

Careers for Islamic Studies Majors

There are a great many career fields which build on studies in Islamic Studies. In exploring options, reflect on the skills you have developed through your Bachelor of Arts and whether it is appropriate to complement these with more specialised skills in a postgraduate program.

What skills and knowledge do I develop by studying Islamic Studies?

The Islamic Studies major is part of a liberal arts program offered at undergraduate level at the University of Melbourne. It provides students an opportunity to study the development of Islamic history, civilisation and culture from an interdisciplinary perspective. Students will gain insight into and understanding of key areas associated with Islamic Studies such as the foundation texts, early and modern history, philosophical and political thought, Muslim societies in majority and minority contexts, unity and diversity, as well as ethnicity and identity.

Depending on the subjects you have chosen you will have built up skills in written and oral communication, working in collaboration with your peers, presenting your work to a group, working to deadlines, as well as skills in intercultural understanding and social and cultural analysis. You may additionally have undertaken an overseas exchange program as part of your Islamic Studies program or Bachelor of Arts. This should provide you with practical experience of Muslim societies and cultures.

Graduates of Islamic Studies programs seek work in a variety of careers, including but not limited to government and public service, international relations, NGOs, teaching, defence and security, journalism, business, and academic research. You may seek a general post for Bachelor of Arts graduates, or you may decide to undertake a Graduate Diploma or Masters by coursework in a specialist area (see below). In some of these programs you may well be able to take up or continue your study of language such as Arabic or Indonesian (eg. the Master of International Relations). You can also seek to enrol in a one-year full-time Honours program. This is open to Islamic Studies majors who have also completed a major in another area such as Politics or History. Some employers value Honours graduates very highly.

What careers build on these skills and knowledge?

The table below lists a range of careers which make use of studies in Islamic Studies. The list is not definitive – depending on your own interests and experiences, there may well be other ways to build on your major.

More information on many of these career areas is available at: http://careers.unimelb.edu.au/student/online_career_tools/exploring_your_options
(Career Exploration - Career Links by Degree – Arts)

Next Steps

The table also provides some information about ‘next steps’ ie what you might need to do to start a career in the particular field, specifically whether graduate study is required or whether immediate employment is possible.

There are two employment types for Bachelor graduates:

- General employment positions suitable for new graduates
- Graduate Employment Programs

Graduate Employment Programs are offered by some employers – generally large commercial organisations and government. Graduate Employment Program positions are jobs that include a substantial component of training and development. Recruitment for these programs takes place early in the year (around March-May). Final year tertiary students and recent grads can apply. For some of the career areas discussed, Graduate Employment programs are available.

For more information on Graduate Employment Programs:

http://careers.unimelb.edu.au/student/find_a_job/professional_and_graduate_work

Career field	Employment setting	Next Steps: Employment and/or graduate study
Business	The private sector, government sector, think tanks	Graduate studies such as the Executive Master of Arts or Master of Management (Marketing).
Public policy – analysis, research, advice, planning	Government/Public Service Policy institutes, think-tanks NGOs, special interest organisations	Honours in Islamic Studies combined with another discipline such as Politics, Sociology, Arabic Studies etc. Graduate study eg Master of Development Studies, Master of Public Policy and Management. Graduate research study path – Honours/Masters/PhD (Research Assistant roles require Honours minimum).
Research – academic positions or research only roles	Universities, research institutes/centres, think-tanks	Graduate research study – Honours, Masters and/or PhD (Research Assistant roles generally require Honours minimum)
International Relations/Diplomacy	Government/Public Service	Graduate study such as Master of International Relations. Honours in Islamic Studies combined with another discipline. Careers in departments eg DFAT, Defence and Immigration. All Australian Public

	International NGOs	Servant departments have an 'international desk'.
Defence and Security	Government/Public Service – specific departments and agencies eg Defence, AFP, ASIO	Honours in Islamic Studies combined with another discipline such as Politics or Sociology, Arabic Studies etc. Graduate study eg Master of International Relations. Graduate research study path – Honours/Masters/PhD (Research Assistant roles require Honours minimum).
International Development	Development NGOs, government departments and agencies	Graduate study eg Master of Development Studies, Master of Public Policy and Management.
Law	Law firms Public Service In-house legal advice	Graduate study – Law
Journalism and Media	Media organisations – television, radio, online and print	Graduate study – Journalism Some cadetships possible for non-media/journalism graduates – most likely in rural/regional areas
Teaching/ Educating	Secondary schools Universities	Graduate study – Teaching (requires studies to cover 2 'learning areas') Graduate research study path – Honours/Masters/PhD

What other careers could I consider?

Islamic Studies majors may also pursue careers which are not directly related to the study of Islamic Studies but make use of transferable skills and/or pick up on other interests.

- **Careers via graduate study** – many careers are available via graduate study which is accessible to Bachelor of Arts graduates; these include both Arts-related careers eg Journalism, Information Management/Librarianship, International Development; and careers in more diverse fields such as Urban Planning, Nursing, Information Systems, Accounting.
- **Careers via Graduate Employment Programs** - in addition to government, some other large organisations have programs open to all disciplines where graduates are generally recruited for general management careers. Some management consultancies also consider applicants from all disciplines. Opportunities are advertised (generally early each year) on *Careers Online*, and graduate recruitment sites eg Graduate Opportunities, GradConnection.
- **Overseas work in Asia and the Middle East.** Australian graduates are increasingly finding work as expatriates in Asian and Middle Eastern countries in the private sector. Various online companies can assist you find work overseas, eg.

<http://mycareer.com.au/jobs/asia-pacific/-/-/>

Where can I find out more?

Further information on career areas:

http://careers.unimelb.edu.au/student/online_career_tools/exploring_your_options

(Career Exploration - Career Links by Degree – Arts)

Graduate study at University of Melbourne:

<http://futurestudents.unimelb.edu.au/courses/graduate>

<http://graduate.arts.unimelb.edu.au/>

<http://government.unimelb.edu.au/>

Researching courses which are not offered at Melbourne: www.myfuture.edu.au