



# Explore Your Education Pathway in Christchurch



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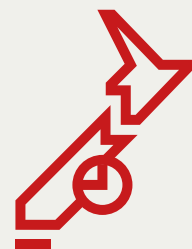
Thinking about your future, and where to study after finishing high school? Ōtautahi Christchurch is home to three world-class universities and an institute of skills and technology with close connections between institutions and industry.



Let us help you explore your pathway and make Ōtautahi Christchurch your choice for the future.



# Why You Should Consider a Christchurch Pathway



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## 01

**Make the most of the support network you have** – tertiary study is full of new experiences. A new campus, new subjects, systems and teaching staff, new friends, and more independence. Make the new experiences easier for yourself with the comfort of familiar faces. You can meet your old host family, your friends from school, and they can help you through your new experiences. This will help you to relax, settle into the new environment and focus on your studies.

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## 02

**Check things out in person** – there's nothing better than doing a campus tour, meeting the staff who will take care of you, talking to their students, and seeing where you might live. Make personal connections and feel comfortable launching into your tertiary study adventure.

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## 03

**Enjoy familiar surroundings** – you know Christchurch and Canterbury. No need to worry about learning a new transport system, understanding a different accent, adjusting to a new climate. Instead, you can focus your energy on succeeding in your studies.

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## 04

**Make the most of your connections** – the contacts you've built up in Christchurch during your studies could help you find a great job after you finish your studies.



The education system in New Zealand is probably different to the system in your home country. The information in this section will help you understand the New Zealand secondary and tertiary system.



# NCEA

The National Certificate of Achievement (NCEA) is the main qualification for secondary school students in New Zealand. You can be confident that you can use NCEA towards future study either in New Zealand or another country. Students with NCEA Level 3 have gained access to famous, high quality universities in New Zealand and around the world.

If you achieve NCEA Level 3 with University Entrance you can enrol to study at any New Zealand university. To gain University Entrance students need all of the following:

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## NCEA Level 3

14 credits in each of three approved subjects at Level 3. Check the [NZQA website for the list of approved subjects](#) ↗

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## UE Literacy

10 credits at Level 2 or above, made up of:  
5 credits in reading  
5 credits in writing

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## UE Numeracy

10 credits at Level 1 or above (the same as the requirement for NCEA numeracy).

It is really important to choose the right subjects and plan your NCEA journey for your future, so you can meet the entry requirements of the course you want to do. Seek advice from your school's International Department or Careers Department when choosing your subjects for NCEA.

# Types of Providers

We have many different tertiary providers in Christchurch. Learn more about what they offer, and how they are different in this section. Sometimes the area you want to study (like Business) is available at more than one institution, and you can choose the best provider and course for you.

However, some specialist qualifications like Engineering, Viticulture and Nursing are only offered at certain institutions and campuses.

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## Universities

University courses traditionally focus on teaching academic subjects, but many now include work placements and internships. They typically offer a mix of general degrees, such as a Bachelor of Arts or Commerce, as well as some more specialist degrees such as Engineering and Agricultural Science.

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## Institute of Skills and Technology

Te Pūkenga - The New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology deliver world-class applied and vocational higher education and training. Study programmes are designed, developed, and delivered in partnership with industry and employers to ensure they are relevant to the future of work, and produce graduates that have the knowledge, cultural competency and skills that are in high demand around the world.

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## Private Training Establishments

