

# Arrival Guide for International Students



## Contents

- 1 Kia ora – welcome to the University of Canterbury
- 2 Christchurch – your new home
- 4 Before you arrive in New Zealand
- 9 Pre-arrival checklist
- 10 You've arrived at UC – what next?
- 11 Frequently asked questions



# Kia ora – welcome to the University of Canterbury

The University of Canterbury is passionate about education, proud of its heritage and offers programmes relevant in the 21st century.

At UC, you will experience a combination of academic excellence and a campus life that is vibrant and inspiring. By the end of your studies you will be well-equipped to play your part in the advancement of the communities you choose to be a part of.

UC hosts students from many countries and encourages them to enjoy not only their time at the University, but also the many cultural, social and recreational opportunities offered by the safe and friendly modern city of Christchurch.

This booklet provides information you need to know before you come to New Zealand, a pre-arrival checklist, and suggestions to ensure that you are well prepared for an enjoyable and rewarding stay at UC.



*University of Canterbury campus*

# Christchurch – your new home

Christchurch is an ethnically diverse city which offers an exciting and easy lifestyle for students. With a population of around 400,000, Christchurch is the largest city in the South Island and one of New Zealand's three main centres.

Located on the coastal edge of the Canterbury Plains the city is close to both the mountains and the sea, offering a huge range of recreational options.

The most affordable major New Zealand city to live in, Christchurch is also the easiest to get around. The city is mostly flat and has

wide streets and many cycle lanes. There is an excellent public transport system and relatively uncongested roads. An international airport providing direct flights to other New Zealand and international centres is ten minutes drive from the University.

Christchurch has a temperate climate, with low rainfall, lots of sunshine and the full range of spectacular seasons. From hot summers when nor'westers whip across the plains, to crisp winter days with clear blue skies (and great skiing), to awesome autumnal displays and springtime blossoms, Christchurch is a city of colour and constant change.

Also known as the Garden City, Christchurch is a cosmopolitan centre with an English flavour and is the shopping centre of the South. Its





internationally influenced cafés, bars, restaurants and clubs offer something for everyone and stay open until late – including the famous ‘Strip’ on Oxford Terrace and SOL Square.

Christchurch has a vibrant arts and entertainment scene with a festival or major event nearly every week of the year, including the Christchurch Arts Festival, the International Buskers’ Festival and Cup Week. It offers movie theatres galore, from arthouse cinemas to multiplexes, and a professional theatre company (the Court Theatre).

There is live music to suit all tastes just about every night of the week. Christchurch is regularly visited by top international performers and boasts its own symphony orchestra.

The stunning Christchurch Art Gallery and Canterbury Museum hold nationally significant collections and host major touring exhibitions.

For the sports-minded, Christchurch is hard to beat, with first-class sporting facilities, whether you are a player or a spectator. The city regularly

hosts international sporting events such as one-day cricket internationals, and rugby and netball tests, and is home to the legendary Canterbury Crusaders rugby team.

The Port Hills offer a range of recreational activities and the city is within easy reach of the spectacular scenery of the South Island for climbing, tramping, mountain biking, skiing and snowboarding. Ten ski fields are within two hours drive.

From the city it is only a short drive to the rugged beauty of Banks Peninsula, the historic French town of Akaroa, the thermal resort town of Hanmer Springs, the mountains and bush of Arthurs Pass National Park, and the seaside settlement of Kaikoura for whale watching.

The best thing about being a student at UC is that you can choose the lifestyle you want.

For more information about living in Christchurch go to [www.christchurch.org.nz/living](http://www.christchurch.org.nz/living)

# Before you arrive in New Zealand

The following is a step-by-step guide to all the things you need to do before you arrive in New Zealand.

## Step 1: Apply for admission

You need to apply for admission before you can enrol at the University of Canterbury. For more information about applying for admission go to [www.canterbury.ac.nz/intstud/admiss](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/intstud/admiss)

## Step 2: Receive an Offer of Place letter

Once your application for admission has been assessed and approved you will be sent an Offer of Place pack.

