



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga

GUIDE TO LIVING AND STUDYING IN NEW ZEALAND



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A Message from the New Zealand Minister for Tertiary Education

My personal welcome to you and my congratulations on your decision to study in New Zealand. You are joining the many students worldwide who have had an enjoyable and successful experience studying in New Zealand. I sincerely hope that you will share that experience and be proud of your success.

Moving to another country and experiencing another way of life can be exciting, but it also has its challenges. I recall my own experience as an international student, moving halfway around the world to further my education. It would have been helpful then to have a guide such as this one!

The New Zealand Government has produced this Guide to introduce you to study and life in New Zealand. It contains important information and advice, and ideas about support if you face a challenge or difficulty during your stay. It will help you find the people who are there to help.

I encourage you to read this Guide thoroughly, so that you are prepared for living and studying in New Zealand, and know the kinds of services we provide for our international students. I suggest you keep this Guide for future reference, and I hope it will be useful in helping you adapt to your new life.

My best wishes for successful study and a memorable stay in New Zealand.



Hon. Dr Michael Cullen

Minister for Tertiary Education

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Introduction

Each year many students from other parts of the world come to study and live in New Zealand. Living and studying in a new country away from friends and family is exciting and scary at the same time. Things will seem strange and different. There is a lot to learn as you settle in.

This Guide aims to help you prepare for living and studying in New Zealand. Use it to answer any questions you may have before you leave home, when you arrive or after you have been in New Zealand a while.

The Guide contains useful and practical information about living in New Zealand. It also has information to help with problems or difficult situations. You may never experience problems, but in case you do, it is good to know that help is available. And remember that most students enjoy their stay in New Zealand with few problems and go home with happy memories.

The Ministry of Education would like to know what you think about this Guide. If you have any comments on the information or have ideas for other useful information to include in future editions, let us know. You can send your comments by email to:

international.unit@minedu.govt.nz

We have tried to make sure that the information included in this Guide is accurate and up to date, but details about websites, contact details and prices etc. can change. If you find any information in this Guide that is not correct, let us know by sending an email to the address above.

We hope you have a fantastic time living and studying in New Zealand!



STUDYING IN NEW ZEALAND

New Zealand has an education system that is highly regarded worldwide.

Secondary or tertiary study through an accredited education provider in New Zealand will mean your qualifications have international recognition and there is confidence in your achievements.

Students come to New Zealand from all over the world. In 2006 there were students from 79 different countries studying in New Zealand. Most came from China or Korea but a significant number were from Japan, Germany, USA, Thailand, Taiwan, India and Malaysia.

In 2006, 66% of the overseas students came from Asia, 16% from Euro countries, 17% from South America and 1% from the Middle Eastern countries.

www.education.org.nz/policy/statistics/AggregateStudentDatabyCountry2.xls

Your Visa/Student Permit

Your Student Visa, issued in your home country, allows you to enter New Zealand. Before you get a Visa you need to know where you will stay when you arrive in New Zealand, even if it's only for a little while. You will not get a Visa if you haven't arranged a place to stay. Your school or institution may help you organise this.

See **'Where to stay'** on page 30 for the types of places you could stay while you are in New Zealand.

When you arrive in New Zealand show your passport and Visa to the immigration officer. You will be issued with a Student Permit if you meet all the requirements.

The Student Permit lets you study in New Zealand until a set date, and has conditions that you must abide by while you are studying.

Conditions of your Student Permit

The conditions of your Student Permit mean you must:

- have enough money to live on – at least NZ\$10,000 for a year's study or \$1,000 per month if you are studying in New Zealand for less than 36 weeks
- have enough money to get home (or to another country that you are entitled to enter) or have a return air ticket
- study at the education institute/school and on the course written on your Student Permit/Visa

- make adequate academic progress while you are here (the level of progress will be determined by your school or institution)
- pay fees for your study.

It is very important that you always meet the conditions of your Visa and Student Permit.

Your Permit may be cancelled if you:

- fail to meet the conditions listed above
- are not in New Zealand for the purpose which you said (i.e. you are not studying)
- engage in paid employment without the permission of the Department of Labour (Immigration)
- commit a crime.

You should always ensure that your Visa or Student Permit is current and note when it expires so you can renew it in plenty of time. If your Permit expires and you are still in New Zealand, you will be here illegally. It is strongly recommended that you allow at least two weeks to have your Permit renewed so there is time for it to be processed and your passport returned to you. If you haven't finished your study when your Permit expires, you may be able to renew it if you still meet the conditions.

The New Zealand Immigration Service (NZIS) issues Student Visas and Permits.

If you have any questions about your Student Visa or Permit, check online at: www.immigration.govt.nz or at your nearest NZIS branch, or phone free on: 914 400 (in Auckland) or 0508 558 855 (from other parts of New Zealand).

If you have a 'limited purposes' Visa or Permit, once it has expired it cannot be renewed except, very rarely, in extreme circumstances.

Student Permit applications in Auckland are done through the post or you can put the forms into the box at NZIS offices in Auckland. Your passport and documents will be returned to you by courier within seven working days. If you are in a city other than Auckland, you can download an application form from the NZIS website, complete the form and either post it or take it with your passport to the nearest NZIS office.

Renewing your Student Permit

Your Visa or Student Permit will be renewed only if you have kept to the conditions of your permit. When renewing your Visa or Student Permit you may be required to provide evidence of your course attendance.

You can renew your Student Permit yourself by completing the necessary forms and providing the required documentation. Ask your education provider for help if you need it. NZIS also has a special arrangement with most of the major education providers which enables you to renew your Student Permit on campus.

If you wish to change from your original enrolment to another education provider, you will need to update your Student Permit. Take with you a record of your attendance, which your school or institution can give you. A valid Student Permit must have details of your actual education provider.

Agents

Immigration agents offer to renew Student Permits for a fee and may approach you with offers to help. Some agents may suggest that you would be better off studying at another institution and offer to assist your enrolment at a new education provider. This offer is often not in your best interests but will earn the agent a commission. The agent will probably charge you a fee and will certainly receive a fee from the new education provider. The tuition you receive at the new institution may be of a lower standard than offered by the institution you came to New Zealand to study at, and the change may disrupt your long-term study goals. Such a change may also affect your ability to get a further Student Permit.

If an agent suggests changing education provider, discuss it fully with the student support centre where you are enrolled, with your agent at home and with your parents. Their advice will be in your best interests and in the interest of the long-term study and life goals you came to New Zealand with.

The New Zealand teaching and learning environment

'Questions in exams usually look for your level of understanding rather than your ability to memorise things. You are likely to face essay-type questions even in maths papers!'

Rami Alhadhrami, age 21, Yemen, 3rd year Bachelor of Commerce and Administration at Victoria University of Wellington.



The style of teaching and learning in New Zealand may not be the same as in your own country. New Zealand has an independent learning environment. You are expected to take full responsibility for attending classes, keeping up with your studies, doing your homework and completing course requirements. At first the amount of work required and the level of responsibility may be overwhelming. You need to organise yourself well and give yourself time to adapt to the new learning environment.

In an independent learning environment you are still encouraged to ask questions and to ask for help from your teachers and lecturers. It is quite acceptable to work in groups as long as the assignments you present for assessment are your own work. Teachers and lecturers want to make sure that **you** understand what you are writing and can apply the knowledge that you have learned. Plagiarism (i.e. copying other people's answers or copying from a textbook) or presenting work done by someone else is cheating. It is unacceptable in New Zealand and is treated very seriously by schools and tertiary institutes.

Study

Students participate actively in their learning – that means you may be expected to ask and answer questions about the course material and provide ideas for discussion. Teachers and lecturers don't ask many 'right/wrong' or 'yes/no' questions. The focus is on understanding the course material rather than memorising it. The answers may come from many sources, and students are expected to use several different texts and reference them in their written work.

At the tertiary level homework is not usually set. You are expected to read the relevant chapters/pages of the textbook independently, take notes during lectures and tutorials, and review and understand the information discussed. You will need to refer back to your lecture notes to prepare for examinations.

Assessment

Each course will have its own method of assessment. This may be a mixture of in-course assessment (e.g. essays, assignments and tests) as well as end-of-course examinations. Some courses may require students to achieve a certain standard in the in-course assessment before they can sit the final examination.

At the end of the course each student will receive a grade or mark. To pass the course and receive credit for it, the student must achieve a level equal to or higher than the grade or pass mark set by the school or institute. To progress in your programme of study you will need to pass your courses and meet your next course's entry-level requirements. Entry to some courses requires that you achieve in a previous course a higher level than just a passing mark or grade.

Examinations

Examinations in New Zealand are designed to test how well students understand concepts and ideas presented during study. Students are expected to be able to remember what they have been taught and to use that knowledge to answer questions in a practical manner rather than reproducing information they have memorised word for word. Cheating in examinations is totally unacceptable and taken very seriously in New Zealand.

Study skill help

Your education provider may have a support system, perhaps run through a Student Learning Support Centre, to help you understand New Zealand's teaching and learning environment. In most cases, your education provider will run study skill seminars or give opportunities for practice before assessments, especially in critical analysis and creative thinking. If you are having difficulty or want to learn how to improve your grades, ask your tutor for help.

The Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students

This is an agreement with the Government to ensure that all education providers take responsibility for the wellbeing of their international students. It means they are more than just education providers; it means they have promised that you will be looked after well. Signing the agreement means they have met and agreed with the requirements of the Ministry of Education.

A Student Visa or Limited Purpose Visa is given to you to study only at an education provider that is registered with the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA), has accredited courses and has signed the Code. Education providers that do not meet these requirements are not allowed to enrol international students.

You will be given a summary of the Code when you enrol. If you would like to read the entire Code it is online at: www.minedu/goto/international

If there is something about the Code that you do not understand and your education provider can't help, contact the Code Advisory Officer, phone: 09 (if you call from outside Auckland) 3745481 or email: info.code@minedu.govt.nz

Course fees and withdrawal

Your education provider must inform you of the total costs of your course. If you decide to change your course, getting your money back will normally be possible only if you advise the education provider very early into your course. This often means you must inform them by the end of the first week of the course.

The education provider will give information about rules that apply:

- if you decide to withdraw from a course
- if the school or institution wishes to stop providing tuition in your subject
- if you request a refund of your fees
- to protect the fees you have paid if the school or institution closes or cancels your course.

If you withdraw from a course and believe that the school or institution did not follow its rules, you can make a formal complaint. If you withdraw after finding a much cheaper school or institution, you should try and talk to an ex-student to find out if the cheaper school or institution is as good as the one you are already enrolled with.

If a course stops before it is scheduled to, you will be helped to find a place in a similar course at another education provider. If you decide not to continue your studies with another education provider, you may be offered a refund of the unused portion of your fees.

Private Training Establishments (PTEs)

All PTEs (this includes English Language Schools) have a Trust Account which your fees are paid into.

If you withdraw from your course, you may be entitled to some money back.

If your course is:

- less than 5 weeks and you withdraw within the first 2 days of the start of the course, you'll get 50% of your total fees back
- between 5 weeks and 13 weeks and you withdraw within the first 5 days of the course, you'll get 75% of your total fees back
- longer than 13 weeks and you withdraw within the first 8 days, you will receive all your money back, less an administration charge of 10% or \$500, whichever is lower.¹

If you withdraw from your course outside the times identified above, any money you receive back will depend on the particular PTE's policies.

If you need to complain

Code of Practice concerns

If you think your school or institution has not kept its promises under the Code of Practice, try talking to an international student support person at your institution to resolve the issue. If this does not satisfy you, you will need to make a formal complaint to the education provider, using the procedures your education provider has in place.

If you are unhappy with the answers you receive after you have complained formally to your education provider, there is an independent appeal authority that will investigate your complaint for you. This organisation is the International Education Appeal Authority (IEAA). You should contact the IEAA only after you have tried to work with your education provider to resolve the complaint. You can write to the IEAA using the following address:

International Education Appeal Authority
C/- Ministry of Education
PO Box 8454
Symonds St
AUCKLAND

¹ www.nzqa.govt.nz

Academic quality concerns

If you have a worry or wish to complain about the quality of the education you are receiving, you should first talk to your education provider. There will be rules or procedures to follow when making a complaint about education quality.

University, Polytechnic or College of Education

Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education have rules and procedures for complaints by students about academic quality. If you are not sure where to find a copy of the rules and procedures, check with the administration office. Usually, what are called 'grievance procedures' will suggest that you first raise your complaint with your lecturer or tutor. Next you may be directed to the Head of the Department, the Dean of the Faculty, or to the Chief Executive or Vice Chancellor.

If you are not satisfied that your problem or concern has been properly addressed, you can lay a complaint with the Office of the Ombudsmen. This is a high-level government office established to review administrative decisions taken by government departments and officials. You need to have tried all other steps before contacting the Office of the Ombudsmen. Further information about the Office of the Ombudsmen is available online at: www.ombudsmen.govt.nz

Primary or Secondary School

Every school in New Zealand has its own governing Board of Trustees, which employs the Principal and staff. The Principal is responsible for the management of the school on behalf of the Board of Trustees. You (or your parents) should first talk to the Principal about any questions or worries you may have about academic quality. If the response from the Principal is not satisfactory, you can contact the Board of Trustees.

The Education Review Office (ERO) is a New Zealand government agency which regularly evaluates the quality of education in all New Zealand schools. It makes recommendations to schools' Boards of Trustees on how they can improve student achievement, and it comments on management issues and the school environment. It also reviews how schools handle complaints. ERO can receive individual complaints if procedures at the school have been followed and you are not satisfied with the result.

ERO's reports on individual schools are regularly published and are available online at: www.ero.govt.nz

Private Training Establishment or Language School study

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) is a government agency that monitors the quality of education provided by PTEs, including Language Schools. The NZQA registers PTEs if they can prove they are able to provide high-quality education and training in a sound and stable learning environment. Once they are registered, the NZQA can approve courses if they meet standards. Each course must be based on clear and consistent aims, content, outcomes and assessment practices. If you have a concern or complaint about your PTE or Language School, you should first raise the problem with the management staff. If the matter is not resolved, you can then approach the NZQA. The NZQA will investigate your concern or complaint, and inform you of the outcome.

If you decide to go to the NZQA with your concern or complaint, it should be in writing, saying exactly what the problem is and what has been done to try and fix it. It is helpful if any copies of relevant documents can be provided. You need to have tried all other steps before the NZQA will investigate (e.g. discussing your concerns or problems with the PTE or Language School management staff). You can, however, phone the NZQA to discuss the matter before submitting your written complaint.

For advice about complaints, phone the NZQA helpline free from anywhere in New Zealand on: 0800 72 4357, or write to: New Zealand Qualifications Authority, PO Box 160, Wellington, or email via the website: www.nzqa.govt.nz/for-learners/complaints.html

Getting your money back

If you withdraw from a course, and believe that your fees should be returned because the education provider did not follow its rules, you should first discuss the problem with the education provider. If you have problems getting your money back, you may complain to the International Education Appeal Authority or the NZQA (contact details follows).

STUDYING IN NEW ZEALAND

International Education Appeal Authority
c/- Ministry of Education
PO Box 8454
Symonds St
AUCKLAND

Email info.ieaa@minedu.govt.nz

New Zealand Qualifications Authority
PO Box 160
WELLINGTON

Free phone 0800 72 4356



YOUR JOURNEY TO NEW ZEALAND

New Zealand is far away from most other countries. Depending on where your home country is, you may spend up to 20 hours travelling to New Zealand. In New Zealand you may also have to take an internal flight of an hour or more. Long flights to New Zealand may include one or more refuelling stops. These stops could be in Asia, Australia or the Pacific. You can usually arrange to stay overnight at one of these stops if you want to rest during the trip.

