Information Technology

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Tongan IT student graduates from Whitireia & WelTec | Te Pūkenga heads to the tech job market

Donald (Nolo) Heimuli will graduate with a Bachelor of Information Technology in June following a long journey to get to this proud moment.

While still back home in Tonga in 2011, Donald originally enrolled in IT with Whitireia via Tupou Tertiary Institute, whereby students in Tonga start the programme locally and complete their final year in New Zealand.

Unfortunately, in 2013, due to financial difficulties, Donald could not get to New Zealand to finish his bachelor's degree. Instead, with the goal very much in mind, Donald set about saving for his studies.

Using his passion for the game of rugby, Donald trained at the Tonga Rugby Union to qualify as a coach and become a Development Officer for junior rugby working with young players.

In 2019, Donald believed the time was right to complete the study he always wanted to do and secure a job in the tech sector to embark on the career he had set on. He was encouraged by Whitireia and WelTec to return to his study and get the 'job done'.

With encouragement and support from his kāinga (family) in Tonga and New Zealand, Donald was able to head to New Zealand and finish his study at Whitireia and WelTec while staying with kāinga nearby. Donald also worked during the holidays picking fruit in Gisborne to contribute to study costs and was awarded funding through Pacific Health Plus.

Last summer, Donald was a successful recipient of a TupuToa internship and gained experience at an insurance company assisting the information security team over a 12 week internship. Following which, he was offered an extension due to his excellent work.

As part of his studies, Donald has completed in-work practical assignments and his final project was a complete digitalisation of the New Zealand Amateur Rock 'n' Roll Association (NZARRA), which had previously been paper based.

"I give thanks to God Almighty for the blessings that He has bestowed upon me and has led me through difficulties to achieve this great achievement," says Donald. "I have taken every opportunity along the way so that I can reach this goal of graduating with a degree in IT.

> "I have had wonderful support from the amazing faiako (teachers/tutors) at Whitireia and WelTec as well as my kāinga and friends who helped me get to this point.

"I say: Mālō 'Aupito - thank you very much. Now, I need to secure a good job in IT so I can return the support to those who have helped me, and maybe there is someone else from Tonga who would like to follow in my footsteps - that I can help," says Donald.

Tony Assadi, Programme Manager at Whitireia and WelTec School of Innovation, Design & Technology has been alongside Donald on his journey and says: "It's absolutely wonderful to witness Donald's success in the face of numerous adversities and challenges throughout his academic journey. Stories like this are the reason why we do what we do."

Bachelor of Information Technology

Learn the skills to take technology to its full potential. No matter what part of the tech world you see yourself in we have a pathway to get you there. Learn in a supportive environment with tutors from different parts of the industry.

Programme outline

The Bachelor of Information Technology is designed with the IT industry to ensure our graduates are well-prepared with the skills required for the 21st century. In addition to the technical skills, you'll learn communication skills, management processes, teamwork and complete an industry project in your final year. This degree has been accredited by the industry, represented by IT Professionals New Zealand.

Study part-time

This programme includes part-time study options for people who want the flexibility of studying while they manage other commitments.

More details about this qualification

Internships

The Bachelor of Information Technology offers the opportunity to complete internships as part of your study. If you're already working, you can choose to complete your internship as part of your study. You'll get the opportunity to gain industry (or grow your expertise) experience to a chosen area of IT, and to reflect critically on concepts and perspectives studied.

While completing your internship, you'll learn how to apply taught knowledge, research evidence and skills to a field of IT to assess work practices, identify a problem related to your placement and recommend strategies for solving that problem.

You'll also document and present recommended strategies as appropriate to a selected audience.

If you're interested in completing an internship as part of the Bachelor of Information Technology, you'll need to indicate when completing the course selection sheet.

Capstone project

The Capstone project provides the opportunity to research, select, integrate, and apply a range of techniques and technologies to a business or industry-based problem. You'll also get the opportunity to demonstrate workplace ready skills that businesses in the IT industry are looking for.

If you're interested in completing the Capstone Project as part of the Bachelor of Information Technology, you'll need to indicate when completing the course selection sheet.

Career options

Career options

Graduates of the Bachelor of Information Technology have detailed knowledge and skills in selected areas of IT for employment as an IT professional. Opportunities within the IT industry include employment in public organisations, private companies, IT enterprises, self-employment, and teaching.

Entry requirements

Under 20 Years

NCEA Level 3 with at least 14 credits in each of 3 subjects.

Literacy - 10 credits at Level 2 or above, made up of 5 credits in reading
and 5 credits in writing.

Numeracy - 10 credits at Level 1 or above.

Over 20 Years

If you're 20 years or over, you may qualify for special admission on this programme. Contact us if you don't meet the Under 20 entry criteria.

International Students:

Minimum IELTS (academic) score of 6 with no band score lower than 5.5.

Find your country's equivalent academic entry requirements here

*For fee exclusions, please see our terms and

conditions.

Related study options

Graduate Diploma in Information Technology

Postgraduate Certificate in Information Technology

Postgraduate Diploma in Information Technology

Master of Information Technology

Hear from our graduates

Course descriptions

Course selection sheet