



# Preparing to study at Ara

A guide for  
international students

[ara.ac.nz](http://ara.ac.nz)



**Te Pūkenga**



## Kia ora, welcome

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It's my great pleasure to welcome you to Ara - a community of students and teaching and support colleagues from more than 50 countries around the world.

We're very proud of our diversity at Ara. Everyone who studies or works here brings a wealth of ideas, perspectives and experiences that enhance and enrich the learning journey for us all. So I encourage you to share your thoughts, knowledge, skills and stories while you are here; if you do, it will make your learning experience at Ara all the richer.

One of the great benefits of studying with us is the variety of backgrounds and cultures of the people you meet - not only at the institute but around the city, the region and the country. The person you sit next to in class on your first day could become a life-long friend, and the connections you make with other students, tutors, industry representatives and New Zealanders during your time here could open doors to all sorts of exciting opportunities.

If you need any assistance, either before you travel here or once you've arrived, please get in touch with my student support colleagues - I know they will be keen to help you, both in assisting you to make decisions and as you settle into life at Ara.



I recognise that your decision to study with us is a very important one. You can be sure that my colleagues and I will do all we can to support you while you're at Ara. I wish you all the very best for your studies and for your time in New Zealand.

**Darren Mitchell**  
**General Manager**

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**Disclaimer:** All care and attention has been given to ensure the information in this document is accurate at the time of publishing. Ara does not take responsibility for any loss or harm incurred as a result of reliance upon any information which is incorrect or out of date. This document was last updated in January 2023.



## Checklist before you leave home

Here's a list of the important things you need when you depart for New Zealand to start your study journey:

- Travel documents
- Air tickets
- Passport
- Medical and travel insurance documents
- Money
- Credit card
- Drivers licence
- Medical records and personal medication
- Extra passport photos
- Your favourite music
- Contact details of your family and friends
- Photos of family and friends to stop you feeling homesick
- Cultural items such as your national costume (optional): other students love to learn about different cultures
- NZeTA

Originals and copies of:

- Passport
- International drivers licence (if you have one)
- Travel insurance documents
- Academic records (if necessary)


See you soon!

**We wish you all the best for your travel to New Zealand to study with us. We are here to help and support you throughout your study journey and look forward to seeing you soon!**



## Getting a student visa

To find everything you need to apply for a student visa, go to Immigration New Zealand's website:

 [immigration.govt.nz](https://immigration.govt.nz)

To apply for a student visa, you will need the following documents:

- Receipt of tuition fees paid
- A recent New Zealand bank statement showing a balance of approximately \$20,000 for a one year visa or \$1,667 per month if your study will be shorter than one year. Your bank statement must state your name and your current address, show three months of your most recent transactions and be less than three days old
- Your passport
- Medical and x-ray certificate
- Two passport-sized photos
- Your Offer of Place and Statement of Fees for study

 [immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/apply-for-a-visa/visa-factsheet/full-fee-paying-student-visa#criteria](https://immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/apply-for-a-visa/visa-factsheet/full-fee-paying-student-visa#criteria)

Please refer to the Immigration New Zealand website for full requirements and the latest visa application fee.

You need to let us know as soon as possible if your visa application is declined as many of our programmes have limited spaces available. Also please check your student visa conditions before you leave your country.

For more information on renewing your visa, visit:

 [immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/options/study](https://immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/options/study)

If you have any problems relating to your visa application, don't hesitate to talk to us.


### Visa conditions

To meet your visa conditions, you need to make sure that you attend all classes and make satisfactory progress.

### International Visitor Conservation and Tourism Levy (IVL)

This levy helps pay for conservation and tourism infrastructure in New Zealand. It costs NZ\$35 per person and you will pay it when you apply for a visa or request a New Zealand Electronic Travel Authority (NZeTA).

If you are visiting New Zealand to complete a short course, such as an English language course, you will need to request a NZeTA before you travel if you are coming from a visa-waiver country. You will pay the IVL when you request the NZeTA. If you need a visa to study, you will not need a NZeTA, but you will pay the NZD\$35 IVL when you apply for your visa. For more information on this levy please go to:

 [mbie.govt.nz/immigration-and-tourism/tourism/tourism-funding/international-visitor-conservation-and-tourism-levy/how-the-ivl-works/](https://mbie.govt.nz/immigration-and-tourism/tourism/tourism-funding/international-visitor-conservation-and-tourism-levy/how-the-ivl-works/)



## Packing your luggage

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### Clothing

The dress standard in New Zealand is casual compared to other parts of the world. Casual clothing - for example jeans and tee-shirt - are fine to wear on campus. It is also a good idea to bring smart clothing for job interviews or events related to your study that you will attend.