Transit Visas

You may need a Transit Visa for countries where your flight stops on the way to New Zealand. If your plane stops in Australia (whether or not you leave the aeroplane) you are likely to need a Transit Visa for Australia. For more information contact your nearest Australian embassy/consulate or check online at: www.immi.gov.au/allforms/transit.htm

If you need to get a Transit Visa you should allow up to two months for it to be processed.

Looking after yourself on the flight

Common problems associated with flying are dehydration, cramps and swelling. You might arrive in New Zealand suffering from jet lag.

Jet lag is caused by disturbance to your body's 24-hour clock. It often occurs after travelling long distances by aeroplane through several time zones. Jet lag can result in tiredness, insomnia (the inability to sleep), disorientation and irritability.

You can reduce the effects of jet lag in the following ways:

- Adjust to the time of the country you are headed for. If you are going directly to New Zealand, set your watches and clocks to New Zealand time as soon as the plane leaves the ground so you can start adjusting to the change.
- Stay hydrated. Drink plenty of water and juices to prevent dehydration. Avoiding coffee, tea and alcohol will help.
- Stretch and walk. It is important to get up and move as much as possible to help blood circulation – about once an hour except when you are sleeping.

- Sleep. Close the window shade and sleep during the night hours of your destination city, even if it is still daylight outside the aircraft. Earplugs and sleep masks help to block out noise and light. Many airlines provide these items on international flights.
- Wear comfortable clothes and socks. This makes sleeping during the flight easier.

For more information about health problems associated with flying check online at:

www.flighthealth.org

Your luggage

Baggage allowance

Airlines have strict baggage restrictions and airline staff will weigh your bags. You are allowed about 20 kilograms for luggage, plus 7 kilograms for any bags you carry on to the plane (cabin bags). If your bags weigh more than the allowance, you may have to pay excess baggage charges or you may be forced to leave some of your things behind. Check the airline's rules about luggage size, weight, allowable items and other rules before you begin packing.

Also, if you need to make a domestic flight in New Zealand to reach your final destination, there may be different baggage restrictions. Check with your travel agent or look up all the different airlines' rules about baggage restrictions. Getting it wrong could cost you a lot of money or deprive you of some of your possessions. This also applies for your return trip to your home.

Essential items

If you wear glasses, pack an extra pair and bring your glasses or contact lens prescription. Carry these and any medication you need in your cabin bag.

Some medicines are illegal in New Zealand. The Customs staff at the airport may want information about any medicine you have with you (refer to **'Clearing Customs' on page 25**). Keep medicines in the original, labelled containers. Bring copies of any prescriptions and the common names for the medicine. Get a note from your doctor explaining your need to take the medicine. If you have any doubts that the medicine you take may not be legal in New Zealand, you should check with the New Zealand Embassy in your home country (see also **'Illegal Drugs' on page 23**)

YOUR JOURNEY TO NEW ZEALAND

Other items for your cabin bag are:

- change of clothing (at least underwear), toothbrush and other personal items you might need if your luggage is delayed or lost or you are kept waiting for a flight
- a warm sweater or jacket
- telephone numbers and email addresses of friends and relatives in New Zealand
- telephone numbers and email addresses of your school or institution (International Student Office) and/or homestay organiser
- address and telephone number of the place you will stay when you arrive (including homestay details)
- passport and airline tickets
- travellers' cheques and/or bank cards
- enough cash for your first week (US\$200-\$300)
- important personal documents
- medical and dental records
- extra passport-size photographs
- pen to complete Arrival Card and other documents.

Put your name, address and phone number on the inside and outside of all your bags.

Security

Your luggage will need to go through security clearances during your journey, and you and your bags may be searched when you arrive in New Zealand.

Be sure to pack your own bags. You will know that all the things you need and want are there and it is likely that you will be asked by New Zealand Customs if you have packed your own bags. Label all your luggage inside and outside with your name and New Zealand address (even if it's a temporary address).

Prohibited items

New Zealand has very strict laws on what you can bring into the country.

You **must not bring** in any animals or insects (alive or dead), feathers, shells, plants, flowers or fresh foods, including meat. Some packaged goods such as certain cheeses are not allowed. If you have any of the above, you must declare them to Customs when you arrive. Failure to

declare could result in a fine or prosecution. There are also limits on quantities that you can bring in. It pays to check with Customs before you travel.

Check online at: www.customs.govt.nz

To find out more about what you can and cannot bring in, check online at: www.protectnz.org.nz

Remember to tell friends and family about New Zealand's strict laws if they are sending or bringing you parcels.

Illegal drugs

Do not bring any illegal drugs into New Zealand. It could result in your prosecution and imprisonment. Never, ever carry packages or baggage for strangers.

Warning: Ephedrine and pseudo-ephedrine-based products, such as Contac NT tablets, are subject to legal restrictions in New Zealand. You may bring these products to New Zealand only for your own reasonable personal use.

Because these substances are widely used in the manufacture of the Class A controlled drug methamphetamine, this restriction is strictly applied. If you become involved in the supply of these substances and know that they will be used for a criminal purpose, you face heavy penalties under New Zealand law and could spend up to seven years in prison.

Arriving in New Zealand

When you arrive in New Zealand try to stay awake until at least 10pm. If you must sleep during the daytime, do so for no more than two hours. This helps your body clock to adjust and reduces the effects of jet lag.

You will probably arrive at one of three airports – Auckland, Wellington or Christchurch. You may have arranged for a staff member of your education provider to meet you at the airport and take you to your accommodation.

If no one is meeting you, ask for help at an i-SITE Visitor Centre (www.i-SITE.org) at the main airports. General information on how to get from the airport to where you are staying follows.

YOUR JOURNEY TO NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

Auckland is New Zealand's largest city and major international gateway. Many international students arrive here. There is a chapel at Auckland airport that can be used for prayer or contemplation by people of any religion.

If you are taking a domestic flight to reach your destination in New Zealand, you can check your luggage in and receive a boarding pass at the domestic transfer desk. You then need to make your way to the Domestic Terminal. A free bus goes every five minutes between the international and domestic terminals (available 6am-10.30pm). You can also walk – go outside the terminal and follow the blue painted line that shows the way between the two terminals.

To get into the city, go by:

- Taxi: this costs about NZ\$50-\$65 and takes 35 minutes.
- Shuttle bus/mini-van: this costs about NZ\$20-\$25 and takes about 40 minutes.
- Public transport (bus): this costs about NZ\$15 and takes about 60 minutes.

In times of heavy traffic (7-10am and 5-7pm on weekdays) the trip from the airport to the city can take longer than the times above.

Wellington

Wellington is the capital city of New Zealand.

To get into the city, go by:

- Taxi: this costs about NZ\$27 and takes about 20 minutes.
- Shuttle bus/mini-van: this costs about NZ\$14 for one passenger and \$4 for each additional one if in a group, and takes about 30 minutes.
- Public transport (bus): this costs about NZ\$4.50 and takes about 45 minutes.

Christchurch

Christchurch is the largest and busiest city in the South Island.

To get into the city, go by:

- Taxi: this costs about NZ\$25 and takes about 20 minutes.
- Shuttle bus/mini-van: this costs about NZ\$12 and takes about 40 minutes.
- Public transport (bus): this costs about NZ\$5 and takes about 35 minutes.

Clearing Customs

Everyone goes through Customs, Immigration and Agriculture clearance on arrival in New Zealand. Clearance procedures protect New Zealand by restricting what crosses the borders. This includes unwanted goods, pests and diseases. Never agree to take another person's belongings, or to help carry their luggage through airport clearance, because they might have packed illegal goods. You should take only your own belongings through airport clearance. You are likely to be asked if you have packed your own bags.

Declarations

Before you arrive in New Zealand you will receive a New Zealand Passenger Arrival Card. You **must** tick 'Yes' in the Customs section of your arrival card if you are bringing any of the following into New Zealand:

- goods that may be prohibited or restricted, such as weapons, objectionable (indecent) items, wildlife products, certain foods or illicit drugs
- goods in excess of the NZ\$700 value allowance and the tobacco and alcoholic beverages allowance
- goods for commercial, business or trade purposes
- goods carried on behalf of another person
- NZ\$10,000 or more, or the equivalent in foreign currency.

You will need to produce purchase receipts for any of the items you declare. It is best not to bring items that need this declaration into New Zealand.

Food items must be declared if they are agricultural and horticultural goods like meat, plant, fruit and dairy products. The Arrival Card describes foods that you must declare.

You do not have to declare your own jewellery, toiletries, clothing or footwear (unless they have soil or seeds on them). These are regarded as personal effects if they are for your own use. The term 'personal effects' covers new or used articles that travellers may reasonably require for their personal use during a journey. Bulk items of clothing (including footwear) brought into the country to sell are not covered by this allowance as they are 'goods for commercial purposes'.

Failure to declare something is an offence and could result in an instant fine or in prosecution. Ignorance of the law is not a defence, and every person who arrives in New Zealand and has completed the Arrival Card is considered to have read and understood New Zealand's border requirements.

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If you are carrying prescription medicines or controlled drugs, you should:

- have a prescription and note (in English or translated into English) from your physician, advising that the medicine is being used under a doctor's direction
- carry the medication in its original containers
- have sufficient quantity not exceeding three months' supply for prescription medicines or one month's supply for legal, controlled drugs.

If you buy any duty-free articles at the airport, keep the receipts. You may need to show these to Customs at the airport when you arrive.

Red/green ways out

After you collect your bags and have shown your passport and had it stamped, either:

- walk through the 'Nothing to Declare Way Out' (green exit) if you have not declared any Customs or agricultural goods on your Arrival Card, or
- go to the 'Goods to Declare Way Out' (red exit) if you have declared any Customs or agricultural goods on your Arrival Card or you are unsure which exit to use.

Bag search

Your bags may be searched by:

- Customs Officers
- Agriculture/Quarantine Officers.

If your bags are searched, be cooperative and helpful. Getting angry or upset will not make it any easier and may make the situation worse.

Lost luggage

Sometimes luggage gets lost during international travel. Generally, the airline finds the luggage and returns it to the owner within a day or two. If your luggage is lost, contact the airline you flew with. There is usually a desk in the arrivals area of the airport where you can do this. You will be asked to fill out a form that includes a description of your bag (size, colour, material, design, brand) and your address in New Zealand. When the bag is found it will be delivered to that address, usually free of charge. If it is never found, replacing your belongings will be covered by insurance. You need to discuss this with the airline.

Registering with your country's representative

Some countries request that their students register with the Education Office at their local embassy, high commission or consulate once they have arrived in New Zealand. You can find details of your country's representative in New Zealand on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade: www.mfat.govt.nz/Embassies2-Foreign-Embassies/Index.php

What to bring with you

Information about the town or city you will live and study in

Before you leave home, find out as much as you can about the place you will live, the education provider you will study with, and about living and studying in New Zealand.

The following websites may be useful:

www.newzealandeducated.com

www.stuff.co.nz

www.newzealand.com

www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/australasia/new_zealand

www.i-SITE.org

and check the website of the school/institution you will attend.

Copies of important documents

Copies of important documents, like the photo page of your passport, make it easier to get replacements if you lose them. Have an extra set of passport photos for the same reason, and for getting ID (Identity) cards for when you are in New Zealand.

Make three photocopies of your passport photo page, airline tickets, driver licence and the credit cards that you plan to bring with you, and of any other personal information such as records of your banking and insurance. Leave one set at home with family, pack one in your luggage and carry one in your cabin bag. If you have any special medical conditions, bring a note in English explaining the condition. List the serial numbers of any travellers' cheques (cross off the numbers from your copy as you use the cheques).

Money

Do not carry large amounts of cash (over \$1000) when you travel to New Zealand. Carrying large amounts of cash is not safe. Travellers' cheques are the safest way to carry large amounts of money and are accepted at hotels, banks and some shops. Another option is electronic transfer from your home country once you have opened a New Zealand bank account.

Bring enough cash with you for the first week. US dollars or Euros are best.

US\$200-300 should be enough to last your first week in New Zealand. It's easy to change your money (travellers' cheques or cash) at a bank or Bureau de Change at the airport or in a town or city.

If you bring NZ\$10,000 cash or more with you, you need to declare this to Customs when you arrive in New Zealand (refer to **'Declarations' on page 25**). In New Zealand it's not safe to keep large amounts of cash at the place you are living or to carry it around with you. A large amount is anything over NZ\$1000. A New Zealand bank account is the safest place to keep your money.

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Visa, MasterCard, Diners Club and American Express credit cards are widely used in New Zealand. It is safer to use credit cards than to carry cash.

ATMs (Automatic Teller Machines) are widely available in shopping malls and outside banks in all towns and cities. International credit cards and ATM cards work in these machines if they have a four-digit PIN (password that is made up of four numbers). Check with your bank before leaving home to make sure your PIN will work when you get here. Do not tell anyone your PIN number.

Travel and health insurance

All international students studying in New Zealand must have medical and travel insurance. It needs to cover you from the day you leave your home until the day you arrive back there, so that costs will be met if you need medical or dental care or if your possessions are lost, stolen or destroyed in New Zealand.

Your school or education provider is the best contact if you have any queries about insurance. They will certainly advise you about what the insurance needs to cover.

They may have an insurance policy that you can pay for at the same time you pay your study fees, or they may be able to help you with advice about buying insurance.

If you are buying your own insurance, you should be aware that the insurance policy must meet certain strict standards set out in the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students. If your insurance policy does not meet these standards, you will be required to buy a new policy that does. For more information on the requirements for a satisfactory insurance policy, refer to your education provider or go to section 7.4 on page 26 of the *Guidelines to Support the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students* found online at: www.minedu.goto.international

The Insurance Council of New Zealand will give you excellent information about buying and claiming insurance. Check online at www.icnz.org.nz

Clothing

Your personal style and the climate in the place you live will influence what you bring. New Zealanders dress for the occasion and it's useful to have casual and formal clothes with you. You will need warm clothes if you are spending winter in New Zealand, and a good coat or jacket and strong shoes for the wind and rain. There are plenty of places to buy inexpensive clothes and shoes throughout New Zealand.

You can buy anything you want in New Zealand but you may prefer to bring your own:

Electronic equipment

- Mobile phone (cellular phone). These can be more expensive in New Zealand than in some other countries. Most major brands of mobile telephones will work in New Zealand, although you may need to purchase a SIM card once you arrive (refer to page 51)
- Laptop. These may be cheaper in your home country. See also **'Connecting a Laptop' on page 48**
- Camera
- Adaptors with a flat two- or three-point power plug to connect to the power supply (if you are bringing electronic devices). You can also buy adaptors when you get to New Zealand.

Things to remind you of home

- Recipes for your favourite dishes
- Familiar items from home, e.g. favourite CDs, books, DVDs
- Photos of your family and friends
- A book with photos and facts about your home country

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Other things

- A good dictionary (if English is not your first language)
- Souvenirs to give people. You will make new friends and people will do kind things to help you settle in New Zealand. A small, inexpensive memento from your home country is a nice way to show appreciation.

Where to stay

There are four main accommodation options for you in New Zealand. You may spend all your time in one of these, or you may change once you have become more familiar with life in New Zealand.

The four main accommodation options are outlined below with a comment on the positives and negatives based on the experience of previous international students. Your circumstances, stage in life, needs and finances will determine the best option for you.

