

2026



STAR PŪAO

DISTANCE

**courses for secondary
school students**

Are you a math STAR?

Explore MATH198, our new zero fee, zero credit course aimed at students who want to push beyond high school maths and start university with confidence.



Important dates 2026

9 February	Applications close for Semester 1 (S1) and Whole Year (W) STAR courses
16 February	Semester 1 and Whole Year lectures start
8 – 20 June	Exam period for Semester 1 courses
6 July	Applications close for Semester 2 (S2) STAR courses
13 July	Semester 2 lectures start and Whole Year lectures resume
27 October – 7 November	Exam period for Semester 2 and Whole Year courses

For more key dates, go to www.canterbury.ac.nz/key-dates

Front cover te reo translation: Pūao means 'to dawn', reflecting that the students coming to UC from their secondary schools are at the dawn of their tertiary education journey.

Front cover image: is a simplified version of Haehae moana or braided rivers design. Haehae moana are representative of our unique natural environment here in the Waitaha region and symbolise the importance of mahinga kai, sustainable food and natural resource gathering practises, of the iwi Ngāi Tahu. The haehae lines used here were traditionally used in whakairo and tell of whakapapa and pūrākau — traditions, histories and stories. Haehae means to etch, cut, carve. Whakarare means to turn or fall and are represented in this design where the haehae lines cross over themselves.

Information is correct as at October 2025, but is subject to change.



Sarah
BE(Hons)
STAR student, 2022



Pūao ki UC | STAR at UC

The Pūao | STAR programme at the University of Canterbury gives capable secondary school students the opportunity to enrol in first-year university courses while completing their high school studies.

It's a chance to experience university-level learning, explore potential pathways, and connect with like-minded peers.

Who can enrol?

The Pūao | STAR programme is intended for students in Year 12 or 13 who have met the literacy and numeracy requirements of NCEA University Entrance (or equivalent).

This includes international students studying at a New Zealand secondary school and home-schooled students.

What does a Pūao | STAR course involve?

The majority of distance courses listed in this brochure are regular first-year university courses suitable for Pūao | STAR students.

Some courses (MATH198, ECON199) are exclusively for Pūao | STAR students. These courses cover the same content as their non-STAR equivalents.

Most Pūao | STAR courses run over one semester (4 months). Each course has a workload of around 8 hours a week, including time spent watching lectures, reading the online course materials, working on assignments, and preparing for assessments.

Detailed course information is available online at www.canterbury.ac.nz/star

What will it cost?

The STAR course fee for international and domestic students in 2026 is \$671 per 15 points.

While most of our STAR students are (partially) funded by Ministry of Education STAR funding, students

at independent schools and home-schooled students are also able to enrol in the STAR programme, as long as course costs are met through other means.

How to apply

- **Fill out the STAR Consent Form** (available online at www.canterbury.ac.nz/star) and get it signed by your parent/caregiver and the STAR Coordinator at your school.
- **Get a copy of your passport or New Zealand birth certificate certified** (signed and dated) by your School Principal, a Justice of the Peace (JP) or solicitor.
- **Create a myUC account** at (myuc.canterbury.ac.nz/login) and submit an application for the STAR Programme. Upload a scan of your completed STAR Consent Form and your certified identity document.

Call 0800 827 748 if you have any problems completing your application.

2026 Akoranga tawhiti

Distance courses

Distance courses allow you to experience UC from your own home. Each course has its own dedicated website on LEARN, UC's online learning management system. If you're in Ōtautahi Christchurch and enrolled in a distance course, you can complete your course online (although you may need to sit any final exams or formal tests on the UC campus). Alternative exam/test arrangements will be made for those outside the Ōtautahi area, at a location closer to home.

