

M S M U N I F Y : S T U D Y I N

# NEW ZEALAND

A N A G E N T ' S G U I D E I N N E W Z E A L A N D

**MSM**  
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**NEED TO KNOW:  
PROMOTING  
NEW ZEALAND**



**NEED TO KNOW:  
PROMOTING EDUCATION  
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**MAKING EDUCATION  
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# INTRODUCTION

**New Zealand** possesses a unique charm, making it among the most alluring countries on earth. From its vibrant Māori culture to its incredible national parks and hiking trails, the country exudes boundless energy meant to inspire a visit.

Despite its modest size, New Zealand is a land of opportunity, with its education and employment industry garnering considerable attention from people all over the world.

In 2018, New Zealand hosted **117,276** international students, with university enrolments posting a six-year high. The country's solid reputation in international education is also strengthened by the locals' positive reception. In a survey, about **65% of New Zealanders agree** that international education is a significant contributor to boosting New Zealand's economic growth and promoting a multicultural country.

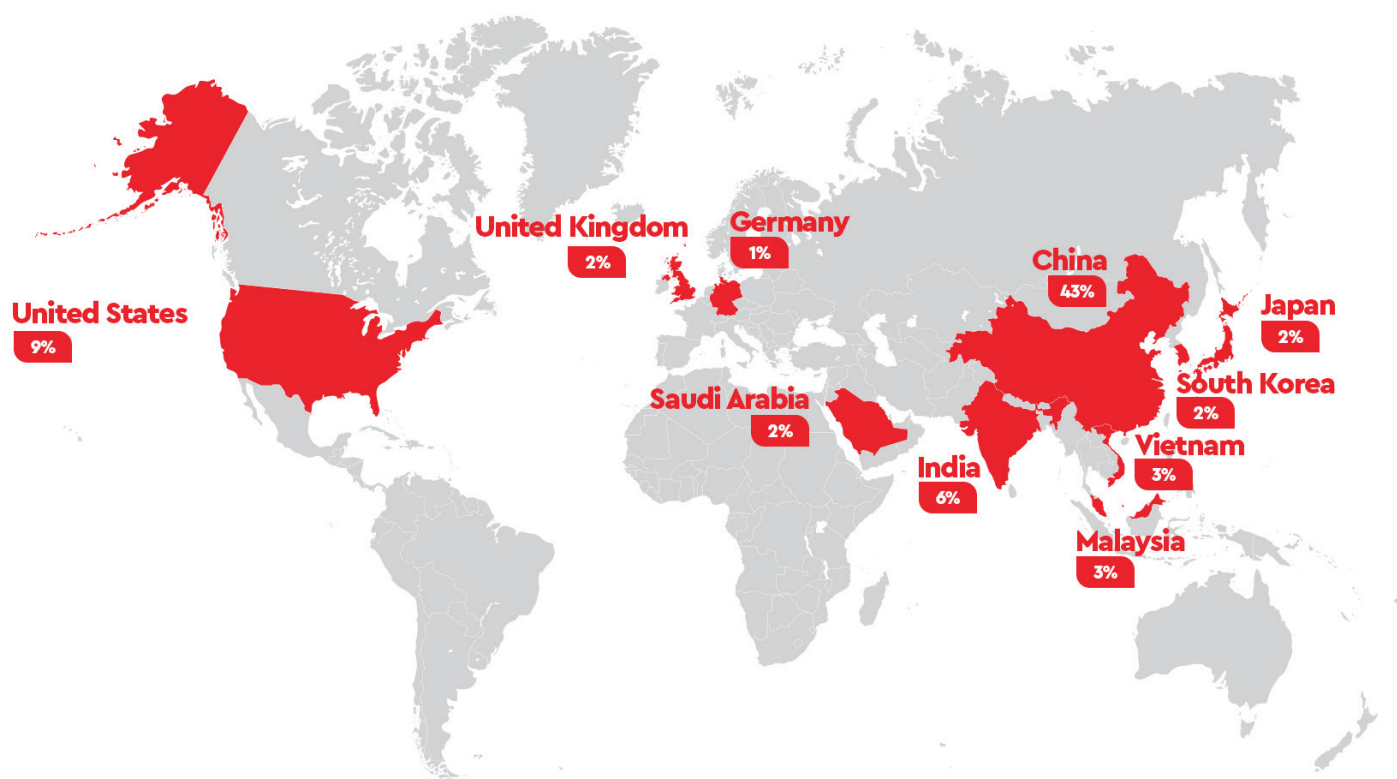


Fig. 1. Citizenship of International Students Enrolled in New Zealand Universities  
Source: Universities New Zealand



## INTRODUCTION

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With the country's excellent study opportunities and globally recognised education system, New Zealand has positioned itself as one of the leading destinations when it comes to international studies, attracting high-calibre talents.

New Zealand also ranked third in the *Economist Intelligence Unit's Worldwide Educating for the Future Index 2019*, holding the position for two consecutive years.

About **42%** of the students enrolled in New Zealand are taking post-graduate degrees, and **50%** of them intend to work in the country after graduation. With MSM Unify's Study in New Zealand guide, recruitment agents and students planning to study in the country can get comprehensive information, including:

- An overview of New Zealand as a study destination
- A look into the country's education system, its admission requirements, and processes
- Information on student permits and visa application requirements and processes
- Details on employment options for students and post-graduates
- Helpful tips and useful information to prepare students for studying and living in New Zealand



# OVERVIEW

## Location and Political Map

New Zealand is an island country in the South Pacific Ocean, occupying the southwesternmost area of Polynesia. It is a remote island comprising two main islands — the South and North Islands, and several offshore islands about a hundred miles away from the main island groups.

While New Zealand may not be as sizable as its neighbouring country of Australia, it boasts a diverse environment with deep glacier lakes, astonishing caves, majestic fjords, snow-capped mountains, and sandy beaches. It is a scenic country home to a vast array of flora and fauna that has beautifully developed from its extended isolation. The most notable is the long-beaked, flightless kiwi, which is how New Zealanders are commonly referred to as.



Fig. 2 – Map of New Zealand



New Zealand follows a parliamentary government using the British model, wherein legislative power is placed on the Parliament, where officials are elected into office for a three-year term.

The majority of the people living in New Zealand have European origins. They also have a significant minority composed of the people of Māori, and several groups from Asia and the Pacific islands.