Homestay

Those studying English will often begin their studies living with a homestay family. You will live in a New Zealand family home and be treated as a member of the family. You will have your own room so you can have some privacy. You will be expected to help out with household tasks and follow family rules such as a curfew (time to be home) and rules about smoking and so on. Food, bedding, laundry facilities and everything you need to live comfortably will be provided.

Mealtimes will usually be shared with the family. You will have time to focus on your studies and will have the family's support to adjust to the different learning environment in New Zealand.

The biggest advantage of a homestay is that you will use English to communicate with the family. This means that you will be practising your English all the time. It is also a great opportunity for you to get to know about New Zealand and how New Zealanders live.

If you live in a homestay, it may be a new experience for your host family as well as for you. Arrangements vary from family to family so you need to talk with your hosts about what you need, or any worries you have, so that misunderstandings are sorted out early. Tell them if you think your bed is not warm enough or if you are afraid of the dog. They will want you to be happy and will help you to settle well. Ask what is expected of you: for example, how you can

help around the house. Ask them what they would like you to call them. Ask about the food you will be having, where to put your rubbish and dirty clothes, what the arrangements for laundry are, and whether you can use the telephone and computer. In some cases you may need to buy your own telephone line and computer. Check out the best time for you to have a shower and use the bathroom. Generally, in New Zealand households there is enough hot water for each person to have a 5-10 minute shower each day. Electricity in New Zealand is expensive and you need to check with your hosts if you use a heater. If you are using an electric blanket to warm your bed, never leave it on while you are asleep or away from the house.

Hall of residence/hostel

This is a common form of accommodation for students. You have your own room or share with another student in a building or large house. All the rooms in the building are occupied by other students. Meals are usually provided in a communal dining room, though some hostels have kitchen facilities for students to use. You will be expected to clean and care for your own room. The hostel or hall of residence is usually located on campus or within walking distance of the school or university.

Private board

In a private board situation you have your own room in a private residential home or boarding house. Meals are provided and usually shared. You are free to come and go as you please. You may or may not be expected to help with household tasks. You will usually be expected to clean and care for your own room. One of the major differences between private boarding and living in a homestay is that the homestay family will be inspected by the person or agency arranging your accommodation to ensure that the family is suitable. In a private boarding situation there is no checking system, and you decide on whether the house you move into and the people are appropriate for you.

Flattening

Flattening is a situation in a rented house or apartment where people live together and share the rent, bills and care of the premises. Most flats in New Zealand are unfurnished, and you will have to arrange for the gas, electricity and telephone to be connected and pay for its usage. There is usually a connection fee and sometimes a bond to pay. Many landlords require a lease for one

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year or more. The Government operates a bond system for the protection of both landlords and tenants, so you will need to pay a bond for the premises too. The bond will be refunded to you when you leave, provided everything is left in good condition. If you join an established flat, it may already be furnished and have everything set up.

For information and advice about renting, tenancy agreements and bonds, check online at: www.dbh.govt.nz/housing/tenancy or phone **0800 TENANCY (0800 83 62 62)**.

In a flatting situation you may have your own room or share with another person. Your rent is usually worked out according to the size of the room. All other expenses are divided, and cooking meals and cleaning is usually shared.

If you do move into your own flat and need to buy furniture, it is worth looking for second-hand furniture (furniture that has been used by someone else). This is normal in New Zealand, especially for students, as it is very expensive to buy everything new. There are many second-hand shops all over New Zealand, and goods are also sold through newspapers and on the internet. Two popular websites used to sell second-hand goods are www.te.co.nz and www.trademe.co.nz

Couples and families

'For a family it is easy to integrate into your new neighbourhood in New Zealand if you are honest and open to them. From my experience, there aren't too many difficulties to building new relationships with Kiwi families.'

Mohammad Ali Alhabdan, Age 38, Saudi Arabia. Studying PhD in Medical Physics at Canterbury University.



Moving to a foreign country like New Zealand is a huge undertaking for anybody. Having a partner or a family can make it easier, but it can also create extra complications. Things you may need to think about when coming to New Zealand with a partner and/or family are:

- Suitable accommodation. University hostels do not cater for families so you will have to organise your own place to live.
- Education for your children. Your children will probably be considered international students and will need to pay international fees; however, there are some exceptions to this. To find out more go online at: www.minedu.govt.nz/goto/international
- Social activities. If your family is used to being part of a large social network they may feel lonely and isolated when they move to New Zealand. It is important to become part of a social network such as a cultural group or club, or religious community.
- Voluntary work. If your family members cannot undertake paid employment while in New Zealand (see 'Permission to work' on page 59) voluntary work is a good way to gain skills and meet people. This could involve working with people from your home country and other places.



FACTS ABOUT NEW ZEALAND (as at 2006 census)

- Population:** 4.1 million
 Land area: 269,000 km (equivalent in size to Japan, Colorado or Great Britain)
 Highest point: 3750 metres above sea level (Mount Cook/Aoraki)
- Official languages:** English and Māori
 Ethnic make-up: 75% European, 15% Māori, 4.5% Polynesian, 5% Asian, 0.5% other
- GDP:** US\$89 billion
- GDP per capita:** US\$21,200²
- Capital:** Wellington
- Largest city:** Auckland
- Head of State:** Queen Elizabeth II
- Head of Government:** Prime Minister Helen Clark



² Taken from OECD website

History

New Zealand is a small island nation located in the South Pacific Ocean. It consists of two main islands, the North Island (Te Ika a Maui) and the South Island (Te Waipounamu), plus Stewart Island and many smaller islands.

New Zealand (or Aotearoa, the original name for New Zealand) was first settled by voyagers, now known as Māori, from the south-east Pacific more than 1,200 years ago. The first European contact occurred when Dutch navigator Abel Tasman visited in 1642 and the British explorer James Cook visited in 1769, 1773 and 1777. Settlement by Europeans was initially associated with the activities of sealers, whalers, traders and missionaries.

More organised settlement occurred from the 1840s onwards.

New Zealand is an increasingly multicultural population, although the current customs and lifestyle derive from European settlement, mainly Great Britain, and from the traditional and contemporary Māori world.

Traditional Māori society was organised in an inter-connected system of iwi (tribes), hapū (sub-tribes) and whānau (extended families). This tribal system continues today. The economy of traditional Māori life reflected this social structure and was centred around agriculture, hunting, textiles, fisheries and trade.

New Zealand became a British colony in 1840 when Māori and representatives of the British Crown signed the Treaty of Waitangi, the nation's founding document.

The Treaty of Waitangi is an agreement between Māori sub-tribes and the New Zealand Government. The Treaty represents an agreement in which Māori gave the Crown rights to govern and to develop British settlement, while the Crown guaranteed Māori full protection of their interests and status and full citizenship rights.

The impacts of expanding European settlement and conflict over land caused Māori economic strength and population levels to decline. However, since the mid-20th century there has been a resurgence in the population size and role of Māori in national life. Recent governments have begun to actively recognise the principles of the Treaty, compensate Māori for breaches of the Treaty, and reduce inequities between Pakeha (New Zealanders of European descent) and Māori.

The Government recognises the Treaty as the founding document of the nation and a 'living' agreement which must grow and develop over time.

Representative government was established in the late 19th century, with the right to vote being rapidly extended. In 1893, New Zealand became the first country in the world to allow women to vote in general elections.

New Zealand is a constitutional monarchy. The Queen of New Zealand, Queen Elizabeth II, is the Head of State. The Queen's representative in this country is the Governor-General who has all the powers of the Queen in relation to New Zealand. Although an integral part of the process of government, the Queen and the Governor-General remain politically neutral and do not get involved in the political contest.

New Zealand government has three branches: the Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary. Power is divided between these branches, preventing any one from acting against the basic constitutional principles of the country. Although each branch has a different role, they are not totally separate from each other.

New Zealand has a single chamber of Parliament known as the House of Representatives.

The principal functions of Parliament are to:

- enact laws
- provide a government
- supervise the government's administration
- allocate funding for government agencies and services
- address grievances by way of petition.

Parliament is elected using the mixed member proportional (MMP) system. The Government is formed after an election by the party or coalition which can command a majority of the votes in the House of Representatives. The leader of the winning party becomes Prime Minister.

The Government is accountable to Parliament for its actions and policies. So Ministers are answerable to Parliament for their own actions and policies and for the actions and policies of the departments and state agencies under their jurisdiction.

For further information about New Zealand and its history go online to: www.govt.nz/en/aboutnz or www.nzhistory.net.nz

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Te reo Māori and English are the official languages, with English being the main language spoken. You will come across Māori words, culture and customs during your time in New Zealand. There is a list of some common Māori words in the Additional Information at the end of this Guide.

To learn about Māori people and customs go online to: www.maori.org.nz

For more information on the Treaty of Waitangi go online to:

www.nzhistory.net.nz/politics/links-treaty

Climate

The first thing to know about New Zealand's climate is that the seasons are opposite to those in the Northern Hemisphere.

Spring September to November

Summer December to February

Autumn March to May

Winter June to August

New Zealand has a pleasant, fairly mild climate but there are extremes of climate. It can get very cold and very hot at times almost anywhere in the country. Most houses are not centrally heated and you may find the winter cold, depending on the climate you are accustomed to in your home country.

The coldest month is usually July, and the warmest months are January and February. There are relatively small variations between summer and winter temperatures, although inland and to the east of the mountain ranges the variation is greater (up to 14°C).

Summer average max. temp. 20°-25°C

Winter average max. temp. 10°-15°C

Most snowfall in New Zealand occurs in mountainous areas. Snow rarely falls in the coastal areas of the North Island or in the west of the South Island, although the east and south of the South Island may get snow in winter.

See the table below for the summer and winter average maximum and minimum temperatures for Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin. New Zealand is windier than many other countries. This means that 14°C in New Zealand may feel colder than it does at home.

City	Temperatures
Auckland average max./min. January	23.8°C / 16.4°C
Auckland average max./min. July	14.7°C / 8.0°C
Wellington average max./min. January	20.3°C / 13.4°C
Wellington average max./min. July	11.3°C / 6.2°C
Christchurch average max./min. January	22.5°C / 12.2°C
Christchurch average max./min. July	11.3°C / 1.7°C
Dunedin average max./min. January	19.9°C / 11.7°C
Dunedin average max./min. July	9.3°C / 2.4°C

The weather can change very quickly in New Zealand. It is a good idea to have a jacket or sweater with you at all times, even if it is warm when you go out. Or the day may start out cold but become quite warm later. Be prepared for anything.

People

New Zealanders are known as friendly and interested in learning about other people's culture and society. They will ask questions about you, and they are happy for you to ask questions about them and about New Zealand in general. People from all over the world live in New Zealand. The indigenous people are Māori and later settlers came from Great Britain and other places.

There may be certain times where personal topics can be discussed quite easily, but privacy about personal matters is important and topics such as earnings, age and how much people pay for things are not often discussed outside of the family. Personal comments such as 'you have got very fat', or 'you are too skinny' or 'his hair is very grey' or 'that is not a nice dress' can be thought rude unless it is to a very close friend or family member who knows you well.

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You may find New Zealanders to be reserved in some ways, as they do not often display emotion or affection openly. When meeting friends and family, for example, a simple hello is usually all that takes place unless it has been a long time since they last met. New Zealanders seldom cry, raise their voices or get very angry or upset in public.

Meeting people

New Zealanders usually shake hands (with the right hand) when meeting each other for the first time. Your handshake should be a firm, but not hard, grip and last for 3-5 seconds. Some family members may kiss you lightly on the cheek and may even give you a hug. It is their way of welcoming you and showing that they are pleased to meet you. Māori people may hongi – lightly press noses with you as they shake your hand.

When you want to meet with someone professional (e.g. a doctor or lecturer) you need to make an appointment in advance. On most occasions you will not be able to meet without organising a time first. If you are meeting someone or attending lectures or classes, it is very important to be on time.

When you visit New Zealanders at home it is expected that you would let the person know that you want to visit and what time you will arrive.

When meeting friends or family it is OK if you are about 10 minutes late. If you know you are going to be later, it is polite to phone and let the person know when you expect to arrive.

If you are tramping, walking or in a situation where there are very few other people, it is quite normal to say 'Hello' or 'Good morning' to strangers.

At home

The average number of children in a New Zealand family is two or three. Most people in New Zealand live in modest houses with three or four bedrooms, one bathroom and a small garden.

Family customs and traditions vary from family to family. Generally, men and women share household tasks, cooking and bringing up children. Many women go to work outside the home, drive and manage finances. In some families the chores men and boys do will be different from those done by women. This includes the role of the 'head of the house'. In New Zealand this position is often held by a woman. Most people do their own cooking and cleaning, and it is very unusual to have servants.

Many children in New Zealand leave their family homes when they start university or when they leave school. It is common for young New Zealanders to leave their family home before they are 20 years old.

Socialising

Young New Zealanders (over 18 years of age) often get together in pubs, bars or cafés.

Restaurants, bars, cafes etc. usually close some time between 9pm and 11pm during the week. During the weekend (Saturday and Sunday) the closing hours are later.

Tipping is not usually expected, as service charges are built into the price of food and drink. Tipping sometimes occurs at restaurants but payment of tips is by customer choice and is usually a reward for exceptional service.

Many New Zealanders like to socialise at home and cook a meal or host a barbeque for their friends. It's common practice to take something to contribute to the meal if you are invited to a New Zealand home – chocolates, fruit, wine or a special food item are always gratefully accepted.

Dress code

New Zealanders dress informally, comfortably and quite conservatively on most occasions. Dressing up for an occasion such as a wedding, special celebration or big party is common, and it is a good idea to have at least one set of smart clothes for special times.

A typical day

The day in New Zealand generally starts at about 7am when most people get out of bed.

The weekend is Saturday and Sunday, and often people will wake up later on these days. It is most usual to have a shower first thing in the morning and then have breakfast. Breakfast usually consists of toast, porridge, cereal or eggs. During the weekdays, work and school start at about 8.30am and end at about 5pm (school for children ends at about 3pm).

Lunch is usually one hour, taken some time between 12pm and 2pm. It is a light meal, often just a sandwich and some fruit. Many food outlets and cafés sell hot food during lunch time but it is rare for people to return home for a large meal. People generally come home in the late afternoon or early evening (about 6pm) and families are likely to have dinner together some time

between 6pm and 8pm. It is common for New Zealanders to spend time together in the evening, talking or watching TV. Usually people go to bed some time between 9pm and 11pm.

In the country districts it may be earlier. In the weekends many people go out to visit friends, cafés, movies, bars or restaurants. It is usually only on weekends that people stay up late unless there is a special reason.

Shopping

Most shops are open between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday. Some are open all weekend as well. In major centres, shopping malls are open seven days a week. Depending on the size of the city or town, there may be reduced hours during the weekend. In some places shops are closed all day on Sunday.

There is usually one weeknight a week when shops are open until about 8pm so people can shop after school or work. Supermarkets and other large shops have longer opening hours.

In New Zealand people do not usually carry large amounts of cash with them. It is much more common to use bank and credit cards to pay for goods.

Student discounts

A range of shops (e.g. those selling clothing, CDs, books etc.) offer student discounts (usually 10%). You need to ask whether the shop offers student discounts before you make your purchase.

If it does, you will need to show your student ID card (if you don't have one, ask your education provider about how to get one) to receive the discount. Student discounts are also available at cinemas, some concerts or shows, DVD/video rental shops, and for public transport etc. Your education provider's student association may have a list of the places offering student discounts in your city or town.

