

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."

Graduate Diploma in Information Technology

 Level 7
 1 Year full-time (part-time options available)
 24 Feb 2025 (Petone)
 \$7,868 (indicative for 2023 intake)
 \$25,000* (indicative for 2023 intake)

Gain valuable skills in a supportive study environment. Take advantage of our flexible courses taught by industry professionals. Work on a range of techniques and technology to solve a workplace or industry problem. Head into the workforce with the confidence and skills behind you to be successful.

Programme outline

The ICT industry is one of the fastest-growing industries in the world. As a result, there is a huge demand for industry-ready ICT graduates who have the right mix of technical skills and business awareness.

The Graduate Diploma in Information Technology is a 120 credit level 7 programme that aims to meet the demand for highly-skilled network and data professionals, coders, system architects, developers, business analysts, cybersecurity experts, and other work-ready ICT professionals.

Students select elective courses based on their desired pathway and with guidance from programme staff. An elective course is any course chosen from the schedule of courses from the Bachelor of Information Technology schedule of courses and the Graduate Diploma in Cyber Security.

Study part-time

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

Schedule of courses

Compulsory courses

- [IT6502 - Project Management](#)
- [IT7510 - Capstone Project](#)

Elective courses

Level 5

- [IT5504 - Information Security I](#)
- [IT5507 - Fundamentals of Data Science](#)
- [IT5505 - Interaction Design Fundamentals](#)
- [IT5506 - Introduction to Networking](#)
- [IT5503 - Programming I](#)
- [IT5509 - Software Testing Fundamentals](#)
- [IT5510 - Introduction to Operating Systems](#)

Level 6

- [IT6501 - Systems Analysis and Design](#)
- [CS6501 - Information Security II](#)
- [CS6502 - Linux System Administration](#)
- [CS6503 - Digital Forensics](#)
- [CS6504 - Cryptography and Blockchain Fundamentals](#)
- [DS6501 - Social Data Analytics](#)
- [DS6502 - Data Analysis and Visualisation](#)
- [DS6503 - Data Mining Tools and Techniques](#)
- [DS6504 - Business Intelligence and Big Data](#)
- [ID6501 - Responsive Website Design](#)
- [ID6502 - 3D Environments](#)
- [ID6503 - Advanced Interaction Design](#)
- [ID6504 - User Interface and User Experience](#)
- [NI6501 - Networking II – LAN](#)
- [NI6502 - Networking III – Campus](#)
- [NI6503 - Unified Infrastructure Services](#)
- [NI6504 - Cloud Computing](#)
- [SD6501 - Mobile Application Development](#)
- [SD6502 - Programming II](#)
- [SD6503 - Testing and Secure Coding](#)
- [SD6504 - Game Development](#)

Level 7

- [CS7501 - Information Security III](#)

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- [CS7502 - Special Topic in Cyber Security](#)
- [DS7501 - Data Mining for Business Analytics](#)
- [DS7502 - Data Warehouse Design and Implementation](#)
- [ID7501 - Advanced Interface Technologies](#)
- [ID7502 - Human Computer Interaction](#)
- [NI7501 - Current topic in Networking and Infrastructure](#)
- [NI7502 - Emerging topic in Networking and Infrastructure](#)
- [SD7501 - Web Application Development](#)
- [SD7502 - Intelligent Systems Development](#)
- [IT7506 - Testing Automation](#)
- [IT7508 - Internship](#)

Career options

Graduates of the Graduate Diploma in 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.

Depending on the course set chosen by students, graduate opportunities include:

Cyber Security

Security analyst, security administrator, incident responder, information assurance analyst, or other information/cyber security-related roles, including support roles such as service desk.

Applied Data Science

Business intelligence analyst, data management and analytics, database developer, marketing data analytics, systems analyst, business, data analyst and reporting analyst.

Interaction Design

Product designer IT, designer in emerging technologies, IT test planning, user experience designer, user interface designer, user experience researcher, front-end web developer design integrator.

Networking and Infrastructure

Network engineer, systems engineer, systems engineer/cloud support, ICT support technician, network support, network administrator, or service desk support.

Software Development

Full stack developer, web developer, analyst programmer, business analyst, .Net developer, software developer, mobile application developer, game developer, system and software tester.

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Entry requirements

Domestic

Bachelor Degree in a relevant discipline or equivalent practical, professional or educational experience.

An applicant with a Bachelor degree in an unrelated discipline may be granted entry at the discretion of the Programme Manager where it is considered that the applicant has a reasonable chance of succeeding in the qualification.

International

All applicants must have a level of English sufficient to be able to study at this level. Those learners whose first language is not English should have IELTS overall academic score of at least 6.0 (with at least 5.5 in each band) issued within the last two years or equivalent.

Find your country's [equivalent academic entry requirements here](#)

**International fee displayed is for 1 year of study (equivalent to 120 credits) and does not include insurance, administration and student service fees. For more details, please email: international@wandw.ac.nz.*

Where you will learn

This qualification will be taught at both [Petone](#) and [Porirua](#) campuses.

[Course selection sheet](#)

