

Graduate Diploma in Not for Profit Management

This is a qualification for managers, coordinators and board members working in Community, Voluntary and Tangata Whenua organisations. Designed with busy managers and community development workers in mind, this is a part-time programme with six day courses in two blocks of three days. The programme consists of eight courses exploring the fundamentals of leading and managing in a complex community setting.



For anyone wanting to start on the programme in 2012, you need to enrol in the **Values Based Management and Leadership in the NFP Sector** course, but you can take the Leading and Facilitating Teams course prior if you wish to. Once you have completed the Values course you can continue on with any others until the Leading Change course towards the end of your study. Dunedin courses on offer in 2012:

- **Leading and Facilitating Teams** 29 February - 2 March and 26- 28 March - a great practical set of skills for anyone's toolbox!
- **Values Based Management and Leadership in the Not for Profit Sector** - 7 - 9 May and 11-13 June - laying the foundation that the rest of the programme builds on
- **Influencing Public Policy and Social Change** - 10- 12 September and 15- 17 October - plan your strategy for changing the world here!

All courses 9am - 4.30 pm each of the six days at the Mornington Presbyterian Community Centre. Further details of the other courses available nationally are on the Unitec website.

Here's what four recent local graduates (*Bernie Lepper*, Manager, Central Otago REAP; *Sue Murray*, Manager of the Yellow Eyed Penguin Trust; *Irene Mosley*, Community Development consultant, Balclutha and *Stuart Gray*, Regional Advisor Funding , Family and Community Services, say about some of the **benefits of this programme:**

The learning and examples were directly relevant to this sector and the exercises, projects and assignments were specifically designed around my organisation. This allowed me to instantly improve both my own and organizational performance through the skills I had learnt (Sue)

For me this programme taught me the theory behind the practical knowledge I already had. It gave me a great understanding of the bigger picture, this is something that can be lost if you only work in your own circles all the time (Irene)

I enjoyed how the course gave me time and permission to think about what I was doing and to see that there were actually theories and practices out there that confirmed that I was on the right track. (Bernie)

The Graduate Diploma is very hands on but the theoretical underpinnings of the teaching are also emphasized. The course materials including readings, research, tools and templates are of an extremely high quality, capturing best practice examples from Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally resulting in the student having a veritable library of resources to draw upon and one to return to repeatedly as required. (Stuart)

But how did you find the time in a busy workload?

I liked the short block courses, that was far easier to manage than a paper that required work the whole year. (Irene)

Like many it was often a rush at the end to get the assignment finished. However I really enjoyed the opportunity of the 3 then 2 days of class time, where I could be right away from the office and indulge myself in new learning and surround myself with people who were not necessarily part of my normal working life. (Bernie)

Barriers of time always exist and the busiest people as we all know get the most work done. The programme allows you to go at your own pace. When I could cope I did 3 papers in one year, when I started a new job I dropped this down to one a year but it was always very manageable. (Stuart)

It wasn't easy! But there are always priorities on ones workload, and the value of the learning from this programme meant it took a higher place in the times needed to both attend courses and complete tasks. The supportive nature I experienced from the Unitec team greatly assisted in this process but I needed to keep focused and organized to meet deadlines and did this by consciously sticking to diary dates for both programme attendance and homework tasks (Sue)

What was it like going “back to school” later in life?

The learning environment is very collegial, you are working closely often in group settings with other managers and leaders of organisations. The value of this learned experience cannot be underestimated and the relationships, knowledge shared and created can sustain your working life. The rich networking opportunity allows you to engage with people who are in similar positions often facing similar issues, sharing knowledge and developing workable solutions together.

The teaching style is accessible, cooperative and dynamic covering community leadership – leading and facilitating teams, people motivation, financial management, community funding, influencing policy, governance/strategy and leading change, an essential jig-saw that builds a comprehensive picture of the sector and its vital components. (Stuart)

Rather daunting when it came to writing an assignment at the start however the support of the group and the tutor soon overcame any doubts. The relevance of the topics to my working life and the collegial support meant that the experience was an exciting and enjoyable learning journey. (Bernie)

Yes it was challenging at times – especially the reading of a lot of theoretical material which wasn't necessarily my first choice of reading. We had a peer mentor group that encouraged the learning and was interactive and supportive. The value of learning with others in similar positions in their organisations was for me an additional learning I had not thought about receiving and was hugely rewarding and beneficial to the whole learning process. (Sue)

What would you say to someone thinking about joining this learning community?

Go for it, I have thoroughly enjoyed the learning, the friendships and the networking that this programme provided. It would be one of the most useful courses I have ever undertaken. (Irene)

As senior leaders within organisations we must be committed to remaining open to learning and managing change.... much like what we might hope or desire for the clients/whanau that we work with: the responsibility of leadership. The learning community provided by the Unitec course helps equip you with the necessary experiences, skills, resources and relationships to become a more effective person and leader of change (Stuart)

Give it a go! I was at a stage where I had used all the natural skills I had, therefore it was important for my growth to take on new learning. This programme allowed me to learn new information, make new friends and feel more confident in what I do.(Bernie)

Start the programme now! I had been in the not-for-sector for several years before entering the programme and wished it had been available when I had started my career in the NFP sector. (Sue)

What does it cost and how could I make it affordable for me?

The fees are approximately \$650 per course, and you do 8 courses, so that's just over \$5000 in total, spread over a number of years. You can apply for scholarship support towards these costs, but you need to get your enrolment underway early, as demand on the scholarship pool is high!

OK, so I am keen, what do I do now?

You need to enrol NOW...here's the people and places that can guide you through that process:

- Go to Unitec's website www.unitec.ac.nz for more detail about the courses, locations, scholarship application forms (look under quicklinks) and enrolment forms
- You can contact Margy-Jean Malcolm, the local Dunedin tutor – on mmalcolm@unitec.ac.nz or 021 832 976 or 03 474 1990 to discuss any questions about the courses, enrolment, scholarships, etc
- Or talk to COSS Dunedin, the local host organisation on 03 471 6177 or admin@councilofsocialexperiences.org.nz