Religion

Modern New Zealand was founded on Christian traditions (Anglican, Catholic and Presbyterian are the main denominations), though many New Zealanders do not have any religious affiliation. There is no official state religion and freedom of religion is a cornerstone of New Zealand democracy. There are about 25,000 Muslims in New Zealand. Other religions in New Zealand include Buddhism, Hinduism and Judaism.

There are many religious groups and organisations throughout the country. The best way to find contact information for them is to look under the 'Churches and Religious Organisations' section of the Yellow Pages edition of the telephone directory.

Important things to note

- New Zealanders drive on the left-hand side of the road. Drivers are generally courteous and always obey road rules. Check online at: www.landtransport.govt.nz/roadcode. Also see 'Cars and driving' on Page 64.
- New Zealanders love sport. Popular sports are rugby, cricket and netball. New Zealanders are very passionate about the outdoors and much of their recreation takes place outdoors.
- A queuing system is used for shopping, going to the post office, buying tickets or at any other place where people are waiting for service. People stand in a line and wait for their turn in the queue.
- Many New Zealanders have pets such as cats, dogs, fish, birds, rabbits etc. You will see dogs at the beach, in parks or on the street. Do not approach any animal or try to pat it unless you check with the owner that it is OK. Dogs must be licensed and there are rules about where they are allowed to be exercised. Note that some people are allergic to cats or dogs. Antihistamine tablets to treat these allergies can be bought at pharmacies, or you may need a doctor's prescription for medication (see 'Hayfever' and 'Asthma' on page 75)
- New Zealanders find spitting or urinating in public very offensive.
- Smoking is not permitted in public buildings, bars, restaurants, cafés, theatres, cinemas, public transport or internal workplaces. Many homes and vehicles are smoke-free as well. Always ask permission before you light a cigarette in anyone's home or car.
- New Zealanders like to keep their country clean and tidy. They do not like people to drop litter or leave trash around in streets, parks or schools.

Becoming independent

If you've been living at home with your family before coming to New Zealand, it may take some time to adjust to independent living. Before you leave home think about the skills you may need for your new life in New Zealand and how to prepare yourself.

New skills

You may need to learn how to:

Study independently and manage your time

The style of teaching in New Zealand may be different from what you are used to. Everyone is expected to study independently. Independent study means that **you** are responsible for making sure that you are prepared for class, keeping up with your studies and completing all your course requirements. You can always ask for help. Most lecturers, tutors and student support staff are very happy to give you advice and answer any questions you have about your studies. However, it is your responsibility to ask for help and to do your studies.

International students can find time management hard if they are used to a strictly regulated routine in their home country. You also need to make sure that you have a balanced life in New Zealand and manage your time so that you can keep up with your studies, find time to socialise and do recreational activities.

Budget/manage money

Another responsibility you will have is managing your money. Many international students have never had to buy their own food or clothes and pay for their own accommodation. You should try to set a budget and plan how and when to use your money so that you can meet all your costs.

See page 54 for more information on budgeting.

Prepare meals, wash clothes and do household chores

Skills such as cooking, washing clothes and cleaning will be very useful to you in New Zealand. Try to learn how to cook a few of your favourite dishes before you leave home. Learn to use a washing machine, vacuum cleaner and to wash and dry dishes.

Live with others (non-family members)

You will probably be living with others in New Zealand, perhaps in a homestay or with other students who are likely to be complete strangers. You will need to be tolerant and considerate of others' needs. You need to be prepared to do certain things differently in New Zealand and accept that your way may not suit others.

If you do have difficulties with your new life in New Zealand, you can always ask for help.

Use English

Some international students come to New Zealand from English-speaking countries. Others have learned English before they arrive and are fluent even though it is not their first language. The more you can speak English and adjust to thinking in English the more you will gain from your New Zealand experience.

If you are reading this Guide you already have a good level of English proficiency. You still need to practise your English as much as possible as soon as you know you are coming to New Zealand. Watching English movies and television programmes, listening to English programmes on the radio and reading a lot in English will help you know the language. The more you know about New Zealand before you come the easier it will be when you arrive. To hear more of the New Zealand accent, *Whale Rider* is a good movie set in New Zealand with New Zealand actors. Australian movies and programmes may also be helpful as the accent is very similar to New Zealand's. For news about New Zealand check online at www.stuff.co.nz, www.nzherald.co.nz and www.tvnz.co.nz

When you arrive in New Zealand, **conversational** English is your first goal. If you are able to communicate well and be understood it will help you to participate in the New Zealand lifestyle. Think about the kind of language you will need for your studies. Do you need to write many essays or reports? Will you need to use **academic** English? Will you be reading a lot? Try to identify what kind of language is most relevant to you and work with that. Most universities and polytechnics offer short introductory courses in writing academic essays and researching. It may be a good idea to take one of these courses or to enrol in a more comprehensive language course when you first come to New Zealand.

You will learn English faster if you use the language regularly. Speak and ask questions in English. No one will mind if you make mistakes. They may laugh along with you and help you with the right words. Ask English speakers to tell you the right words and the right way to say them. New Zealanders are patient and considerate people who enjoy talking with people from other countries and helping them with language. Put yourself in situations where you have to speak English. Joining a club, sports team or other New Zealand group where English is used is a good way to make friends and to practise communicating in English.

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The English spoken in New Zealand is very similar to that spoken in other parts of the world but there are some differences in vocabulary and accent. Many students find that New Zealanders speak very fast. You will also notice that the vowel sounds and length may not be quite the same as the English you have learned. Some sayings and vocabulary used in New Zealand will be unfamiliar to you. At the end of this Guide there is a list of some words used in New Zealand. It is quite OK to ask people to speak more slowly or to explain words or phrases that you do not know.

If English is hard for you, an English language course, even if it is not a compulsory part of your required programme, is very worthwhile. The course will teach you about New Zealand as well as teaching you how to use English.

Learning a new language can often be frustrating but is well worth the effort.

Improving your English will help you to get more from your New Zealand experience.

Culture shock

It is common for international students to experience feelings of excitement and enthusiasm upon arriving in New Zealand; this is often called the honeymoon period. Everything is new and exciting. However, after settling into the routine of study and coping with new and different demands, some people experience feelings of frustration, loneliness or uneasiness. This is a natural part of adapting to a new culture. This 'culture shock' is very real and all international students are affected by it in some way.

Sometimes you may feel as if you lack direction, not knowing what to do or how to do things in New Zealand. The way that you lived or behaved at home may not be accepted or considered normal here. You might feel unhappy and think it was a mistake to choose New Zealand. You could wish you were safely at home with your friends and family.

Some other symptoms of culture shock you may experience are:

- feeling isolated, lonely or frustrated
- missing your home country, the weather, food, family and friends (homesickness)
- anger or hostility toward your new home and the people in it
- over-dependence on other students from your home country
- doubts about your decision to come to New Zealand and thoughts of giving up.

Things to remember

- Experiencing culture shock is a normal part of the adaptation process. You will get over it but you need to give yourself time to adapt.
- Be patient with yourself. You are not a failure or a loser. What you are feeling is natural.
- Be open to appreciating difference and keep an open mind, even though people may behave in ways that may seem odd or rude to you.
- Remember and write down the good things from your experience of living in New Zealand.

Ways to cope

- Keep yourself busy and active; keep your mind occupied.
- Maintain contact with other students from your home country. This will give you a feeling of belonging and reduce your feelings of loneliness and alienation. However, try to avoid the temptation of spending all your time with them, as it is important for your experience and language development to interact with other students.
- Exercise, play sport or find a hobby you enjoy.
- Eat well and get the sleep you need.
- Try to get involved in activities outside your studies, perhaps with other international students or people in New Zealand.

Positive steps

- Keep a journal. This can really show you how you are adjusting if you read what you wrote when you first arrived and compare it to how you feel several months later.
- Establish some simple goals like catching a bus on your own, visiting a place of interest or making a special meal.
- Join a club, sports team, church or social group where you can meet new people.
- Talk to someone who has been through culture shock and the cultural adaptation process.

Once you begin to understand New Zealand culture you will start to gain a sense of direction and enjoyment. You will realise that New Zealand culture, like any other, has positive and negative aspects. Remember that there is always someone or some service available to help you.

Keeping contact with home

There are a number of ways you can keep in contact with family and friends.

Emailing

If you have access to a computer and want to use the internet for emailing or research, you need to sign up with an Internet Service Provider (ISP). There are many prices, paying schemes and speeds offered by the different ISPs. They usually charge per hour or offer a flat rate amount for the month. For a list of ISPs, their contact details and prices check online at:

www.netguide.co.nz/shopping/directory

Most education providers have computers for students to use for internet and email. There are cyber/internet cafés in most towns and cities where you can pay to email or use the internet for as little as \$1 for 15 minutes. Email and internet services are often available at public libraries as well.

Connecting a laptop

To connect a laptop computer, you will need a RJ45 type plug to connect to a computer, and an adapter with a flat two- or three-point power plug to connect to the power supply. The normal power supply is 230 volts 50 hertz alternating current (AC). The wall plugs are the Australian/New Zealand three-pin types.

Posting letters – mail

New Zealand Post, the main postal company, has a very efficient local and overseas posting system. You can buy stamps at New Zealand PostShops, some dairies (small, local convenience stores), bookshops and petrol stations.

For most services, the world is divided into zones, with costs and delivery times varying from zone to zone. For letters, there are two options – International Air or International Economy. International Air is a faster service, but International Economy is cheaper. There are three options for parcels – International Express (quickest service), International Air (slightly cheaper but still very fast), International Economy (slower but much cheaper).

For more information about New Zealand Post services phone free on: **0800 501 501** or go online to: **www.nzpost.co.nz**

Using a telephone

Most public phones take pre-paid phone cards, purchased from PostShops, dairies and newsagents, with a minimum value of NZ\$5. Some also accept credit cards and a few accept coins.

Calling New Zealand from overseas

1. Dial the international dialling code of the country you're in.
2. Dial 64 (the country code for New Zealand).
3. Dial the area code (drop the 0).
4. Dial the local number. Local phone numbers have seven digits.

Calling within New Zealand

1. Dial the area code. (Area codes are two numbers, the first is 0. The area codes for New Zealand regions are listed in the appendix.)
2. Dial the local number. Local phone numbers have seven digits.

Calling overseas from New Zealand from a home phone

1. Dial 00 (the international dialling code).
2. Dial the international calling code for the country you want (international calling codes are in the Appendix and at **www.countrycallingcodes.com**).
3. Dial the area code (drop the 0).
4. Dial the local number.

Remember that the time in New Zealand is 12 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT). Make sure family and friends calling you are aware of this. The acceptable time for calling a New Zealander at their home is usually between 8am and 9pm on weekdays and between 9.30am and 9.30pm during the weekend. You can get the country code, area code and the time difference from **www.countrycallingcodes.com**

Landline calls outside your own area are national toll calls and are not free. Calls to numbers starting with 0800 or 0508 are free. Calls to numbers starting with 0900 are not free and are usually charged by the minute.

In an emergency dial 111.

You will be asked for the emergency service you require. The emergency services are the Police, Fire and Ambulance. This is a free call.

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The phone directories in New Zealand are called the White Pages and the Yellow Pages. The White Pages list New Zealand households and businesses alphabetically, the Yellow Pages list businesses and organisations by category. You can find them online at: www.whitepages.co.nz and www.yellowpages.co.nz

Hard copies of the local White Pages and Yellow Pages are delivered free to every home and business. These are usually available in public phone boxes as well.

Home phones

There are two main companies in New Zealand that supply home phone line connections: Telecom and TelstraClear. They offer varying rates for national and international calls, though all local calls (calls within the same area code) are free with both companies.

It can be very expensive to call your home country from a home phone. It is cheaper to use pre-paid international phone cards. Telecommunications companies often have special rates for calling Australia, the UK and the US.

Toll bars

Some houses have a 'toll bar' on the household phone, which means you can only make local calls or you must enter a personal identification number (PIN) first.

Pre-paid international phone cards

Pre-paid international phone cards are available at PostShops, dairies, petrol stations and newsagents (shops selling newspapers, magazines, cigarettes and confectionary). Phone cards allow you to call anywhere in New Zealand or the world, from any phone, by following the instructions on the card. When you've spent the value of the card, you just buy another one. There are several different kinds so ask someone to recommend a good card.

Mobile (cellular) phones

You can buy a prepay phone or set up an account with Vodafone (GSM 900 and GSM 1800) or Telecom (CDMA) in New Zealand. Be sure to read the agreement if you set up an account, because most will be for a minimum of one or two years. In New Zealand, the caller pays to call a mobile phone.

The prepay system for mobile phones involves loading credit on your phone before using it. You can put credit on your phone by either buying a 'prepay card' or you can use your credit card. The prepay cards come in a variety of denominations, starting from NZ\$20. There is no minimum amount you must spend each month.

If you set up an account, you pay a set fee every month which entitles you to a certain number of 'free' calls and messages. Any additional messages or calls you make will be charged at the end of the month when a bill will be sent to you.

If you already have a mobile phone that is compatible with the New Zealand mobile network, to use it you will need a 'SIM card' from Vodafone. You can either buy a 'pre-paid SIM card' or set up an account. You should note that the phone you have brought with you from home may not work in New Zealand. Some service providers lock their phones so that they will only work on their network. You will need to make sure that your phone has not been locked before you leave your country. (SIM cards are not available from Telecom.)

To set up a phone account you will need two forms of ID (including one that has your photo on it), be over 18 years old and have a valid Visa. You may have to pay a security deposit of about NZ\$250. If you are in New Zealand for a short time, you may want to hire a phone. This can be done when you arrive at the airport.

Buying food

New Zealand has a wide selection of home-grown and imported food. It is a major producer of lamb, venison and beef. It also produces quality dairy products and there are plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables. Most of the major cities have shops (or areas within shops) where you can buy food from different parts of the world, so you should be able to find food that is familiar to you. The tap water in New Zealand is safe to drink – it does not need boiling or sterilising. New Zealanders are influenced by food trends from all over the world and enjoy a variety of foods. Most New Zealanders enjoy experimenting and cooking new dishes.

Breakfast is often informal and each person in a family may prepare their own. It is eaten soon after waking up about 7-9am. The midday meal is eaten about 12-2pm. This is not usually a family meal, and is often cold food such as sandwiches prepared at home and eaten at school or work. The main meal of the day is eaten in the evening. It is usually shared with the other members of the household and eaten about 6-8pm.

Supermarkets

Most New Zealanders go to the supermarket to buy food. You can buy almost everything you need to eat at supermarkets. They sell groceries, fruit and vegetables, meat and fish, as well as

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essential household items like cleaning equipment, light bulbs, rubbish bags and personal needs such as toiletries, first-aid and sanitary needs, as well as wine, newspapers, magazines and a variety of consumer goods. Opening hours vary, but in the main cities they are usually open between 8am and 8pm or later, seven days a week.

Weekend markets

Many cities and towns also have weekend markets where fresh fruit and vegetables and a range of goods are sold, often at very good prices.

Dairies and convenience stores

Dairies are small convenience stores located near neighbourhood housing. They sell a range of things such as newspapers, bread, milk, soft drinks and personal items. Dairies sell essential items, but do not usually sell fresh meat or fish. Dairies are more expensive than supermarkets but are convenient and local. Opening hours vary but will usually be from 7am-7pm. In the cities, 24-hour convenience stores also operate, and there are often convenience stores attached to petrol stations.