Regardless of the season, Canterbury's weather can change quickly, even in one day. For spring and summer (September-February) you will need lightweight clothing and layers, a windproof waterproof jacket, a swimsuit. A sunhat and sunglasses are a must for New Zealand conditions. For autumn and winter (March-August) you will need warm clothes, a waterproof jacket, hat, gloves and a scarf.

### Medicines

If you need to bring medication into New Zealand, follow these simple steps:

- Keep your medicine in the original container with the label on
- Make sure your name is clearly stated on the label
- Have a copy of the prescription or a letter from your doctor explaining why you need to take the medicine
- Have no more than a 3-month supply
- Declare the medicine on your Passenger Arrival Card

If you are unsure whether your medicine is legal in New Zealand, check with the New Zealand Embassy in your home country before you leave.

### Restricted and banned items

New Zealand has strict laws on what you can bring into the country. Items that you must not bring include:


- Drugs (unless they are prescription medication and you have a letter from your doctor explaining why you are carrying them)
- Firearms/weapons
- Flammable goods (such as gas cookers or lighters)
- More than NZD\$10,000, or the equivalent in foreign currency (cash)
- Any animals or insects (alive or dead)
- Feathers, shells, plants or flowers
- Fresh foods, including meat
- Some packaged goods, such as certain cheeses

There are also security regulations about carrying liquids, aerosols or gels in your hand luggage.

### Biosecurity

To keep New Zealand free from serious pests and disease, strict quarantine laws are in place at all New Zealand international airports.

You must declare all foods (including fruit or any items you have been given by the airline), plants or animal goods on arrival in New Zealand. You may also have any camping equipment, hiking boots or sports gear inspected. For more information, please visit:

 [mpi.govt.nz/bring-send-to-nz/](https://mpi.govt.nz/bring-send-to-nz/)

### Voltage/electricity

Electricity is supplied throughout New Zealand at 230/240 volts (50 hertz) and power outlets use flat three-pin or two-pin plugs. You will need an adaptor for any equipment you bring from home. You can buy an adaptor when you arrive or before you leave your home country.

You may choose to buy some smaller appliances (like a hairdryer) when you get here rather than bringing them with you.

## Insurance

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### Medical and travel insurance

As an international student, you are required to have comprehensive travel and medical insurance for the period of your visa. This is a legal requirement under the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021.

Our preferred insurance provider is Studentsafe, who have specifically tailored their StudentSafe policy to meet the needs of Ara students. We include an insurance fee with your Statement of Fees.

### Eligibility for health services

Most international students are not entitled to publicly-funded health services while in New Zealand. If you receive medical treatment during your visit, you may be liable for the full costs of that treatment. Full details on entitlements to publicly-funded health services are available through the Ministry of Health at:

 [health.govt.nz/](https://health.govt.nz/)

### Accident insurance

The Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) provides accident insurance for all New Zealand citizens, residents and temporary visitors to New Zealand, but students may still be liable for all other medical and related costs. For further information:

 [acc.co.nz](https://acc.co.nz)

## Banks and money

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### Setting up a bank account

New Zealand has several major banks:

 [anz.co.nz](https://anz.co.nz)

 [asb.co.nz](https://asb.co.nz)

 [bnz.co.nz](https://bnz.co.nz)

 [kiwibank.co.nz](https://kiwibank.co.nz)

 [westpac.co.nz](https://westpac.co.nz)


We suggest you check each bank's website to see what options they have available for international students.

You can open a New Zealand bank account and deposit money into it before you leave home. We can give you a letter at orientation with proof of your New Zealand address after you arrive. You will need to take this to your local branch to activate your account.

If you want to wait and open a bank account when you arrive, our student advisors will be happy to help you.

### Cost of living

Immigration New Zealand estimates that an international student requires at least NZD\$20,000 per year to cover all living expenses. For up-to-date information about New Zealand living costs, please visit:

 [newzealandnow.govt.nz/living-in-nz/family-friendly/comparable-living-costs](https://newzealandnow.govt.nz/living-in-nz/family-friendly/comparable-living-costs)

Remember, your daily cost of living is in addition to your Ara tuition fees.

## Buying things in New Zealand

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In New Zealand, there are a few ways you can pay for purchases.