New Zealand has 16 regions:

**NORTH**

- Northland
- Auckland
- Waikato
- Bay of Plenty
- Gisborne
- Hawke's Bay
- Taranaki
- Manawatū-Whanganui
- Wellington

**SOUTH**

- Tasma
- Nelson
- Marlborough
- West Coast
- Canterbury
- Otago
- Southland

**OUTLYING ISLANDS**

- Chatham Islands
- Kermadecs
- Subantarctic Islands  
(UNESCO World Heritage Site)





## Climate and Weather

New Zealand's climate is known for its extreme temperatures that vary per latitude. There are days when the country experiences fine weather with clear skies and sudden shifts to heavy rains and unsettling weather conditions.

Summer seasons are notable for having intense sunshine, while winters have wet conditions with short bursts of clear skies. The presence of mountain ranges across Central Otago is primarily responsible for the region's semi-continental climate.

The southern islands also have intricate patterns of temperature difference due to elevation changes. During winter, temperatures can drop up to -10 °C, while the northern areas of New Zealand experience subtropical conditions with abundant sunshine.

The warmest months in New Zealand begin from December and last until February, with temperatures ranging from 20 - 30 °C. The coldest months span from June to August, with temperatures between 10 - 15 °C.

## Culture and Languages

The European and Māori cultures dominate New Zealand, with most immigrant groups assimilating into the European lifestyle. However, traditional customs are still widely celebrated by many people, predominantly the Samoans and Tongans. The country has preserved many aspects of the Māori culture, including the kapa haka, a traditional song and dance performance.

English is the primary language spoken in New Zealand, but the country also recognises Māori as an official language. It is safe to assume that all Māori people speak both English and their language.





# STUDYING IN NEW ZEALAND

More recently, New Zealand gained immense popularity for its high quality of life, stable government, peace and safety, and world-class education. For its efforts, the country ranked 11th in the *U.S. News and World Report Overall Best Countries Ranking* for 2020 and 5th in the *Credit Suisse Global Wealth Report 2020*.

Most students choose New Zealand as their study destination because of its English-speaking environment, international recognition of New Zealand credentials, affordable student rates, better career placement, and the Kiwi experience—living in a scenic country with a unique culture and opportunities for adventure.

Additionally, the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) also maintains that all registered institutions comply with qualification standards that are accredited globally.

The passing of the *Education and Training Act 2020* is a significant move in improving the education system in New Zealand, not only in academics but also in terms of the emotional safety of students and staff.



## Global Academic Excellence

New Zealand is known for its commitment to providing quality education for all. All eight New Zealand universities ranked in the top 500 in the *QS World University Rankings 2021*, with the University of Auckland clinching the highest ranking at the 81st percentile. The country is also among the top 20 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries for its impressive quality of education.

Education has always been a top priority for the New Zealand government, which offers free education for state and public schools and considerable funding for private institutions.

As much as **79% of adults in New Zealand have upper secondary education**. A high percentage of students also **scored 506 in maths, reading literacy, and science**, based on the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), scoring higher than the OECD average of 486.

## Highest Quality of Life

People living in New Zealand report high satisfaction with their quality of life. Based on the *OECD Better Life Index* data as of February 2021, New Zealanders gave their general satisfaction with life 7.3 grade on average, much higher than the average OECD of 6.5, ranking 8th out of 40 countries surveyed

Satisfaction comes from the work-life balance that the government affords its people. About **77% of those living in New Zealand have a paid job**, allowing them to support their family and have a comfortable lifestyle. It also helps that the country has maintained a strong sense of community and utmost importance to civic duties, with 96% of people expressing a belief that they can have someone to rely on in times of need.



## Cultural Diversity

Cultural diversity is also among the strongest suits of New Zealand. In April 2019, the country welcomed an estimated **113,900 migrants**, mostly coming from China (17,300), India (13,200), the Philippines (9,000), and Australia (8,900).

As the country becomes more ethnically diverse, so does the student population. Highly diverse school populations significantly contribute to stimulating students' creativity. Notably, Asian students have increased their share in the school roll, with Auckland having the most ethnically diverse roster of students.

As evidenced by *New Zealand's Pacific Action Plan 2020-2030*, the country is committed to encouraging Pacific diversity. The said initiative focuses on addressing problems arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, dealing with systematic racism and discrimination in educational institutions, and supporting all stakeholders in their goal to become culturally competent.

