

Media, Design & Style

Te Ara Auaha

2027

STUDY GUIDE

Media

- Audio Engineering & Production
- Music
- Music Theatre
- Journalism
- Radio, Audio & Entertainment
- Screen Production

Design

- Fashion
- Visual Art
- Visual Communication
- Game Animation
- Creative Practice

Style

- Barbering
- Beauty Therapy & Cosmetics
- Hairdressing

**GET
SET**



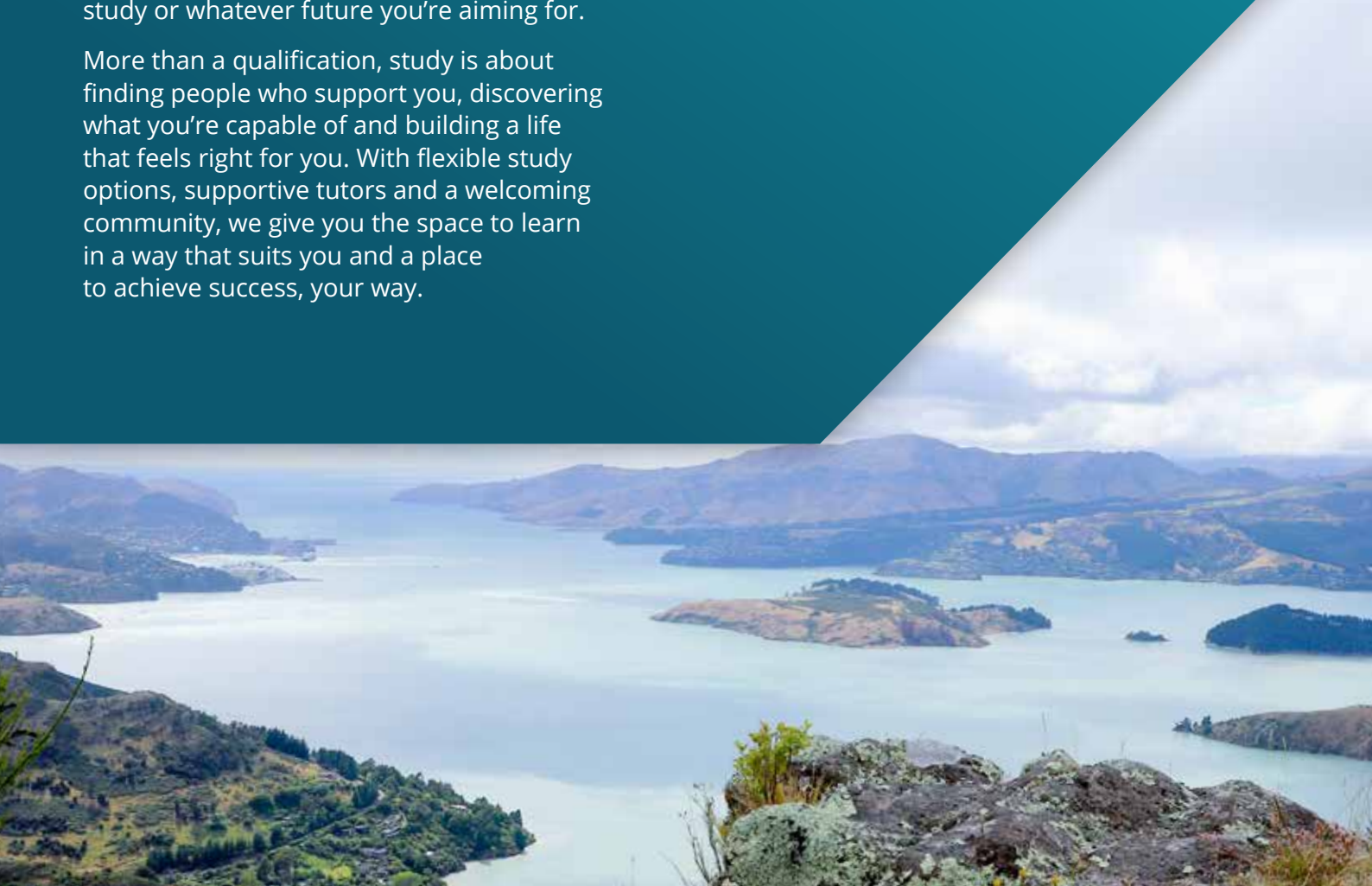
ara.ac.nz

KIA ORA

Choosing what comes next can feel exciting, daunting and full of pressure — but it's also full of possibility.