Speciality stores

There are a range of speciality food providers in most towns and cities. Butcheries sell meat, bakeries sell bread and pastry products, greengrocers sell fruit and vegetables, wine and spirit merchants sell alcohol. There may be specialists in certain products such as foods from a particular country. Most food products are available in New Zealand, though it may take a little searching to find what you are looking for.

Eating out

Depending on where you choose, you can eat out for as little as NZ\$7 for lunch and NZ\$12-15 for dinner. Most New Zealanders eat out once or twice a week.

New Zealand has a multicultural population and a large number of restaurants and cafés offering dishes from around the world.

Food courts are areas with lots of food outlets in one place. They are economical for eating out. They are found at shopping malls and in large cinema complexes. Food courts offer food from around the world.

Money matters

New Zealand may be more or less expensive to live in than your home country. It may take time to adjust to new costs and systems, so it is important that you allow for this.

Your biggest expense will be education fees, followed by accommodation and food. To make managing your money easier, it is recommended that you pay your education fees directly from your home country.

Careful spending

Be careful how much money you spend in your first two months, until you understand a little more about the costs during your stay. It is important to make sure your money lasts until the end of your studies.

If you need help managing your money, talk to the student welfare officer or department at your education provider for budgeting advice.

It is not advisable to lend money to anyone unless you are sure you can completely trust them and the money will be returned.

Costs

Below is a table indicating approximate costs of a few goods to give you an impression of prices in New Zealand, depending on where you shop and the quantities you buy.

Item	Cost	Item	Cost
Takeaway meal	\$7-10	Cell phone call	50c-\$1.50 per minute
1 kg apples	\$1-3	Bottle of water	\$1.95
1 kg tomatoes	\$2-8 (seasonal)	1 kg rice	\$2-3
Shoes	\$100 +	Big Mac	\$4.50
Mobile phone	\$150 +	Coca Cola (can)	\$1.50
Laptop	\$2000 +	1 uncooked chicken	\$7

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Budgeting

There will be unexpected expenses that come up during your stay. Most of these will come up at the beginning of your time in New Zealand, or if you move into an unfurnished flat. One of the expenses university students often underestimate is the cost of textbooks. Most textbooks cost around \$100 each and you can expect to have either one or two textbooks per course. An unfurnished (empty) flat will need a refrigerator, bed, and furniture such as shelving, sofa and a desk. These can be bought or hired and could cost you a total of anything between \$500 and \$3,000. You may also have to pay a large deposit for the flat and for setting up gas, electricity and a phone line (this is refundable but may require money you expected to have available).

It is a good practice to over-budget for expenses and to avoid making any large purchases until you are familiar with the prices in New Zealand. You should also save some of your money each week for emergencies and unexpected costs.

Try and set yourself weekly or monthly limits on spending. An example of a weekly budget follows. You can create an initial budget for yourself by filling in the last column.

Item	Cost	Item		My Expenses
Rent	Hostel/Residence 230	Flat 120	Homestay 200	
Power/gas	–	15	–	
Food	–	40	–	
Snacks/treats	15	25	20	
Entertainment	15	20	15	
Travel	5	20	20	
Phone	–	5	–	
Toll calls	10	10	10	
Cell phone usage	10	10	10	
Clothing	20	20	20	
Emergencies	20	25	20	
Total	NZ\$325	NZ\$310	NZ\$315	

These prices are estimates only and will vary between cities.

New Zealand currency

The New Zealand dollar is the currency used in New Zealand. Dollars are divided into cents: 100 cents = 1 dollar. The currency symbols used are \$ = dollar, c = cents. The following notes and coins are in circulation: notes – \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100; coins – 10c, 20c, 50c, \$1, \$2

For an international currency converter go to: www.oanda.com/convert/classic

Security

New Zealanders do not carry large amounts of cash or keep it at home because it is considered unsafe. Large amounts of money should be kept in bank accounts. It is important to keep your bank account and banking details private. Only you or an authorised user should have access to it.

Opening a bank account

Nearly all the major banks have international student packages. To open a student bank account you will need a passport, evidence of study to prove you will be a full-time student (a study approval letter or a fees invoice) and a residential address in New Zealand. Your education provider may have an arrangement with a particular bank, which may make things easier for you.

Banks are usually open from 9am-4.30pm Monday to Friday, but customers are able to access their accounts 24 hours a day using Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs). Banks are not open on Saturday and Sunday, or on public holidays.

When you open a bank account you will get a bank account number and be able to make deposits (including international money transfers) and withdrawals. It is important to keep a note of this account number, as you will need it for any account operations. An ATM card will be sent to you after a few days, or the bank may ask you to come and collect it personally. You will then need to take the card into a branch of your bank and select a personal identification number (PIN). Once your card has a PIN you will be able to use it at ATM machines and for EFTPOS transactions (see below). Choose a number you can easily memorise but that others will not guess. You should never tell anyone your PIN.

The bank will send you regular bank statements. You can request these to be sent weekly, fortnightly or monthly. Most student accounts have either no charges or reduced bank charges but it is still important to check your bank statements to ensure you are not being overcharged

by the bank. As well as listing any charges, the statements will list any deposits and withdrawals made during the statement period. Bank statements are important documents that you should read and understand and keep for future reference.

If you are over 18 it may be possible to arrange to get a cheque book and/or credit card with your bank account. You may be required to provide some security if you want an overdraft on your credit card.

Bank services

ATMs – Automatic Teller Machines

ATMs allow you to withdraw money without going to the bank. There are ATMs located throughout towns and cities in New Zealand. You can normally find them outside bank branches, in shopping areas and malls. To use an ATM, insert your bankcard and enter your PIN. You can withdraw money, check your account balances, transfer funds between your accounts etc. If you use an ATM that is not owned by your bank, you may be charged a small fee. There is a limit to the amount of cash you can access from an ATM, usually NZ\$800 per day, but this depends on your bank and the type of account you have. If you want to pay a big bill in cash, you'll need to go to the branch to withdraw the full amount.

EFTPOS – Electronic Funds Transfer at Point of Sale

EFTPOS allows you to pay for purchases without carrying cash. EFTPOS is available in most shops, restaurants and businesses. To use EFTPOS, your bankcard is swiped in a special machine which reads the magnetic strip. You select the account you want to pay from and then enter your PIN. Money is automatically transferred from the account you selected to the shop's account. You can also use EFTPOS to get cash when making purchases. Again, there is a daily limit to the amount of money you can transact with using EFTPOS. This is usually \$2,000 but depends on your bank and the type of account you have.

Credit cards

Many shops and restaurants accept credit cards for payment. The most common are Visa, MasterCard, Diners and American Express. For a credit card your signature on the back will be matched as you sign for the goods or services you are buying, or you can have a PIN for your credit card to use instead of your signature.

Paying by cheque

Payments can also be made by writing a cheque using a cheque book from your bank. If you are paying personally (rather than by post), identification with your signature is required to make a payment using a cheque. Paying by cheque is less common than EFTPOS; however, it has some advantages. With EFTPOS there is a daily transaction limit of \$2000 while cheques have no limit. With EFTPOS you also have to pay personally whereas cheques can be posted.

Phone banking

Using a touch-tone phone, you can dial a free number for your bank and have access to your accounts over the phone, at any time.

Online banking

You can also do your banking on the internet at any time. Banks provide secure access for this. Bank staff can set up online banking for you when you open your account.

Keeping bankcards and credit cards safe

Make sure you keep your bankcards and credit cards safe at all times. If you lose your cards you must contact the bank immediately to cancel them. Also let the Police know, as lost property may be handed in to them. See your local phone book for the contact details of your nearest Police station.



Permission to work

Some students may apply for permission to work part time while they are studying in New Zealand if they are:

- taking a full-time course of study of two years or longer at a Private Training Establishment or Tertiary Institution
- taking a full-time course of study that would gain points under the Skilled Migrant Category
- Year 12 & 13 school students, with school and parental permission
- studying full time for six months or more at a Private Training Establishment or Tertiary Institution on a course of study where the primary purpose is developing English language skills, and who have an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score of 5.

The students specified above are able to apply for permission to work for up to 20 hours in any given week during the academic year. In addition, all students studying in a course of 12 months or more can apply for permission to work full-time over the Christmas period (i.e. in the summer vacation).

Students enrolled in a course that requires practical work experience can also apply for permission to work. In these cases the Visa or Immigration Officer must be satisfied that the practical experience is a course requirement and that most of the course time is spent on study, not work.

In order to work, you must have a 'Variation of Conditions' to your Student Visa or Permit. You can apply for a Variation of Conditions when you first apply for your Student Visa in your home country, or when you renew your Student Permit.

Otherwise, once you have a Student Permit you can:

- visit a Department of Labour (Immigration) office to apply for a Variation of Conditions
- visit the international office and check if your education institution/school can process Student Permits online and, if so, complete the Variation of Conditions form
- download a Variation of Conditions form from www.immigration.govt.nz or
- call **0508 558855** to request a Variation of Conditions form to be sent to you.

You have to pay a fee if you apply for a Variation of Conditions after you have received your Permit, unless you apply when you renew your Permit.

You are not allowed to work in the sex industry (e.g. as a prostitute or a brothel manager), or be self-employed (this includes running your own shop or business).

In some circumstances your partner or spouse may be able to work while you study. If you want to find out if your partner or spouse is eligible, ask the Department of Labour (Immigration) or the international office at the education institution where you study.

Once you have completed your studies you might want to stay in New Zealand and work. To find out if you are eligible for a Working Visa or Permit, and how to apply for one, visit a Department of Labour (Immigration) office or check online at: www.immigration.govt.nz

The New Zealand Department of Labour has a number of information resources about employment and work issues, like pay rates, health and safety, and your rights as an employee. You can view this information online at: www.ers.govt.nz

This website is also a good resource if you have any employment questions or problems.

Student Job Search

Student Job Search helps students find summer vacation and temporary or part-time work. It is funded by the Government, Students' Associations and Tertiary Institutions, and run by Students' Associations. Check online at www.sjs.co.nz or visit your local Student Job Search office for further information.

If you have a 'Variation of Conditions' on your Visa or Student Permit and are studying at a University, Polytechnic or College of Education, you are eligible to use Student Job Search. All students studying at New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) approved private training establishments are also eligible to use Student Job Search services, but are required to pay an enrolment fee from March to September.

New Zealand's tax system

New Zealand's laws require people and organisations to pay taxes. The New Zealand Government uses these taxes to pay for government expenditure. Inland Revenue is the main government department that collects tax payments and administers the New Zealand tax system.

As an individual, you are a New Zealand resident for tax purposes if you meet any of the following conditions:

- you are in New Zealand for more than 183 days in **any** 12-month period
- you have an enduring relationship with New Zealand (such as if you have immediate family living here; you intend to live here or return here after a time; you keep personal possessions here permanently).

The residence rules set out in the tax laws are different from the normal citizenship rules. You can be a New Zealand resident for tax purposes but not hold New Zealand citizenship.

As a New Zealand resident for tax purposes you must pay income tax on all your income received both in New Zealand and overseas. The tax rate on your income depends on how much you earn. At the time of printing this booklet, the New Zealand income tax rates are:

Income	Taxed at
Up to \$38,000 per year	19.5%
\$38,001 to \$60,000	33%
\$60,001 and over	39%

If your income is from salary, wages or a social security benefit, tax will be deducted under the pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) system. This means the pay you get has already had tax deducted. If you earn income that hasn't had tax deducted before you receive it, you are still required to tell Inland Revenue about this income and pay tax on it.

New Zealand's tax year runs from 1 April to 31 March. You can submit a tax return after 31 March each year to see if you are eligible for a refund.

For further information visit the Inland Revenue website: www.ird.govt.nz

An IRD number

An IRD number is a unique number that identifies all your tax payments and records at Inland Revenue. You will need an IRD number if you work, open a bank account or are required to pay tax in New Zealand.

You need to give your IRD number to your employer and your bank. Otherwise, your employer or bank will be required to deduct tax at a higher 'no declaration rate' of 45% from your salary or 39% from your interest.

To apply for an IRD number from Inland Revenue, you need to fill in an *IRD number application – individual* (IR 595) form. Return this completed form to Inland Revenue with identification, such as a copy of your birth certificate or current passport.

For help with tax matters

Two helpful Inland Revenue publications are:

- *Taxes and duties: an introduction to New Zealand's tax system* (IR 295), and
- *New Zealand tax residence: who is a New Zealand resident for tax purposes?* (IR 292).

These publications and other general tax information are available from Inland Revenue online at: www.ird.govt.nz

It is illegal to work in New Zealand without the correct Visa. You must pay tax on all your earnings.

Getting from place to place

You need to take all the normal precautions you would at home when travelling at any time. Try not to travel alone at night. If you have any travel queries, including questions on how to get around the city you are staying in, or around New Zealand, you can ask your local i-SITE Visitor Centre. These are found in most New Zealand towns and cities.

Student Travel Agency (STA)

STA travel www.statravel.co.nz is a very useful student travel agency that can arrange discounted plane tickets and holiday packages. It also issues International Student Identification Cards (ISIC) accepted throughout New Zealand and all over the world for student discounts. However, these are not accepted as an official proof of age. If you want an identification card for proof of age, you should consider getting a HANZ +18 Card. You can get an application form for an 18+ Card online at: www.hanz.org.nz/index.cfm/18_Plus_Cards or at a New Zealand PostShop. Your passport, or New Zealand driving licence with photo, is also official proof of age.

Walking/cycling

Walking is popular in New Zealand, is good exercise and safe during the day. Riding a bicycle (cycling or biking) is a popular form of transport for short journeys, and mountain biking off-road is a popular sport. Under New Zealand law you must wear a helmet when you are cycling and you must have front and back lights on at night. Road rules apply to cyclists.

Public transport

Buses operate in the major cities and some smaller towns. Suburban trains operate in Auckland and Wellington. The public transport you choose will usually depend on what gets you closest to your destination. Most transport services have detailed timetables so you can plan in advance to catch a particular service. Public transport varies in its frequency due to demand and according to the size of the city/town. More services run at the main commuting times (rush hours), 7.30-9 in the morning and 5-7 in the evenings. Throughout the rest of the day services will run less frequently but still on a regular basis. Most public transport stops at midnight, although in the weekends there are often later services. Student discounts are offered on some public transport. Check this before you buy your ticket.

At rush hours the buses can get full. In New Zealand there is a limit to the number of people who can ride on a bus at one time. If a bus is full, it will not stop at the bus stop to pick more people up. If you are catching a bus alone late at night, sit near the driver if possible rather than at the back of the bus.

There are several long-distance bus companies that travel between cities and towns within New Zealand. Intercity Coachlines (www.intercitycoach.co.nz) is the main long-distance bus company and runs services to most places in both the North and South Island. There are other smaller companies that run selected routes.

There are very few long-distance trains. Check with a local travel agent if you are planning long-distance travel, or call Toll NZ 0800 801 070.

Taxis

Taxis cost more than other public transport but can be good for occasions when several people are sharing the fare, when you have a lot of luggage, or when public transport is inconvenient or not available, such as late at night. There are taxi stands where taxis wait for passengers throughout the city. You can also wave at empty taxis to stop them in the street, or you can phone a taxi company and ask them to send a taxi to pick you up. Ask a local person for the name of a reliable taxi company.