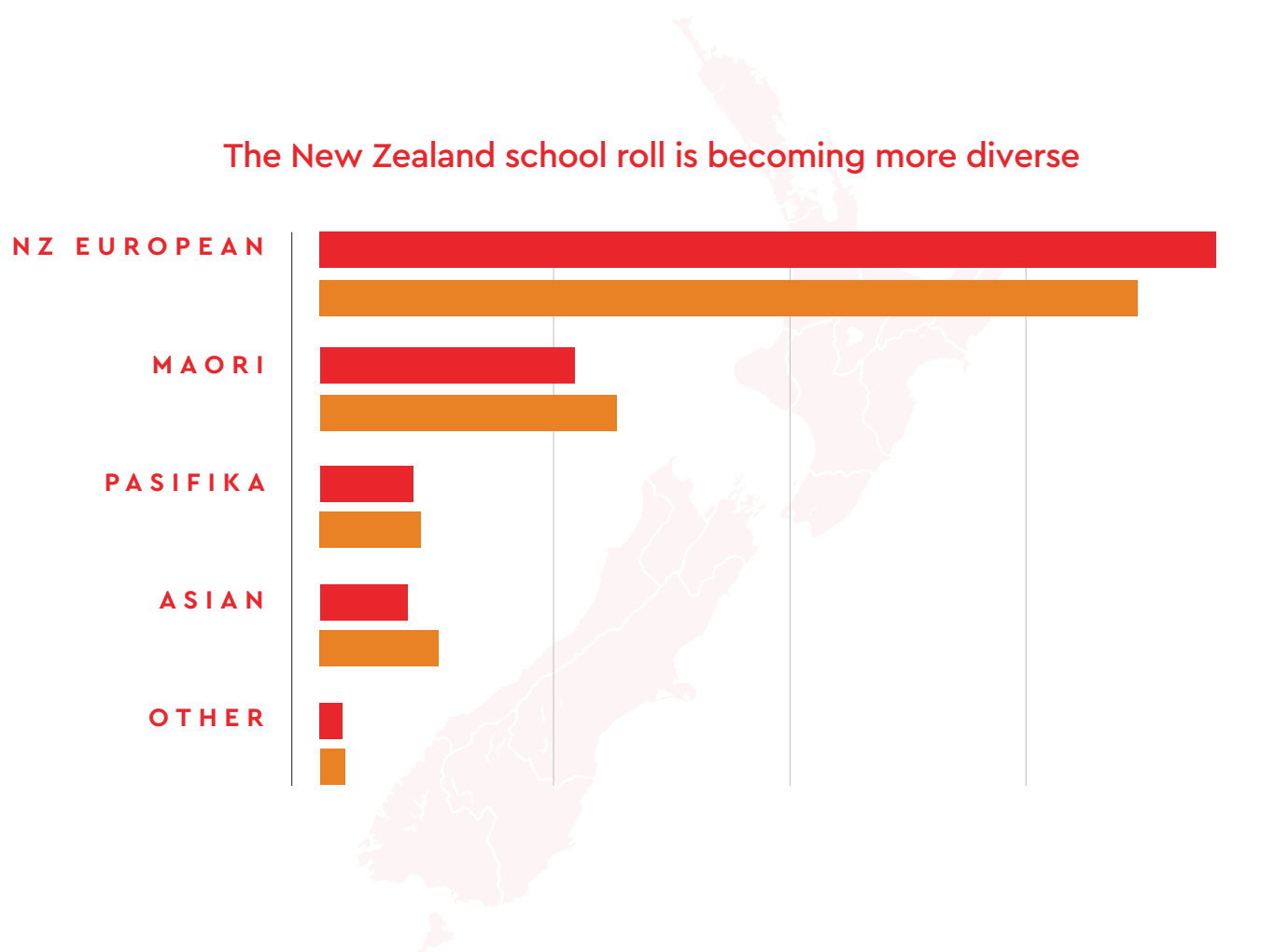


Fig. 2 – Diversity in New Zealand Schools  
Source: Education Review Office

## Safety and Security

Some parents may worry about sending their children to study abroad because of safety issues. In New Zealand's case, it should not be an issue since it is regarded as one of the world's safest. New Zealand places high importance on everyone's safety and security, including international students.

In the Global Peace Index 2020 [report](#), New Zealand ranked as the second safest country globally, next to Iceland.

SEASON	
1	Iceland
2	<b>NEW ZEALAND</b>
3	Portugal
4	Austria
5	Denmark
6	Canada
7	Singapore
8	Czech Republic
9	Japan
10	Switzerland

Fig. 3 – Safest Countries in the World, 2020  
Source: [World Population Review](#)

## Study-Work Opportunities

New Zealand believes that working while studying is an effective way for students to support themselves while in the country. It also helps them develop the skills they need, including communication, timekeeping, teamwork, conversational English, and interpersonal skills. This is also why international students are encouraged to look for jobs. Students taking PhD classes can even work full-time while studying.

However, this should only be considered if the student can work without compromising their academic performance. Take note that some scholarships also place limits on the working hours students can do.

**Learn more** about study-work opportunities in the *Working on Student Visa* Section of this guidebook.



## Immigration Policies

One of the reasons New Zealand continues to attract troves of international students is its global reputation for pro-immigration policies. According to the Center for Global Development, New Zealand is among the countries that offer highly developed immigration policies, allowing people from different nations to assimilate and integrate into the Kiwi lifestyle.

New Zealand has also shown great willingness to accept migrants from developing countries and has participated in many international conventions discussing migration. It is also notable for being the most welcoming toward international students, especially those from developing nations, who want to take up higher education in the country.

### Countries with Best Migration Policies

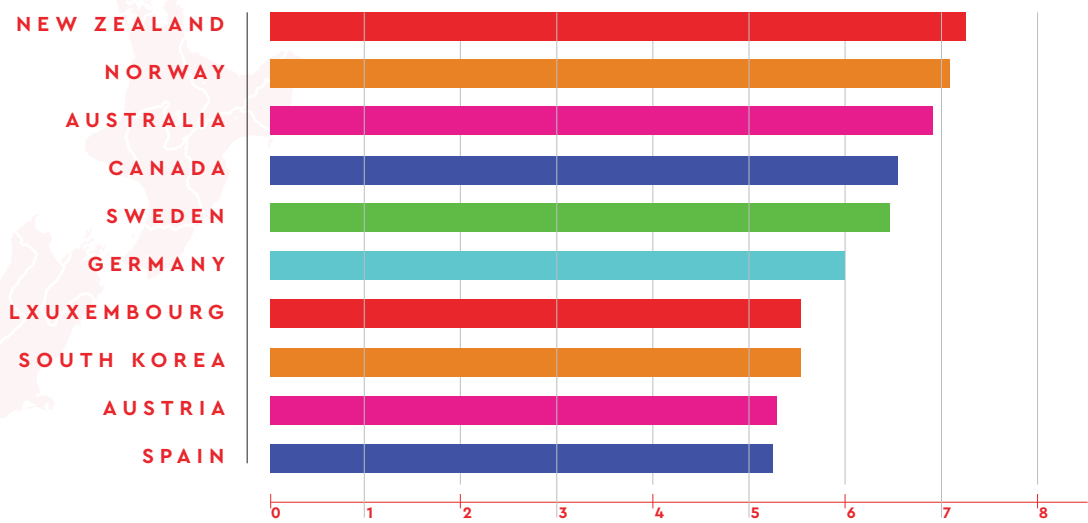


Fig. 4 - Countries with Best Migration Policies  
Source: Center for Global Development



# NEW ZEALAND EDUCATION SYSTEM

New Zealand offers different types of higher education institutions (HEIs), including colleges, universities, polytechnics, and private institutions. The country has a unique education system and a sophisticated approach to education. Students can study in the country at all traditional levels: undergraduate (bachelor's), postgraduate (master's), and doctoral (PhD).

Based on the UK education system, New Zealand's teachings are all research-based, allowing students to learn in an organised and systematic manner, including working independently and as part of a team. Students are encouraged to critically think and interact with teachers. The country also presents tons of opportunities for students to dive into research with its highly experienced faculty, accessible libraries, and well-equipped laboratories.

New Zealand's education system has three levels:

- Early childhood education – from 0 to 5 years old
- Primary and secondary education – from 5 to 19 years old
- Further education – higher and vocational education

It has eight state-funded universities, 16 Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics (ITPs) unified into the New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology (NZIST), and roughly 550 Private Training Establishments (PTEs).

## TYPES OF POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

**Universities** provide students with a higher degree of education. Most of the programmes offered are research-driven and offer academic pathways. Most of the bachelor's degrees included in the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF) are acceptable in the international job market and qualified for postgraduate study.

**ITPs** and some major **PTEs** provide vocational degree education. The studies may involve work placements and internships, increasing knowledge application in the workplace.