Inside will be an Offer of Place letter containing important information about applying for a student visa, enrolment, medical and travel insurance, and accommodation. It also contains an invoice with an estimate of your tuition fees.

It is important that you read and understand all the conditions specified in your Offer of Place letter, and respond to the information by the dates listed.

## Step 3: Accept your offer

You must confirm your acceptance of the Offer of Place by completing the response form and posting it to Admissions and Enrolments.

This will ensure that your place at the University of Canterbury is secured. If you have moved since we sent you the Offer of Place letter, please advise us of your new address details.

## Step 4: Pay your tuition fees

You are required to pay your tuition fees before you can apply for a student visa. There are three ways of paying them from outside New Zealand.

### Money transfer

You can quickly and securely transfer money to one of the University's Custom House accounts. Details are in the invoice with your Offer of Place letter. This payment method allows you to track the progress of your payment through the internet.

### Credit card (MasterCard or Visa)

You can pay by credit card, using either MasterCard or Visa card. American Express is not accepted. You will need to fill in and return a Credit Card Authorisation Form, downloaded from [www.canterbury.ac.nz/intstud/costs/payment.shtml](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/intstud/costs/payment.shtml)

### Cheque, draft or money order

You can post a cheque, draft or money order to the University. The University prefers payments to be in New Zealand dollars from a New Zealand bank, but a cheque in US dollars from a US bank or in Australian dollars from an Australian bank is also accepted. Other foreign currencies and Eurocheques are not accepted.

For more about fees, costs and funding go to [www.canterbury.ac.nz/intstud/costs](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/intstud/costs)

### Cost of living expenses

The University can only accept funds equal to the amount on the invoice that is included with your Offer Letter. If you wish to transfer extra money for living expenses, you will need to open your own bank account in New Zealand when you arrive.



In general, you should budget NZ\$300–\$350 per week for living expenses; that is a total of NZ\$12,000–\$14,000 from mid-February to mid-November. If you decide to stay during the summer holidays (mid-November to mid-February) you will need to budget accordingly.

Books and stationery costs will vary depending on your courses, ranging from NZ\$500–\$1,000 in the first year, and may increase in subsequent years for certain courses. In addition some subjects requires students to pay up to NZ\$1,000 per year for extra course costs such as practical courses and field trips.

Students from tropical countries may require an additional sum of NZ\$600–\$800 for warm clothing during their first year of study.

For more information about banking, go to [www.canterbury.ac.nz/support/nz/banks.shtml](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/support/nz/banks.shtml)

For advice about handling money in New Zealand go to [www.canterbury.ac.nz/support/pre\\_arrival/money.shtml](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/support/pre_arrival/money.shtml)

## Step 5: Arrange your accommodation

The Accommodation Office provides assistance and advice on accommodation options for students. Christchurch is New Zealand's most affordable major city and offers a range of accommodation options.

These include:

- Halls of residence – fully-catered (three meals a day), semi-catered (evening meals only) or self-catered (meals not provided)
- Private renting in houses or flats (apartments)
- Homestay (private board).

If you are under 18 years old or travelling to New Zealand with your family, please contact the Accommodation Office.

For more information about accommodation options for International students go to [www.canterbury.ac.nz/accom/international](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/accom/international)

## Step 6: Apply for a student visa

International students who study in New Zealand for longer than three months must have a student visa. When your application for admission is approved, you will need to contact the appropriate office of Immigration New Zealand to apply for your student visa.

Acceptance by the University does not guarantee that the Immigration Service will issue you a student visa. If possible, you should try to apply for your student visa by the end of September in the year before enrolment.

We strongly recommend that you seek advice before travelling and get your student visa before leaving your home country. Allow plenty of time to have your student visa processed and make sure that you provide all the information required.

For full details of student visa requirements, financial requirements, advice on being employed in New Zealand while studying, and the reporting requirements, go to [www.immigration.govt.nz](http://www.immigration.govt.nz)

If you need to apply for a student visa after you arrive in New Zealand, you can apply for your visa at UC under the Students Online programme. Students Online is an arrangement between INZ and selected education providers that makes applying for student visa's easier.

