

New Zealand

— its own state of coolness

Kiwis! If it's so great in New Zealand, why are there so many of them here? Well, don't ever let them know, but some things about their country are actually quite good. In fact, really good. In fact, amazing. *Smart Start* reports on study and life in NZ.

The variety of the place is extraordinary. Show a Kiwi a photo of a paddock or beach and they'll probably be able to pinpoint to a few miles where it is. NZ is made up from volcanic, mountainous islands, and that means there's lots of climates and differences and geography and geology and rivers and lakes and different stuff happening.

You can waltz over to New Zealand and get educated and get a job, and the rules are pretty much the same for you as it is for them.

Probably best to just move there first (grab your passport and jump on a plane – Aussies and permanent residents of Australia may visit, live and work in New Zealand indefinitely with no visa). After you're there, sign up for training. Of course, you can sort out the education options first too.

Paying for your study

Student Loans are administered by the NZ government and they are a bit like HECS. To get a Student Loan you will need to be a tertiary student taking an approved course, and a NZ or Australian citizen, permanent resident or refugee.

The amount you are able to borrow is related to the length of your course and the type of institution you attend.

Three components to a loan

1. Compulsory student fees. The money you borrow to pay your compulsory student fees will probably form most of your loan and is paid directly to your tertiary provider.
2. Course-related costs. You can borrow up to \$1000 a year for things like stationery, textbooks, childcare, travel and computer stuff. You'll need proof of spending.
3. Some living costs. There is a living cost entitlement for full-time students on programs recognised by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC). You can borrow up to \$150 for each week of study.

Paying back the money

You don't have to start paying back your student loan until you earn a reasonable amount – somewhere around \$18,000 a year. The minimum amount you're required to pay back is 10 per cent of what you earn.

Where to study?

You can study anywhere from the sub-Antarctic south with low rent and no fees and lovely oysters and albatrosses and trout, to the sub-tropical north with golden beaches and marlin and lazy days, and everywhere in between.

Polytechnics/institutes of technology (ITPs)

- Where: Pretty much everywhere – 20 in the country plus sub campuses.
- Learning style: These are NZ's answer to TAFEs, but they are still different. Many offer degrees although study is still practical, applied and job-specific. Some independent study, but less than universities. Work experience often included.

Distance education

- Where: While there are two main distance providers in the country, other institutions are bringing in distance learning options.
- Learning Style: Self motivation and discipline are important. Work at your own pace in your own space. Open to everyone, including people with disabilities, workers and people who just don't like classrooms. See page 82 for info about distance education generally.

Wananga

- Where: There are three wananga in New Zealand.
- Learning style: Practical and applied studies with a Maori approach. Wananga offer warm, inclusive and empowering choice for students. You do not have to be a Maori to attend a wananga – people of all background study and teach.

Universities

- Where: There are eight universities.
- Learning style: Independent and self-motivation required. No one's going to be checking on your homework or telling you off for not getting things in on time.

Private colleges

- Where: There are around 800 non-government providers all over the country.
- Learning style: Small, supportive, hands-on approach. Often very practical. Many run youth training programmes.

Economy

NZ has a modern market economy with a fairly high standard of living. However, some unique factors about the economy are:

- tourism is now the main earner
- private owners make many economic decisions, but they work within laws made by the government
- there is a large service sector (people working in transport, or serving food in restaurants); more people do this work than factory or farm work
- New Zealand is a long way from the world's markets
- it is relatively small
- there are few high-earning industries such as making cars or aircraft.

Yes, but why NZ?

Why not?

TOURISM

Innovative and adventure tourism makes NZ a world leader.

AGRICULTURE

Wine, niche crops, and, of course, sheep, are NZ standards. NZ is also the world's greatest exporter of dairy products and this industry is currently booming big-time.

SOCIAL POLICY AND BICULTURALISM

NZ has a history of innovative social policy and unique and proactive race relations.

FUN

Adventure sports, skiing, fishing, mountain-biking, trout fishing, diving, night-life, surfing, hiking, volcano-watching. And, importantly, IT'S DIFFERENT.



The wonderful Maori element

What's with the haka?

Well, firstly, don't make fun of it. Why?

Well, some history – there's not just 'a haka'. There are thousands of different haka. The famous All Blacks haka, 'Ka mate', was written by a chief of the Ngati Toa tribe, Te Rauparaha, back in the 19th century. The haka tells about a time that Te Rauparaha was being sheltered from his enemies.

Each tribe (iwi) has a number of haka, and each hapu (sub-tribe) might also have different ones. Different haka might be performed at festivals, weddings, tangi (funeral), celebrations, competitions. Many schools have their own haka. The All Blacks have another haka too, Kapa o Pango.

Haka are both important expressions of Maoriness and important expressions of New Zealand's bicultural identity.

Why "lots of haka" and not "lots of hakas"

There is no 's' in the Maori language, so most media don't add the English plural to Maori words.

Confusing? Not at all – very easy to tell by the context.

Speaking of Maori

Te Reo Maori is closely related to Tahitian as well as Rarotongan. There are 13 base characters in the Maori language, although it is treated like a 20-letter alphabet (A Ā E Ē H I Ī K M N O Ō P R T U Ū W NG) – the long thing over the vowels simply makes the sound longer. Here's a rough guide.

Vowels

- 'A' – are as in "are"
- 'E' – e in "egg"
- 'I' – ee as in "see"
- 'O' – or "in this or that"
- 'U' – oo in "moon"

Consonants

Just like in English, although 'wh' is pronounced as an 'f' (ef) and 'ng' is pronounced as the ng in sing.