Ferries

Parts of Auckland and Wellington are well served by harbour ferries that can be fast, economical and pleasurable ways to travel. The North and South Island are connected by a regular ferry service. This runs between Wellington harbour in the North Island and Picton in the South Island. Cars and foot passengers can travel on the ferry. If you book in advance you can often get reduced fares on the price of the ticket. Free phone 0800 802 802 or check online at: www.interislandline.co.nz or 0800 844 844 or check online at: www.bluebridge.co.nz

Planes

You can fly to most parts of New Zealand. This form of transport costs the most but it's the quickest. If you book in advance you can often get good reductions on the price of the ticket. You will need a credit card to book and purchase flights over the internet. Generally, you need to arrive at the airport at least 30 minutes before your departure time. It is also important to take photo ID with you if you are using an E-Ticket (electronic ticket).

The main domestic airlines are:

- Air New Zealand www.airnewzealand.co.nz
- Qantas New Zealand www.qantas.co.nz

Cars and driving

Driver licence

You need to be 15 years old or over to drive in New Zealand. All drivers must have a current and valid New Zealand driver licence, International Driving Permit or overseas licence. You can drive on an overseas licence for 12 months; after that you will need to apply for a New Zealand one.

If you use an overseas licence it must be in clear English. We recommend you have an International Driving Permit, as some international students have problems with driver licences from their country of origin. You must carry your licence with you at all times when driving.

To drive a motorcycle over 250ccs in New Zealand you need a motorcycle driver licence. To drive a motorcycle under 250ccs you need a car driver licence.

There are three stages to getting a New Zealand licence. You must pass a test at each stage. These include one written and two practical driving tests.

Learner licence

When learning to drive, you must have a supervisor with you at all times when driving. The supervisor must have held a full licence for at least two years.

Restricted licence

You can drive on your own between 5am and 10pm. To drive at other times or with passengers, you must have a supervisor with you. When driving alone, only your dependants (e.g. children) may accompany you.

Full licence

You can drive on your own and take passengers at any time.

For more information on how to get a licence, see factsheet 45 *Learning to drive: how to get your licence*, available on the Land Transport New Zealand's website: www.landtransport.govt.nz (LTSA/Factsheets).

New Zealanders drive on the left-hand side of the road and there are a number of different road rules, e.g. the 'give way' rule. It is important you understand these rules before driving in New Zealand. The Police enforce the driving laws and there are penalties for breaking them such as fines, confiscation of your licence, confiscation of your vehicle or imprisonment.

If you are going to drive in New Zealand it is important to get a copy of the Land Transport Safety Authority (LTSA) New Zealand *Road Code* and learn the road rules, traffic signs and signals for driving. Land Transport New Zealand also has a factsheet for visitors to New Zealand: factsheet 56 *New residents and visitors: driving in New Zealand*. You can access both the *Road Code* and factsheet 56 through Land Transport New Zealand online at:

www.landtransport.govt.nz Copies of the *Road Code* can also be bought at all large bookstores. An information kit called *On the Road*, developed by LTSA, is distributed to English Language Schools to help improve the safety of international students on the roads.

It is highly recommended that you complete an Automobile Association (AA) defensive driving course. These courses help drivers who already have some experience to learn how to drive safely in New Zealand. Defensive driving courses are available in most towns and cities. Visit the AA website www.aa.co.nz, look in your local Yellow Pages directory or at your local licensing agent for more information.

Driving with care

There are four main reasons why people crash and sometimes die on New Zealand roads: driving too fast, driving after drinking alcohol, not wearing their safety belts and not giving way at intersections.

Speed – driving too fast

The maximum speed limit on open roads in New Zealand (roads outside of cities and towns) is 100km/h. This is the fastest you are allowed to drive, and you must obey any speed limit signs that instruct you to slow down. The speed limit in towns and cities is 50km/h, unless speed signs tell you that you can go faster. Speed limits are well signposted and can change on the same stretch of road. Whatever the posted speed limit, you must always drive to the conditions – drive slower when it's hard to see or if it's raining.

Alcohol

The amount of alcohol that drivers are legally allowed differs depending on the age of the driver. The amount of alcohol that drivers under 20 years of age are legally allowed to drink before driving is so small that it is safer not to drink at all. Driving while over the alcohol limit is illegal (an offence), and has severe penalties, including having your licence taken away or imprisonment.

Safety belts (seat belts)

You must always wear your safety belt, whether you are sitting in the front or the back of the vehicle. Drivers and passengers are legally required to and are responsible for wearing their own safety belts. The driver is also responsible for making sure that children under 15 years of age are

wearing their safety belts. Children under five years need to be in an approved child's car seat. There are fines for not wearing safety belts.

Failure to give way

It's very important that you know the 'give way' rules or you risk being involved in a serious car accident at an intersection.

If you have a car accident

If you have an accident while driving and are not badly hurt, you must stop and check to see if anyone else is hurt. If someone is hurt, give first aid or find a phone and dial 111 for emergency services (e.g. an ambulance). You will also need to protect the scene to ensure that other crashes do not occur. You must tell the Police about the accident no later than 24 hours after the crash.

If no one is hurt, you'll need to give your name and address (and the name and address of the owner of the vehicle you are driving) as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours after the crash to the owner or driver of any other damaged vehicle and the owner of any damaged property. If you cannot find these owners, tell the Police as soon as possible and no later than 60 hours after the crash.

Owning a car

Owning a car is a big responsibility, and maintenance, petrol and insurance costs can be high. Think carefully before buying a car. Some international students have had serious problems with driving or owning cars. Think about whether you really need one – most New Zealand students find they are too costly. Cars lose value quickly, so that when you sell you may be disappointed with the money you get or you may not be able to sell at all. Parking in the main cities can also be costly.

Once you own a car it must be licensed and have a current warrant of fitness (WoF). If your vehicle does not have a current vehicle licence and WoF, you will be fined.

Vehicle licensing

You need to pay a licensing fee to use your vehicle on the road. When the fee is paid you receive a label showing the date it expires. The label is usually put on the windscreen. You can license your vehicle at any Land Transport New Zealand agent, e.g. any New Zealand PostShop. You'll need to renew the licence before the expiry date on the label. For further information go to: www.landtransport.govt.nz (LTSA).

Warrant of Fitness (WoF)

A WoF is a safety check for most cars, vans, utes and many trucks. If the vehicle passes the safety check, a WoF label is put on the windscreen. You must have the vehicle re-checked for a new WoF before the expiry date on the label. Cars are not allowed to be driven on the road without a current WoF. If your car does not have a WoF or registration, you can be fined even if it is parked outside your house.

Vehicles first registered anywhere less than six years ago have a WoF check every 12 months; other vehicles have them every six months.

Only approved garages and testing stations can carry out WoF checks. Ask at your local petrol station for an agent close to where you are staying.

Vehicle insurance

If you buy a vehicle, you will need vehicle insurance. Insurance fees are usually higher for people under 25 years, and may also depend on your driving history and the type of vehicle you own.

Further information about vehicle insurance is available online from the Insurance Council of New Zealand at: www.icnz.org.nz/consumer/motor

If your vehicle is not registered and/or does not have a current WoF, or if you are driving without a valid licence, your insurance company will not pay out if you have an accident.

Police checks

The Police can stop any driver at any time to check that the vehicle is roadworthy and the driver is properly licensed. If the Police ask for your name and address, you must tell them the truth. They may want to see your driver licence and they may ask you to take a breathalyser test if they think you have been drinking alcohol.

Cooperate with the Police and answer questions politely. If you are arrested you must go with the Police. You will be permitted to make one phone call to a lawyer or to a support person.

Recreation and tourism

New Zealanders enjoy spending time outdoors doing recreational activities or playing sports. Rugby is the national game – other popular sports in New Zealand are cricket, football, hockey, tennis, netball, golf and skiing.

There are many sports fields and most are open to the public when games are not being played. You can either organise a game with your friends or join an official club. Joining a club is a good way to meet New Zealanders. Most of the large education institutes have a range of sports and interest clubs that you can join. Many of them may also have gyms and recreational facilities.

Things to see and do

Visit your local i-SITE Visitor Centre for information about museums, art galleries, libraries, cinemas and zoos in your area. These official Visitor Information Centres are located in most towns and cities in New Zealand and have good local knowledge of local events, tourist information and holiday accommodation. Look in your local telephone book under i-SITE Visitor Information for the phone number, or check online at www.i-SITE.org for contact details. There are also free local newspapers and student magazines that list events coming up in your area. These are usually found outside large supermarkets and libraries.

New Zealand is regarded as one of the best tourist destinations in the world. For its size it is hugely diverse in its geography. There are volcanoes, high mountains, glacial valleys, lakes and rivers, fiords and sandy beaches. Some of the highlights to see in New Zealand are: the Southern Alps, Queenstown, Fiordland, Waitomo Caves, Tongariro National Park, the Bay of Islands, Cape Reinga, and the geysers and mud pools in Rotorua.

New Zealand has a well-developed tourism sector and you will find many tourist activities throughout the country. Some are extreme (e.g. bungee jumping and white water rafting), while others are more leisurely (e.g. walking and fishing). The best way to find out what is available in your area is to visit your local i-SITE Visitor Centre. They will be able to recommend any day trips, sightseeing activities or local walks you can do.

Some useful sites in addition to those already mentioned at the beginning of this Guide are:

www.newzealandnz.co.nz/activities

www.jasons.co.nz

www.tourism.net.nz

LIVING IN NEW ZEALAND

Safety around water³

Many recreational activities are based around the sea, rivers or lakes. Care is needed when swimming or learning water sports or activities.

Many of New Zealand's most popular beaches are patrolled by Surf Life Savers. These are people qualified to advise people on safety at the beach and who are there to help if people are in trouble in the water. The Surf Life Savers put up two flags when they are on duty. These flags also mark the area that they will be watching closely. Always swim between these flags if you see them.

If you want to enjoy New Zealand's lakes, rivers, swimming pools and beaches or participate in any water-based activity you should:

- learn to swim (contact your local city council swimming pool for details about lessons)
- always swim, kayak or go fishing with someone else – never go alone
- swim between the flags at the beach
- always wear a life jacket when going out on a boat.

Bush walking or tramping⁴

New Zealand is famous for its beautiful outdoor environment, and bush walking and tramping are enjoyable activities. Your local Department of Conservation (DoC) office has information about local walks and tramps, or go to: www.doc.govt.nz and click on 'explore'. The Department of Conservation is responsible for maintaining and protecting parks and reserves.

New Zealand weather can change very quickly, especially in mountainous areas. It is important to be prepared for all types of weather, no matter what it is like when you leave. Warm, waterproof clothing is essential. It is unwise to tramp alone in the bush. Always tell someone where you are going and when you expect to return. Always stay on the track and make sure you know the way out of the bush at all times. Be prepared for emergencies as well as weather changes (e.g. take a first-aid kit, extra food and water and a mobile phone). You can hear a weather report every hour on most radio stations, or phone 0900 999 (then your phone area code) for weather updates.

³ Information under this title has been sourced from: www.letsgo.co.nz/advice/safety.asp

⁴ Information under this title has been sourced from: www.niwa.cri.nz/edu/resources/climate/overview
www.metservice.co.nz www.experiencenz.com/climate.cfm



LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF

Large Tertiary Institutions have their own student health services centre or clinic which students can use. This service is partially subsidised by fees paid by all students at enrolment, so is much cheaper than regular medical centres or clinics.

There are good professional health services in New Zealand, including doctors, pharmacies, dentists and hospitals. It is a good idea to locate a doctor, dentist, after-hours medical centre and hospital in case you need them. The local telephone book has a section at the front that lists hospitals, medical centres (doctors' clinics) and dentists.

Students coming to New Zealand are often so busy with study and learning about a new country that they forget to eat well and then get sick. It is important to eat a healthy, well-balanced diet. Your health service or student advisor may be able to help you with nutrition advice.

Medical insurance

Having medical insurance to cover all your dental, medical, specialist and hospital costs is compulsory for all international students. Your medical insurance policy will be checked by your school or institution to make sure it meets the requirements.

General health

Visiting a doctor

You can choose any doctor or medical centre close to where you are living or studying. The local doctor (General Practitioner or GP) is often the first medical professional a New Zealander will see when they have a health problem. GPs work in local medical centres or clinics, not hospitals. You should go to see a GP if you are ill. You need to call the centre or clinic and make an appointment to see a doctor or nurse. This also applies if you want to see a doctor or nurse at your education provider's student health centre. Most medical centres and clinics are open during normal business hours. For medical attention outside these hours you can go to your nearest after-hours medical centre without an appointment. In the case of an emergency you should go directly to the hospital.

Your medical insurance may cover the costs for visits to the doctor. GPs generally charge between NZ\$30 and NZ\$60 per visit.

Going to the optometrist or dentist

If you need to get your eyes tested or a prescription for glasses or contact lenses, you will need to see an optometrist. Check the Yellow Pages directory for a list of optometrists in your area or check online at: www.yellowpages.co.nz

Eye tests cost from NZ\$40, glasses from about NZ\$300, and contact lenses from about NZ\$150 for a six-month prescription. You or your medical insurance will need to pay for your optometrist costs.

You or your medical insurance will also have to pay for any visits to the dentist. You can find a list of dental practitioners in the Yellow Pages. For both the optometrist and the dentist, appointments must be made in advance.

Going to hospital

Many hospitals have their own staff or a network of volunteers who will help with translation, hospital admission or any related needs. There will be charges for your care which your medical insurance should cover.

Injury or accident

The Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) provides 24-hour personal injury or accident cover for New Zealanders, New Zealand residents who are temporarily overseas and visitors to New Zealand. This means you are eligible for accident compensation cover while you are here. For more information, free phone 0800 101 996 or check online at: www.acc.co.nz

Drugs from the pharmacy and diagnostic tests

You, or your medical insurance, will also have to pay for any medicines that you need. You can buy some medicines directly from the pharmacy or chemist but for most medicines you will need a prescription from your doctor. A doctor writes the prescription and a pharmacy or chemist provides the medicine the doctor prescribes for you. The cost will depend on the medication you are prescribed. Charges will also apply to any diagnostic tests (such as blood tests) from a laboratory.

Meningitis (meningococcal disease)

Meningococcal disease is a bacterial infection that can affect anyone. Babies, young children, teenagers and young adults are at greatest risk. It can cause two very serious illnesses: septicaemia (blood poisoning) and meningitis (an infection of the brain membranes).

There are different strains of the bacteria. The B strain is the most common in New Zealand.

Meningococcal disease can look like a case of influenza in its early stages, but it quickly gets much worse. The symptoms may not all show up at once. Tell your doctor if you or someone else have any of the following signs and/or symptoms:

- fever and headache
- vomiting
- sleepiness, confusion, delirium or unconsciousness
- a stiff neck and dislike of bright lights
- joint pain and aching muscles
- a rash or spots (show your doctor).

Meningococcal disease can progress very quickly. Don't wait – take action. If someone in your household is sick with one or more of the above symptoms, contact a doctor or medical centre immediately no matter what time of the day or night. If meningococcal disease is treated straight away with antibiotics, most people will recover. For further information about meningococcal disease check online at: www.moh.govt.nz/meningococcal

Hayfever

Hayfever (also called seasonal allergic rhinitis) is an allergic condition usually caused by pollen in the air. It can affect the nose, eyes and throat. Symptoms are usually a runny, stuffy, itchy nose and sneezing. Your eyes may also become itchy and watery and your throat may become irritated. Hayfever is very common in New Zealand (about one in five people are affected by it).

There are many medicines available to prevent hayfever, and to alleviate its symptoms. The main medications used are antihistamines and nasal sprays. If you think you have hayfever see a doctor so they can diagnose you and prescribe the appropriate medication.