For more information go to [www.canterbury.ac.nz/intstud/visa](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/intstud/visa)

## Step 7: Purchase medical and travel insurance

All international students in New Zealand must have appropriate and current medical and travel insurance for the duration of their study. This is a requirement of the New Zealand government.

### **Purchasing private medical insurance**

You can be covered by your own medical insurance, but it must be on the University's approved list.



If you wish to purchase insurance before you leave home, you must present for assessment either a policy that is on our approved policy list or provide full details of your policy at least 4 weeks before arrival. Insurance policies that do not meet the high standards set by the New Zealand government cannot be accepted.

For a list of overseas policies that have been assessed and approved or rejected, go to [www.canterbury.ac.nz/intstud/insurance](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/intstud/insurance)

### **Studentsafe-University insurance**

If you have not purchased approved insurance in advance, you will be required to purchase the insurance policy (Studentsafe-University) at enrolment. Studentsafe-University meets the standards of the New Zealand Ministry of Education's Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students.

Every student intending to enrol at UC is covered by the Studentsafe-University policy from the time they leave home (up to 31 days prior to enrolment). So, if you intend to enrol at UC you do not need to purchase your own insurance before you leave home. The cost of this insurance will be added to your enrolment fees. The policy covers transit stopovers, but does not cover stopovers regarded as holidays.

For more information about Studentsafe-University, go to [www.studentassist.co.nz](http://www.studentassist.co.nz)

### **Pre-existing medical conditions**

Pre-existing medical conditions are not automatically covered by Studentsafe-University. These are medical or physical conditions that you have before you enrol in the plan and can extend to conditions you were aware of but did not seek treatment for.

If you have a pre-existing medical condition and you intend to purchase another University-approved policy, you need to check whether your pre-existing condition will be covered by that policy.

We recommend that you have your teeth checked thoroughly before you leave. Dental treatment in New Zealand is expensive and is generally not covered by insurance.

### **Step 8: Book your flight**

To ensure you arrive in time to enrol and not incur late fees, we suggest you make your travel plans and book your flights as soon as possible – especially if you intend to start in February since this coincides with the high season for tourism.

Check with your travel agent about transit visa requirements if you have to travel through another country on your way to New Zealand.

You must arrive in Christchurch in time for the compulsory International orientation.

If you are unable to enrol during enrolment, you have until the Friday of the second week of lectures to enrol. However, you will miss important introductory lectures offered during International orientation and you will be charged a late enrolment fee of NZ\$205. You may also need to get permission from your College to enrol late.

For more information about International orientation and enrolment, go to [www.canterbury.ac.nz/support/orientation](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/support/orientation)

### **Step 9: Apply to enrol**

Applying to enrol is when you specify the courses you want to study at the University of Canterbury. Although you may have been sent an Offer of Place letter, you still need to inform UC of the courses you plan to take by completing an Application to Enrol. We strongly recommend that you do this before you arrive in New Zealand.

For some courses it is essential to apply to enrol before you arrive. This is to ensure that you are taking the right courses for your degree or diploma. It also speeds up your in-person enrolment if your courses are already in the system before you arrive. Enrolment opens in October for study starting the following year.

Your Offer of Place letter will contain information on how to apply to enrol, or go to [www.canterbury.ac.nz/enrol](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/enrol)

If you need advice to plan your degree, or if you have questions about which courses you should choose before you Apply to Enrol, you can apply online for assistance – go to [www.canterbury.ac.nz/liaison/advice](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/liaison/advice)

For information about the University's enrolment and academic regulations, go to [www.canterbury.ac.nz/publicatioins/calendar](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/publicatioins/calendar)



## Step 10: Request an airport pick-up

If you are arriving in New Zealand for the first time, the Accommodation Office can arrange for you to be picked up from the airport and taken to your accommodation. This service is free but must be booked at least a week prior to your departure.

To book an airport pick-up, go to [www.canterbury.ac.nz/accom/international/airport\\_pickup.shtml](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/accom/international/airport_pickup.shtml)

## Step 11: Travel to New Zealand

Enclosed with your Offer of Place pack is a leaflet entitled 'Help protect New Zealand's beautiful environment'. It outlines what you may not bring into New Zealand, and what may not be sent to you while you are living here. It is very important that you read it carefully, that you do not try to bring anything into New Zealand which is prohibited, and that you declare anything which is restricted on your arrival.