Most **PTEs** focus on offering specific vocational programmes at the certificate and diploma levels. They offer courses that match all study levels, including foundation programmes and masters degrees, allowing

A **wānanga** is a state-owned Māori teaching and research institution. New Zealand has three wānanga, which teach students based on the Māori tradition (āhuatanga Māori) and Māori custom (Tikanga Māori). These institutions also offer diplomas, certificates, and degrees, with some teaching specialised areas up to a doctorate degree.

**Table 1 – Types of Post-Secondary Institutions in New Zealand**

## Levels of Higher Education in New Zealand

Despite the number of international student enrollees New Zealand gets, its unique education system can still confuse many. That's why the NZQF has laid down the rules on the different education levels and the qualifications on who can pursue them.

LEVEL		EDUCATION GAINED	
Level 5	First Year of College	Certificate	Diploma
Level 6	Second Year of College	Certificate	Diploma
Level 7	Bachelor's Degree	Graduate Certificate	Graduate Diploma
Level 8	Bachelor's Honours	Postgraduate Certificate	Postgraduate Diploma
Level 9	Masters Degree	—	—
Level 10	Doctoral Degree	—	—

Table 2 – Levels of Education in New Zealand

### Level 7

#### BACHELOR'S DEGREE

The bachelor's degree aims to provide students with specialised knowledge through theoretical and practical teachings needed in their chosen field of study. In New Zealand, the course follows a curriculum that can serve as the basis for potential postgraduate study and a professional career.

In general, a student will finish a bachelor's degree within three years or when they complete a minimum of 360 credits. Note, however, that professional fields like medicine, engineering, and law require students to gain 480 credits, which can lengthen their study period. Additionally, at least 72 credits must be earned at level 7

#### GRADUATE CERTIFICATE

Students may need to obtain a graduate certificate if they intend to study at an advanced undergraduate level. These courses are typically used as an additional credential to qualify for a postgraduate course. A graduate certificate course can be taken by students who wish to further their education and professional knowledge on a new subject or gain in-depth specialisation in their chosen field. Degree graduates are those qualified to enter a graduate certificate course, which requires a minimum of 60 credits with 40 of those from level 7.

**GRADUATE DIPLOMA**

The graduate diploma is a more extensive study than a graduate certificate. It allows students to study at an advanced undergraduate level, serving as a bridging qualification to pursue a postgraduate course. It requires 120 credits, 72 of which are earned at level 7.

**Level 8****BACHELOR HONOURS DEGREE**

In New Zealand, an honours degree can be a degree in itself, but it can also be a postgraduate degree after earning a bachelor's degree. This degree, however, means it was earned with an outstanding achievement. An honours degree year is often reserved for students who showed a solid history of above-average performance when earning their bachelor's degree credits, as relevant to the honours course.

An honours degree can be completed in four years (480 credits) or a one-year postgraduate degree after a bachelor's degree (120 credits).

**POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE/DIPLOMA**

A postgraduate certificate/diploma course is often taken to allow students to gain in-depth knowledge and develop skills in a particular subject, which can be related to their previous degree, graduate certificate, or graduate diploma. Students often get their preparations for independent research in their chosen areas of specialisation in their postgraduate certificate/diploma course.

Students who wish to pursue a postgraduate certificate must first have a bachelor's degree, graduate certificate, or adequate work and professional background. On the other hand, students applying for a postgraduate diploma must first complete a bachelor's degree, a graduate certificate, or a diploma.

**Level 9****MASTER'S DEGREE**

Students need a bachelor's degree, a bachelor honours degree, or a graduate diploma to gain entry into a master's degree programme. Entry requirements typically differ from one university to another. Some institutions may also require students to have relevant work experience. In addition to attending courses, students may also need to participate in research studies.

Students must complete at least 240 credits. However, some institutions may allow students to complete their master's degree with less than 240 credits if they have a bachelor's or honours degree. Again, this depends on the HEI.

An international student may pursue a master's degree if they have an international bachelor's degree considered at par with level 7 of the NZQF.



## Level 10

### DOCTORAL DEGREE

Also considered a PhD, a doctoral degree mostly involves research, in which students are considered independent scholars. When securing a PhD, the students pursue their studies under the guidance of renowned experts in their area of speciality. It requires students to have at least 360 credits. In New Zealand, students can choose from various doctoral degree programmes, including:

#### **Doctorate of Philosophy**

Also known as PhD or DPhil, the qualification for this study is based on the student's final thesis. In some cases, students may need to complete the recommended coursework to help them prepare for their research.

#### **Doctorate in Special Discipline**

Doctor of Music (DMus) and Doctor of Education (EdD) are fields of study that fall under doctoral degrees in specified areas. This doctoral degree usually involves thesis, research, and scholarly works that must be covered within two full-time academic years. Additional coursework must be completed in one academic year.

#### **Higher Doctorates**

Higher doctorate degrees require applicants to complete a minimum of 10 years of experience in independent research. Students should also have extensive publications in scholarly textbooks and reputable international journals.

## New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA)

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (**NZQA**) is the office responsible for ensuring that all non-university tertiary educational institutions in New Zealand meet the qualifications as mandated by the government. The NZQA aims to optimise its academic achievements as a primary contributor to New Zealand's economic, cultural, and social success.



A close-up photograph of a person's hands signing a document. The person is wearing a light blue shirt. The document is white and has some faint text and a logo. The background is blurred, showing other people in a similar setting. In the top left corner, there is a red and white geometric graphic.

# ADMISSIONS

Now that you have an idea of how fulfilling it is to gain international education from New Zealand, it is time to dive deeper into how students can apply for acceptance into one of the country's best universities. Read on to know the requirements necessary to increase student admission. Note that admission requirements may change over time and vary per institution

## Academic Requirements

In general, HEIs in New Zealand would require students to present valid proof of secondary education. Students must have completed Grade 12 or equivalent to be accepted into a higher education programme. They must also submit proof of proper knowledge of the English language. For IELTS, a minimum Overall Band Score of 5.5 is required. For PTE, the minimum score should range from 43 to 50.



### ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FROM NEW ZEALAND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

- Filled-In Application Form
- Graduation Diploma
- Attested Transcript of Records
- Offer Letter from a New Zealand Education Institution
- Two (2) academic reference letters from most recent professors
- Two (2) recommendation letters from most recent employer/manager (if with work experience)
- Statement of Purpose
- CV/Resume
- Photocopy of score reports from IELTS/TOEFL/GMAT
- Proof of Sufficient Fund
- Evidence of Onward Travel
- Travel Insurance
- Medical Certificate
- Police Certificate (for students over 17 years old and if staying for three months and more)
- Valid Passport up to three months after scheduled departure
- Accommodation (for students under 18 years old)

### GPA

Grade point average (GPA) requirements vary per study programme and level. In general, a GPA score equivalent to 65% and above is the minimum academic requirement. For students with a grade below 60%, diploma programmes are available. Take note that these numbers serve as a reference. You may check the student's university of choice for the actual GPA requirement.