- EFTPOS card - this card comes with a 'PIN' number which lets you access your bank account; you can also use it to get cash from automatic teller machines (ATMs) 24 hours a day
- Cash
- Credit card - these are widely accepted although some retailers add a surcharge for using a credit card

## Homestay accommodation

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Finding accommodation can be a difficult process and you need to find the type of accommodation that's right for you. If you are visiting New Zealand for the first time, we strongly recommend you apply for homestay accommodation.

### Ara homestays

A homestay is an option that lets you to concentrate on your studies while also allowing you to experience a New Zealand family lifestyle. With a homestay, you have your own room and meals are provided. It is a great way to practise English and get a taste of the "Kiwi" lifestyle.

In a homestay, local phone calls are free but toll calls should be made using an international calling card. Wireless broadband internet is included in the homestay fee (maximum usage of 25GB per month, additional data is extra and paid to the hosts).

	Christchurch	Timaru
<b>Placement fee</b>	\$320	\$420

Includes pick up from Christchurch airport and transfer to your homestay in Christchurch or Timaru.

<b>Weekly homestay fee*</b>	\$280	-
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Includes two meals on weekdays and three meals on the weekends.

<b>Weekly homestay fee*</b>	\$315	\$280
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Includes all meals (including a packed lunch).

*\*Halal diets may cost an extra \$20 per week.*

For more information on our homestay services, contact International Admissions or visit

 [ara.ac.nz/explore/accommodation/homestays/](https://ara.ac.nz/explore/accommodation/homestays/)

### Homestay service

New Zealand Education Advisor Services (NZEAS) offers the following services if you are in homestay accommodation:

- Police vetting of all home host families
- Full inspection of all homes and interviews with homestay families
- Airport pick-up and delivery to home-host family on your arrival
- A full "Welcome Pack" upon arrival
- Greeting on your first day at Ara
- Banking assistance on your first day at Ara
- Language translators
- 24 hour contact number to be used in the case of an emergency
- Follow-up meetings with you to ensure you are happy in your home environment

### If you're under 18 years old

If you're under the age of 18, you must have a designated caregiver or guardian while you are in New Zealand. We will forward the relevant indemnity documents for completion as required. If you are coming directly to Ara, and not living with your parents, you must stay with one of our approved homestay families.




## Living in shared accommodation

### Ōtautahi House

Ōtautahi House is a modern apartment complex opposite the City campus. It has 36 apartments accommodating 192 Ara students. As a resident at Ōtautahi House you'll enjoy the friendship of fellow residents from a range of backgrounds, places and programmes of study. You'll share experiences together, like flatting for the first time and exploring a new city. You and your flatmates have the flexibility to organise your own shopping and cooking rosters. Some cleaning services are provided, and pastoral care from designated Ara staff is always available.

### Ōtautahi House International fees (TBC)

Deposit (bond)	\$900
Administration fee	\$270
Activities fee	\$220
Residential fee (48 week contract includes power and wi-fi)	\$10,800 (approx \$225 per week)
Car parking (limited spaces available)	\$25 per week

 [ara.ac.nz/explore/accommodation/otautahi-house/](https://ara.ac.nz/explore/accommodation/otautahi-house/)



## Flatting

Many Ara students live in shared rental accommodation while studying. Sharing a flat with other students is one of the cheapest ways to live. While there are many flats to rent, a good one may be hard to find, especially at the beginning of the academic year. It is easier to obtain a flat if you are already in the area. Finding a flat may involve first arranging temporary accommodation with relatives or friends, homestay for international students or initially staying somewhere such as a motel or backpackers.

### What to expect

Most flats are unfurnished. They will contain an oven and in some cases a refrigerator and washing machine. Furnished flats are available but rental costs are higher. International students sharing a flat with New Zealanders will develop English skills as well as being independent (international students under 18 must live in homestay accommodation).

### Finding a flat

If you're going to flat, make sure you give yourself plenty of time to find the perfect spot. In Christchurch, areas close to Ara are: Addington, Beckenham, Central City, Linwood, Opawa, Phillipstown, Riccarton (near Hagley Park), Somerfield, Sydenham and Waltham. Talk to friends and check out one of these websites to find a flat: TradeMe, NZ Flatmates, Roomies.

### Cost of flatting

The following are examples of the average flatting costs per week (based upon a three person share flat):

Rent	\$85 - \$200
Electricity	\$20
Phone	\$5
Food	\$50
Appliance hire	\$4

If you are considering flatting, we suggest you look at the following websites:

 [tenancy.govt.nz](https://tenancy.govt.nz)

 [trademe.co.nz/flatmates-wanted](https://trademe.co.nz/flatmates-wanted)



## When you first arrive

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### The enrolment process

Soon after your arrival in New Zealand you will need to complete the enrolment process. It is important that you do this before starting your classes. If you are studying in Christchurch, please go to International Admissions & Enrolments. If you are studying in Timaru, please go to Student Central. For this visit, remember to bring your passport and your original academic documents as evidence to enrol in the programme of your choice.