For information on quarantine matters go to [www.maf.govt.nz](http://www.maf.govt.nz)

The New Zealand Customs Service also provides advice on importing goods into New Zealand. For information about customs duties and taxes on articles imported into New Zealand, and goods which are exempt, subject to strict import control, or are absolutely prohibited, go to [www.customs.govt.nz](http://www.customs.govt.nz)

### **New Zealand's arrival process**

When you arrive in New Zealand, you will go through an arrivals process. This will involve immigration, customs, and biosecurity checks. You will be given an arrival card which asks you to declare food and other restricted items.

It is important to read the information of the arrival card carefully. If you are not sure about an item you are carrying, declare it. If you fail to declare any goods that are considered a biosecurity risk you may receive an instant fine of NZ\$400, or be prosecuted.

Once you have cleared customs, collect a UC Welcome Letter at the Travel and Tourism Centre and look out for your airport pick-up (if you have booked one).

## Pre-arrival checklist

- I have submitted an Application for Admission and provided all the required documentation.
- I have accepted my Offer of Place.
- I have paid my tuition fees.
- I have arranged my accommodation.
- I have applied for my student visa.
- I have arranged travel and medical insurance, by either:
  - purchasing a policy that the University has already approved; or
  - deciding to purchase Studentsafe-University insurance when I enrol.
- I have booked and confirmed my travel arrangements, and will arrive in time for orientation.
- I have arranged transit visa(s) through other countries, where necessary.
- I have selected my UC courses and submitted my Application to Enrol.
- I have informed UC of my arrival time and requested an airport pick-up.
- I have photocopied my important documents, like the personal page of my passport and my airline tickets, and given them to someone at home for safe keeping.
- I have read 'Help protect New Zealand's Beautiful Environment' and I understand what I am not allowed to bring into New Zealand.
- I have viewed New Zealand Customs Service website and I understand the explanation of duties and taxes on articles imported into New Zealand and which goods are absolutely prohibited to be imported into New Zealand.

### In my check-in luggage

- I have removed from my luggage any items which are prohibited in New Zealand.
- I have packed my traditional costume to wear during the International Festival (optional).
- I have packed something I value to remind me of my home and home country.

### In my carry-on bag

- I have packed the following documents:
  - My passport and all travel documents
  - My student visa
  - My Offer of Place letter
  - My tuition fee receipt (if fees have already been paid), or a letter of scholarship award, if applicable
  - Details of my accommodation
  - My driver's licence translated into English (if I have one and intend driving a vehicle)
  - Copies of information about prescription medicines from my doctor in English
  - A copy of medical information from my doctor (if necessary) in English
  - Contact details of family or friends, of my bank at home, and of my Embassy or High Commission in New Zealand
  - Emergency contact numbers for my insurance company and for the University.
- I have given my family a New Zealand contact address.
- I'm on the plane and I'm on my way to New Zealand.

# You've arrived at UC – what next?

After you have settled into your accommodation, there are just a few more steps to complete before you begin attending lectures.

## Step 12: Attend the International orientation

All first-year international students must attend International orientation. You will not be able to complete enrolment until you have attended the compulsory International Orientation. The programme offers guidance on the enrolment process as well as vital information to help you adjust to your new environment. There will be some fun activities which will help you to meet other students and get to know Christchurch and Canterbury better.

For orientation dates and details go to [www.canterbury.ac.nz/support/orientation](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/support/orientation)

## Step 13: Complete your enrolment

During orientation week, you must complete your enrolment in person. Bring your passport, your Offer of Place letter, and your tuition fees (if you have not already paid them). Also, bring everything you need for the application for your student visa if you haven't already got one. If you have not purchased approved insurance in advance, you will be required to purchase the insurance policy (Studentsafe-University) at enrolment.

If you have been awarded a scholarship or you are an exchange/study abroad student, please bring appropriate letters and/or documents to enrolment.