Course Code	Course Title	Semester	Course Description
ANTH108	Witchcraft, Magic and The Dead	S1	This course aims to challenge taken-for-granted assumptions about witchcraft, magic and the dead, as well as introducing students to key anthropological concerns such as ritual, symbolism and religion.
ASTR109	The Cosmos: Birth and Evolution	S1	In this course, you will explore how our societies connect to our place in the cosmos, build your own personal awareness of how earth and sky relate, and gain an understanding of astronomy, astrophysics and planetary science, beginning with our Solar System and expanding outward to visit exotic stars, remote planets, and distant galaxies.
CHCH101	Engaging Communities through Social Innovation	S1	This course partners with communities to work collaboratively to affect meaningful change. This course would suit those students with an interest in active citizenship, social activism, community engagement, and social innovation with our local or global communities.
CHIN151	Chinese Language 1-A	S1	A beginner's level course, focusing on the four basic language skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening, designed for students with little or no previous knowledge of the Chinese language.
CHIN152	Chinese Language 1-B	S2	This course follows CHIN151 still focusing on the four basic language skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. This course teaches how to conduct simple conversations and read and write simple texts in Chinese at an elementary level, with an adequate cultural understanding of China.
CHIN251	Chinese Language 2-A	S1	This course follows CHIN152 still focusing on the four basic language skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. This course is a Chinese language course teaching how to conduct daily and social conversations, and to read and write texts in Chinese at an early intermediate level, with an adequate cultural understanding of China.
CHIN252	Chinese Language 2-B	S2	This course follows CHIN251 still focusing on the four basic language skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. This is a Chinese language course, teaching how to communicate in Chinese in social and semi-formal situations at an intermediate level, with an adequate cultural understanding of China.
CLAS120	People, Places and Histories of the Graeco-Roman World	S1	In this course we will survey events in antiquity from Homer through to the Roman Emperor Constantine. On the way we will explore the world of fifth century Athens, gaining an insight into the society that established democracy and move on to appreciate Alexander's campaigns and the formation of the Hellenistic kingdoms after his death. We will also turn to the west of the Mediterranean Sea and investigate the development of Rome from a small town to the capital of a large Empire, its constitutional transformations and the social impact of those changes on people's sense of place and identity.
CLAS122	Myth, Power and Identity in the Graeco-Roman World	S2	In this course students will consider how the Greeks and the Romans thought of themselves and others in their mythology and social power structures. Students will gain an understanding of ancient cosmic world-views, gender issues, colonisation and identity in Archaic and Classical Greece and Augustan Rome, and the relevance of such ideas now. Students will read, analyse and interpret ancient literary texts (selections from epic, tragedy, etc.) and material culture (art and architecture) that depict Greek and Roman myths as well as expressing ancient political and social views.

Course Code	Course Title	Semester	Course Description
CLAS145	Beginners' Latin	S2	An introduction to Latin grammar and to reading Latin, following on from CLAS151.
CLAS151	Greek and Latin for Absolute Beginners	S1	This course introduces Greek and Latin grammar to students by way of English grammar. At the end of the course students will understand the most important basic grammatical concepts in Greek and Latin and will have a working vocabulary of about 75 words in each language. They will be prepared to continue more intensive study in Greek and/or Latin.
COMS101	Media and Society	S1	This course explores the relationship between society and media - including social media, print, broadcasting, and all kinds of online spaces. We will explore topics like media audiences, technologies, ownership and work; the frames of representation, power, and identity; and analytical tools like semiotics, discourse, and narrative. COMS101 is a stage one course that does not require any prior media study, but it builds on everything you have ever watched, listened to, interacted with, and produced.
EDUC101	Spark! The Art & Science of Learning	S2	In this course, we address how people learn as well as the social, political, and global contexts in which learning takes place. Together, we walk through the art and science of learning, including contemporary debates and discussions in anthropology, history, philosophy, sociology, and psychology. Through questions, we view learning from diverse perspectives to understand learning in Aotearoa New Zealand and elsewhere around the world.
EDUC102	Child and Adolescent Development	S2	This course establishes a foundation in theory, concepts, processes and factual knowledge of infant, child, and adolescent development within the context of family, school, and community. Students will acquire an understanding of the developmental processes that take place within and across physical, cognitive, emotional, and social domains, and their associations with developmental outcomes.
EDUC103	Education, Culture and Society	S1	This course provides an introduction to foundational theories, concepts and processes in the study of education. The course explores theories about power, justice and fairness in society, with a particular focus on how they relate to education. It also examines what part factors such as class, genders and sexualities, disability, and race may play in maintaining unequal forms of education. An important feature of the course will be analysing the role played by education in the development of colonial relations between Māori and Pakeha, and how that continues to shape contemporary New Zealand society.
EURA101	Global EUrope	S1	What is the European Union? How important is it in Global Affairs? Why is the EU expanding? What lead to the BREXIT vote and what influence will it have? Through the use of traditional and online teaching methods, this course introduces students to the identity, structure and function of the EU, its key challenges and its role and impact on the world, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region.
GRMN151	Elementary German Language A	S1	This course is a German language course for beginners based on the communicative approach.
GRMN152	Elementary German Language B	S2	This course is a German language course that follows on from GRMN151, and is based on the communicative approach.

