse and solve theoretical and practical problems
- Demonstrate cultural sensitivity based on genuine knowledge and understanding

PERSONAL QUALITIES

- Show tolerance towards cultural differences
- Be a team player with integrity, keen for a challenge and inquisitive
- Have ability to work autonomously, responsibly and co-operatively
- Demonstrate intercultural competency and cultural intelligence

PROFESSIONAL ACCREDITATION

The New Zealand Society of Translators and Interpreters (NZSTI) formally recognises translating and/or interpreting qualifications

The NZSTI Code of Ethics (2013) sets out professional code of conduct for interpreters and translators.
www.nzsti.org/assets/uploads/files/nzsti_code_of_ethics_and_code_of_conduct_may_2013.pdf

SALARY GUIDE

| | Salary |
|--|---|
| Teacher of foreign language (Chinese or Japanese) | Private tutor \$17 – \$25 per hour Private tutor with specialist qualifications: \$30 – \$120 per hour, depending on clientele |
| Interpreting | Court interpreter \$35 per hour in Auckland (\$25 per hour in other regions) Healthcare interpreter: \$30 per hour approx |
| Foreign affairs officer | \$51,000 – \$60,000 (entry level) |
| Online marketing manager | \$90,000 – \$120,000 (with experience) |

Sources: Careers NZ, Hudson Salary Guides 2015

Salary range is indicative of the New Zealand job market at the time of publication (mid Sept 2015) and should only be used as a guideline.

FURTHER STUDY OPTIONS

Further study in Asian languages is available at postgraduate level, including Master of Arts, Master of Language and Culture, Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy. Research areas include language and cultural policy analysis, bilingualism, language teaching.

THE AUT APPROACH

AUT students of Japanese and Chinese do a minimum of 150 hours in work placement in organisations such as international publishing companies, importing and exporting companies, language schools, agencies supporting Asian students coming into New Zealand, NZ branches of Japanese travel agencies, immigration consultants and school teacher aide roles.

The teaching approach at AUT is very applied with students engaging authentically at many levels, including regular communication with Japanese university students. They also have the opportunity of a China/Japan exchange study.

A number of students take advantage of the Language Teaching minor offered within the Bachelor of Arts, that includes a certificate in language teaching to adults.



NATALIE CHAMBERS

Co-ordinator for International Relations

International Affairs Department, General Affairs
Bureau, Takikawa, Japan

Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Japanese Language

"My role as international relations co-ordinator for the Japan Exchange and Teaching programme (JET) includes translating, event planning, visits to local kindergartens and schools, teaching English classes to local residents and supporting other JETs in the area.

I work at the local city hall in Takikawa in Japan, which means I am immersed in Japanese language on a daily basis. Given that social cues and context play a huge role in communication here, knowledge of Japanese language and culture is critical.

Before getting this job, I worked at New Zealand Language Centre in Auckland for two and a half years. I was counselling Japanese students, dealing with Japanese local and international agents, marketing, processing enrolments and providing administrative and student support. Using Japanese there on a regular basis provided me with the confidence and skills necessary to apply for the JET Programme."

EMPLOYER COMMENT

"Natalie works for the city hall as a CIR (coordinator for international relations) on the JET Program where she engages in extensive work in translating and interpreting with her fluent Japanese. A CIR requires high levels of language skills. Coordination and communication skills are also important and Natalie is a well-balanced person who dedicates herself to planning international events considering Japanese participants."

Hiroko Sasamoto

Coordinator for International Exchange and Promotion
International Affairs Department, General Affairs Bureau,
Takikawa

USEFUL WEBSITES

Asia New Zealand Foundation

www.asianz.org.nz

New Zealand Society of Translators and Interpreters (NZSTI)

www.nzsti.org

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

www.mfat.govt.nz/en/about-us/work-with-us

FURTHER INFORMATION


For more up-to-date information on Asian languages and studies or the Bachelor of Arts, please visit our website:

www.aut.ac.nz/asian-studies

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

studenthub@aut.ac.nz

 @AUTEmployabilityandCareers

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/>


CITY CAMPUS


55 Wellesley Street East, Auckland Central

CONNECT WITH US NOW

 @autuni

 @AUTuni

 AUTUniversity

 @autuni

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