For more information about enrolment go to [www.canterbury.ac.nz/enrol/person.shtml](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/enrol/person.shtml)

For enrolment dates and the start of lectures go to [www.canterbury.ac.nz/enrol/dates.shtml](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/enrol/dates.shtml)

## Step 14: Discover UC's student support services

The Student Support team is located at the Student Services Centre, next to Engineering Road. They provide advice and support on adjustment and transition, illness/injury/aegrotats, disputes, accommodation issues, insurance, immigration, academic issues and any other concerns.

### **Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students**

The Code is the New Zealand government's assurance to you that you will be treated honestly and responsibly by the institution in which you are a student. It guarantees that international students will be looked after and that the courses that are taught are of a high standard. Copies of the Code are available at Student Services or from the New Zealand Ministry of Education [www.minedu.govt.nz/goto/international](http://www.minedu.govt.nz/goto/international)

### **Other UC services**

There are many on-campus services available to help you enjoy your time at UC.

For a full list of UC's support and services go to [www.canterbury.ac.nz/theuni/student.shtml](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/theuni/student.shtml)

# Frequently asked questions

## ***Can I bring prescription medicine with me?***

Yes. The New Zealand Customs Service recommends that you carry a note from your doctor listing the medication, the medical condition it is treating, and the quantity you need for your stay in New Zealand. You must keep all the medication in its original packaging. If you have a chronic medical condition we recommend that you visit the UC Health Centre soon after you arrive.

## ***Will I have internet access when I arrive?***

UC's Student Services provides free internet when you first arrive in Christchurch, so that you can let family and friends know that you have arrived safely. Once you are fully enrolled at UC you will have an email account and access to internet facilities on campus.

## ***What is the weather like?***

Christchurch has a temperate climate, with low rainfall, lots of sunshine and the full range of spectacular seasons. Temperatures can vary between 15–30°C (60–85°F) in summer and 12–15°C (50–60°F) in winter.

## ***What if I am bringing my family with me?***

For advice about accommodation options for families contact the Accommodation Office. If you have children under 5 years old and require childcare, you need to organise this yourself. You should do this well in advance of your arrival and budget for the cost. If you have children going to school, bring a copy of their school reports in English. International school fees apply, except for UC students coming on a PhD package.

## ***Can my partner work in New Zealand while I study?***

Only if they have a work visa/permit. They can apply to Immigration New Zealand for a work visa/permit once you've received your Offer of Place.

## ***Do I need to bring adaptor plugs with me?***

We recommend that you bring appropriate adaptor plugs and a voltage converter. The New Zealand power system is 240 volts.

## ***Can I pay my tuition fee in instalments?***

No. You need to pay your tuition fee in full for the academic year to comply with Immigration New Zealand student visa requirements.

