

Academic Career Advancement Programme (ACAP) 2026

What is ACAP?

ACAP is a sought-after annual programme that provides candidates with the opportunity to explore key aspects of academic life, build interdisciplinary relationships with academics across the University, and get a head start in the academic job market.

ACAP elements

1. Orientation Morning is an opportunity for participants to get to know each other. Held during Orientation Week, it provides an introduction to the programme and prepares participants for their role in the regular seminars.
2. Regular seminars are co-facilitated by participants and cover key aspects of academic careers such as research, teaching and professionalism. Where relevant, careers external to academia will also be discussed.

Notes about the programme

1. Tuition is funded by the Academic Career Advancement Award.
2. You will need to have a conversation with your supervisor before you apply.
3. Your supervisor will need to provide a reference letter in support of your application, and they will be notified when you apply for the programme.
4. There is a competitive selection process where priority is given to mid-phase doctoral students who have completed their provisional goals. You must have been confirmed by 1 February in the year in which you join ACAP, and your final submission date must not be before November of the same year. Due to the high number of applications, meeting these criteria does not guarantee you a place.
5. Due to limited availability, participants will only be accepted into either the Academic Career Advancement Programme (ACAP) or the Doctoral Entrepreneurial Leadership Programme (DELP).
6. Participants must be prepared to attend all seminars on City Campus, and co-facilitate a seminar on one of the topics listed below. Seminars are normally held on Wednesdays during term time.

ACAP schedule for 2026

1. **Wednesday 25 February (9am-1pm):**

Orientation: Planning your ACAP Year

Meet other ACAP participants, get an introduction to the programme, and prepare for your role in the regular seminars.

2. **Wednesday 4 March (10am to 1pm):**

Becoming an Academic

Get started in academia with confidence. We will discuss adapting to the University environment as an early career academic and examine resources that will help you to plan your entry pathway.

3. **Wednesday 18 March (10am to 1pm):**

Presentation Skills

Giving a great presentation is key to getting your message across in a variety of both academic and industry contexts.

4. **Wednesday 1 April (10am to 1pm):**

Academic Citizenship

Engaging with opportunities to be an active citizen of your institution and the wider educational community can be rewarding. Explore the University as an organisation, including its structure (departments, faculties and centrally) and the purpose of committees. Understanding the key policies that impact on research and teaching is essential for maintaining academic integrity.

5. **Wednesday 22 April (10am to 1pm):**

Student Engagement

When students are engaged in learning, their focus and motivation increases. Discuss ways to develop meaningful learning experiences in a variety of environments: small classes, large lectures and online spaces. Explore the impact of assessment methods on student engagement.

6. **Wednesday 13 May (10am to 1pm):**

Innovation in Teaching

Educators innovate teaching practices to improve student learning outcomes. What is innovation in teaching and why is it important? How can teachers and students create innovative learning spaces? How can we look at teaching problems differently in order to solve them? What does the future hold for learning?

7. **Wednesday 10 June (10am to 1pm):**

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Understanding how to research your teaching will improve your practice and contribute to the growing field called the Scholarship of Learning and Teaching (SoTL). Explore the SoTL process of researching teaching and learning within the disciplines and learn how to develop questions that can be researched.

8. Wednesday 1 July (10am to 1pm):

The Teaching Profile and Evidence

Now is the time to begin developing your teaching profile. Discuss approaches to developing an academic CV and a teaching profile that will underpin applications for employment and promotion. Understanding the impact of teaching is essential for student success. Therefore, a key element of the teaching profile will be the evidence that shows the impact of your teaching. Explore methods for gathering that evidence and writing it up.

9. Wednesday 22 July (10am to 1pm):

Getting Research Funding

Securing research funding is a challenging but crucial part of being a researcher, so we'll explore the process for early career researchers. We will cover identifying funding opportunities, knowing when to apply, creating a funding plan, identifying a mentor and/or collaborators, the keys to writing a successful application and what to do if your application is rejected.

10. Wednesday 5 August (10am to 1pm):

Getting Published

Writing and publishing a journal article is about to get a whole lot easier! Understand the review process, the role of journal editors and reviewers, and how to respond to reviewers' comments. Identify the most appropriate journals for your research area and the potential resulting impact on your research profile.

11. Wednesday 26 August (10am to 1pm):

Broader Dissemination of Research

Disseminating your research to a wider audience can provide opportunities for collaboration. Explore strategies for networking and presenting at international forums, engaging with the public through media and social media, and partnering with government, iwi and industry.

12. Wednesday 16 September (10am to 1pm):

The Research Profile and Evidence

Now is the time to begin developing your research profile. It will underpin your applications for employment, funding and PBRF (Performance Based Research Fund) reporting. Explore strategies for developing a long-term research plan for academic and industry-based careers and for contributing to the wider research environment.

13. Wednesday 30 September (10am to 1pm):

Career Planning

To ensure success, you need a plan. What does the job market look like for PhDs? How do you go about getting the job you want? Explore ways of representing yourself well in applications for postdocs or for academic, professional or industry jobs.

14. Wednesday 7 October (10am to 1pm):

Reflection and Graduation