### Admissions and Enrolments opening hours

#### City campus:

Monday - Thursday 8am-4.30pm  
Friday 9am-4.30pm

#### Timaru:

Monday - Friday 8am-5pm

Our International Admissions Team will be the first point of contact for any questions you may have. This team is also responsible for looking after your admission and enrolment process. Our contact details in Christchurch are:


International Admissions Team  
Ara Institute of Canterbury  
City campus, Madras Street  
PO Box 540  
Christchurch 8140  
New Zealand

Phone: +64 3 940 8000  
Email: [intladmissions@ara.ac.nz](mailto:intladmissions@ara.ac.nz)

## Online international study guide

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You can find useful information for international students in our international study guide which is available online here:

 [ara.ac.nz/study/priority-learner-groups/international/brochures/](https://ara.ac.nz/study/priority-learner-groups/international/brochures/)

## Orientation

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As in international student you are required by the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 to attend an international orientation presentation.

At Ara we expect all international students to attend two compulsory orientations. One orientation is for all International students. You will learn about study in New Zealand - how it is different to study in your home country - and how to maximise your chance of success. You will be provided with important information that is specific to international students. The orientation will help prepare you personally and academically while studying at Ara. This is an opportunity to meet other international students who are also beginning their journey of study in New Zealand.

The second orientation is specific to your chosen programme of study.

Once you are enrolled at Ara we will send you an enrolment booklet that contains the international and programme orientation dates.



## Acceptance documents

The Offer of Place officially accepts you into your chosen path of study (providing you pay your fees by the due date). It also explains the terms and conditions that you need to follow if you accept your path of study.

The Statement of Fees explains what you need to pay to study at Ara. After you have paid your fees, you can use the Offer of Place (with your receipt) to apply to Immigration New Zealand for a Student Visa.


## English language requirements

We use the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). This will show us that you have the level of English required to achieve your study goals. We provide IELTS courses at Ara, and we are an official IELTS and PTE testing centre. For more information about sitting these tests, please visit:

 [ielts.org.nz](https://ielts.org.nz)

 [pearsonpte.com](https://pearsonpte.com)


We accept other International English test results. You can view a list of approved tests here:

 [nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/our-role/legislation/nzqa-rules/nzqf-related-rules/the-table/](https://nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/our-role/legislation/nzqa-rules/nzqf-related-rules/the-table/)

English requirements vary between programmes. Please refer to your chosen programme for requirements. If you are unsure, check with us.

## Terms and conditions of enrolment

Please make sure that you understand all of the things you need to do before you start your study. Full details are available at:

 [ara.ac.nz/student-services/how-to-apply/terms-and-conditions-of-enrolment/](https://ara.ac.nz/student-services/how-to-apply/terms-and-conditions-of-enrolment/)


Please make your travel arrangements early, because we will be unable to accept you for study if you arrive more than one week after the course commences.

## Travelling to Timaru

Please note that if you are studying at the Timaru campus you will need to organise your transport from Christchurch Airport to Timaru (approx. 2-hour drive).

## Visiting drivers

If you are new to driving in New Zealand, we encourage you to visit the following link :

 [aa.co.nz/travel/rental-vehicles-and-transport/visiting-driver-training-programme/](https://aa.co.nz/travel/rental-vehicles-and-transport/visiting-driver-training-programme/)

## Fee payment

Please make sure you understand expectations for payment of your fees. You can view our Terms and Conditions of Enrolment here:



[ara.ac.nz/student-services/how-to-apply/terms-and-conditions-of-enrolment/](https://ara.ac.nz/student-services/how-to-apply/terms-and-conditions-of-enrolment/)

### Preferred payment method

Our preferred payment method is a bank transfer (telegraphic transfer) to Ara Institute of Canterbury's bank account, using the details below. Please include your name and Student ID number in the payment information. Payments will incur a \$30 bank charge.

Bank Account: 03-0826-0169064-003  
Te Pūkenga - NZIST -  
Ara Institute

Bank: Westpac New Zealand  
Limited

Branch Address: Westpac on Takutai  
Square  
16 Takutai Square  
Auckland 1010  
New Zealand

Other payment options are:

- Swift Code: WPACNZ2W
- Credit Card (Visa, Mastercard)
- EFTPOS or cash if you are in New Zealand (please note that for safety reasons we advise that you do not carry large amounts of cash)

Please note: you may incur bank charges (these are not paid by Ara).