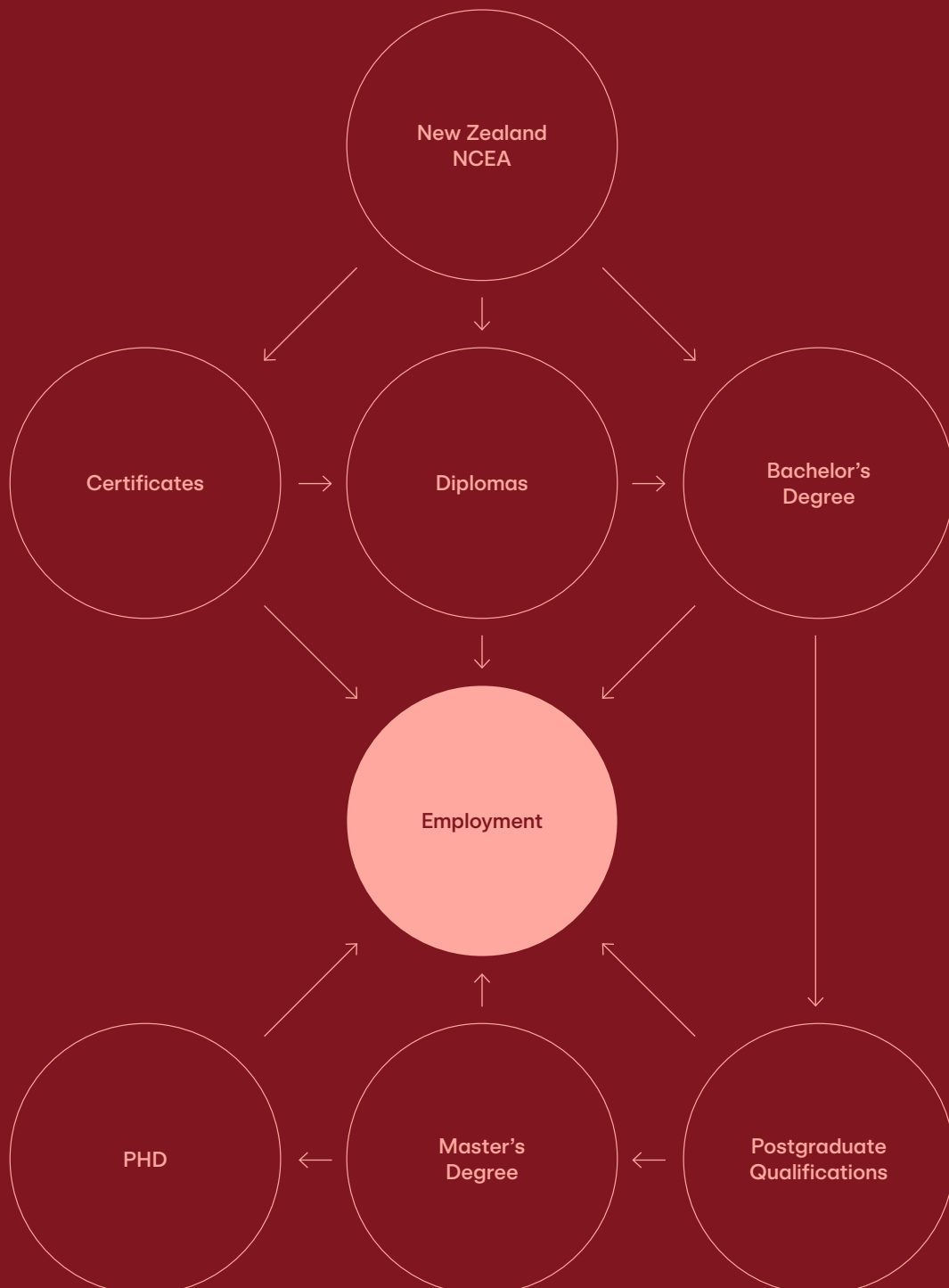
Private Training Establishments can offer study options ranging from vocational study to degrees. While some PTE's offer a variety of subjects, some focus on more specific areas like Rural Animal Technology.



# Qualification Levels & Types:

There are 10 qualification levels in New Zealand, which start with NCEA in secondary school at Levels 1,2 and 3. The qualifications you'll gain here through NCEA are highly regarded and sought-after by employers and other educational institutions around the world.

Generally, a higher level of qualification will get you a job with a higher salary. For example, 10 years after graduating, people with Level 1 to 4 certificates usually earn 15% more than the average income. However, people with Bachelor's degrees (Level 7 and above) usually earn 67% more than the average income.



**Coming to New Zealand for secondary school**  
[NZQA ↗](#)

**How to choose NCEA subjects**  
[careers.govt.nz ↗](#)

**Choosing a course or subjects at school**  
[NZQA ↗](#)

# Types & Levels of Tertiary Qualifications

Type of Qualification	Course length
Certificate	6 months to 1 year
Diploma	1 to 2 years
Bachelor's Degree	3 years
Bachelor's Degree with Honours	4 years
Postgraduate qualifications	varies
Master's Degree	1 to 2 years
PhD	4 years or more

Qualification Level	Certificate	Diploma	Degree
1	Certificate		
2	Certificate		
3	Certificate		
4	Certificate		
5	Certificate	Diploma	
6	Certificate	Diploma	
7	Certificate	Graduate Diploma or Diploma	Bachelor's Degree
8		Postgraduate Diploma	Bachelor Honours Degree
9			Master's Degree
10			Doctoral Degree (PhD)

# Lincoln University

## University

Lincoln University provides accelerated and flexible pathway programmes to an undergraduate degree, as well as a special English language school if you need to improve your English before starting your studies.



**LINCOLN**  
UNIVERSITY  
TE WHARE WĀNAKA O AORAKI

New Zealand's smallest university, and that's a huge advantage

Enjoy a more personal learning environment and much more face-to-face contact with lecturers

Ranked 17th best in the world in small university category

Top 100 in Agriculture (QS rankings)

QS 5 stars rating in employability, facilities, internationalisation, inclusiveness and teaching and research

1st in the New Zealand University Employment Outcomes Rankings and 48th globally (QS rankings 2023)

Agriculture, Horticulture & Viticulture

Business

Environment

Food, Wine & Beer

Accelerated Degree and English Language Pathways

Landscape Architecture

Science

Sport & Recreation

Tourism

Property and Valuation



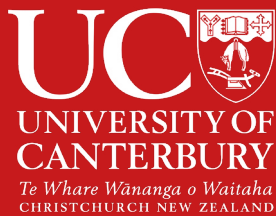
[Check the full list here ↗](#)



# University of Canterbury

## University

UC is the only University in New Zealand that offers a pathway college on campus. UC International College (UCIC) provides an alternative entry point for international students who miss gaining University Entrance. UCIC offers the Foundation Studies Certificate and unique University Transfer Programmes.



In the top 1% of the world's universities

UC is known for its high-quality degrees, research active teaching, and modern facilities.

A range of specialist support services for international students including academic, career pathways, health and mental well-being.

Work placements, internships, and industry connections will help you become involved with the community where you will gain a new cultural awareness, become globally connected, and be highly employable.

UC offers over 100 qualifications in more than 80 different subject areas, across these colleges:

Arts

Business

Education, Health and Human Development

Engineering

Law

Science



[Check the full list here ↗](#)

# Ara Institute of Canterbury

(Business division of New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology - Te Pūkenga)

Institute of Skills and Technology

Ara offers foundation programmes which are stepping stones to further study or a new career. They can equip you with entry level qualifications and academic skills needed for more advanced study. Ara also has a high-quality English language school. You can take a foundation or English language course if you don't meet the entry requirements for the programme you want to study.



Part of the largest institute of technology in New Zealand.

Ara provides a personalised learning experience, one that is flexible and respectful of our students' educational needs and career goals.

The focus is always on balancing theory with practical learning to ensure students are work-ready when they graduate.

Low student to staff ratio.

Pathways for all students regardless of academic results and English language ability.

Most programmes offer work placements or industry projects during study.

English Language

Foundation Study Pathways

Nursing, Midwifery & Medical Imaging

Sustainable Practice

Architectural Studies, Quantity Surveying and Construction Management

Cookery, Tourism & Hospitality Management

Laboratory Technology

Engineering Technology

Computing & ICT

Business & Accounting

Broadcasting

Communications

Performing Arts & Musical Arts

Fashion

Art & Design

Outdoor Education

Applied Science - Human Nutrition, Health Promotion, Sports & Exercise Science

[Check the full list here ↗](#)



# Christchurch's PTE Tertiary Providers

These private tertiary providers are some examples of PTE options in Christchurch. Please check with your school's Careers Department for information on further options.

## NTA

Private Training Establishment

Practical-minded students thrive with the 'hands-on' learning we offer each day.

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Agriculture

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Equine

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Horticulture

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Animal Care Studies

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English Language

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Commercial Pilot License

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Welding

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To provide real life training, NTA also has access to the Arion Farm Park, Arion Riding Centre and a Commercial Nursery.

### English+ Options

## Yoobee Colleges

Private Training Establishment

New Zealand's largest specialised creative and technology institution

Gain an education that opens doors to the best digital and design studios in the world.