For more information on hayfever check online at: www.allergy.org.nz or www.everybody.co.nz

Asthma

Asthma is a common medical condition in New Zealand. One in six New Zealanders is a sufferer. The symptoms of asthma are shortness of breath, coughing, tightness in the chest and wheezing (when your chest makes a rattling sound when you breathe). Generally asthma is not a serious condition and it is usually controlled well by medication. However, some people are vulnerable to asthma and have asthma attacks that can be life-threatening. If you think you have the symptoms of asthma, you should consult a doctor.

For more information about asthma and what triggers it check online at: www.asthmanz.co.nz

Sexual health

In New Zealand the age of sexual consent is 16, and it is illegal to have sexual contact with a person under this age even if he or she agrees.

If you choose to have a sexual relationship during your time in New Zealand, you need to protect yourself both from unwanted pregnancy and from sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

You can discuss any issues you have about sexual health and contraception with a doctor or nurse. Health professionals are there to help and provide advice, and will not judge you. Anything you discuss with them is completely confidential. In New Zealand, individual privacy is treated very seriously and protected by law.

For information on STIs and contraception check online at: www.hubba.co.nz

Family Planning Association

The Family Planning Association (FPA) provides sexual and contraceptive information, clinical services and education. If you make an appointment, you or your medical insurance must pay for your visit.

FPA clinics are listed in your local telephone book (or check online at: www.whitepages.co.nz or www.fpanz.org.nz to locate the FPA clinic closest to you), there is also a free information service available on free phone 0800 372 5463. Some FPA clinics may have interpreters available.

Mental health

Studying can be very stressful for any student. When you are studying overseas, language and culture differences can increase stress levels. If you are having difficulty coping, look for support. If you are worried about your stress level, ask for help. Do not feel ashamed. Make an appointment to talk to a counsellor or doctor. Sometimes medical insurance does not cover treatment for mental illness. You may be liable for any charges incurred from your treatment.

Larger tertiary education institutions may have student counsellors available for consultations at very little or no cost.

If you'd rather talk with someone over the phone, you can call Lifeline. Lifeline is a free, confidential and anonymous service for anyone needing to talk about personal problems. Some of the feelings or worries they can assist you with are:

- facing difficulties in a new country
- loneliness
- stress-related issues
- problems with relationships
- depression and worry
- grief and loss
- thoughts of suicide or self-harm.

Lifeline is open 24 hours every day. If you are in the Auckland area phone 522 2999; if you are outside Auckland phone free on 0800 111 777. Lifeline also has a brochure about helping services. Your education provider should have a copy.

Smoking cigarettes or any tobacco

In New Zealand, alcohol and tobacco smoking are legal but regulated; you have to be 18 or over to purchase them, and there are rules about where and when you can and can't drink alcohol and smoke.

It is illegal to smoke inside any clubs, bars, restaurants, theatres, public buildings or on public transport. Smoking is permitted outdoors. Smoking is becoming increasingly unpopular with

New Zealanders and many people do not like others smoking near them. If you smoke in public areas, smoke in areas where your cigarette smoke will not bother other people. Always check for permission before you smoke in a home or car – it is likely you will be asked to go outside or wait until the car stops.

Alcohol

In some cities it is illegal to drink alcohol in public places, such as in the streets or parks, and many places have alcohol bans (no alcohol is allowed) over the New Year period when lots of people go out to celebrate.

Alcohol is sold in liquor stores and licensed beer and wine stores. Most supermarkets and some convenience stores also sell beer and wine. It is illegal to buy alcohol if you are under 18 and it is also illegal to supply alcohol to anyone who is under 18. You may be asked for proof of your age if you purchase alcohol (see below).

Although alcohol is widely consumed at social events in New Zealand, it is very acceptable and quite normal not to drink alcohol at all. If you are serving drinks for friends, make sure there are non-alcoholic drinks available.

In New Zealand there have been a few cases of 'drink spiking', where someone adds a tasteless, odourless and colourless drug to a drink without the drinker knowing. This can happen at bars, clubs, pubs or parties. These drugs are extremely dangerous and leave people with little or no memory of what has happened to them. If you feel dizzy or uncomfortable after you have a drink, try to tell a friend to look after you. If you think this may have happened to you, seek medical advice immediately. To avoid drink spiking, keep hold of your drink and never leave it unattended.

18+ Card (Evidence of Age)

The minimum legal drinking age in New Zealand is 18 years. If young people wish to purchase alcohol or get into licensed premises, they need to provide photographic proof of age.

The acceptable forms of ID are a New Zealand or overseas passport, a photographic New Zealand driver licence or a HANZ 18+ Card. You can get an application form for an 18+ Card online at:

www.hanz.org.nz/index.cfm/18_Plus_Cards or at a New Zealand PostShop. The card will cost you NZ\$20. You will need to fill out a statutory declaration and provide certain documents to prove you are over 18 years of age and that you are who you say you are.

Drugs

Illegal drugs include marijuana, 'magic mushrooms', LSD, ecstasy, methamphetamines, cocaine and heroin. Possession of any of these drugs is against the law and carries a penalty that may include imprisonment.

Ecstasy or 'e' comes as a capsule with brownish powder inside, or as a pill, usually with a symbol like a heart or a happy face. You should refuse these drugs if they are offered to you. There are considerable risks in consuming them and they are illegal.

Alcohol and drug help

There are a number of places to go to if you or someone you know needs help with alcohol or drugs. Contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau and they will refer you to a service that can assist you. Your local Citizens Advice Bureau is in the phone book or phone free on 0800 367 222. Some Citizens Advice Bureaux have interpreters.

Protection from the sun⁵

New Zealand is a great country to experience the outdoors, but it is important to protect yourself against the harmful effects of the sun. New Zealand is exposed to the sun's harmful ultraviolet (UV) radiation. There is less pollution to block out UV radiation than there is in many other countries, and in addition the protective ozone layer is decreasing.

UV radiation is responsible for burning and damaging skin. UV radiation does not provide heat, so you can burn even when you feel cool (on a cloudy day, for example).

Sunburn can result in skin cancers and harmful melanomas. To avoid sunburn:

- wear a hat and clothing that covers your skin
- apply sunscreen
- wear wrap-around sunglasses to protect your eyes.

⁵ Information under this title has been sourced from: www.cancernz.org.nz

It is important to note that:

- no sunscreen will completely shield you from the effects of UV radiation. You can still burn, especially if you have sensitive skin
- avoiding the sun between the hottest times (11am to 3pm in summer) is recommended and
- wearing a hat and long clothing, sunglasses and staying in the shade are additional forms of sun protection.

Relationships

Attitudes and approaches to personal and romantic relationships in New Zealand may be very different from those in your home country. With the extra sense of freedom in New Zealand and being away from your family and friends, the support and comfort of a romantic relationship might seem very reassuring. However, too many students find themselves involved in serious relationships more deeply and quickly than if they were at home.

If you have any questions or concerns about relationships while you are in New Zealand, there are several services you can use such as Lifeline (see '**Mental health**' on page 76) or the counsellor service at your educational institute.

You should never feel pressured to do anything in a relationship that does not feel right for you, your culture or your religion. There is nothing wrong with refusing to do anything that you are not totally sure about and making it clear that you expect to be taken seriously.

The main reason you are in New Zealand is to study. It is important that you remember the goals you had before you left home and avoid anything that may jeopardise them and leave you disappointed and unhappy.

Harassment and discrimination

Most international students enjoy their stay in New Zealand and the interaction they have with New Zealanders. New Zealand has a multicultural population, and most people are open to and accepting of other cultures and different ways of life. New Zealand has laws against harassment and discrimination.

LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF

Below is a description of what constitutes discrimination and harassment in New Zealand law.

- Discrimination occurs when a person is disadvantaged or treated less favourably than another person in the same or similar circumstances.
- Harassment is behaviour that is uninvited and humiliates, offends or intimidates someone.

Harassment and discrimination may be based, for example, on gender, marital status, religious belief, colour, race, ethnicity, disability, age, political opinion, employment status, family status or sexual orientation. The Human Rights Act 1993 makes harassment and discrimination unlawful.

What you can do if you are being harassed

- Keep a record of the incidents that you find offensive.
- Talk it over with someone you trust and who will keep the information confidential. This may help clarify your best course of action.
- Confront the person who is harassing you and tell them you don't like their behaviour. Tell them you do not like what they are doing and that it is unlawful. Tell them you want them to stop – otherwise you will complain. You can make a complaint in person, in a letter, or with a student or other representative.
- Only confront the harasser if you feel confident and safe to do so. If this doesn't work, or is not appropriate, you can seek advice and assistance from:
 - a racial/sexual harassment contact person
 - a manager or school counsellor
 - the Human Rights Commission
 - a professional disciplinary body
 - the Employment Relations Service (if you have been harassed at work).

Further information

For further information or to make a complaint, contact the Human Rights Commission online at: www.hrc.co.nz

The Human Rights Commission also operates an InfoLine, staffed from 8.30am until 5pm Monday to Friday, plus an automated service accessible 24 hours, seven days a week. All calls are confidential. The InfoLine service provides answers to general human rights enquiries, and provides advice on how to deal with disputes including matters of racial harassment. Call InfoLine toll free on 0800 4 YOUR RIGHTS (0800 496 877), or you can email: info@hrc.co.nz

Keeping safe

The laws operate to protect the rights of all people in New Zealand, including visitors and international students. It is important to be aware of New Zealand laws and abide by them, as ignorance of law is not accepted as an excuse for law breaking in New Zealand.

New Zealand has an international reputation as a safe and friendly country, but you still need to take all the security precautions you would take anywhere in the world. For example, look after your belongings, do not carry large amounts of cash and avoid doing things you know are against the law.

Your education provider will give some advice, including the driving laws and road safety rules. If you need other advice, for example, personal security or legal welfare issues, ask the student welfare officer at your education provider.

In New Zealand you are breaking the law if you hit, punch, kick or in any way assault another person or have, or attempt to have, sexual contact without the other person's consent. Violence is unacceptable wherever it happens and whoever the victim is, including family members. The New Zealand Police take all incidents of violence very seriously – call them if you need help (dial 111 in an emergency and ask for the Police).

Safety in public places

Being aware of safety in public places helps to reduce your risks. If you go out, keep your possessions with you. If you are in a place such as a library or bus station or you need to use a public toilet, make sure you keep your possessions with you or have someone you can trust watch them for you. Never, ever leave your valuable possessions where they could be stolen or damaged. If you use an ATM, make sure no one is watching you and put your cash away safely.

Street safety

Going out with someone you trust lessens your risk of being a victim of crime. Keep to areas where there are other people and that are well lit at night. Avoid vacant spaces, parks or shortcuts through alleys or waste ground, and do not walk close to arcade entrances or places where a person might be hiding. Check street signs so you know where you are and, if you need to call the Police, you can be easily located.

LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF

Body language is important. A person who is confident, walking upright and quickly is less likely to become a victim of crime. There may be times when it's best not to walk through a group of people. Cross the road to avoid contact.

Let someone you trust (someone you live with or a friend) know where you are going. Plan for a friend to pick you up, or use a taxi, rather than walk alone at night. If you feel uncomfortable in a situation, you could help to keep yourself safe by:

- covering up expensive jewellery
- keeping your house and car keys separate in case your handbag or bag is snatched
- carrying a personal alarm or mobile phone
- keeping close to your friends when you are out late at night.

Being followed

If you think someone is following you, cross the street, more than once if necessary. Vary your pace and change direction to confirm your suspicions. If someone is following you, go as quickly as possible to the nearest place where there will be other people. This could be a petrol station, fast-food outlet or house with lights on. Call the Police immediately.

Pubs, clubs and parties

If you use drugs or drink more than a moderate level of alcohol, it will lower your awareness and increase the risk to your safety. Alcohol and drugs affect the ability to be in control and react to a situation appropriately.

Potentially unsafe situations are:

- leaving a party or pub with a person you have just met
- accepting a car-ride from a stranger or someone you have just met
- walking home alone
- driving after taking drugs or alcohol.

Dealing with drunk people

People who have taken drugs or alcohol can threaten your safety. If you go out into town at night in New Zealand you may come across people who have been drinking heavily. Warning signs that a person is drunk may be that they are pushy, rude, have slurred speech or stumble when they walk. The best way to deal with drunk people is to avoid them. Do not provoke them as they may react aggressively.

If you want more advice on keeping yourself safe, try the Citizens Advice Bureau, Community Law Centre or talk to the Police. Don't rely solely on what other international students tell you. It's best to get up-to-date information from the people who know best.

In an emergency phone 111

An emergency is when there is:

- a death or a life-threatening situation
- a crime is being committed
- a fire or serious accident.

The 111 phone call is free. The person answering will ask which service you need (Fire, Police or Ambulance). Be ready to tell them who you are, what has happened and where you are.

If someone is injured and needs to go to hospital, an ambulance will come for them.

If it's not possible to make a phone call, go as quickly as possible to the nearest place where there are other people. This could be a petrol station, fast-food outlet or a house with lights on. If you can't do this, make lots of noise to attract attention. As soon as you can, go to a safe place and phone 111 and ask for the emergency service you need: Fire, Police or Ambulance.

If you need urgent medical treatment, but are well enough to travel, you can go to an Accident and Emergency centre or hospital, or ask a friend to take you.

The Police

The Police in New Zealand uphold the law and prevent crime. The Police force in New Zealand is honest and it is a crime to offer a bribe (money to ignore or overlook a crime) to a member of the Police.

When you move into your accommodation, find out where the local Police station is, and write down the phone number. You can phone or visit your local Police station if you are worried about crime or if something happens to you that is not lawful. Look in the local telephone book for the number or check online at: www.police.govt.nz

LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF

If there is a crime, the Police will investigate and advise you about follow-up action. They will tell you about other support services that may be helpful, such as Victim Support, which helps people who have been the victims of crime, or an accident or emergency. Look under 'Victim Support' in your local telephone book. The Police also have quick access to interpreters who can help explain things if necessary.

If you are a woman you can ask to speak to a female Police Officer in any dealings with the Police. This also applies to men who may prefer to speak to a male Officer.

Community Law Centre

Your local branch of the Community Law Centre will also be able to provide advice and assistance. These centres provide free advice on New Zealand laws and legal procedures. Many cities and towns have Community Law Centres; the phone number is in your local telephone book.

The student welfare person or department at your education provider will also be able to offer support and may be able to help you if you are dealing with the Police.

A publication on 'your rights as a victim' is on the Ministry of Justice website. Check online at: www.justice.govt.nz/Information and [Publications/Victims](http://www.justice.govt.nz/Publications/Victims)

Being accused of a crime

If you are arrested, you have the right to contact a lawyer as soon as possible. If you appear in court, you will need a lawyer. There will be a lawyer at the court who will give you legal help, or you can hire your own lawyer. Lawyers are the best people to advise you on your legal rights. You also have the right to contact your embassy and your family. Contact your local Community Law Centre (in the local telephone book) for information and advice about New Zealand laws.

Natural disasters

The most common disasters in New Zealand are floods and earthquakes. New Zealand lies between two tectonic plates and as a result there is a lot of seismic and geothermal activity in the country. There are several active volcanoes in the North Island, and many small earthquakes

occur every year. Heavy rain can cause flooding very quickly in some areas, and roads can become blocked, bridges swept away, and rivers and high tides threaten the safety of houses. The chance of being involved in a natural disaster is very small but it is a good idea to become aware of the risks in your local area.