## ***Can I work while I am a student?***

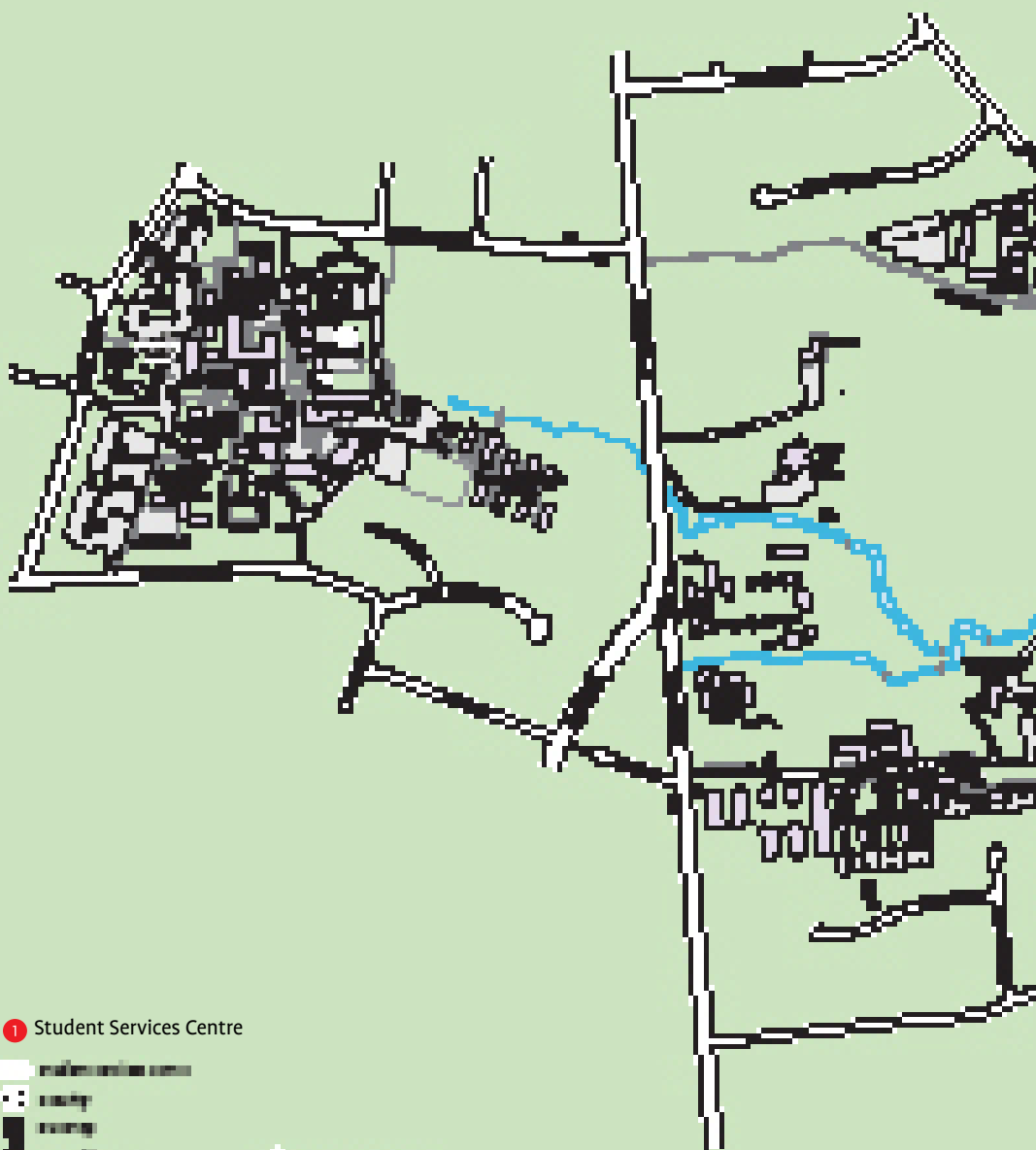
International students who are enrolled in full-time programmes of 12 months or more can work up to 20 hours per week and will be able to apply to work full-time over the summer holidays. However, you must have a Variation of Conditions on your student visa to allow you to do this. This does not apply to NZAID, study abroad, students on one semester exchange or a short study programme. For more information go to [www.immigration.govt.nz](http://www.immigration.govt.nz)

## ***Where do I find my timetable?***

Once you have completed your enrolment a copy of your timetable is available through UC Student Web, our student intranet. Your username and password to log in will be provided to you when you collect your Canterbury Card, although you will get a temporary one when you Apply to Enrol.







## ***I think I have a timetable clash. What can I do?***

Because of the number of courses that students can mix and match, there are often times when courses may clash. One solution is to see if the course is offered in another semester and if changing it will fix the clash. Timetable clashes are permitted, but it is up to you to manage your workload. It may be best to look at studying a different course.



**1** Student Services Centre

-  student services centre
-  study
-  dining
-  computing
-  leisure/sporting
-  reference
-  student computing
-  library
-  cafe
-  entrepreneurship

-  college/union office
-  college/union office with services office
-  college/union office office
-  college/union office/guest office
-  student union office
-  college/union office



**Student Services/International**

University of Canterbury  
Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha  
Private Bag 4800  
Christchurch  
New Zealand

Telephone: +64 3 364 2459

Fax: +64 3 364 2940

Email: [international@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:international@canterbury.ac.nz)

[www.canterbury.ac.nz](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz)