

STUDY NZ.

2025 | No. 01

Discover New Zealand
Education, Culture
and Beyond.

Read about inspiring stories
and start your own journey.



**NEW ZEALAND
EDUCATION**
Manapou ki te Ao

studywithnewzealand.govt.nz

Kia ora and welcome



**I'm Amanda Malu,
Chief Executive of Education
New Zealand, Manapou ki te
Ao, the government agency
responsible for international
education in New Zealand.
I'm delighted to welcome
you to *Study NZ*, our new
online magazine that tells
you all about the unique
advantages of studying
and living in New Zealand.**

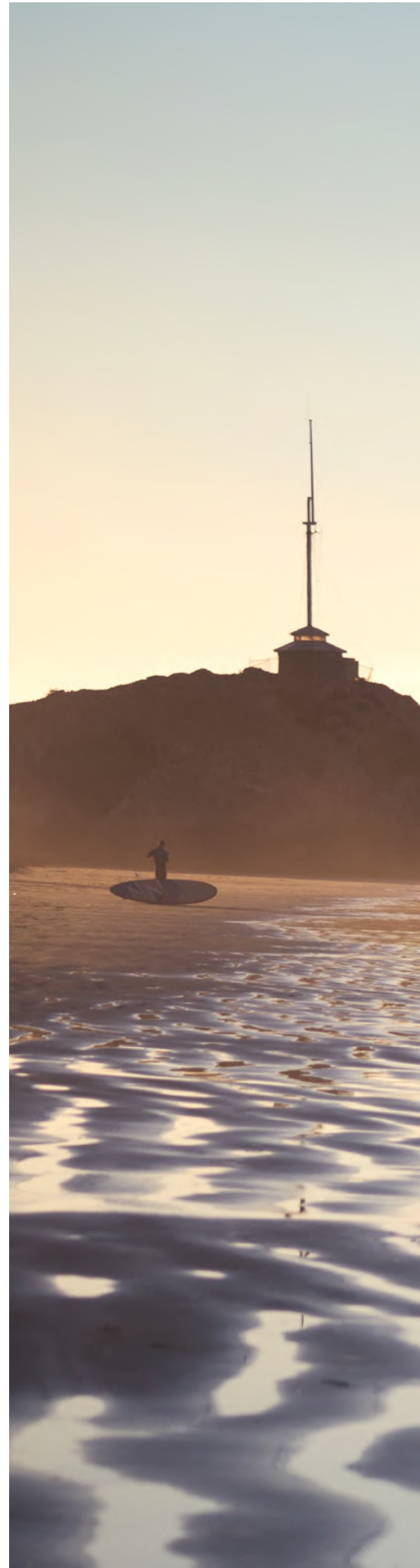
International students from all over the world come here every year to discover not only what New Zealand offers in terms of education and lifestyle, but also how our culture and inclusiveness helps them grow as a person.

It isn't easy moving to a new country. Adapting to a different way of life and making new friends can be tough at first. Here in New Zealand, we pride ourselves on being a multicultural society and welcome students from all walks of life.

While New Zealand is a great place to enjoy new experiences it also offers a high-quality education. Our qualifications are **quality-assured** by the government, making them globally respected and recognised. A New Zealand education can give you the skills and experience to excel anywhere in the world with your chosen career.

This online magazine will answer a lot of questions you may have about studying in New Zealand.

I hope you enjoy reading it.







