

NZQA

New Zealand Qualifications Authority

Mana Tohu Matauranga O Aotearoa

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Tertiary education

The New Zealand tertiary sector covers private training establishments (PTEs), institutes of technology and polytechnics (ITPs), wananga, universities and workplace training.

These all deliver a variety of educational options, often in flexible ways to meet the needs of adult learners. NZQA acts as a quality assurance body and approves all qualifications for the above institutions, apart from universities.

Tertiary education providers offer courses which range from transition (school to work) programmes, through to postgraduate study and research. There are no fixed divisions between the types of courses offered by each sort of provider. The focus is on their ability to offer education to the required quality standards, rather than based on their type.

- Higher, degree-level education is mainly offered at universities. Programmes are research-led and generally academic, as distinct from vocational.
- Vocational degree level education is offered at ITPs, wānanga and a few larger PTEs. Such degrees tend to be specific and applied.
- PTEs' programmes are mostly in specific vocational niches at certificate and diploma level.

For more information see [Choosing a tertiary course](#) and [Choosing an educational provider](#).

In New Zealand we recognise that you may already have skills and knowledge from previous study or through your experience in the workplace, self-study or through life itself. For some qualifications this is able to be recognised, see [Prior learning and credit transfer](#) for more information.

Information on funding and student loans

The [Tertiary Education Commission](#) is responsible for funding the Government's contribution to tertiary education and training.

If you are interested in applying for student loans or allowances, find out your eligibility on the [Studylink](#) website.

Tertiary students

As a student in New Zealand you have certain rights:

- NZQA requires all registered PTEs to have policies and procedures for student withdrawals and refunds. You should have received this information from your PTE before you enrolled. See [Withdrawals and refunds](#) for more information.
- Registered PTEs must have adequate protection of student fees in the event of their insolvency, de-registration by NZQA and/or partial or complete loss of accreditation. See [PTE course closure](#) for more information.
- If you have any issues with your provider you can make an official complaint to NZQA, see [Make a complaint about a provider](#).

Awarding of NCEA after leaving secondary school

Many students are completing NCEA - often at Level 2 - in attempting new qualifications while undertaking tertiary study. For more information see [Awarding of NCEA Level 2 after leaving school](#).

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