Course Code	Course Title	Semester		Course Description
HLTH101	Introduction to Health Studies	S1		This course introduces students to the determinants of health in the context of Aotearoa New Zealand. Students will examine health and how it is viewed and experienced by different groups of people, including key influences and challenges to achieving [good] health. Measures to address health inequities, including the role of the health system, will be explored and examined.
HLTH102	Health Promotion		S2	This course will provide an understanding of the broad range of ways in which the health of populations or societies can be promoted. Through personal reflection and synthesis of course material, students will deepen their understanding of key health concepts. Students will learn to design health promotion approaches that aligns with epidemiological and life-course evidence.
HLTH106	Te Wero - Māori Health Issues and Opportunities		S2	This course introduces students to a selection of historical and contemporary Māori health content within a Treaty of Waitangi framework, to support robust analyses of Māori population health issues. Exploring what Māori health was and is, students will be challenged to consider the promise of Māori health and its significance for current and future Aotearoa New Zealand.
HSRV103	Violence in Society		S2	This course will introduce students to the issue of violence in society and its impact on communities. The course will introduce the concept of structural violence and explore the links between interpersonal violence and structural violence. Key topics include economic violence, colonial violence, cultural violence, gendered violence, political violence and family violence.
HSRV104	Youth Realities	S1		The course introduces students to the diverse realities of 'youth' with a focus on multiple contexts. Students explore the concept of youth and the cultural, historical, political and economic contexts in which young people live and the decisions that they make. We critically consider the issues that place young people outside the margins of dominant society, and the responses, models and theoretical frameworks used in youth studies.
LING101	How Language Works	S1		This course introduces students to the study of the English language, its words, sounds and sentences. It also introduces the conceptual and analytical tools which linguists use to understand how languages are constructed.
LING102	Language and Society in New Zealand and Beyond		S2	When we hear somebody talk, even for the very first time, we make a split-second judgement about them. That's because a speaker's language tells us something about them. We not only receive a linguistic message - the content of what is being said - but we also receive social information. Is the speaker male or female? Where are they from? How old are they? Are they Māori or Pakeha? In this course, we examine the relationship between language and our social lives, exploring topics such as language use in multilingual communities, the impact of attitudes, and the role of identity. As the course progresses, we focus more closely on our local context, exploring the use of and relationship between New Zealand English and te reo Māori.
MAOR107	Te Ara o Tawhaki: Māori Thought, Beliefs and Practices	S1		This course provides an introduction to Māori knowledges and metaphysics through a study of topics such as voyaging, art and aesthetics, warfare, conflict and peace. We also look at how approaches to Māori knowledges and their impacts are critiqued.
MAOR108	Te Patu a Maui : The Treaty of Waitangi - facing and overcoming colonisation		S2	Through focus on the themes of Power, Property and Citizenship, this course examines the historical realities of the Treaty, enabling an understanding of the modern colonial nation state and its processes with respect to Indigenous peoples. The course examines Māori responses, engagement with, and resistance to the colonial project leading to a critical understanding of colonialism.
MAOR165	Tuakiri : Culture and Identity	S1	S2	What does it mean to live in Aotearoa/New Zealand in the 21st century? This course examines identity as a lived experience for Māori and non-Māori and how it shapes our thinking at individual, organisation and systemic levels in this country. The course also focusses on contemporary issues arising from identity tensions, enabling students to apply insights to effect positive social change in order to work effectively in a bicultural manner.

Course Code	Course Title	Semester	Course Description
PACS111	Pacific Peoples and Societies	S1	This course provides a rich foundation of the history, diversity, and contemporary issues of the Pacific, including diasporic Pacific communities. Students will learn about Pacific Indigenous worldviews, cultures, knowledges, identities and experiences. Students will also explore the structures of Pacific societies and how these are evolving with changes in the modern world. Pacific agency, the transnationalism of Pacific identity and contemporary issues of climate change, sustainability and innovation are themes that run through the course as are the concepts of inclusion, diversity, empowerment, and positive transformation.
PHIL110	Science: Good, Bad, and Bogus	S1	This course will teach you 20 principles you can use to tell science from pseudo-science, truth from falsehood, logic from rhetoric, sound reasoning from wishful thinking, effective medicine from quackery, and good evidence from lies, fraud and fakery. The critical thinking skills you learn in this course will be vital if you go on to do more philosophy. They are also readily applicable to other disciplines, and should help you steer clear of scam-artists, charlatans, confidence-tricksters and get-rich-quick-schemes in the world outside of academia. Topics covered include the fallibility of the senses, the fallibility of memory, the placebo effect, the tricks of the cold reader's trade, confirmation bias, the Barnum effect, relativism, mind viruses, the basics of logic, formal and informal fallacies, and the scientific evaluation of competing hypotheses.
PHIL137	The Philosophy and Ethics of Artificial Intelligence	S2	Computing technology has already revolutionised our lives and shows no signs of stopping. Algorithms are everywhere. Artificial Intelligence powered by our data is increasingly determining our lives. The implementation of this technology has leapt ahead of our understanding of its ethical, societal, legal, and political significance. From self-driving cars to autonomous weapons, data-brokers to the metaverse, no aspects of our lives will be the same again. In this course, you will learn about cutting edge work from both within and outside academic philosophy concerning the challenges posed by the ever-increasing use of computing technology and AI. Questions raised in the course include: Do tech companies violate our right to privacy when they harvest our data? Can automated algorithmic decision-making deliver us a future free of human bias? Could an Artificial Intelligence possess freewill?
PHIL139	Ethics, Politics and Justice	S2	How we should live our lives is the most important question of all. What makes our actions right or wrong? Is it our culture, our emotions, facts about the world, or God's commands? Are pleasure and happiness all that really matters? What should we do when justice and freedom conflict with happiness or with each other? Should we always obey the law? Is taxation legalised theft? This course introduces students to moral and political philosophy by examining ideas and arguments about how we should live our personal, social and political lives.
POLS102	Politics: An Introduction	S2	This course introduces the basic tools and techniques used in political science, including research techniques, formulation of hypotheses, and methods of analysis. It also introduces students to a selection of key theories and frameworks. The course covers topics such as nationalism and ethnicity, democracy, authoritarianism, people's power, conflict, globalisation, and the future of global politics.
POLS104	Introduction to International Relations	S1	This course provides a broad introduction to the core issues and theories related to the study of international relations. Students will be introduced to the discipline through a study of key historical events, prominent theories of international relations, and a variety of practical examples.
POLS106	Plato to Nato: Introduction to Political Thought	S1	In this course, you will study the evolution of the ideas that form the building blocks of the political and social sciences. The course traverses the political ideas that arose in the Greek and Roman civilisations, the Renaissance, the birth of America, the death of the English and French despotic monarchies, and the great traumas of socialism, Marxism and the political upheavals that followed the wars of the 20th century. We will trace the changes in the fundamental political concepts such as freedom, equality, rights, justice, government, the state, markets, and domination.