## Intake Seasons and Application Deadlines

Most international students can send their applications online. This means visiting each of the HEIs websites to apply. This includes providing the student's basic information, sending scanned copies of documents, and paying the application fee.

Students must also pay close attention to intake seasons. New Zealand has two intake seasons: January and July. However, there may be some universities that may offer several intakes in September and November. Ideally, students must start their admission processes at least six months before the actual application deadline.

Most HEIs would offer three deadlines in a given intake season. The students can then decide on which deadline to aim for. However, language and aptitude tests should be completed at least three months before the deadline. Students can use the remaining three months to fill out the application form and complete all necessary documentary requirements.

Typically, if aiming for a February intake, students should complete their application process, including interviews and visa application process, by October until November. For those taking vocational courses, some programmes open in March, April, May, or July.

## Application Fee

All educational institutions in New Zealand require international students to pay an application fee when applying. The cost varies per college and course.





## Applying for Admission

New Zealand has different learning institutions, and students must choose which of them offer their chosen courses. Once they have chosen a particular university, they should contact the school or visit the website to gather more information, including the fees they have to pay.

Students should send application forms and take the entrance exams. Students should also take the time to start writing their Statement of Purpose (SOP) during this time. An SOP is a student's introduction to the admission officers, detailing why they chose the given institution. They are ideally written in the first-person perspective, which can be formal or casual. Most importantly, it should reflect the student's personality and character.

In some cases, a student may also be required to submit one or two essays. Essay topics would typically range from skills, experiences, aspirations, and expectations. Some universities may also need to appear for video interviews. Once accepted, students can start processing their student visa application.

## Language Exams

Since English is the main language spoken in New Zealand, the government requires its students to pass language exams or show proof of English competency. Some of the standardised language tests acceptable include the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), and Pearson Test of English (PTE). These tests have different formats and results bands. The language exams fees are as follows: US\$190 for IELTS and US\$180 for TOEFL and PTE. The time a student needs to prepare for these exams depends on their current English language proficiency.



A young man with short dark hair, wearing a dark blue t-shirt and a black backpack with brown leather straps, is seen from the side, looking out of a large glass window. The window reflects the outdoors, showing a blue railing and greenery. The image is partially obscured by a red and grey geometric graphic in the top left corner.

# STUDENT PERMITS AND VISA

Accepted students will receive an offer of place letter, which includes all the fees they need to pay. Once paid, they will receive a confirmed offer of place. If the student will only spend less than 12 weeks in New Zealand or has an existing visa-free agreement with the country, a student visa is not necessary.

Students need to secure a student visa if they are:

- not from New Zealand or Australia.
- studying in New Zealand for more than three months

Since the country adopted a liberal visa policy, most students applying for New Zealand visas are accepted. Students can choose to apply for their visa, either in-person or online up to six weeks before departure. Take note that online visas would usually have a 20-day processing period, while in-person applications can take roughly 25 days. Given this, it is a good practice to set aside days as an allowance for issues or processing delays.

**Note:** Application for a student visa should begin once a study is confirmed (but should not be earlier than 60 days before the actual start of the chosen course).

## Student Visa Options

There are different types of visas a student can avail of in New Zealand:

### **FEE PAYING STUDENT VISA**

This student visa allows students to study full-time at a New Zealand-accredited institution for four years.

### **EXCHANGE STUDENT VISA**

For students under an exchange programme, they should apply for an exchange student visa. This visa allows them to study for the whole duration of the exchange programme, which can last up to four years.

### **FOREIGN GOVERNMENT-SUPPORTED STUDENT VISA**

For students under a foreign government-funded or loan, the visa they should apply for is the foreign government-supported student visa, which allows students to study in New Zealand from three months to four years.

### **NEW ZEALAND AID STUDENT VISA**

For students financially supported by the New Zealand government, they should apply for this visa, which will allow them to study in New Zealand for up to four years.

### **PATHWAY STUDENT VISA**

New Zealand has offered the Pathway Student Visa to benefit international students who wish to study in the country. The pilot offering, introduced in 2015, allows students to take up to three consecutive programmes under only one student visa for up to five years, long enough for students to complete their education in New Zealand.

Under the Pathway Student Visa, students must meet all the prerequisites for their second and third courses included in their study pathway. Most importantly, students must provide a letter of support issued by a Pathway education provider (joint letter if study pathways come from more than one provider). The letter must include the student's courses, with each course's start and end dates.

Students must provide proof of identity, good health, character, and must have a genuine intention of fulfilling the given requirement. In addition to academic opportunities, students can also take on a part-time work of up to 20 hours while studying, and full-time when on a holiday break.

For more information about visas, please visit the [New Zealand Immigration website](#)





# FINANCIAL COSTS AND ESTIMATES

## Tuition Fees

New Zealand HEIs are given the liberty to set their own tuition fees so students may need to pay different tuition rates per institution, level of education and length of studies. Public universities in New Zealand may charge international students the following rates:

- **\$6,800 to \$10,220** per year for Bachelor's Degrees
- **\$12,200 to 17,600** per year for Master's Degrees
- **\$6,200 to \$8,500** per year for PhD degrees.

The fees are higher in specialised courses, such as law, engineering, medicine, and veterinary science. Private universities are much more expensive than public ones. International students may need to prepare tuition fees ranging from \$33,000 to \$42,000 per academic year.

Top-ranking universities also have competitive rates. For example, students enrolled in the University of Auckland may have to pay between \$10,200 to \$37,000 per year. Note that tuition fees may vary from one year to another. Always check the official university website for updated rates.

### Note:

*Fees are in New Zealand dollars*

## Financial Assistance and Scholarships

New Zealand also offers a myriad of scholarships for international students at all levels, including those aiming for a doctorate degree. The scholarships can either be offered by the government or the institutions themselves.

To apply for a government scholarship, a student must meet the eligibility requirements by filling out the online questionnaire. The questionnaire will ask citizenship, length of stay in the home country, work experience, and scholarships offered in the student's home country.

For those applying for a New Zealand Commonwealth Scholarship, answering the online eligibility questionnaire is unnecessary as this will be included in the application form.

If students don't qualify for a government scholarship, they may check out the list of scholarships offered by private institutions [here](#).