We believe education should open doors, build confidence and lead somewhere meaningful. That's why our learning is grounded in the real world: practical, hands-on and shaped by industry, so you graduate ready to step into work, further study or whatever future you're aiming for.

More than a qualification, study is about finding people who support you, discovering what you're capable of and building a life that feels right for you. With flexible study options, supportive tutors and a welcoming community, we give you the space to learn in a way that suits you and a place to achieve success, your way.



Disclaimer The information contained in this document is correct at the time of production (July 2026). Ara reserves the right to cancel or postpone any of the programmes, and shall not be liable for any claim other than the proportion of programme fees that the cancelled portion bears. Some programmes may be dependent upon formal approval from NZQA (New Zealand Qualifications Authority), TEC (Tertiary Education Commission) funding allocation, and the number of enrolments. Fees, programmes, entry and selection criteria, and dates, are subject to change. Please check the relevant programme pages at ara.ac.nz for up-to-date information and full entry requirements before applying to enrol. Information regarding English language requirements is available on each programme page at ara.ac.nz.

**SUCCESS ISN'T
ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL.**

**AT ARA,
SUCCESS IS SHAPED
AROUND YOU.**

**YOUR GOALS,
YOUR PACE,
YOUR LIFE.**

**SUCCESS.
YOUR WAY.**



AUDIO ENGINEERING & PRODUCTION

Audio engineering and production is the practice of capturing, shaping, mixing and presenting sound for music, live performance, film, broadcast and digital media. Djing and electronic music production focus on selecting, performing, creating and manipulating music

through turntables, controllers, computers, synthesis, sampling and digital audio workstations. Together, these fields combine technical skill, musical judgment and creative decision-making, using technology as an instrument for creative expression.

Would this suit me?

This pathway could suit you if your passion is sound, music technology, live performance, recording, mixing, Djing or electronic music creation. You may already produce music, DJ, record bands, run sound at events, or simply know that sound is where your heart belongs. MAINZ at Ara can give you a structured, creative and technically grounded environment to develop your skills and artistic voice.

Career Pathways

Studio & Production

- Audio and studio engineering (tracking, mixing, mastering)
- Record production and music production
- Sound for film, TV and commercials
- Radio and spoken word (podcasts, audiobooks)

Live & Performance

- Djing and electronic music performance
- Live sound production and streaming

Sound Design & Technology

- Sound design for games, multimedia and sonic arts
- Audio and MIDI software/hardware design
- Acoustic design and audiology

NB: Advanced roles may require experience and/or further study.

WHAT will I learn?

- The principles and techniques of recording, producing, mixing, mastering and performing music using industry equipment and software
- Core skills in sound, acoustics, microphones, digital audio workstations (DAWs), synthesis, sampling and live sound
- Practical approaches to working in studio, live, DJ, electronic and digital audio environments.
- Sound design, mastering, immersive audio and advanced production techniques
- A broad range of audio and music production skills, techniques and workflows leading to advanced creative practice

HOW will I learn?

- Learning by doing in studios, live sound setups, DJ spaces and computer labs
- Hands-on experience with real equipment, software and industry workflows
- Skills building through workshops, demos, creative projects and guided production time
- Feedback from tutors and peers
- Learning from active industry professionals with real-world experience
- Developing technical skills, conceptual knowledge, critical thinking, reflective and creative practice

Industry connections

MAINZ at Ara stays closely connected to industry through guest speakers, field trips, stakeholder input into curriculum and assessment, and links with PA hire companies, venues, film audio, radio and creative

practitioners. Employers have recruited MAINZ graduates into technical roles, including live sound, AV, studio, broadcast and education-sector technician pathways.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES	
New Zealand Certificate in DJ and Music Production	4	Christchurch	Full-time 1 year	February	
New Zealand Diploma in Audio Engineering and Production (Level 5)	5	Christchurch	Full-time 1 year	February	
New Zealand Diploma in Audio Engineering and Production (Level 6)	6	Christchurch	Full-time 1 year	February	

See the Music section for related degree study options.



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information on
this subject



MUSIC

Music is a working craft that turns ideas and emotion into live and recorded experiences. Performers, songwriters and producers create material, rehearse, record and deliver shows that connect with audiences. They collaborate in bands and studios, shape arrangements, use sound technology and respond to feedback in real time.

Many build portfolio careers, combining gigs with teaching, composing or arranging, artist support and event work. Along the way they develop creativity, teamwork, discipline and small-business skills that are valued across the creative industries.

Would this suit me?

This area could suit you if music is already part of your life and you're ready to take it seriously. You might already play, sing, write songs or produce tracks, and want to lift your craft to a professional standard. You'll do well if you can take feedback on board, collaborate well and commit to practising steadily.