A careers team is dedicated to helping students find relevant and sustainable employment when they graduate, as well as meaningful work experience while they study

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Animation

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Digital Innovation

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Creative Media

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Creative Marketing

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Digital Design (Web & Graphic)

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Film & Content Creation

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Film & TV Production

---

Game Art & Development

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Makeup Artistry

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Web & UX Design

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Useful links:

**Other PTE's in Christchurch**  
[christchurchnz.com/study/private-training-establishment/search/?keywords=](https://christchurchnz.com/study/private-training-establishment/search/?keywords=)



# How to get in

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There can be different entry requirements for each tertiary provider and course. You can check the requirements on provider websites, or in their brochures. If you achieve NCEA Level 3 with University Entrance, you can enter most. The requirements can be:

An academic qualification (like NCEA Level 3 with University Entrance)

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Credits in particular school subjects (like at least 14 credits in Level 3 Chemistry)

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An English language level (like IELTS 6.0)

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An age (like 18 years or older)

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A portfolio of work (such as a collection of images, designs etc.)

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An interview and/or a personal statement

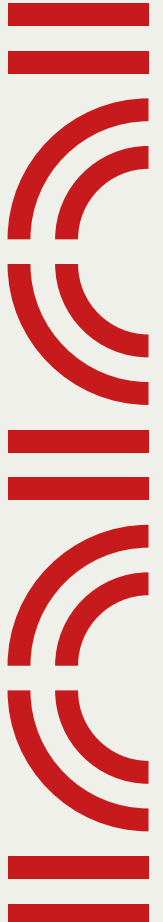


It is very important to check the requirements for courses you are interested in. Understanding them will help you decide which subjects to take at school, and how realistic your tertiary study plans are. Sometimes only a limited number of students can join a course each year, and there may be early deadlines for enrolments.

# Options for Students Without NCEA Level 3 University Entrance

If you don't think you will meet the entry requirements for a tertiary course, there are still pathway options for you. Tertiary providers have preparation, foundation, and transition programmes or introductory courses with lower entry requirements. These will help you gain entry to main tertiary courses.

Your school may be able to help if you are missing NCEA credits for entry requirements. There are a range of providers in Christchurch with English language courses to help you improve your English level. Check with your agent or tertiary provider for their recommendations.



# What Will Student Life Be Like?

## Accommodation Options

After turning 18 years old and finishing secondary school, you have more freedom to decide where to live while you study. It's an important part of your life and choosing the best option will help you succeed at your studies. Here are the most common choices in Christchurch:

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## Tertiary Accommodation/ Halls of Residence

This is a popular option for students in their first year of tertiary study. The accommodation is often located on or very close to the campus, which saves time and makes transport easier. It is quite similar to boarding houses offered by some secondary schools. Sometimes you can choose to include meals with your accommodation, so you don't need to cook. It can also be a good place to make new friends, and meet people you can share accommodation with, in the future. You can usually do a tour or visit before you decide to apply for this choice.

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## Homestay

Homestay is another good choice if you would like some extra support while you study, and gain independence. Some tertiary providers can arrange a host family for you, and there are also companies which specialise in organising homestays.

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## Flatting

Many kiwi students rent a house together and share the costs, which is called 'flatting'. There are many different arrangements for flatting, and you will need a good level of independence to manage various situations. It's a good idea to think about who you will be living with and your relationships, what you need to buy, provide or pay for, what rules there might be, and the length and type of contract.





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# Support Services

Tertiary providers have a comprehensive range of services to help you succeed in your studies and support your wellbeing. These services are often included in your fees, so don't be shy and make sure you try some of them.

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## Learning & Academic Support

If you need help with writing, grammar, punctuation, how to give a presentation, academic writing, and much more this is the place to go. There are often senior (international) students available to mentor and help you with your studies, and staff can help you arrange this.



# Support Services

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## Student Health Centres

On campus you can make an appointment to see a doctor, nurse, counsellor, and sometimes other health professionals. They can help you with your health and wellbeing in a supportive, quality, inclusive and non-judgemental environment.

