

Studying in New Zealand

In New Zealand, we invite students from around the world to “Learn More, Stress Less”. Almost 100,000 international students come to New Zealand each year to pursue their studies and to experience a lifestyle that is warm, welcoming and relaxed. The high quality of the education offered in New Zealand, combined with a safe learning environment, makes New Zealand an ideal choice for students who want to combine a valuable qualification with an unrivalled overseas experience.

The high quality of New Zealand’s education system is recognised in a large number of countries so students can either progress to further education in New Zealand or other English speaking nations, or move to further study or employment back in their home countries easily.

Studying in New Zealand is about more than getting a good education. The school system is well-respected around the world, and very consistent between schools. But a student who comes to New Zealand goes home with more than just a qualification. Most will tell you that their experience of the culture, landscape and lifestyle in New Zealand was as important to them as their schooling there. It’s that complete experience that makes the trip worthwhile.

New Zealand is around the same size as Japan or the Britain, but with a population of just over 4 million. That leaves a lot of open space, and a chance for every single person to make their mark. Smaller cities, smaller classes, and a more relaxed approach to life influence the student experience all around the country.

New Zealand Qualifications

Education in New Zealand focuses on equipping students with skills and knowledge essential for their career on a global scale.

The New Zealand Government works with officials worldwide to ensure our qualifications are recognised. This provides you with an assurance that whether you continue studying in New Zealand or move to another country’s education system, you will be able to credit your New Zealand qualification towards your future study.

The National Certificate of Educational Achievement programme (NCEA) is New Zealand’s main national qualification for secondary students. However, international qualifications considered equivalent are accepted.

New Zealand’s university degrees and other tertiary qualifications are recognised around the world. Students who gain tertiary qualifications in New Zealand can use them as a step towards further education in other countries, or as final qualifications to put to work in the international job market.

Quality Assurance

New Zealand has an excellent centrally-managed quality assurance system. All institutions enrolling international students must be registered and maintain very high standards of course quality and pastoral care.

This system means students can move between sectors of education easily. A student can begin their New Zealand education in a secondary school and move through to tertiary study by only providing evidence of identity and a single sheet of paper outlining their NZQA (New Zealand Qualifications Authority) approved qualifications.

Similarly, a student can move between tertiary education providers easily as the system ensures papers or qualifications completed can be credited to their new institution. Flexibility and choice are among the appealing features of a New Zealand education. Where needed, English courses can be arranged to bring a student's ability up to the required standard for entrance.

All New Zealand institutions who enrol international students must be a signatory to the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students.

This system creates a depth of quality right across all educational offerings. A student contemplating study within New Zealand does not have to worry about which institution to study at so much as which course and part of New Zealand they want to be in.

The New Zealand Difference

In New Zealand, we pride ourselves on being inventive and thinking outside the box. This is seen in our educational system, as we encourage students to think for themselves and solve problems together. We find this more practical than memorisation or rote learning. Lively discussion and debate are part of the normal classroom experience here.

With a New Zealand education, students are able to enter the competitive working world prepared to face difficult decisions and complex problems.

Also, New Zealand's smaller population means that students have more personal experience here. Class sizes are smaller, cities are compact and easy to get around, and nobody gets lost in the crowd. International students here are often surprised by the amount of personal attention they receive from their teachers and lecturers, giving them a chance to make the most of their education.

Universities

There are eight universities in New Zealand, and all are research based and state owned. New Zealand's universities are performing very highly on a global level, and New Zealand has a higher percentage of its universities listed in the Times Higher Education Top 500 and the Shanghai Jiao Tong Top 500 world universities than any other English-speaking countries.

New Zealand universities offer courses from certificate level through to PhD. The academic year is from March to November. July start dates may be available for some courses. Summer semester courses (January to March) may also be available.

Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics (ITPs)

New Zealand Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics are state owned. There are 18 spread throughout the country, some with multiple campuses in different cities.

New Zealand ITPs offer courses that are equivalent in merit to those offered in New Zealand universities. ITPs offer courses from certificate level, with some offering full degree and postgraduate level studies.

The academic year is from March to November. July start dates may be available for some courses.

Private Training Establishments (PTEs)

There are a large number of private training establishments throughout New Zealand. Some PTEs run courses in a particular discipline, such as business, IT or travel and tourism. Often, these courses allow students to complete a qualification more quickly than other types of institution.

All PTEs are all required to be registered with NZQA to ensure they meet quality standards. Most run on a similar timetable to state tertiary institutions.

English Language Providers

Most tertiary and private English language providers have flexible course commencement dates throughout the year.

Many international students enrol in English for academic study courses prior to formal academic studies. Special English language courses are available throughout the year, and range from 4 weeks to 12 months in duration.

Foundation Studies

A number of New Zealand's tertiary institutions and some secondary schools offer foundation studies. These are generally an introduction to the New Zealand education system and courses are particularly useful in preparing students to enter the tertiary education system.

Secondary Schools and Colleges

Most New Zealand secondary schools are state (government) owned but a small percentage are private or integrated (receiving some state funding) and may be single sex or affiliated to a particular religion. Many schools welcome international students, who either board at school hostels, or are hosted by homestay families.

New Zealand secondary schools are typically for students aged 13 – 18 (Years 9 – 13).

The academic year runs from February to mid-December with breaks in April, July and September.