## Living Expenses and Accommodations

Living costs vary depending on the region students choose to live in when studying in New Zealand. In general, bigger and more urbanised cities may require a more considerable budget compared to living in smaller towns. Having at least \$15,000 to \$27,000 per academic year should be enough.

Take note that students need to have at least \$15,000 to support themselves during the first year. If studies require more than a year of stay, a budget of at least \$1,250 for each month of study is necessary.

To get an idea of how much a New Zealand student needs, here is an illustration of the usual costs:



PARTICULARS	COST (in NZ dollars)
<i>Milk (one-litre)</i>	\$1.77 – \$3.56
<i>Loaf of bread</i>	\$2.35 – \$3.00
<i>Dozen of eggs</i>	\$3.00 – \$8.40
<i>Local cheese</i>	\$8.76 – \$4.50
<i>Soda can</i>	\$2.50 – \$4.50
<i>Coffee</i>	\$4 – \$6
<i>Restaurant meal</i>	\$12 – \$30
<i>Bus ride (one-way)</i>	\$2.4 – \$5
<i>Monthly bus pass</i>	\$112 – \$215
<i>Movie ticket</i>	\$13 – \$20
<i>Monthly fitness club fee</i>	\$25 – \$100
<i>One-bedroom apartment in the city centre</i>	\$1,200 – \$2,250

**Table 4 – Cost of Living in New Zealand**

Source: [Numbeo](#), February 2021

## Health and Travel Insurance

Students are also required to maintain medical and travel insurance as part of the visa condition, regardless of the length of their stay in the country. Student visa holders are not covered by publicly funded health services, except for students from Australia, the UK, and PhD students (Note: These students are eligible for immediately necessary treatments only).

Based on the country's "Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students," international students must have existing health and travel insurance during the entire length of study. Universities are also mandated to ensure that all international students will have appropriate insurance policies. In some cases, universities may provide insurance to students, which may be included in their first-semester tuition fee.

# COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS



The New Zealand borders are currently closed because of the imminent dangers brought about by COVID-19. While the government looks forward to welcoming international students, it can only do so when the situation permits. For now, New Zealand only accepts 250 international PhD and postgraduate students, provided they are eligible based on the following criteria:

- they hold or were granted student visas in 2020 but were unable to enter New Zealand
- enrolled in a PhD or postgraduate qualifications before the March 19, 2020 border closure
- scope of study includes achieving qualifications with practical components that cannot be done offshore

Education providers should identify and nominate students. If the 250 allowance is not filled up, the government will accept level 9 master's students following the same set of criteria. Students intending to be considered should connect with their education providers.

Furthermore, partners and dependents of eligible students may also be granted access in accordance with visa requirements.





# WORKING IN NEW ZEALAND UNDER A STUDENT VISA

## Part-Time Work

While studying in New Zealand, students may look for a part-time job to help with their everyday expenses. Having a part-time job will also give the students an opportunity to meet new people and be familiar with the country, but they should check and verify their student visas to know if they are allowed to work, when they can work, and how many hours they can work in a week.

## Eligibility to Work Under a Student Visa

New Zealand allows full-time students to have a part-time job. These students can work for 20 hours a week if:

- The course they are taking will take two years to complete
- The course they are taking qualifies them to apply for a Skilled Migrant Category Resident Visa

In some cases, students may be required to complete a work experience as part of their academic requirements. In such a case, students may do so on top of the 20-hour workweek.

Full-time work is only applicable during scheduled breaks and holiday seasons.

A course is considered full-time if it:

- Lasts for at least one full academic year and awards students with 120 credits or more
- Lasts for two semesters spanning eight months

Part-time jobs apply to both secondary school and tertiary students. For research master's and PhD students, they can have a part-time job and work for 40 hours a week in one academic year.

Students working under a student visa can be paid at least a minimum wage of \$18.90 per hour, including annual and public holidays, and even rest days. Like any earning individual, students will also need to pay taxes based on their earnings. To date, the tax rate is at 10.5% for those earning less than \$14,000 annually. Securing an Inland Revenue Department (IRD) number from the tax department, Inland Revenue, is a prerequisite before starting work.





## Finding Work in New Zealand

Education providers may assist students in looking for jobs. Students can also find work opportunities through the Student Job Search, New Zealand's national organisation that helps students find part-time job opportunities in the country.

## Postgraduate Work

New Zealand will let students stay and work for up to three years once they obtain their post-study work visa with a bachelor's degree or higher. They will be given this privilege if they have a bachelor's degree, postgraduate certificate or diploma, honours degree, master's degree, or PhD. In addition, students can also have their partner apply for a work visa, and their dependent children can also study in New Zealand for free as domestic students.

Based on the NZQA, qualifications at level 7 or higher are eligible if the course lasts for 30 weeks or more. For those with qualifications of levels 4, 5, or 6, the course must be completed after 60 weeks or more if the students were able to gain two qualifications with a 30-week study and the last qualification level was higher than the first.

Extending a post-study work visa may only be allowed if the student studied for more than 30 weeks, possesses a bachelor or postgraduate degree, and has a higher level than the qualification used to get the first visa.

## Permanent Residency (PR) in New Zealand

After studying in New Zealand, students may want to pursue a professional career based on their field of expertise in the country. Applying for a permanent residence visa is the next step as it allows students to stay in the country indefinitely and avail of the various publicly-funded services at subsidised rates.

## The PR Points System

Students can directly apply for a permanent residency. The government has laid down a PR points system to judge eligibility. Currently, New Zealand accepts applicants with 100 to 135 points.

### EMPLOYABILITY

Skilled employees for more than a year can get 60 points while those looking for a job or have worked for less than a year can get 50 points.

### WORK EXPERIENCE

Points can range from 10 points for those with two years of work experience to 30 points for 10 years or more of work experience—additional points are awarded if their work experience has benefits and work appraisals.

### QUALIFICATIONS

Bachelor's degree and major diploma qualifications get 50 points while master's and doctorate degrees get 55 points.

### FAMILY TIES

Those with close family members in New Zealand get 10 points.

### AGE

Maximum of 30 points for 20–29 years and up to a minimum of 5 points for 50–55 years of age



# ARRIVAL IN NEW ZEALAND



Once a student visa is approved, students must plan for their trip accordingly. This includes comparing flight prices, booking tickets, and planning where to live in New Zealand. They may also need to secure travel insurance and an international driving permit.