Course Code	Course Title	Semester		Course Description
PSYC105	Introductory Psychology - Brain, Behaviour and Cognition	S1		Psychology is a diverse and thriving science devoted to understanding behaviour and the human mind. In PSYC105 you will receive an introduction to the following areas: positive psychology; wellbeing; visual perception; research methods; learning and behaviour change; forensic psychology; neuropsychology; drugs and behaviour; memory and cognition; and health psychology.
PSYC106	Introductory Psychology - Social, Personality and Developmental		S2	Psychology is a diverse and thriving science devoted to understanding behaviour and the human mind. In PSYC106 you will receive an introduction to five major domains: personality, abnormal, social, developmental, and organisational psychology. You will also learn about the different research methods used in each of these domains.
PSYC107	Foundations of Psychological Science		S2	In this course we'll take a holistic and critical look at the science of psychology itself: its questions, methods, evidence, and unique challenges; as well as its place within modern Aotearoa New Zealand society. You'll learn how psychologists measure a world of unobservable mental traits, devise experiments that reveal the underlying organisation and mechanisms of the mind, and convert raw data into real world conclusions that have a meaningful impact on people's lives. You'll build the critical thinking skills to distinguish good psychological science from bad, genuine breakthroughs from glorified clickbait, and evidence-based interventions from scams and grifts.
RUSS130	Elementary Russian Language A	S1		This is a Russian language course for absolute beginners, i.e. students with no knowledge of Russian, based on the communicative approach.
RUSS131	Elementary Russian Language B		S2	This is a Russian language course that follows on from RUSS130, based on the communicative approach.
RUSS230	Intermediate Russian Language A	S1		This is the first of two intermediate Russian language courses. It aims at extending vocabulary and grammatical structures to discuss and write about simple topics in Russian culture.
RUSS231	Intermediate Russian Language B		S2	This is the second of two intermediate Russian language courses. It extends the reading, writing and discussion skills acquired in RUSS230 and places greater emphasis on conversation skills.
SCIE101	Science, Society and Me	S1	S2	In this foundational course, we examine stimulating questions such as what science is, who does science, how is science practiced, how do science, culture and society interact and how science is communicated to differing audiences. This course will draw on a variety of historical and contemporary case-studies, leading edge research, ethical challenges and controversial issues. Students will gain an understanding of the civic roles, responsibilities and influence of science in our Māori, New Zealand, and global communities. Students will learn how to work effectively as a team and communicate successfully to communities and end-users. Students will learn what it means to be a successful scientist in Aotearoa (New Zealand) and the world in the 21st century.
SOWK102	Introduction to Social Work	S1		A course that introduces the history, and contemporary organisation, and functions of social services in Aotearoa New Zealand society. Particular emphasis is placed on the development of students' capacities to understand and critically analyse the impact of service delivery on Māori as tangata whenua and/or diverse populations.
SOWK104	Youth Realities	S1		The course introduces students to the diverse realities of 'youth' with a focus on multiple contexts. Students explore the concept of youth and the cultural, historical, political and economic contexts in which young people live and the decisions that they make. We critically consider the issues that place young people outside the margins of dominant society, and the responses, models and theoretical frameworks used in youth studies.