Contents

06 Top 5 reasons
for studying in
New Zealand

10 New Zealand
Education

16 Student stories

22 Māori culture

28 Article

34 Alumni stories

40 Accommodation

46 Tourism – Day trips

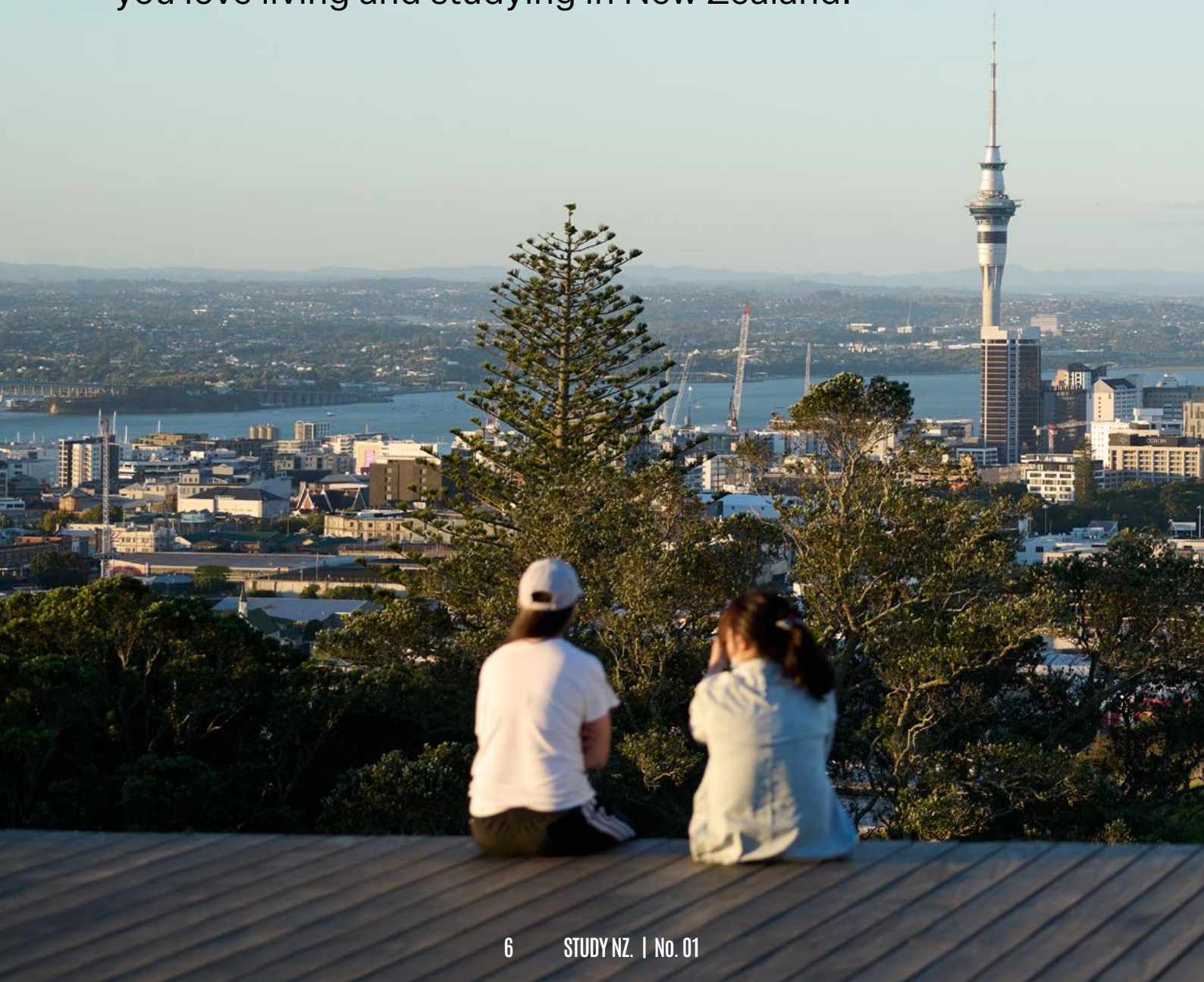
65 Visa requirements

TOP 5 REASONS

Why you'll love living and studying in New Zealand

New Zealand is world-famous for its friendly people, spectacular landscape and relaxed lifestyle.

Discover the top 5 reasons why students like you love living and studying in New Zealand.



You'll fit right in

New Zealand is a multicultural society, so you'll find it easy to fit in and discover so much about other cultures – and yourself! And speaking English every day will give your English language skills a real boost!

01



02

People are super friendly

You'll be surprised at how welcoming people are. New Zealanders are genuinely friendly people who think nothing of striking up a conversation with you. You'll often be greeted with a warm 'Kia ora' from the locals, a te reo Māori greeting that is widely used in everyday life.



Fourth most peaceful country

03

Did you know that New Zealand is ranked the fourth most peaceful country in the world? (**Vision of Humanity**). It's also one of the least corrupt. Our small population along with an excellent work-life balance, means you can enjoy a good quality of life here.



04

Globally recognised qualifications

Our universities are ranked in the top 2% in the world so you can be confident that a New Zealand qualification will really take you places.



Flexible study options

Not sure what to study? New Zealand has flexible study options to suit most budgets, from short-term English language courses to postgraduate degrees. (Tuition fees vary depending on which course you choose, where you study and how long you study for.)

05



→ [Find out about New Zealand study options](#)

“ From its pristine environment to its globally recognised education systems, New Zealand has everything a student might focus on. ”

Ryan Chow, student at the Auckland University of Technology (AUT) majoring in Business Management and Media.

A better way to learn

You can trust New Zealand's education system to be among the best in the world. It is backed by The New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQA), an assurance of quality that is recognised and trusted worldwide.

The education system in New Zealand goes from primary and intermediate schools, followed by secondary schools (known as high schools or college) to tertiary education at universities and polytechnics.