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## Student Care & Support

Along with the dedicated International staff members, there are experienced and friendly staff to help support you through all aspects of your tertiary life. They can often connect you with other support services available and find the best ways to help you through any challenges you face.

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## Career, Employment & Internship Services

You can receive help to explore your career options, learn how to increase your employability, and identify your strengths. Staff can also give you tips on job-hunting strategies, CV writing, applications, LinkedIn profiles and interview practice. Often there are also events and seminars.

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## Recreation, Clubs & Groups

Most providers have gyms or recreation centres, many groups, clubs and events you can join in. This is an excellent way to stay healthy and make new friends. Many offer fitness classes, equipment to use, and a range of facilities. There are also student clubs, groups and societies that have meetings and do activities together. Orientation week usually includes an event where you can check out which clubs or groups you might like to join.



# FAQs

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## What is orientation day or week?

A programme of events and activities that is usually held the week before courses start each semester. It's a great way to learn about the systems and support available, meet new friends, and celebrate the beginning of a new study journey. Sometimes it's called 'O Week'.

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## Can I have a part time job while I study?

Most students studying on a student visa can work part time while they study. Some students may be able to work full time during their scheduled semester breaks or holidays, like the summer holiday period. Check your student visa for the current work entitlements you have and find out more information on [NauMai](#).

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## What can I do in the summer holidays?

If you are under 18 years old, finishing secondary school, and then starting tertiary study after the summer holidays you will need to make a plan with your current school, tertiary provider, family and agent for the break. During the break you may be able to return to your country for a holiday, stay in your homestay, move into temporary accommodation, or take a short course.

If you are over 18 years old, you might want to work, travel around New Zealand, take summer school classes, or return to your country for a holiday.

**Accommodation**  
[christchurchnz.com](http://christchurchnz.com)

**Housing | NauMaiNZ**  
[studyinnewzealand.govt.nz](http://studyinnewzealand.govt.nz)

**Working on a student visa | NauMaiNZ**  
[studyinnewzealand.govt.nz](http://studyinnewzealand.govt.nz)

**What to expect at university**  
[careers.govt.nz](http://careers.govt.nz)

**What to expect at institute of skills and technology – Te Pūkenga**  
[careers.govt.nz](http://careers.govt.nz)

# What are the main differences between secondary school and tertiary study?

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## High School

The timetable is very structured, classes are organised for students, and attendance is checked.

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Usually there aren't more than 35 students in one class.

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Classmates are all about the same age.

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Teachers will offer you a lot of support, check your homework, remind you of assessments, and give you help and advice.

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## Tertiary

The timetable can vary a lot, depending on your course. You must organise your own classes, and it is your responsibility to attend them.

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There may be hundreds of students in a lecture (class).

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Students can be all different ages.

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Lecturers will expect you to ask for help if you need it, take responsibility for your homework and follow assessment schedules.



# Costs

## Approximate International Tuition Fees at Christchurch Tertiary Providers

Type of Qualification	Cost per year
Certificate	\$25,000 – \$31,000
Diploma	\$23,500 – \$38,000
Bachelor's Degree	\$25,000 – \$46,000
Master's Degree	\$29,000 – \$46,000

## Additional Costs

You will also need to allow money for compulsory costs such as international student insurance, the student services levy (\$900 – \$1500 per year), and course related costs such as textbooks or equipment which depend on your course. Other costs to consider are visa application, parking and printing fees.

## Living Costs

You will need to have a certain amount of money per year for living costs as part of your student visa application. Your living costs will depend on your accommodation choices and lifestyle, but to be comfortable allowing at least \$19,000 – \$25,000 is recommended.



01



02



**Where do I start?**  
[careers.govt.nz](https://careers.govt.nz)

**How to get ideas for your career**  
[careers.govt.nz](https://careers.govt.nz)

**Job profiles**  
[careers.govt.nz](https://careers.govt.nz)

**Salary guide**  
[careers.govt.nz](https://careers.govt.nz)

**Jobs in skill shortage**  
[careers.govt.nz](https://careers.govt.nz)

**Skill shortage – NZ Green List**  
[Immigration New Zealand](https://immigration.govt.nz)

# Career and Work Advice

There is a lot of support available to help you think about what job you want to do in the future. Even if you have some ideas, it's really useful to research it thoroughly before you choose a tertiary course. Your school will have a careers office and the careers advisor will be able to give you advice. They can also recommend tools to help you identify your strengths and interests, how these may connect to jobs and careers, and find more information about them. For jobs you are interested in it's a good idea to consider:

What tasks and type of work the job involves. Will you enjoy it?