Emergency management

The Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management is the government agency responsible for coordinating national emergency operations in the event of a large-scale disaster. Their website www.civildefence.govt.nz contains a lot of information about natural disasters in New Zealand, how you can prepare for them and what you should do if one occurs. The inside back cover of the Yellow Pages directory also has some of this information.

Earthquakes

Most earthquakes in New Zealand are too small to be felt. Those that are felt are normally very short in length (about 5 seconds) and cause little disturbance.

New Zealand is a world leader in earthquake engineering design, so most large buildings are designed to withstand large earthquakes. It is very important that you know what to do if a large earthquake occurs.

Most earthquake-related injuries and deaths result from collapsing walls, flying glass and falling objects caused by the ground shaking. You can reduce the likelihood of damage to your valuables and yourself by securing heavy furniture (e.g. bookcases) to the wall or floor and placing heavy items near the floor. For a complete list of things to check in your home check online at:

www.eqc.govt.nz/quakesafeyourhome.aspx

It is also a good idea to develop an Emergency Plan within your household and to have emergency survival items so that you could cope on your own for at least three days. To find out more about what you can do to be better prepared check online at: www.civildefence.govt.nz (Being Prepared/What to do).

Earthquakes are often followed by aftershocks (another quake after the main shock), some of which can be large. It is important that you get yourself into a safe place and stay there until you are sure the shaking has stopped. For more information on earthquakes check online at: www.gns.cri.nz/what/earthact/earthquakes

LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF

Homesickness

Most people have felt homesick at some time. Beginning life and study in a new country can mean both excitement and anxiety about the move, the study and meeting new people. The most common times to feel anxiety are several weeks before leaving home or in the first few weeks after arriving. You might feel okay at first but then find yourself feeling homesick later on, perhaps around a traditional holiday, missing a big event at home, or at the start of your second year.

Coming to New Zealand is a huge undertaking. Remember that feeling homesick is normal.

Here are a few suggestions that may help you:

- Talk to someone you trust about it. If you haven't made friends, then try talking to a teacher, tutor, nurse or a counsellor at your education provider.
- Remember that other people will have similar feelings, even if they seem to be OK.
- Keep in regular contact with family and friends at home; email, phone or write letters. Don't be afraid to tell them how you're really feeling and of any problems. Let them know you want to hear from them.
- Remember to get plenty of sleep and to eat good food.
- Give yourself enough time to adjust: you don't have to get everything right straight away. Learn from your mistakes.
- You don't have to rush into making major decisions, for example about staying or leaving.
- Be realistic about what to expect from student life and from yourself. Get involved in an activity you enjoy or try new ones in your spare time when you're not studying. At the start of the academic year many new people will be joining clubs and groups and you are unlikely to be the only new person.
- If you are finding study too difficult, talk to your teacher, advisor or the staff at Student Learning Support (universities and polytechnics). They will help you improve your study or time management skills.
- Explore and get to know about your neighbourhood or town.
- Try something new or involve yourself in some activities. Don't wait for feelings of homesickness to disappear automatically. Problems can show up later as headaches, tiredness, illness or lack of motivation. If you stop being able to do normal social and academic things, get professional help from your doctor or the counselling service at your education provider.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Embassies

Embassies throughout the world have a responsibility to assist their citizens in foreign countries in times of crisis, and also to provide information on what is happening at home. It is a good idea to register with your embassy so your government can provide support for you in the event of an emergency or let you know about affairs at home.

You can find details of your country's representative in New Zealand on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade: www.mfat.govt.nz/Embassies2-Foreign-Embassies/Index.php

Parents' questions

How can I make sure my child is doing well?

Anyone over the age of 18 is considered an independent adult in New Zealand and is protected by privacy laws. This means that no one except the educational institute and the student has the right to know what grades your child is getting. If you are particularly worried, it is possible to arrange for you to gain access to their results. In the event that your child is failing courses and their educational institute is worried, you will always be contacted.

How will I keep in contact with my child?

There are many easy ways for you and your child to keep in regular contact. Phone, email and even text messaging are often used between parents and their children. Of course you will miss each other, but modern methods of communication can ease the stress of being so far apart.

If my child is having problems, who will help?

Remember that your child is not alone. There are very likely to be other international students studying at the same institute or in the same area. If they are staying in student accommodation they will meet many other students who can help them with any difficulties. There are many other support services in New Zealand for international students.

How will my child be treated?

New Zealand is a very tolerant, open society. Racism, discrimination and sexism are rare and considered unacceptable. No matter what their culture, religion or ethnicity students can expect to be treated with respect and courtesy. New Zealanders are world renowned for their friendliness.

New Zealand public holidays

When there is a public holiday most organisations are closed and many people go away for a holiday. On Christmas Day, Good Friday, Easter Sunday and until noon on ANZAC day, most businesses are closed and only essential services are available.

The public holidays are:

Date	Holiday
1-2 January	New Year's holiday
6 February	Waitangi Day (celebrates the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 between Māori Chiefs and the British Crown)
A Friday and a Monday in March/April (timing depends on the year)	Easter: Good Friday and Easter Monday
25 April	ANZAC Day (commemorating New Zealand and Australia's forces killed in World War I)
First Monday in June	Queen's Birthday
Final Monday in October	Labour Day
25 December	Christmas Day
26 December	Boxing Day

Most government departments and services, many businesses, and some shops and restaurants close during the period from 25 December to 2 January.

Each region also has an anniversary holiday. Ask your education provider when the regional holiday is. They are usually on a Monday, and most occur during the summer months (December-February).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Glossary of some common Māori words

Here is a list of Māori words that you are likely to come across and their meanings:

Aotearoa	Land of the long white cloud (the Māori name for New Zealand)
Haere mai	Welcome
Haere rā	Goodbye
Hāngi	Traditional way of cooking food, where the food is cooked in the ground
Hapū	Sub-tribe
Hongi	A formal greeting, gently pressing noses
Hui	Meeting to discuss a special topic
Iwi	Tribal people
Kai	Food
Kaiako	Teacher
Ka pai	Good
Kawa	Customs
Kia ora	Māori greeting, also used to express thanks and agreement
Kōhanga reo	Māori language pre-school (literally learning nest)
Kura	School, college
Mana	Prestige, authority, status
Marae	A communal facility (generally consisting of a meeting house, dining hall, kitchen and sleeping quarters with ablution area)
Mokopuna	Grandchild
Mihimihi	Greeting
Pākehā	The Māori word for non-Māori (white) people
Pōwhiri	Ritual of Māori welcome
Rangatira	High-ranking person
Reo	Language
Tamariki	Children
Tāngata whenua	People of the land, original inhabitants (Māori)
Tangi	Funeral or to weep

Taonga	Values (spiritual, personal) and physical treasures
Tapu	Sacred
Tōnā koe	Formal greeting (to one person)
Te reo	The language (Māori)
Tiriti	Treaty
Waka	Canoe, vessel or vehicle in modern context
Wānanga	University
Whānau	Family
Whare	House, meeting house on a marae
Whenua	Land

Common New Zealand words/phrases – colloquialisms

Colloquialisms are words or phrases that have an informal and generally accepted meaning rather than a literal meaning. There are many more but here are a few that are commonly used.

Awesome	Fine, excellent
Bach	A holiday home (also known as a crib in the South Island)
Barbie	Barbecue (also written as BBQ) – food cooked outside over a charcoal or gas fire
Beaut, beauty	Something good or outstanding
Bro	Term of address for a male friend or relative
Bright as a button	Looking fresh, alert
Bright spark	Intelligent, alert, attentive, awake
Bring a plate	Everyone brings food to share. (Do not bring an empty plate.)
Bush	New Zealand's native forest
Bushed, had it	Exhausted
BYO	Bring Your Own. A BYO restaurant is a restaurant that allows customers to bring their own wine to drink with their meal. Or take your own drinks to a party

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Common New Zealand words/phrases – colloquialisms *continued*

Cheers	Thanks	Hook up	Meet up or join in
Chocker	Full	Hoon	A noisy person, a lout
Choice	Fine, excellent	Jandals	Rubber sandals or thongs (called flip flops in UK)
Clean as a whistle	Very clean	Kiwi	New Zealand native bird symbol. Also, a general term for a New Zealander
Clown	Foolish person, idiot	Lolly	The usual word for a confection or sweet such as a toffee
Cool	Good, acceptable	Mate	A friend, also a friendly term of address
Crook	A thief. To 'feel crook' is to be ill or unwell	Mission	An adventure or an achievement
Cuz	Term of address for friend or relative	Mullet	A type of haircut where the hair is short and spiky on top and long and straggly at the back
Dough	Money	Munted	Broken or distorted
Drive around the bend	Annoy so much you lose your temper	Narley	Good
Dude	A cool or good-looking male	Nerd	A boring or overly serious person
Fade	Type of hair cut that is very short at the back and over the ears and gradually becomes longer on top	Nifty	Good (applied to a thing)
Feed	A meal	No worries	No problem, it's OK
Flat tack	At top speed	On to it	Efficiency or smart thinking
Foxy, fox	A good-looking person of either sex	On a high	A good feeling that can come from success
Fully	I agree	Once in a blue moon	Very rarely, seldom, almost never
G'day	Hello (literally Good Day)	Paddock	A field. Also a sports pitch
Get a move on/ hurry up	Move faster	Paint the town red	To go out and have a good time
Got the blues	Feeling sad	Piker	Someone who doesn't want to join in an activity
Greenie	A conservationist	Pop on over/pop in	Come and visit me at my house
Gumboots	Waterproof rubber boots (called Wellingtons in UK)	Potluck dinner	Everyone brings prepared food to share with all the guests. See 'Bring a plate'.
Grog	Alcohol	Prezzie	A present (gift)
Grouse	Fine, excellent, often used to express delight	Pulling your leg	Joking
Hard case/core	A tough but likeable person, an eccentric person	Pub	A bar where alcoholic drinks are served over the counter
Hard graft	Hard work	Rapt	Very pleased
Head over heels	Usually describing somebody who is very very happy or in love	Rellie	A relation or relative
Heart of gold	Describing a person who is very kind	Rough ride	A difficult experience
		Score	Have a romantic/sexual encounter

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Common New Zealand words/phrases – colloquialisms *continued*

She'll be right	Everything is going to be OK
Shocking	Very bad
Shout	To buy your friends something such as a drink or a meal
Skite	To boast. A boaster or show-off
Smoko	Coffee or tea break
Snowed under	Has too much work or responsibility
Spuds	Potatoes
Sticks	Remote or rural district, the countryside
Stingy	Not generous with money
Stoked	Very excited
Sunnies	Sunglasses
Sweet as	Great, OK
Swot	Study hard, especially before an exam
Ta	Thanks
To take for a ride	To deceive or trick someone
Togs	Swimming costume
Tucker	Food
Turn to custard	Collapse of ideas, schemes, plans
Twist your arm	Convince you to do something
Under the weather	Feeling unwell or tired
Uni	University
Varsity	University
Veggies	Vegetables
Wicked	Fine, excellent
Wop-wops	Remote or rural district, the countryside

Information on New Zealand cities

City	Agency	Website
Auckland	Auckland City Council Tourism Auckland	www.aucklandcity.govt.nz www.aucklandnz.com
Christchurch	Christchurch City Council Visitor information site for Christchurch and Canterbury Christchurch City Promotions Education Christchurch	www.ccc.govt.nz www.christchurchnz.net www.christchurch.org.nz www.educationchristchurch.com
Dunedin	Dunedin City Council Dunedin Tourism Tourism Dunedin Education Dunedin	www.cityofdunedin.com www.dunedintourism.co.nz www.dunedinnz.com/tourism www.educationdunedin.co.nz
Hamilton	Hamilton City Council	www.hamiltoncity.co.nz
Palmerston North	Palmerston North City Council Destination Manawatu	www.pncc.govt.nz www.manawatunz.co.nz
Wellington	Education Wellington International Tourism Wellington Wellington City Council	www.ewi.org.nz www.wellingtonnz.com www.wellington.govt.nz

Local calling codes

Area	Calling code
Northland/Auckland	9
Waikato/Bay of Plenty	7
Central North Island	6
Wellington/Kapiti	4
South Island and Stewart Island	3

International calling codes

A list of international calling codes is available in the telephone book (the White Pages) and online at: www.whitepages.co.nz

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Summary of important contacts

The table below provides a summary of important contacts listed throughout this booklet.

Arriving in New Zealand	Contact	Phone / Email	Websites
What not to bring into New Zealand	NZ Customs Service	0800 4CUSTOMS (0800 428 786) Email: feedback@customs.govt.nz	www.customs.govt.nz www.protectnz.org.nz
Transit Visas for Australia	Australian Government: Dept of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs		www.immi.gov.au/allforms/transit.htm
Living in New Zealand	Contact	Phone / Email	Websites
Racial/sexual harassment or discrimination	Human Rights Commission	0800 496 877 Email: infoline@hrc.co.nz	www.hrc.co.nz
Work	Student Job Search		www.sjs.co.nz
	Inland Revenue Department	General Tax Enquiries: 98145.451 Automated Services: 0800 257 777	www.ird.govt.nz
Your rights while working in NZ	Employment Relations Service – Department of Labour	0800 800 863 Email: info@ers.dol.govt.nz	www.ers.dol.govt.nz
Flatting in NZ	New Zealand Tenancy Service	Bond Enquiries 0800 737 666 Tenancy Advice 0800 TENANCY 0800 83 62 62	www.dbh.govt.nz/housing/tenancy

Living in New Zealand	Contact	Phone / Email	Websites
Driving and owning a vehicle	Land Transport New Zealand	General Road Safety: 0800 699 000 Driver Licensing: 0800 822 422 Email: info@landtransport.govt.nz	www.landtransport.govt.nz
General advice (personal, housing, financial, vehicle and legal issues)	Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB)	0800 FOR CAB (0800 367 222)	www.cab.org.nz
Interpretation Service when interacting with government departments	Language Line	Language.Line@dia.govt.nz	www.languageline.govt.nz
Translation of important documents	The Translation Service	0800 TRANSLATE 0800 87 26 75 translate@parliament.govt.nz	www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/wpg_URL/Services-Translation-Index
Legal issues	Community Law Centre	Refer to the White Pages as differs between areas	
To report a crime or talk to the Police	New Zealand Police	Emergency Services only: 111. Refer to the telephone directory or Police website for the local phone number	www.police.govt.nz
For support if you have been the victim of a crime	Victim Support	0800 VICTIM (0800 842 846) Email: victim@xtra.co.nz	www.victimsupport.org.nz

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Tourism and Recreation	Contact	Phone / Email	Websites
Information about what to see and do in New Zealand	i-SITE	There are i-SITE centres in most cities and towns in New Zealand	www.i-SITE.org
Education and Immigration	Contact	Phone / Email	Websites
Renewing your Student Visa or Permit	New Zealand Immigration Service	0508 558 855 info@immigration.govt.nz	www.immigration.govt.nz
Information about New Zealand education institutions and studying in New Zealand	The New World Class website		www.newzealandeducated.com
The Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students	Ministry of Education	(09) 302 9263 Email: info.code@minedu.govt.nz	www.minedu.govt.nz/goto/international and click on 'Code of Practice'
Making a complaint relating to a breach of the Code of Practice	International Education Appeal Authority	(09) 302 9263 Email: info.ieaa@minedu.govt.nz	www.minedu.govt.nz/goto/international and click on 'Code of Practice' and then Complaints Procedure



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