→ [Find out more about New Zealand's education system](#)

Preschool
Age 2–5

Primary School
Age 5–10

Intermediate School
Age 10–13



LEVEL 10

- Doctoral Degree
- PhD

LEVEL 9

- Master's Degree

LEVEL 8

- Postgraduate Certificate
- Postgraduate Diploma
- Bachelor Honours Degree

LEVEL 7

- Bachelor's Degree
- Graduate Certificate
- Graduate Diploma

LEVEL 4

- Certificate
- Diploma

Secondary School
Age 13-18

Higher Education

Schools encourage creative thinking

New Zealand schools encourage students to work collaboratively in a supportive environment that helps build confidence and independence. Throughout all stages of school – early education, primary, secondary, and higher education – students learn to be open-minded, curious, and ready to take on the world.

→ Explore NZ's school system and qualifications

“New Zealand taught me to think differently - to think outside the box. You get to explore your ideas and be creative.”

Southland Girls' High School
student from Thailand





Globally accepted qualifications

At most New Zealand secondary schools students take National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA). Some secondary schools offer Cambridge International and International Baccalaureate (IB) exams. Both qualifications are recognised globally and accepted by universities and colleges in many countries.

→ [Learn more about
NCEA qualifications](#)

Train for a great career

New Zealand also offers a wide range of vocational and applied learning to help you gain the skills you need for a great career. Programmes are designed to provide hands-on, practical learning, real-world experience, and work-ready qualifications.

→ Explore providers to find
the best fit for you





Well respected universities

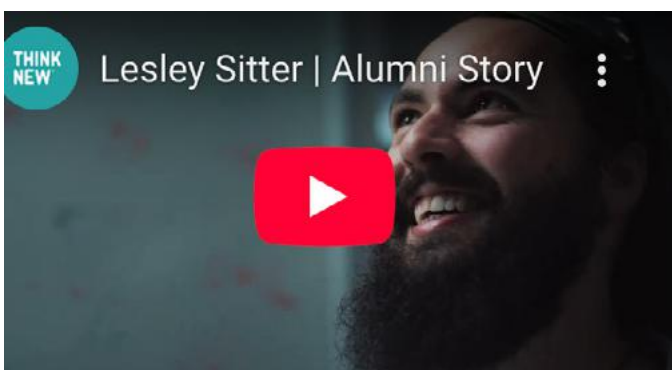
All of New Zealand's eight government-funded universities are ranked among the top 2% in the world.

Start with a bachelor's degree and then take your education even further by studying for a postgraduate or graduate degree (eg, honours, master's, PhD).

Graduates are valued by employers around the world for their ability to think critically and solve problems creatively. Study with expert, passionate academics. Be challenged to think independently.

New Zealand university degrees are designed to send you out into the world with the right skills for a great career or prepare you for further study.

→ [Learn more about higher education providers](#)



STUDENT STORIES

Ready for a life changing experience?

Studying in New Zealand will take you on a journey of personal growth and development.

You'll learn to make meaningful connections, think independently and work collaboratively. You'll have the skills you need for a thriving, global career and successful future. Discover inspiring student stories and their education journeys.



**Sunantha,
Thailand**

Sunantha took her learning to the next level by studying business.



**Carlos,
the Philippines**

Carlos is living his childhood dream studying healthcare and wellbeing.



**Jasmine,
China**

Jasmine is at school, embracing life in a new city and making lasting friendships.

Sunantha Bunjongvut

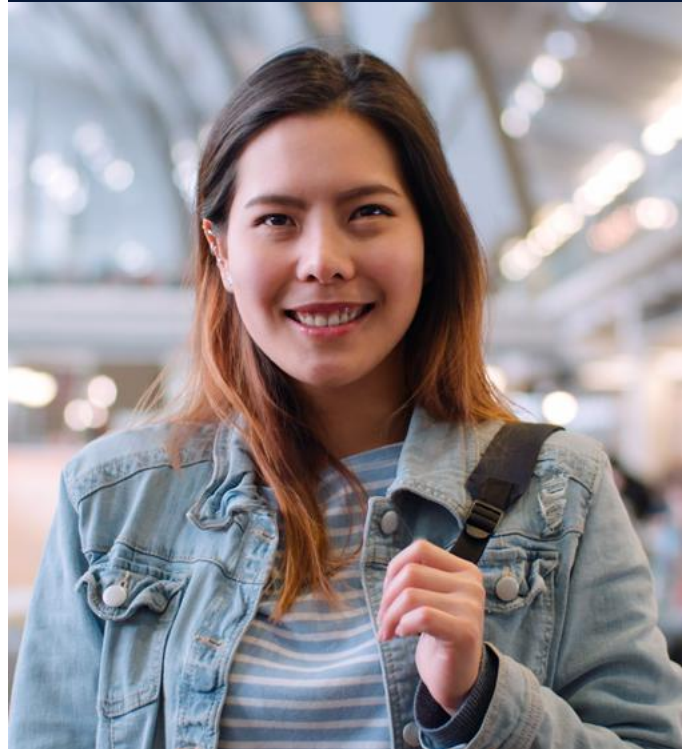
Before arriving in New Zealand, Sunantha spoke no English. Today she's planning to open her own business.

