

What do pathways in the humanities look like in the real world?

The skills and knowledge that you are learning in Civics and Citizenship – skills like critical thinking and using evidence to support your perspective, as well as knowledge about the contemporary world – are powerful. This fact sheet includes information and profiles about interesting and rewarding careers where people use their political and sociological skills and knowledge.

Humanities skills are in demand in all industries

Did you know that leaders in business, politics and the non-profit sector are extremely likely to have humanities degrees?

In Australia, an impressive two-thirds of chief executive officers (CEOs) of Australian Stock Exchange (ASX)-listed businesses – the leaders of some of our biggest companies – completed degrees in the humanities. And it isn't just leadership roles that require these skills. Humanities skills and knowledge are in demand in the other jobs as well.

Many employers are looking for people with transferable skills like critical thinking, evaluating evidence and decision-making – exactly the kinds of skills you are building in Civics and Citizenship.





Career profile: Mahad

Role: Public health officer with the Department of Health

'When I was a teenager, I didn't know what I wanted to do. But once I engaged in the social sciences it helped me understand where I wanted to take things, which is why I studied public health.'

Mahad is helping to control the COVID-19 outbreak by tracing the contacts of people who have been exposed to or diagnosed with the virus. He is doing valuable and rewarding work that uses humanities skills like critical thinking and evaluating evidence. Mahad uses knowledge about contemporary society, built through subjects like Civics and Citizenship, to understand the communities that he works with. To help him build skills and confidence, he completed a community leadership program and volunteered, which also helped him grow his networks.

How does knowledge about contemporary society help Mahad with his work?

'Knowledge about contemporary society plays a major role in my work for the state government. We deal with people from different backgrounds and communities, so it's important to understand how they do things and how we do things so we can find middle ground. It's also a major asset in terms of career progression by helping you understand how the organisation works, as well.'



Career profile: Etienne

Role: Field officer in the federal public service

In his current role as field officer, Etienne travels around Victoria interviewing people and gathering data on a range of topics, which is used to help businesses, governments and non-profits understand Australian society better. Etienne has always been interested in politics and society, so he completed a degree in International Studies – but he's been surprised by the twists and turns that his career has taken. After he finished studying, Etienne worked in media monitoring but the role became automated while he was working there. Luckily, Etienne had developed transferable skills and knowledge, which meant he could easily move to a new role in another industry.

What does Etienne think about building transferable skills and knowledge?

'I think one of the strengths of learning something to do with the humanities, arts, politics, sociology is that we're shifting into an economy of knowledge and skills where being multidisciplinary is going to be a big advantage, and limiting yourself to one hard skill, especially at a time when the job market is going through such radical change and that job may not exist in five to ten years' time is essentially limiting what you're capable of.'



Career profile: Urvi

Role: Creative workshops producer with Footscray Community Arts, stand-up comedian and writer for Channel 10's The Project

As a creative workshops producer, Urvi combines her interests in the arts, education and community to coordinate artistic workshops and programs. Urvi was passionate about the arts and humanities when she was a student, but she had heard that the job prospects were not good. She stuck to the subjects that interested her, pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree. Urvi then trained as a teacher and worked in education until her talent for stand-up comedy and her continued love of the arts drew her to begin writing and to seek out more creative work.

How can knowledge about politics and society help you make decisions?

'The knowledge and skills that I developed about politics and society through my interest at school, through the subjects that I did, as well as in university, really help me ground to who I am and what my values are. I'm really interested in looking at the ethics of that and how it can really engage with communities.'

Wait, is politics connected to comedy as well?

'It helps me to have my values to begin with and then use them to analyse the discrepancies in what's going on in society around us. As you might notice, not everything makes sense. And often that's funny, so we laugh at it.'