

Auckland Grammar School

Careers-linked courses prepare students for life beyond school



For students who choose to explore other career pathways, Auckland Grammar School's commitment to support them to become the best they can be is just as strong. Photo credit: Auckland Grammar School

—
“We want our students to have as many options as possible and understand how to access those options. It's about preparing them for life beyond school.”

—
GRAHAM EDWARDS, HEAD OF FACULTY - VOCATIONAL AND ASSISTED LEARNING AT AUCKLAND GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Auckland Grammar School's high academic standards are well-known - one of the three highest-achieving schools in New Zealand Scholarship examinations each year, close to 100 per cent pass rate in Cambridge International A-level examinations, and 87 per cent University Entrance pass rate. Many of its students continue their academic journey in prestigious universities in New Zealand and overseas, including the United States, Australia and the United Kingdom.

The School's commitment to support those who choose to explore other career pathways is just as strong.

“University is not the only way to become successful. Other pathways also offer good opportunities,” said Graham Edwards, Head of Faculty - Vocational and Assisted Learning at Auckland Grammar School.

“Everyone is capable and wants to learn if we can find the area they are interested in.”

From Year 11, students are prompted to look to the future and encouraged to talk about their hopes and aspirations.

They are offered the “Early Career Exploration” subject, which Mr Edwards says is designed to support them to gain confidence and direction as well as greater self-awareness and teamwork. This subject exposes students to a range of industries including travel and tourism, hospitality, Police, health and fitness, and construction. They are also taught how to write formal letters, complete forms, and obtain a learner licence.

In keeping with “The Grammar Way,” English, Maths and Science remain compulsory with this group.

In Year 12, students are also offered an “Employment Skills” course, where they develop skills and practical knowledge that are deemed important in the workplace.

Key parts of the course include writing a CV, obtaining work experience in an area chosen by the student, and knowing the legal requirements to purchase and safely operate a car.

Students are supported to obtain a learner licence, SiteSafe Foundation Passport – Building Construction certificate, or a licence to operate a forklift. First Aid training and a barista course are also provided to build students' employability and support a seamless, post-school transition. Most importantly, students are taught about employment rights and responsibilities, and how to explore career options and set personal goals.

Off-site courses are funded through the Ministry of Education's Secondary Tertiary Alignment Resource (STAR) programme.

Old Boys have boosted the school's employer contacts and helped students gain work experience placements.

"With their support, we've been able to give our students opportunities to engage with employers, discover different workplaces, and test-drive different occupations," Mr Edwards explained.

In Year 13, the careers-linked "Student Pathways" course is offered, where students get to research and test a chosen career pathway and then share their findings in class.

"Through this course, they learn career planning skills. What does the job look like? What qualifications are required for it? What is Plan B if things don't go according to plan?" Mr Edwards said.

Students gain insights into future careers from guest speakers from various organisations and industries, including the New Zealand Defence Force, Mainfreight, and Māori and Pasifika Trades Training.

They are given opportunities to gain work experience in customer service, security industry or freight and logistics. They continue learning how to write CVs



Careers-linked courses at Auckland Grammar School give students opportunities to engage with employers, discover different workplaces, and test-drive different occupations. Photo credit: Auckland Grammar School

and applications as well as handling job interviews and applying for financial support for tertiary study. Free financial literacy workshops are provided by SavY, a student-run charitable trust.

"The 'Student Pathways' programme introduces students to the world of work. We want them to give everything a go and see where it leads," Mr Edwards said.

The school's approach to connect classroom learning with young people's aspirations has been a success.

From time to time, Mr Edwards said Old Boys have reached out to thank him for the careers-linked courses at Auckland Grammar School that have jumpstarted their successful careers in construction, law, logistics or the New Zealand Army.

"Our philosophy is simple. We want our students to have as many options as possible and understand how to access those options. It's about preparing them for life beyond school."

For more
information

<https://ncea.education.govt.nz/pathways>