Before coming to New Zealand, Sunantha (aka Por) couldn't speak English at all.

When her English course finished, she decided to stay in New Zealand to study business. She knew that learning business in English would be useful for her international business career.

Sunantha says the English language and business skills she has learned here will help her open her own business in the future.

→ [Read more about Sunantha's story](#)



“ I learnt a lot by studying in New Zealand - becoming fluent in English was just the beginning. ”



Carlos Solomon Jr

New Zealand made a difference to Carlos's life. Now he has the confidence to fulfill his childhood dreams.

Carlos is an international student from the Philippines. He is studying to be a support worker for people with disabilities and addictions at a Private Training Establishment in Auckland.

One of the things he noticed about studying in New Zealand was how friendly and welcoming his classmates were. Their support helped boost his confidence and gain more knowledge and skills.

→ [Read more about Carlos' story](#)



“ My education here set me up to have a better future and to fulfill my dream of becoming a support worker. ”

“ My classmates are like having new sisters and brothers. We learn from each other’s backgrounds and cultures. ”





Jasmine Yip

The multi-cultural aspect of New Zealand made Jasmine feel welcome and helped her flourish.

When Jasmine first went to college as a secondary school student, she found it hard to make friends. She joined school clubs, trialled for the netball team, and went on field trips – and while she met lots of lovely locals, she longed to make deeper connections.

It wasn't until she joined the Wellington International Students' Association (WISA) that she met other international students like herself and realised that although they all came from different countries, they shared common experiences like being away from home, adjusting to a new culture, and grappling with language barriers.





“When you study in New Zealand you will feel welcomed, safe and supported. You can flourish when you feel like this.”

Jasmine found learning about Manaakitanga, (the Māori way of showing respect, generosity and care for others), enabled her to build friendships and celebrate diversity.

→ [Read more about Jasmine's story](#)

Explore Te Reo and Te Ao Māori

**New Zealand's indigenous
language and worldview.**

Settling in a new country is easier if you know a little about its culture and lifestyle. Māori are the indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand, and their language and culture is a very important part of life here.

Even if you're only in New Zealand for a short time, it's a good idea to learn about Māori culture. The knowledge and experience that you gain will be just as special as any souvenir you bring home.

Start with a few common phrases like Kia ora.







Kia ora has many meanings

To Māori and to New Zealanders, Kia ora has deep meaning.

“Kia ora”

To greet someone

To support someone when they are expressing a point

To wish someone good health or to be well

To thank someone



Most universities in Aotearoa New Zealand encourage international students to take general interest courses about Māori culture as part of their studies.



Learning about Māori culture will help you engage with and explore the community around you, and broaden your understanding of other cultures, languages and values.

→ **[Find out more about speaking te reo Māori](#)**

Māori creation story

Did you know the Māori creation story influences many aspects of life here, such as customs, practices and ways of living?

The narrative and elements of our creation story influence our world view and gives us structure and support to live in a way that is closely aligned with our tīpuna (ancestors), atua (gods), and taiao (environment).

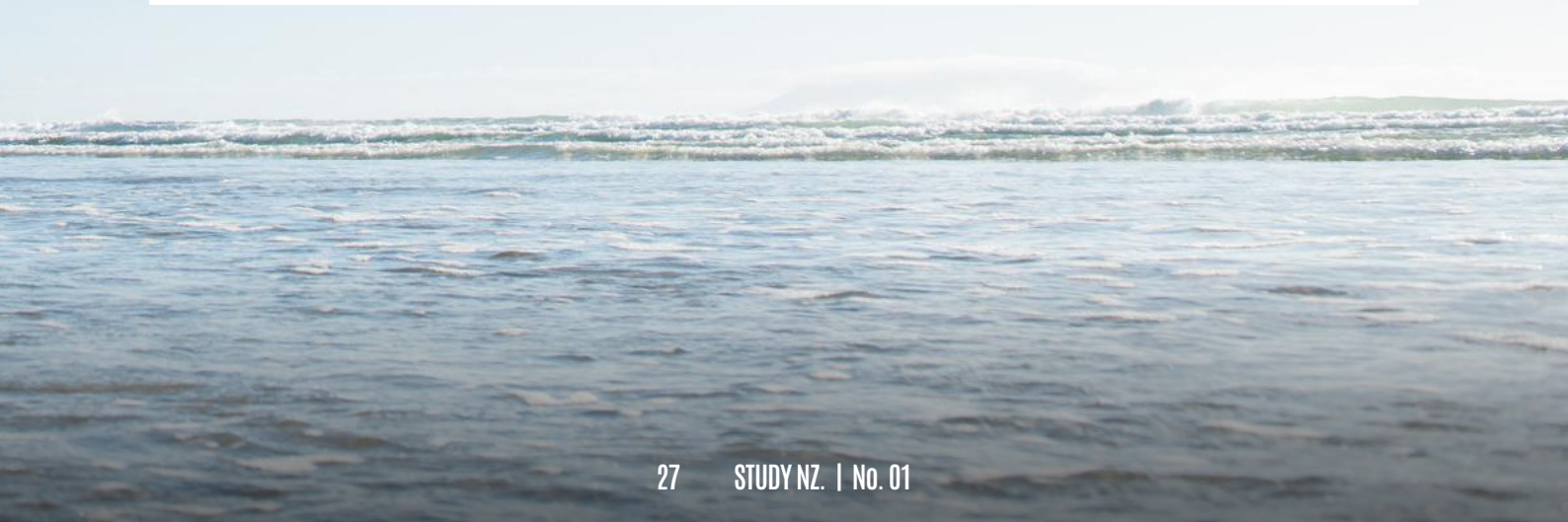


Te Ao Māori creation story begins with Te Kore (the nothingness). Out of Te Kore came Te Pō (the darkness).

Papatūānuku (Earth Mother) and Ranginui (Sky Father) had six children. Their children did not see light because they were lying between their parents who were in a tight embrace.

The children began to wonder what life would be like beyond the darkness and planned to separate their parents. Only one of the children, Tāne succeeds, forcing his father Ranginui above and his mother Papatūānuku below.

From this came Te Ao Mārama (the light).



Rising in EdTech

Diana Sharma came to New Zealand as an international student to study business.

After taking an alternative path into tech she ended up as co-founder and CEO of Mission Ready, New Zealand's first and most successful tech career accelerator and a top NZQA-rated category 1 tech-training provider.



An alternative path to tech

Diana was born in Kuwait and went to high school in India. When she left school, she thought a career in hospitality would be “cool” but after a three-year degree, a short stint as a management trainee, she realised hospitality was not her thing. Seeking a career that aligned with her passions, she explored different paths and discovered her love for corporate talent development. Driven by her desire to help others succeed, Diana decided to invest in further education to achieve her goals. After researching university programmes worldwide, she finally chose New Zealand – not only for its reputation as a great education provider, but also for its practical, hands-on programme that offered unique industry insights.



Bring it on!

In 2009 Diana took up a Postgraduate Diploma in Business at **Unitec** in Auckland. The one-year programme was like nothing she'd ever experienced before. Her professor took an innovative approach, teaching his students how to work with companies to help them solve real business problems. Diana thrived in this environment and gained so much confidence she suggested to her professor that they try something different. His response? “Bring it on!”

Diana became Unitec's coordinator where she was encouraged to try out new ideas. Over the next eight years, Diana took on various roles, including Project Manager and Business Planning Manager advancing to the position of General Manager of Partnerships and Alliances.

“ New Zealand's tech education system is very open to innovative thinking and learning. ”



At Unitec, Diana's various roles focused on exploring innovative approaches to education and fostering partnerships with industry and international education providers. Those partnerships exposed her to a gap in the tech market where companies were crying out for talent, yet graduates were not getting hired. This gave her the idea of setting up a company that would bridge this gap by accelerating talent development for high-demand tech careers. The model combined intensive training with mentored work experience, producing highly skilled graduates ready for the tech sector in less than 8 months. In 2018, together with Alan Kan from IBM, **Mission Ready** was launched with a view to becoming New Zealand's first ever tech career accelerator

Ethical technology

The principles Diana and her co-founder embedded into Mission Ready programmes are built around ethical technology which prioritises fairness, transparency, privacy and the overall good of society. It's something Diana is passionate about – she believes ethical technology needs to be at the forefront of innovations like Artificial Intelligence (AI).

“ If we use AI to meet global challenges like climate change, education and healthcare and we get it wrong, we can cause an awful lot of harm. ”



She says that there are lots of conversations here in the New Zealand education system about how we use AI in a meaningful way. Even within schools and the tertiary education space, we are embedding more and more of the latest tech.



Opportunities for international students

Although Mission Ready focuses on placing domestic students (for now) Diana says there are some really good programmes in New Zealand for international students looking to get into the tech sector.

The industry in New Zealand is growing rapidly and there are lots of opportunities within the New Zealand education system to get into software development, or any aligned careers such as business or data analysis.

“ We have some pretty amazing tech companies here who are doing some pretty cool things. ”

“ The vocational sector in other parts of the world can learn a lot from New Zealand’s education system. ”

Tech as a career pathway

Diana says that while tech may seem complex, it really comes down to problem solving and remaining agile and continuing to be a lifelong learner.

Whether you're technical or not, there's a place for you in the industry. There are many types of roles, creative roles like UX design, technical roles – and you can cross over any time.

“Technology is integrated into every part of our lives and it's only going to get bigger and brighter.”

→ [Find out more about studying tech in New Zealand](#)



ALUMNI STORIES

How my New Zealand study experience led to a successful career

They could have chosen anywhere in the world to study, but these alumni students chose New Zealand. Find out why.



Alberto, Chile

Alberto's postdoctoral research ignited his passion for active volcanoes.



Caroline, China

Studying in New Zealand led Caroline on an unforgettable journey.

Alberto Ardid from Chile

Post Doctoral Researcher



Alberto studied geysers and other geothermal activity in his home country of Chile, but it wasn't until he arrived in New Zealand in 2016 that he got to study his greatest passion – active volcanoes!

Several universities around the world competed for Alberto's geothermal expertise but it was the combination of both the educational and lifestyle opportunities that New Zealand offers that enticed him to our shores.

“ I received several offers to continue my studies from various locations world-wide, but it was the offer I received from the University's Geothermal Institute that stood out for me. ”

New Zealand has some of the world's top centres for geothermal research and the fact that outside the classroom, Alberto could pursue any adrenalin seeking sports such as surfing, climbing, and hiking, made his decision straight forward in the end.

The tragic 2019 volcanic eruption on Whakaari/ White Island was the



catalyst for Alberto and his team to develop a tool that can help anticipate eruptions in any volcano, even dormant ones such as Mount Taranaki.

Alberto's international expertise has been a significant benefit to the team and their research.

→ [Read more about Alberto's research](#)



**Empower
your future
with hands-
on learning in
New Zealand.**

Learn more

Caroline Su from China

Quantity Surveyor



At the age of 15 Caroline's parents wanted her to experience studying in another country with a different culture and chose New Zealand because it was peaceful and safe. Today she's a quantity surveyor, as comfortable working on building sites as she is back in the office crunching the numbers.

Caroline says it is not a profession she would have contemplated in China, where she grew up, but Christchurch's rebuild, due to the earthquake, inspired her to pursue a career in the construction industry and she is grateful for the freedom to be able to achieve her ambitions.

The decision to study in New Zealand has taken Caroline on a journey she couldn't have imagined when she arrived.

“In China I would not be working in construction. I would probably have been working in finance or management,” she says.

“The environment here changed me and gave me career options I would not have considered at home.”

Caroline has bought her first house in New Zealand, giving her a real sense of belonging.

→ [Read more about Caroline's study experience](#)



Living the dream

Finding a place to live is an exciting part of your study experience.

There are many wonderful things to experience as an international student in New Zealand. Getting the right accommodation will help you settle in more quickly and help you make the most of everything New Zealand has to offer.



Lots of options

Living and studying here gives you the opportunity to experience the great New Zealand lifestyle for yourself. There are lots of options from dormitory style accommodation; to busy flats with lots of people coming and going; quieter flats with fewer people; or homestay accommodation where you live with a New Zealand family and enjoy typical Kiwi hospitality.

→ [Explore accommodation options](#)



New flat, new friends!

The most popular choice for students is to 'go flatting.' This means sharing a house or flat with other people. It's a great way to share costs and make new friends. If you choose this option, try to meet your fellow flat mates first to see if you're compatible. (You'll be seeing a lot of them so it's important you get on.)

Where to start looking? Most students find shared flats on [Trademe](#), or Facebook. You could also try [NZflatmates](#) or [Roomies](#).

→ [A guide to going flatting](#)







Want to live close to where you study?

For a more structured environment you could apply to one of the university-owned places called Halls of Residence. Halls provide dormitory style accommodation close to the university with everything you need in one convenient location.

Apply to Halls early. They're extremely popular and fill up fast!

→ **Find out more about Halls of Residence**

All the comforts of home

If you don't like the idea of flatting, you might prefer boarding or being a homestay student. There are lots of advantages to living with a Kiwi family. You'll get to learn about Kiwi culture and food and get a local's perspective of your new hometown. Plus, you'll get to meet your host's family and friends giving you lots of opportunities to practice your English.

International student Josephine Malenga wrote a blog about her experience as a homestay student.

→ [Read Josephine Malenga's blog](#)



Get out there and explore!

The best way to learn is through doing and there are plenty of amazing things to do in New Zealand.

Make the most of your free time by exploring the best of what this country has to offer with an epic day trip from our largest centres.



See day trips
from Auckland,
Tāmaki Makaurau

See day trips
from Waikato

See day trips
from Wellington,
Te Whanganui-a-Tara

See day trips from
Christchurch, Ōtautahi

See day trips from
Dunedin, Ōtepoti

Auckland, Tāmaki Makaurau

Karangahake Gorge, just two hours south of Auckland, is a nature lover's dream with cliffs, native bush, waterfalls, and the Ohinemuri River. Explore the **Windows Walk trail** through 1880s gold-mining sites or venture into the **Karangahake Tunnels** which take you along the old underground railway track. For a biking adventure, hire a bike from Waihi Bicycle Hire and explore the **Hauraki Rail Trail**.