Before packing bags, checking what the New Zealand government allows is mandatory. Bringing in restricted and prohibited goods must be declared on the Passenger Arrival Card and upon arrival at the airport. This includes

- All food items, including all ingredients used
- Live plants and plant products
- Live animals
- Animal products (i.e., shells, hides, and feathers)
- Water products (i.e., fish, diving, and fishing equipment)
- All used equipment

Should airport officials find any item at risk in the baggage, it may have to be confiscated or sent for treatment. Declaring everything is the safest option. After filling out the Passenger Arrival Card, students should hand it over to the airport's Passport Control desk. This is also where Immigration officers will check the passport and visa.

*Note: Passports must be valid at least three months after the intended departure date. Depending on the home country, students may need to present a valid visa.*

Upon arrival in New Zealand, students may find it necessary to have documents easily accessible. They may be asked to provide:

- Birth certificate
- Marriage certificate
- Academic qualifications
- Resume/CV
- Work references
- Credit references

Having the documents photocopied is ideal. Students must also have copies in the original language or in certified English translations.

### Common Immigration Questions

Immigration officers will ask a series of questions. It is not always done, but it is best for students to come prepared. Some of the most common questions include:

- *What is your name?*
- *What is your country of origin?*
- *Do you have anything to declare?*
- *What is the purpose of your trip to New Zealand?*
- *Do you have a return ticket?*
- *Do you have sufficient funds to purchase a return ticket?*
- *Do you have funds required for your visa?*
- *Do you have relatives or friends in New Zealand?*
- *Where are you staying in the country?*
- *Is it your first time to visit New Zealand?*
- *Do you have any food with you?*
- *How much cash do you have today?*

#### BORDER CASH REPORT

For individuals with more than **NZ\$10,000** cash or its foreign equivalent, they will be advised to go through a Border Cash Report.

When all is done, students will get the Immigration NZ stamp on the passport, and the Passenger Arrival Card will be given back.

## List of Airports in New Zealand

New Zealand has 62 airports, with Auckland Airport being the largest international airport. Other major airports in the country are located in Christchurch, Wellington, Dunedin, and Queenstown. The following airports are considered the busiest in New Zealand:

- **AUCKLAND AIRPORT** (AKL)
- **CHRISTCHURCH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT** (CHC)
- **WELLINGTON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT** (WLG)
- **QUEENSTOWN AIRPORT** (ZQN)
- **DUNEDIN AIRPORT** (DUD)
- **NELSON AIRPORT** (NSN)
- **HAWKES BAY AIRPORT** (NPE)
- **PALMERSTON NORTH AIRPORT** (PMR)
- **TAURANGA AIRPORT** (TRG)
- **NEW PLYMOUTH AIRPORT** (NPL)





## Airport Transportation Modes

Upon arrival at any of these New Zealand airports, students are responsible for arranging their transportation from the airport to their accommodation. There are several options students can choose from. This includes:

### AIRPORT SHUTTLES

Airport shuttles are an affordable option compared to hailing a taxi, mainly for students travelling on their own and if their stop is within the central business district area. However, travel times are longer because the shuttle would make a number of stops during the trip.

### TAXI

Students can hail a local taxi to bring them to their destination once they arrive in New Zealand. They are often the best option if they have luggage they need to haul. Taxis are pretty common within the airport vicinity.

### UBER AND THUMBSUP

New Zealand also has ridesharing apps. The most popular is Uber. However, students may also avail of ThumbsUp, a free ridesharing service offered exclusively in New Zealand.

### PRIVATE OR RENTAL CAR

Students may also opt to avail of a private car rental. They are highly advised to connect through private rental companies to book rides ahead.



A close-up, low-angle shot of the New Zealand flag waving against a bright, slightly hazy sky. The flag's Union Jack canton and the four red stars on the blue field are prominent. In the top left corner, there is a graphic element consisting of several overlapping, semi-transparent red and white diagonal stripes.

# LIVING IN NEW ZEALAND

## Accommodations

When it comes to living expenses, students need to choose where they intend to live. They can live in a **university-managed accommodation** where they can choose whether to avail of a catered or self-catered option. Catered accommodation means that meals will be prepared for students at a given cost.

Going for a **private landlord** is another option, mainly for universities that cannot offer a residential facility. In this case, students may need to shoulder other living expenses, such as utilities, food, and transportation. Students may need to shoulder other costs, including dining out, car rental and insurance, cable TV connectivity, and travel. Renting private accommodations may be much more expensive, ranging from \$150 to \$2,000. That's why some students opt to share a two or three-bedroom flat with other students.

Another popular option for international students is **homestays**. It is much more affordable than renting a flat. Plus, it allows students to discover the local culture and tradition as they can meet different people in the area.





## Moving Around in New Zealand

Students are encouraged to discover the different modes of transportation to help them navigate to and from their educational institutions. Fares would vary from region to region. Here are some of them:

### AIR

Students can fly between all New Zealand cities and to the majority of the towns in the area using domestic air services. Jetstar and Air New Zealand are the two main providers with services, including charter companies, regional airlines, and scenic flights.

### RAIL

New Zealand's railway system may not be as vast, but the country also offers unforgettable train trips that pass through astounding national parks and across volcanic landscapes. Trains in Auckland service southern, central, and western suburbs and have fares starting from NZ\$2.50 per stage.

### BUS

Students can also take bus rides to bring them to and from their universities. It is one of the cheapest options that they can avail. Buses run frequently and can connect students to all parts of the city. Fares start at NZ\$1.

### FERRIES AND WATER TAXIS

Ferries and water taxis are also available for those who want to explore nearby islands. For example, Queenstown water taxis connect the town with the Frankton arm of the lake. A one-way trip costs NZ\$10.



### CARS, TAXIS, AND RIDESHARING SERVICES

Students with an international licence can drive around New Zealand for up to 12 months if the International Driving Permit (IDP) is in English or has been translated into English. Drivers should also bring the current driver's licence the permit is based on.

### WALKING AND CYCLING

New Zealand has many beautiful areas that are best explored via walking and cycling. For one, Christchurch is a flat city, a perfect place to enjoy cycling, primarily since they have dedicated bicycle lanes throughout the central business district.

Public transportation in New Zealand is the best way to explore. Students are encouraged to avail of prepaid transportation cards to get cheaper rates.

## Banking and Money Matters

The currency widely used in New Zealand is the New Zealand Dollar (NZD or NZ\$). Currently, the country has five coins and five banknotes in circulation.

Coin denominations are available in:

- 10c
- 20c
- 50c
- NZ\$1
- NZ\$2

Banknotes are available in:

- NZ\$5
- NZ\$10
- NZ\$20
- NZ\$50
- NZ\$100

## Opening a Bank Account

International students can open a bank account during their stay in the country. All they need to do is set up an appointment with a local branch. Requirements may vary from bank to bank but the usual documents asked include passport, proof of enrollment like an acceptance letter, and evidence of permanent address in New Zealand like a utility bill or tenancy agreement.