### Additional costs

As well as your tuition fees and general living expenses, please budget for NZD\$1,000 for additional costs for other items such as textbooks, equipment, miscellaneous items, exam fees, field trips, uniforms and stationery.



## Refund and withdrawal policy

Consideration for Refund	Documents to be submitted by student	Homestay placement fee	Refund amount (Tuition fees)
Student withdrawing prior to the programme start date (being the start date of the first course of the student's path of study)	Completed Withdrawal (enrolment amendment form) and written request to withdraw (email or letter to intladmissions@ara.ac.nz)	No refund	Full refund less NZ\$500 administration fee
Student withdrawing within the first 7 calendar day from the start date of the first course of the student's path of study)	Completed Withdrawal (enrolment amendment form) and Written request to withdraw (email or letter to intladmissions@ara.ac.nz)	No refund	80% of tuition fees paid (20% tuition fees will be deducted for administration purposes)
Student withdrawing after the 7th calendar day from the start date of the first course of the student's path of study).	Completed Withdrawal (enrolment amendment form) and written request to withdraw (email or letter to intladmissions@ara.ac.nz)	No refund	No refund
A student visa is not granted or approved by Immigration New Zealand.	Official notification from Immigration NZ indicating the student visa application has been declined	No refund	Full refund less NZ\$500 administration fee
Student visa renewal declined by Immigration New Zealand on the basis of poor attendance, unsatisfactory academic performance and/or late visa application (Sec 61)	Official notification from Immigration NZ indicating the student visa application has been declined	No refund	80% of tuition fees paid (20% tuition fees will be deducted) OR Pro-rata basis based on last attendance date
Cancellation of enrolment by Ara	A termination of enrolment letter	No refund	No refund
Compassionate Consideration (only considered when withdrawal circumstances are beyond student's control and meet the requirements of the Consideration for Withdrawn Grade or Fees Refund Policy)	Documentation supporting your application for a refund and Compassionate consideration application form.	Refund decision will be determined on an individual basis	Refund amount will be determined on an individual basis.

## Terms and conditions of enrolment

Please make sure that you understand all of the things you need to do before you start your studies. Full details are available here:

 [ara.ac.nz/student-services/how-to-apply/terms-and-conditions-of-enrolment/](https://ara.ac.nz/student-services/how-to-apply/terms-and-conditions-of-enrolment/)

## Learning in New Zealand

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Learning in New Zealand may be different to what you are used to. Adult learners are expected to take responsibility for their own learning, and as a student at Ara you can expect to study on your own after class hours to meet the academic requirements.

Individual or group assessments are a common part of learning at Ara, and there will be occasional tests or exams, depending on your study area. You are expected to apply principles of learning and produce independent work rather than simply reproducing classroom learning in writing. Teaching staff are very approachable and they generally prefer to be addressed by their first names.

### Class attendance and progression

To maintain your eligibility to hold a student visa, you are required to:

- Attend all classes and maintain 100% attendance unless there are genuine reasons for absence (e.g. you are sick)
- Make satisfactory progress on the programme you are enrolled in: you must pass at least 75% of your courses

If you do not attend classes or make satisfactory progress, Immigration New Zealand can revoke your visa. It is your responsibility to comply with the requirements to hold a student visa, and it is extremely important that you do so, as it may affect any future visa applications and your studies in New Zealand.

If you are sick and unable to come to classes, you must inform your tutor, an international student advisor or a department support administrator. If you plan to be absent, for example to travel overseas or for another reason, you must seek approval from an international student advisor before you leave.

### Re-sits / repeating courses

If you fail a course or assessment, you may be able to re-sit it. Otherwise you will need to repeat the course and pay the full course fees.


### Academic misconduct

It is well known that people learn better when they work together, and this is encouraged. However, when it comes to assessment, collaboration (working together) is not permitted unless it is a formal part of the assignment set by the tutor.

You are also responsible for making sure your work is not able to be copied by others. Sharing or comparing tests, exams and assessments is prohibited and, if detected, will be treated as 'academic misconduct'.

Cheating, plagiarism and other dishonest academic practices have serious consequences and if you fail to meet academic standards you may be subject to educative processes or penalties.