Muriwai, a 40-minute drive from Auckland City takes you to the West Coast. Visit Muriwai Deli for donuts and coffee, surf the famous waves, or explore the black sand beach and caves. **The Gannet Colony**, with hundreds of birds, nest here from August to March.







Auckland's **Hauraki Gulf** is home to more than 50 islands and with a selection accessible by ferry, exploring one makes for the perfect day trip.

Tiritiri Matangi is an 80-minute ferry ride from Auckland's Viaduct Harbour and a bird lover's paradise. There are many walking trails around the island leading to beaches, the lighthouse, and through native bush where you can spot birds. Or take a guided walk – a bargain at just \$10. Book when you buy your ferry ticket. You can also book the former lighthouse keeper's cabin via the [**DOC website**](#) and stay overnight.



Look out to sea from almost anywhere in the city and you'll see the perfect cone of **Rangitoto Island** rising out of the harbour. Catch the 25-minute **Fullers ferry** from Britomart and climb to the summit. You'll enjoy incredible views across the lava fields and pōhutukawa forest out to the harbour and Auckland skyline.

Discover the white sandy beaches of **Waiheke Island**, perfect for swimming, kayaking, or having a picnic. If you're a walker, explore the island's trails that meander along cliff tops, down to the beaches and into cool enclaves of native forest. Getting around is easy. Catch one of the regular ferries that run out to Waiheke from downtown Auckland. Once on the island, there are public buses and taxis, or you can hire a mountain bike, motor scooter or car. And if you've already got a car or bike, you can bring it over with you on the car ferry.



Wellington, Te Whanganui-a-Tara

Red Rocks Coastal Walk is one of the best day walks in the Wellington region. A decent stretch of Wellington's rugged south coast, it's a good two- to three-hour return trip offering great views and plenty of sea breeze along the way. While it's suitable at any time of year, winter is one of the best times to visit as you can check out the seal colonies, making it a perfect adventure for animal lovers – just don't get too close!



Featherston is another classic day-trip destination just outside Wellington offering the perfect getaway, especially for boutique shopping. Quaint specialty shops are one of the many things that put Featherston on the map – from the many charming bookstores to C’est Cheese, a true cheese lover’s paradise. Featherston is also the gateway to some of the most impressive natural wonders in the region – the breathtaking [Putangirua Pinnacles Track Walk](#) and the scenic drive to [Cape Palliser](#).



Take the **Wellington Cable Car** up to the **Botanical Gardens** for stunning city views. From there, catch the free Zealandia shuttle to **Zealandia Sanctuary**. Join a guided tour to explore the ecosystem and spot native birds like the Tūī, Kākā, and Bellbird. Enjoy lunch at Rata Café before walking the scenic trails and visiting the interactive exhibition at the Visitor Centre.



Matiu/Somes Island

is a short ferry ride from central Wellington but feels like a world away. The scientific and historic reserve offers a range of easy walking tracks suitable for all fitness levels, plus splendid panoramic views, and the chance to spot native birds. Pack your lunch – while the island doesn't have any shops, you'll find some great picnic spots along the way.



Jump on your bike or take a long walk on a flat, winding trail to the historic **Pencarrow Lighthouse** in Eastbourne, Lower Hutt. Start at Burdan's Gate, at the end of Muritai Road and make your way along

the coastline for 7km to the lighthouse and the shores of Cook Strait. Take the side trail and enjoy incredible views of the Orongorongo Mountain range and the coast, or continue around the bend for 2km to Lake Kohangatera.

Christchurch, Ōtautahi

Escape to **New Brighton Beach**, just a 15-minute drive from the city. Start with a serene “Sunrise Soak” at He Puna Taimoana’s beachside hot pools. Afterward, take a tranquil walk on New Brighton Pier before heading back to the city for breakfast.

Next, visit **Sumner Beach**, a favourite among surfers. Experience the unique thrill of surfing with snow-capped peaks in the background. For a more relaxed pace, stroll along the Coastal Pathway and beach promenade, stopping by Bohemian Bakery for coffee and pastries. For a vigorous outing, the Godley Head Walk offers spectacular views of Lyttelton Harbour, Banks Peninsula, and the city. Take the scenic drive from Sumner to **Lyttelton** with its charming main street that comes alive on Saturday mornings with the Lyttelton Farmers Market.







Credit: Miles Holden



Credit: Miles Holden, Mt John Observatory, Lake Takapō. Dark Sky Project



A short drive from Lyttelton brings you to the base of the Christchurch Gondola, offering a bird's eye view of the city and the snow-capped Southern Alps. For adventure, head to the Christchurch Adventure Park for ziplining and mountain biking.

