

MEDIA RELEASE

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From Masters to MetService: first-ever Masters of Meteorology students graduate this week

This week saw the first graduates from the Masters in Meteorology cross the stage at a Victoria University of Wellington graduation ceremony.

Eight students graduated from the only Master of Meteorology programme available in the country, run collaboratively by Victoria University and MetService. The programme sees students employed fulltime by MetService, learning academic and theoretical diagnostic and forecasting skills at the University, and then implementing those skills in MetService's state-of-the-art teaching laboratory.

Recent graduates Ashlee Parkes and Lewis Ferris valued the combination of the practical and theoretical.

"I have always wondered what makes the weather behave the way it does," Lewis says. "When I heard that Victoria University offered a Master's programme with a practical component, I knew what career I had to pursue. The instructors were very knowledgeable and the small class size meant we progressed really fast."

"I always wanted to work in applied physics, but there aren't many opportunities to do that," Ashlee says. "Working while I studied made me more passionate about the topic and kept me looking forward to a career in the field."

This programme is an extension of the current relationship between Victoria University and MetService.

"Victoria University has a long-standing record of providing teaching and research opportunities in meteorology," says Dr Jim McGregor, Programme Director for Meteorology. "By partnering with MetService, we can offer a Master's degree that provides the depth of knowledge and understanding that a modern meteorologist needs."

The programme has been highly successful so far, Dr McGregor says.

"We've received overseas interest from potential students, particularly from South Pacific national meteorological services, for the next intake in 2019."

The students were employed by MetService during their studies, and MetService also covered all fees from the programme.

“MetService and Victoria University have a long-standing relationship built around expertise in meteorology,” says Peter Lennox, MetService chief executive. “The Master’s programme brings that expertise together in support of a world-class meteorology qualification, the only one of its kind in New Zealand.”

The students attended graduation this week, and then it was straight back into the forecasting room – all eight now have fulltime jobs at MetService.

Both Ashlee and Lewis found the transition into fulltime work challenging but fun.

“It seemed daunting at first, but it became clear pretty soon that the work we did during our studies and our full-time jobs are very similar, so I felt well-prepared,” Lewis says.

“It is fantastic to welcome the first class of graduates into fulltime employment at MetService,” says Mr Lennox.

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Victoria University of Wellington: Capital thinking. Globally minded.



About MetService

The MetService group is a State-Owned Enterprise (SOE) and commercial entity that provides World Meteorological Organization (WMO) standard weather services in New Zealand. It includes MetService New Zealand, MetraWeather and MetOceans Solutions Ltd. MetService is the one agency officially responsible for issuing national warnings for severe weather.

Image caption

Back row - left to right - Lewis Ferris - Peter Lennox - James McGregor - Andrew James - Ashlee Parkes - Chris Webster
Front row - left to right - Melissa Oosterwijk - Jessie Owen - Juliane Bergdolt - Tahlia Crabtree - Kathryn Boorman