For further details, refer to our Academic Misconduct Policy here:

 [ara.ac.nz/siteassets/documents---home/about-us/policies/general-academic-policies/app304-academic-misconduct2.pdf](https://ara.ac.nz/siteassets/documents---home/about-us/policies/general-academic-policies/app304-academic-misconduct2.pdf)



## APA

Ara uses the APA referencing style for academic writing and assessments. Referencing, or citing, is acknowledging the sources of information that you have used in your assignment. It shows that the information in your assignment comes from other sources and is not your own.

With APA, you avoid plagiarism, or copying and using someone else's words or ideas and presenting them as if they were your own without clearly acknowledging the author(s). It shows that you have read widely for your assignment.





## Working in New Zealand

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As an international student studying in New Zealand, you may be granted work rights. To confirm this, check your eVisa or visa label in your passport. Work rights allow you to work up to 20 hours per week and full-time during scheduled holidays (subject to visa conditions).

If you are found working more than your approved hours, you may be deported. Your employer may ask you to provide a letter confirming the scheduled holiday dates. Your international student advisor will provide this for you upon request (please allow 2-3 days). A guide to working while studying in New Zealand can be found here:

 [naumainz.studyinnewzealand.govt.nz/](https://naumainz.studyinnewzealand.govt.nz/)


### Employee rights

All workers in New Zealand have rights as employees. For more information on minimum wages and rights, go to:


 [employment.govt.nz/er/minimumrights](https://employment.govt.nz/er/minimumrights)

### Key employment sites

If you are looking for work, we recommend searching on:

 [ara.ac.nz/employment-and-partnerships/careers-and-employment/](https://ara.ac.nz/employment-and-partnerships/careers-and-employment/)

 [sjs.co.nz](https://sjs.co.nz)

 [trademe.co.nz/jobs](https://trademe.co.nz/jobs)

 [seek.co.nz](https://seek.co.nz)



### Dealing with homesickness

Arriving in a new country is often overwhelming and adjusting to a new culture can be difficult. When you arrive in New Zealand you might find our accent, food, weather and way of life strange. You may feel confused, overwhelmed, anxious, lonely, and have a real desire to return home. Remember, this is a completely normal reaction and it's temporary. You will get used to it and settle in after a short time.

Homesickness is common and no-one is immune - even Kiwi students studying in a different city! It is a completely normal feeling. Sometimes homesickness lasts for only a few weeks but other times it can linger for a few months. Our International Student Advisors are here to help you feel welcome at Ara and in Canterbury. We can answer any questions you have and we will assist you in any way we can.



### Personal safety

You should never have to suffer any form of physical, psychological or sexual abuse or mistreatment. This also applies when you are in a relationship with someone. Seek help and talk to someone you trust.

To avoid undesirable visitors or prowlers at home, keep curtains and blinds closed at night. When you go out at night, go with friends and stay with them. If you are by yourself, use common sense. Stay in brightly-lit areas and be aware of what is happening around you. Keep some money for a taxi with you.

### If you are asked for money

Some people may try to take advantage of international students. They can be people from your own country. It is okay to say no if you do not want to give someone else money. If someone asks you for money for 'protection', this is called extortion and it is a crime under New Zealand law. If anyone asks you for money, please come and speak to a student advisor or a staff member at Ara.

### Protecting your property

Keep a record of serial numbers of your electrical equipment, computers and devices, and a record of everything else of value you own including clothing. If you lose something, the police and your insurance company will require these details.

### Lost and found property

New Zealand Police provide a lost and found service at local police stations. Call 105 for non-emergency assistance or visit your nearest police station; you can locate the closest one here:




[police.govt.nz/stations](https://www.police.govt.nz/stations)

Note that in some circumstances your medical and travel insurance can cover the replacement cost of a lost or stolen item.




## Safety in outdoor environments

If you go hiking (or even for a long bush walk), be prepared for extreme changes in weather. New Zealand has no dangerous animals, but not being prepared for sudden and extreme changes in weather can get you into trouble. Let your friends know your plans before you leave, and tell them of any change in your plans. New Zealanders take this responsibility seriously.

 [mountainsafety.org.nz](https://mountainsafety.org.nz)

New Zealand is surrounded by beautiful beaches and has many lakes and rivers. Some of these places can be dangerous - especially if you are not experienced on or near the water - and sadly many people drown every year. There is lots of good safety information available here:

 [live-work.immigration.govt.nz/resources/stay-water-safe](https://live-work.immigration.govt.nz/resources/stay-water-safe)

## New Zealand emergency services

To reach the Police, ambulance and fire services in case of emergency dial 111 from any private, public or mobile telephone.