Washpen Falls walking track in the **Methven** region is about an hour and a half's drive from Christchurch. Situated on a high-country working farm this two-hour loop track takes you through a canyon rich with native bush, past waterfalls, caves, and an old woolshed.



Just 25 minutes away are the Ōpuke Thermal Pools, sourced from the mountains and warmed by the sun. Pop down the road to Primo E Secundo and you'll find quality kai (food) in an eccentric, cosy setting.

The biggest rocks you've ever seen are at **Castle Hill** just an hour and a half drive west from Christchurch on Highway 73. A climber's paradise, Castle Hill provides access to club ski fields, mountain biking and hiking trails. Fuel up along the way at Sheffield Pie Shop known for its sumptuous pies and

then walk around Ōpōrea Lake Pearson. Keep an eye out for birdlife – you might be lucky enough to spot a protected Southern Crested Grebe.

Just 20 minutes north of Christchurch is the diverse and exciting **Waimakariri** region, boasting vast natural beauty, slower-paced country towns, and unique beach settlements. With over 10km of beach, conservation areas in the Southern Alps' foothills, regional parks, wetlands, and lakes, there are plenty of cycling and walking tracks to explore, or if you want to have a go at jet boating, you can do that too.



Dunedin, Ōtepoti

Just over an hour south of Dunedin enter the world of lush native forest, coastal splendour and iconic landmarks of **The Catlins**. It's a great place to spend a day exploring before heading back to the comforts of the city.

The Taieri Gorge train journey offers an unforgettable educational experience through the breathtaking landscapes of Otago. This iconic trip takes you across sweeping countryside, over towering viaducts, and along the rushing Taieri River, culminating in a five-hour adventure to **Pukerangi**. Highlights of the journey



include exploring Otago's rich history, marvelling at the engineering feats of early railway pioneers, and listening to fascinating stories from the onboard commentator.

Otago Peninsula is just a short drive from Dunedin. This area is perfect for nature lovers with stunning views and wind-swept beaches. Go bird watching at Tairoa Head and visit the Royal Albatross Centre. Check out the elusive little blue penguin at Pilot's Beach and the yellow-eyed penguins at Penguin Place Reserve and Allans Beach. Make time on the way back to visit Lanarch Castle. Built in 1871, it's New Zealand's only castle and offers an insight into Victorian Living.

Waikato

Raglan, known for its stunning black sand coastline and surfing is just 45 minutes from Hamilton – an ideal weekend getaway.

You can watch skilled surfers at Manu Bay or give it a go yourself at Raglan Surf School. If surfing's not your thing how about a swim – lifeguards patrol all

summer so you're in safe hands. The area also boasts several excellent walks. Cycling enthusiasts can explore the Pipiwharauroa Trail and Te Ara Kakariki mountain bike track, while other activities like kayaking, paddleboarding, and rock climbing add to the fun. Raglan township, with its vibrant mix of cafés, bars, surf shops, and galleries, offers a unique cultural experience, making it a perfect spot for students to unwind and enjoy a sustainable lifestyle.



Matamata/Hobbiton, just an hour from Hamilton, is a fantastic weekend destination for students, blending rural charm with exciting attractions. Known for its thoroughbred horse breeding and dairy farming, Matamata is famously home to the Hobbiton Movie Set, a must-visit for fans of Middle-earth. For those seeking adventure, Wairere Falls offers spectacular views and a challenging hike to the top, the highest waterfall in the



Credit: Matt Crawford

North Island. The Matamata-Piako Heritage Trail provides a historical journey through the town's parks, gardens, and sites, including the Middle-earth themed i-SITE building.

Port Waikato, just 90 minutes from Hamilton, is an excellent day trip or overnight getaway for anyone looking to escape the crowds. Nestled at the mouth of the Waikato River, this charming town offers some of New Zealand's best surf beaches. The nearby Nikau Caves, with their stunning formations and glowworms, are a must-visit, and the onsite café serves delicious local food. Visitors can also explore the limestone rock outcrops used as Weathertop Hollow in the Lord of the Rings films. On the way back, a stop in Pokeno for a giant ice cream is a fun treat, and petrol heads will love the excitement at Hampton Downs motorsport venue.



No deadly animals

No snakes and no crocodiles.

You can enjoy all of this without having to worry about dangerous animals.

[Learn more about living in New Zealand](#)

Would you like to study in New Zealand?

First, you'll need a visa.

If you're interested in studying in New Zealand, you'll need to apply for a student visa from [Immigration New Zealand](#) and have this approved before you start your studies.

This video tells you all about applying for the student visa and provides tips to help you prepare and successfully submit your application.

**APPLYING FOR A VISA
TO STUDY IN NEW ZEALAND**





**NEW ZEALAND
EDUCATION**
Manapou ki te Ao

studywithnewzealand.govt.nz