Average pay (when you first start the job, and after 3, 5, 10 years)

Qualifications and study required to get into the job – how long will it take, and how much will it cost?

Personal requirements to get into the job – what kind of personality and soft skills do you need?

Work conditions – when, where and how people in the job usually work

Experiences of people doing this job

Job opportunities – what are the chances of getting a job now and in the future?  
 Where can you find work?

# New Zealand Green List

The Immigration New Zealand website explains which work skills are in demand throughout New Zealand. If you're offered a job that's on one of the lists, and you've got the qualifications and experience to match, getting a work or residence visa may be easier.





# Christchurch Employment Opportunities and Clusters

Christchurch has a broad economy offering career opportunities in a wide range of industries. Four sectors in particular have been identified as high-growth sectors with global opportunity for the region and where we are leading the way in creating solutions for an exciting future. These sectors, offer unique learning and career opportunities for students.

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## Aerospace and Future Transport

The Aerospace & Future Transport industry requires deep foundational knowledge in specialist areas across Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths. Employers are looking for graduates of Applied Data Science and Mechatronics, with capability in Machine Learning, Automation, IoT and Firmware development. They are also looking for vocational skills in areas of high-value Fabrication and Electronics.



## Health Tech and Resilient Communities

Our growing HealthTech & Resilient Communities sector requires a strong manufacturing, professional, scientific and technical services and health care and social assistance talent flow. Health Sciences and Health Practice graduates with skills in genetics, the health of populations, evidence-based decision making, psychology, education, and public policy are in demand; along with Nursing and Data Science graduates.

## Food, Fibre and Agritech

The shift towards a high-value, global food and fibre economy comes with a fundamental shift in the types of skills, knowledge and mindsets needed. As we transition to a market-led, consumer-centric approach, local businesses are looking for Engineers and Computer Scientists to increase efficiencies, and Data Scientists are growing in demand as the industry becomes more automated and connected. Local businesses are also looking for graduates with vocational qualifications in Laboratory Technology.



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## Hi-Tech Services

There is a strong demand for graduates who are qualified in Computer Science, particularly those who combine technical skills with good communication and teamwork skills. Canterbury's leading-edge IT sector is facing a shortage of qualified graduates, meaning that qualified Computer Science graduates are in high demand. Local employers are specifically looking for graduates with skills in Data Analysis, IoT and Maths, Physics and Data Security. Vocational skills in Computing and Technical Support are also in high demand.



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Strong eco-systems around each Cluster make it easy for students to connect with innovative businesses working on the world's biggest and boldest challenges, with opportunities such as:

**Internships and work-integrated learning**

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**Challenges and Hackathons**

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**Networking groups and events**





# Becoming Work Ready

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When you study at one of our tertiary institutions you will find many ways to learn about the Kiwi work environment, the opportunities available and how to connect with future employers. ChristchurchNZ have also created some resources to support you on your journey.

[Getting Started and Creating a Job Search Strategy ↗](#)

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[CVs, Cover Letters and Interviews ↗](#)

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[The New Zealand Way of Working and the Skills you'll Need ↗](#)

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[Useful Links and Resources ↗](#)

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[Student profiles by country — UC  
canterbury.ac.nz](https://www.canterbury.ac.nz)

[Student Stories — Ara  
ara.ac.nz](https://www.ara.ac.nz)

[Student Profiles — Lincoln University  
lincoln.ac.nz](https://www.lincoln.ac.nz)

[Health Tech Student Case Study Eve Ji  
christchurchnz.com](https://www.christchurchnz.com)

# Connect With Other International Students

It can be helpful to learn about the experience of other students who are studying at the tertiary provider you are interested in, or have maybe graduated and are now working. Often you can read student stories on the provider websites, watch videos of current and former students talking about their experiences, and meet them at open days and campus visits.

Contact the International Office or ask your school for help if you would like help connecting with students to help you choose a course or provider.