Some banks like Kiwibank, ANZ, ASB, and BNZ allow account opening even before arriving in the country. Students would simply fill out the form and submit it online. Within a few business days, account details will be sent to the registered email and they can be allowed to deposit money. Upon arrival in New Zealand, they just have to visit the local branch to activate the account.

ANZ offers an *International Student Package*, in which students can maintain a current account with no monthly maintenance account or transaction fees. If the account is linked to an existing account, the bank also waives card fees on its annual ANZ Visa Debit.

**Internet and online banking** are also widely practised in New Zealand, particularly for paying bills and other transactions.

## Credit Cards and Automated Banking Machines

The most commonly used notes in New Zealand are the NZ\$20 and NZ\$50. They are also dispensed most frequently when withdrawing in ATMs around the country. Most kiwis will pay by card. As such, most credit and debit cards are accepted in most establishments.



## Communications

### INTERNET AND CELLPHONES

Maintaining a line of communication with family back home is essential for international students. That's why getting a cellphone or a local SIM card as soon as they arrive in New Zealand should be a top priority. Students planning to bring their own phone should ensure that it is unlocked. There are several network providers in New Zealand that offer different plans. While mobile data is available in most places, 3G data can be quite expensive. Some remote areas only have 2G signals. However, 4G networks are currently being rolled out in major city centres.

New Zealand has four leading mobile phone network providers:

- Spark
- Vodafone
- Skinny
- 2degrees

Most accommodations in New Zealand come equipped with Wi-Fi. Free Wi-Fi is also widely available in most cafes, city centres, and public libraries.

## Dining and Food Options

New Zealand's cuisine echoes the strong influence it got from Polynesia, Europe, and Asia. Most of the dining options students can find in the country draws inspiration from a fusion of flavours. Most of the dishes include pork, lamb, cervena (venison), salmon, oysters, crayfish (lobster), and paua (abalone).

The country has a wide variety of restaurants, from fast-food chains to casual and fine dining. Students can also find food offerings that well within their budget. The country also has bars and restaurants where they can lounge and enjoy after classes.

## Leisure and Sports

Walking is one of the favourite pastimes of New Zealanders. During the winter season, many locals will engage in skiing and snowboarding. Others will also find it worthwhile to hunt goats, pigs, and deer. During summer, locals head to the beach to swim, snorkel, surf, dive and windsurf. There are also some who will go fishing. That said, it is most notable that most locals prefer engaging in informal recreation more than organised sports.

However, a huge percentage of New Zealanders are also avid fans of sports, and one of the most popular sports they play is golf. In fact, the country has more golf courses per head compared to other countries. Rugby union is one sport that will have New Zealanders gather round to watch. Cricket is also well-followed during summer.



## Personal Safety

Being the second safest country globally, most students should have nothing to worry about when they are in New Zealand. Of course, it pays to practice safety precautions still. Here is what students should know regarding their personal safety:

- New Zealand's emergency number for ambulance, fire, and police is 111. To contact the police for non-emergency cases, call 105.
- All emergency calls are free of charge.
- Most towns, cities, and rural areas have their own [police stations](#).
- Never hitchhike or accept rides from strangers.
- Avoid travelling alone. If going on a trip alone, text your location and movements to 7233 [SAFE], which police can access on request to help find someone.
- Always lock your doors and windows of your accommodations and vehicles.
- Keep records and serial numbers of all valuables. Use the [SNAP website](#).

## Drinking Alcohol in New Zealand

- The legal age for purchasing alcoholic beverages is 18. Establishments may ask for proof of age. Acceptable identifications are a passport, Hospitality Association of NZ 18+ card, and New Zealand driver's licence.
- Faking proof of age has a fine of \$250.
- Some areas in New Zealand have liquor bans, including central business district areas and near sports stadiums. Violators can be fined \$250 or arrested.



## NEED TO KNOW: PROMOTING NEW ZEALAND

As an **MSM Unify** agent, you are responsible for assisting students in making informed and wise decisions on their global study pursuits. A recruitment agent's task is simple: to guide students on their path to academic excellence and make their study dreams a reality, one application at a time.

**MSM Unify** agents should:

- Be knowledgeable of the programs, features, policies, and benefits of the institution they represent
- Be honest and sincere with their student clients
- Be able to present students the proper programs that match their objectives and qualifications
- Be able to extend assistance and service to students without bias or prejudice

New Zealand acknowledges that education agents are vital in promoting, attracting, and improving international students' academic experience. However, the promotion of New Zealand, particularly giving immigration advice, should comply with the regulations stipulated in the [Immigration Advisers Licensing Act 2007](#)

## NEED TO KNOW: PROMOTING NEW ZEALAND EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

- Ensure that all information provided is current, accurate, and comprehensive
  - Consider students' information as confidential
  - Find ways to make services more helpful to prospective students by providing additional assistance (e.g., *translating information to students who are having a hard time understanding*)
- 
- Provide false information or biased opinions when comparing institutions
  - Make overly idealized statements with regard to facilities and benefits of institutions, as well as employment opportunities after studies
  - Convince prospective students to choose programs or institutions that are not in line with their educational goals and interests for personal gain
  - Require payment for immigration services to students unless legally authorised to do so
  - Forward students' confidential information to third parties without approval of the students or recruitment partners

## **MAKING EDUCATION ACCESSIBLE TO ALL**

The challenge in studying overseas lies in the pre-departure process as the student undertakes a series of choices, from deciding which institution to study in to which program will benefit their study goals the most.

With thousands of education providers across the globe, it can be challenging for students to determine the right study options that match their goals. This is where recruitment agents come in. They are the people who will bring light and wisdom into the students' decision-making to ensure that the students are on the right track, that they are getting the right study options, and that they are being provided with the best of opportunities.

**MSM Unify** is committed to providing education agents and partners a way to better serve and assist the students of today toward fulfilling their study goals. Through its AI-power platform that streamlines the entire student recruitment process, MSM Unify enhances the agent experience with all the tools and resources they need to give their students the best application experience possible.

Backed by an extensive network of international education providers in 20 countries, as well as market intelligence and management experience, MSM Unify agents will have the ability to lead their students towards a brighter future. They can work directly with institutions, receive direct commissions, and streamline applications on a self-service dashboard. By automating the process and giving agents access to over 1,000 program choices from leading institutions around the world, we are helping pave the way for students to make their study dreams a reality, one application at a time.



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