Course Code	Course Title	Semester	Course Description
SPRT101	Introduction to Sport Coaching	S1	This course explores contemporary practice and recent research developments in Sport Coaching. It encourages students to adopt an open mindset toward coaching and engage in informed reflective practice. Students will critically examine their existing coaching beliefs and how these shape their coaching behaviours. The course focuses on coaching for learning rather than simply what to coach, emphasising human developmental psychology and pedagogy. Planning for learning and managing learners is a major focus of the course. Students will be introduced to a spectrum of coaching styles - from direct instruction to problem-solving approaches - with an emphasis on direct instruction and management techniques.
SPRT104	Anatomy and Physiology	S1	This course provides a comprehensive introduction to the structure and function of the human body, and will be fundamental for students pursuing careers in the health sciences, sport and exercise sciences or biomedical fields. Covering topics from cellular biology to major body systems, this course focuses on the building blocks of life and the complex interactions between the musculoskeletal, nervous, cardiovascular and respiratory systems. Through a blend of dynamic theoretical lectures, online learning and interactive workshops, students will explore topics such as how tissues form organs; how bones and muscles maintain structure and enable movement; how the brain and nerves control bodily functions; and how the cardiovascular and respiratory systems move blood and vital gases around our body.
SPRT105	Sport, History and Society	S2	An introduction to the history and philosophy of physical education, physical activity and sport, critiquing the development of movement culture with particular reference to New Zealand sport development and physical education. In order to understand the nature and purpose of contemporary movement contexts, this course provides historical and philosophical frameworks.
SPRT108	Sport Business and Governance	S2	This course investigates governance of sports organisations through a variety of contexts. This includes a focus on board leadership, motivations and structures, including a focus on addressing Māori and Pasifika health and well-being goals and outcomes as a strategic priority for sports organisations. There is a particular focus on Sport NZ's development and use of Te Pake o Ihi Aotearoa Māori Outcomes Framework and Ara Taiohi's Mana Taiohi framework. This course focuses on community engagement through the use of marketing communications to create strong connection, action and support.
SPSC114	The Art and Science of Human Communication	S1	SPSC114 examines how we communicate, how that is influenced by our culture, the neural and cognitive processes underpinning communication, and how communication is affected by external contexts such as noise and stress. It highlights theories and practical strategies to enhance the success of communication, in written and spoken format, as a university student and future professional. Drawing on case studies from the fields of medicine and aviation, we explore the effects of communication failure-and how those issues can be mitigated. We explore how communication differs across groups-such as children, older adults and those with communication difficulty.
YACL101	Introduction to Youth Leadership: Leading the Self	S1	What is the role of 'the self' in youth and community leadership? What are the personal dispositions required for youth and community leadership and how might these be nurtured within, for and by the self, and/or by others? In this course, students will explore self-leadership from contemporary psychological, philosophical, cultural, and/or any other theoretical perspective/s relevant to their situation and to contemporary Aotearoa. Kaupapa Maori approaches will be explored, as part of which students will be required to have experienced a stay on the noho marae (or alternative).

Course Code	Course Title	Semester		Course Description
YACL102	Introduction to Professional Youth Work in Aotearoa		S2	In this course, you will be introduced to and learn about the professional practice of youth work in Aotearoa. You will learn about the context within which youth work in Aotearoa operates, its history and current structures. The course will help you understand the principles of the sector and explicitly acknowledges the diversity and mana of young people. In this course, you will examine how young people build and sustain quality relationships and connect to the social, physical and digital world, demonstrating knowledge of hononga and whanaungatanga. We will investigate the legal and ethical requirements for the care of young people in Aotearoa in the context of holistic wellbeing, responsibility and reciprocity. You will be introduced to frameworks that are used in the youth work sector to facilitate manaakitanga, youth participation and whai wahitanga, recognising young people as valued contributors to society.
WRIT101	Writing for Academic Success	S1	S2	Writing for Academic Success fosters the capacity for analytical thought about texts and language. The course also provides training in the writing of clear and effective prose, inculcates awareness of crucial structural and rhetorical features of expository writing, and encourages the application of that awareness to writing in a range of academic and professional contexts.



“Taking STAR maths showed me what a university maths paper would look like, helping me get used to the content load and grading

systems while still in high school. I really loved the weekly online tutorials as they helped me understand the concepts well and get personal help due to the small group size. I would highly recommend this course to anyone who loves maths, as it’s a great way to challenge yourself. You really have nothing to lose!”

Elaine

STAR Student from Westlake Girls’ High School



“Completing the ANTH108 STAR programme has been a highlight of my year. It was an awesome opportunity

to experience the academic level of university and to learn about local sites. UC has a fluid system that makes it easy to learn remotely and Doctor Fraser was extremely approachable.”

Jack

2025 STAR student from Nelson College

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