# Steps to Choosing an Education Provider, Course, and Enrolling

## How to Enrol

- 
- ### 01

Talk to the International Department and/ or Careers Department in your school, your family, your agent, and maybe your host family when you are thinking about your future plan. Complete the International Student Career & Pathway Planner.

<hr/> <p>Check all of the information available carefully. Think about what job or career you want in the future and what qualification(s) you will need.</p> <hr/>	<hr/> <p>Check the entry requirements</p> <hr/>
<p>Attend open days or campus visits if you can.</p>	<hr/> <p>Get advice and help from tertiary provider staff on choosing your course and planning it.</p> <hr/>
	<hr/> <p>Check the deadlines for enrolment, accommodation and scholarship applications to help with your planning.</p> <hr/>
  - ### 02

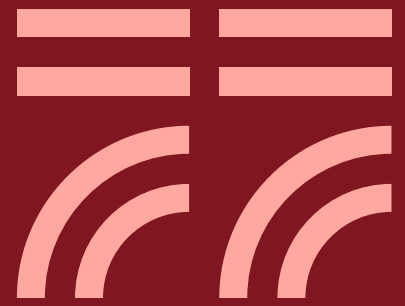
Create an online account and do your enrolment application on the tertiary provider's website or contact them directly about how to enrol.
  - ### 03

Get course planning advice and confirm your courses using your login.
  - ### 04

Complete your enrolment in person on campus. This is when you pay your fees, and accept your enrolment offer.

# Timeline Guide

Year 9 & 10		<p>Talk with school staff, your family and agent when you are choosing your optional school subjects.</p> <p>It's good to start thinking and talking about what jobs you might want to do in the future, and what study is required for those jobs.</p>
Year 11 & 12		<p>Choose your school subjects carefully with help from school staff. Your choices are important for what you want to do after finishing school.</p> <p>Keep talking to school staff, your family and your agent about your future plans. Check any entry requirements carefully to make sure your plans are achievable.</p> <p>Visit tertiary campuses you are interested in.</p> <p>Join career or tertiary provider information events that your school organises.</p> <p>Complete the International Student Career &amp; Pathway Planner.</p>
Year 13	June–July	<p>Attend open day events.</p> <p>Apply for scholarships.</p> <p>Check early closing dates for some courses.</p>
	August	<p>Applications for halls of residence open.</p> <p>Most scholarships close.</p>
	Early October	<p>Halls of residence applications close. Accommodation offers are sent to students in October and November.</p>
	October onwards	<p>Choose your courses through your online login on the provider website.</p>
Tertiary Year	January	<p>NCEA results come out. Your tertiary provider will check your results.</p> <p>If you have any problems with your NCEA results, talk to your agent, school, and tertiary provider to get help.</p>
	February	<p>Complete your enrolment on campus in person.</p> <p>Join orientation.</p> <p>Start lectures.</p>



# Sources

Images courtesy of Education New Zealand, Ara — Te Pūkenga, Lincoln University, University of Canterbury and UCIC. The creation of this resource was supported by Education New Zealand.



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[Ara - Te Pūkenga ↗](#)

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[Careers New Zealand ↗](#)

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[Education New Zealand ↗](#)

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[Immigration New Zealand ↗](#)

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[Lincoln University ↗](#)

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[Ministry of Education School Leavers' Toolkit ↗](#)

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[NauMai NZ ↗](#)

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[NZQA ↗](#)

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[Study in New Zealand ↗](#)

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[University of Canterbury ↗](#)

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# Key Vocabulary

Here are some key words used often in this guide or when exploring tertiary study options. Check the meaning in your language and learn them to help you understand the information.

Term	Definition
Tertiary	Tertiary education is any type of learning that happens after finishing secondary school
Vocational	Vocational education and skills prepare you for a particular type of work
Campus	The land and buildings belonging to an institute of technology or university
Education Provider	An institution which provides education like a school or university
Lecturer	Someone who teaches at a university or college
Clusters	Industries that are becoming increasingly necessary worldwide, where Christchurch is leading the way in creating solutions for an exciting future
Eco-system	A network or interconnected system
Hackathon	An event where lots of people meet to do collaborative computer programming
Te Pūkenga	New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology providing a unified public network of accessible vocational education



01



02