## Embassies

To find your embassy, consulate or high commission, visit

 [mfat.govt.nz](https://mfat.govt.nz)

### Key advice for pedestrians and cyclists

When you are walking in a built up area, use pedestrian crossings or cross at traffic signals to stay safe. Look both ways before crossing the road because cars may approach from the opposite way you are used to in your country. Beware of bikes and scooters as often they share the footpaths.

Before cycling on the road it is important to familiarise yourself with the road rules.

You must wear a securely fastened cycle helmet or risk a fine. Your bike must have brakes, reflectors and lights to use when it is dark. You cannot carry a passenger unless there is a specially fitted seat (usually for children). Passengers must also wear a helmet.

### Key advice for drivers

If you wish to drive in New Zealand, you must meet a number of requirements such as driving on the LEFT side of the road. You must also have a current driver's licence. If you are in New Zealand for up to 12 months, you may be able to use an international driving permit. Remember to get a translation if your licence is not in English.

The New Zealand road code has very strict rules, including the limits for drinking alcohol and then driving. For more information, visit:

 [nzta.govt.nz/resources/roadcode/](https://nzta.govt.nz/resources/roadcode/)

If you are thinking about renting a car in New Zealand you must be at least 25 years old.

For more information about driving in New Zealand and cycling safety, visit the New Zealand Transport Agency

 [nzta.govt.nz](https://nzta.govt.nz)

### Alcohol

In New Zealand it is illegal for anyone under 18 years of age to consume or possess alcohol in a public place. If you break this law, you may have to pay a fine. More information can be found here:


 [police.govt.nz/advice/drugs-and-alcohol/alcohol-laws-and-penalties](https://police.govt.nz/advice/drugs-and-alcohol/alcohol-laws-and-penalties)

Photo identification (ID) that shows your age is often requested before you are allowed to enter a bar or club or purchase alcohol in a store. Your

ID must be one of the following:

- Passport
- New Zealand Driver's Licence
- Kiwi Access Card

### Drugs and tobacco

In New Zealand, the penalties for importing and/or selling illegal drugs are severe. It is illegal to possess or consume/smoke drugs including cannabis, ecstasy, heroin, methamphetamine and LSD.

Visitors to New Zealand who are caught with illegal drugs will be sent home and not allowed to return to New Zealand.

Cigarettes and tobacco are legal in New Zealand, although it is illegal for shops to sell these items to anyone under 18 years old. Smoking is prohibited in all bars, clubs, pubs, restaurants, offices, work places, shopping areas and on public transport. Ara campuses are smoke-free zones - you are not allowed to smoke or vape on campus.

### Pastoral care code of practice


Ara is a signatory to the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021, administered by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA). We are committed to the quality and care of international students.

The Code makes sure that educational providers ensure:

- high professional standards are maintained
- international students are recruited in an ethical and responsible way
- information supplied to international students is clear, accurate and up-to-date
- students are provided with information before taking on any commitments
- contractual dealings with international students are done in an ethical and responsible way
- the particular needs of international students are recognised
- international students under the age of 18 are in safe accommodation
- all providers have fair and equitable internal procedures for the resolution of international student grievances.



All schools and institutions that wish to have international students studying on their programmes must comply with the Code. The Code is available on the NZQA website:

 [nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/education-code-of-practice](https://nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/education-code-of-practice)

### International student advisors

At Ara we have a team of international advisors who offer advice and support to international students during their enrolment. This advice is confidential and will not be shared with anyone else without your permission.

The team are there to support you and offer advice on many things, such as:

- cultural adjustment
- homesickness
- general health and wellbeing
- academic issues
- accommodation

Advisors can refer you to other services as required. If we can help, just get in touch:

#### City campus, Christchurch

Student Central, Madras Street  
Email: [learnersupport@ara.ac.nz](mailto:learnersupport@ara.ac.nz)

Open Monday to Friday, 8am-4.30pm

#### Timaru campus

Student Central Arthur Street  
Email: [learnersupport@ara.ac.nz](mailto:learnersupport@ara.ac.nz)

Monday to Friday, 8.30am-4.30pm

## Student support services at Ara

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The support services at Ara have been designed to help you throughout your study journey. We're committed to helping achieve your study goals and supporting you to make the most of your time at Ara as you progress towards an exciting career.

Our support services staff can help you with everything from enrolment to accommodation advice through to learning support and choosing your career. They can also tell you about our outstanding on-campus facilities and the many opportunities to socialise at events and activities.

### Learning Support

Ara offers a number of services designed to help and promote your learning. Our library facilities are open seven days a week and include access to computers and email facilities. We can help and support you with your study techniques and learning, plus we have specialist support and guidance for our international students.

### Disability Services

If you have any kind of disability, talk to Disability Services about the information, equipment, services and support they can provide to help you make the most of study. You may be eligible for services such as note-taking support in class, alternative exam arrangements, exam reader/writer, course materials in alternative formats such as enlarged text and specialised equipment and furniture.

### Counselling

Our counselling service offers you the opportunity to speak in confidence to one of our qualified counsellors about anything that is worrying you. It could be stress, course concerns, relationship difficulties, personal issues, home sickness or another other worries and concerns.



## Careers & Employment

The Careers & Employment team at Ara provides free advice to current and prospective students, as well as to our graduates. The team can help you with exploring your career options, developing your employability, job searching, CVs, interviews and more.

## Health Centre

Our Health Centre at the City campus offers a great range of services including nurses, a general practitioner (GP), counsellors and a social worker. All services are confidential.

## Student Advocate

Student advocacy is a free service available to all students. If you are facing difficulties inside or outside Ara that will affect your studies and your ability to achieve your academic goals, the student advocacy can assist. It can also assist if you want to make a complaint.





## Living in Canterbury, New Zealand

Canterbury is a vibrant and dynamic region. The largest city in Canterbury is Christchurch, which is home to just over 400,000 people. Christchurch's vitality is reflected throughout Canterbury in smaller centres such as Timaru, Ashburton and Kaikoura, which are thriving on the back of tourism and primary industries.

When you come to Canterbury to study at Ara, your opportunities to explore and experience this beautiful region are endless. You are never far from beaches, rivers, lakes, mountains and bush, and there are all sorts of ways you can enjoy these places; from kayaking, skiing

and hiking to mountain biking, rock climbing and swimming with dolphins. To find out more about Christchurch and Canterbury, we recommend these websites:



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




[eventfinda.co.nz/whatson/events/christchurch-city](http://eventfinda.co.nz/whatson/events/christchurch-city)




[tourism.net.nz/region/canterbury/canterbury---timaru](http://tourism.net.nz/region/canterbury/canterbury---timaru)



## Studying in New Zealand

 [blog.studywithnewzealand.govt.nz/](http://blog.studywithnewzealand.govt.nz/)

 [live-work.immigration.govt.nz/study-in-new-zealand](http://live-work.immigration.govt.nz/study-in-new-zealand)

## Weather

Canterbury has a mild climate. Summer (December to February) is usually warm and dry. Winter (June to August) is cooler; at night the temperature can fall below zero degrees Celsius but the days are often sunny. Autumn and spring have mild days but the nights are cool.

The weather in Canterbury can vary a lot, even in one day and the wind can be cold. Be prepared for these changes - even in summer - by having some warm clothes.

Central heating is uncommon in New Zealand homes. Most homes have either a heat pump (air conditioning) or a log fire, but in some homes you'll need to provide your own heating appliance.

## Seasons

**Spring** September to November

**Summer** December to February

**Autumn** March to May

**Winter** June to August

These figures for temperature, sunshine and rain are a guide to normal conditions:

## February (summer)


Daytime average temperature	<b>23.9°C</b>
Nighttime average temperature	<b>8.2°C</b>
Sunshine (hours per month)	<b>188.6</b>
Rain (days per month)	<b>5.1</b>

## August (winter)

Daytime average temperature	<b>14.4°C</b>
Nighttime average temperature	<b>0.2°C</b>
Sunshine (hours per month)	<b>147.9</b>
Rain (days per month)	<b>8.22</b>


## Getting around

The Metro network provides bus transport from most suburbs to the city, all shopping centres and most attractions around the city. The Central Station is located in the city at 46-50 Lichfield Street. Some services run from stops near Ara. For more information please visit:

 [metroinfo.co.nz](http://metroinfo.co.nz)

If you plan to use the bus frequently, we recommend that you purchase a Metrocard for discounted travel.










There is a special Tertiary Student Metrocard available which gives you access to cheaper bus fares:

 [metroinfo.co.nz/metrocard/tertiary-discount/](http://metroinfo.co.nz/metrocard/tertiary-discount/)



## City campus map



- |   |   |
|---|---|
|  <b>FREE</b> wifi on campus      |  Café            |
|  Student carpark                 |  Supermarket     |
|  Restaurant/Bar                  |  Post Office     |
|  Bus Stop                      |  Health Centre |
|  Covered Secure Cycle Compound |   |



# Timaru campus map





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For more information:



0800 24 24 76



[ara.ac.nz](http://ara.ac.nz)

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