Career Pathways

Entry Level

- Performing musician
- Session musician
- Studio assistant
- Live sound assistant
- Private music tutor

Intermediate

- Music producer
- Composer or arranger
- Songwriter
- Bandleader
- Music director
- Artist manager

Advanced

- Touring musician
- Senior music producer
- Music supervisor
- Secondary school music teacher
- Arts manager
- Creative director

NB: Advanced roles may require experience and/or further study.

WHAT will I learn?

- Instrumental or vocal technique and practice
- Ensemble playing and live performance skills
- Songwriting, composition and arranging
- Music theory and musicianship
- Ear training and listening skills
- Recording, editing and mixing fundamentals
- Music technology, studio and acoustics basics
- Music business and self-management

HOW will I learn?

- One-on-one lessons and coaching
- Small group classes and workshops
- Band rehearsals and ensemble sessions
- Studio recording and production sessions
- Collaborative projects with other musicians
- Live performances in real venues

Industry connections

You'll learn in a music environment that mirrors the real world. Our tutors are working musicians and producers who bring current practice into the studio and rehearsal room. You'll perform at external venues, take part in

school visits and engage with the wider jazz community through competitions. Our industry-standard spaces and equipment will help you build confidence and professionalism for live and recorded work.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES	
New Zealand Certificate in Music	4	Christchurch	Full-time 1 year	February	
Bachelor of Music*	7	Christchurch	Full-time 3 years	February	

*See Audio Engineering and Production section for courses that can pathway into the Bachelor of Music.
See the Creative Practice section for related postgraduate study options.



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this subject



MUSIC THEATRE

Music theatre is a professional performing arts industry that combines singing, acting, dance and storytelling to create live theatrical productions. Performers are required to integrate these disciplines seamlessly, often transitioning between spoken dialogue, vocal performance and choreography within the same scene. Training and work in the industry involve developing technical excellence, artistic versatility and professional rehearsal practices.

Industry professionals regularly participate in auditions, workshops, rehearsals, recordings and live performances, collaborating with directors, choreographers, musical directors, designers, stage managers and fellow performers. Employment is typically contract-based and may include commercial productions, regional and touring shows, festivals, cruise ships, educational theatre and other project-driven performance opportunities.

Would this suit me?

If you like storytelling and performing, and you're keen to develop skills across acting, singing and movement rather than focusing on just one, music theatre could be a good fit for you. Being resilient and adaptable really helps. You need to be able to handle auditions, lots of rehearsal, feedback, teamwork and irregular work patterns, as roles are often short-term and schedules can vary.

Career Pathways

Entry Level

- Ensemble performer
- Chorus performer
- Fringe or festival performer
- Production crew
- Assistant stage manager

Intermediate

- Music theatre performer
- Actor (theatre or screen)
- Cruise ship entertainer
- Cabaret artist
- Voiceover artist
- Events coordinator

Advanced

- Director
- Musical director
- Producer
- Playwright
- Stage manager
- Performing arts teacher

NB: Advanced roles may require experience and/or further study.

WHAT will I learn?

- Singing and vocal technique
- Dance, movement and physical skills
- Acting, spoken voice and storytelling
- Musicianship and keyboard fundamentals
- Ensemble performance and collaboration
- Theatre and music theatre history
- Professional practice for sustainable careers
- Research-informed creative practice

HOW will I learn?

- Face-to-face studio-based training
- Rehearsals, productions and performance seasons
- Forums, chorus work and open showings
- Guided practice, feedback and coaching
- E-portfolio reflection and self-directed projects
- Work-integrated learning, including simulated settings

Industry connections

You'll learn in specialist performance and studio facilities and work with tutors and visiting creative professionals. Industry-connected learning is built into performances and production processes, with most work-integrated learning occurring in simulated,

real-world settings. If you study the degree, in your final year, you can include industry placement and external projects within your capstone, including work under the auspices of partner theatre companies such as The Court Theatre.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES
New Zealand Certificate in Performing Arts	4	Christchurch	Full-time 1 year	February
Bachelor of Music Theatre	7	Christchurch	Full-time 3 years	February

See the *Creative Practice* section for related postgraduate study options.



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JOURNALISM

Journalism is about telling people’s stories, holding power to account and being the public’s eyes and ears. Journalists track down leads, interview people, and produce interesting and informative stories for audiences across TV, radio, podcasts and digital and

social platforms. No two days are the same in this exciting and fast-paced industry. You could find yourself reporting, producing, editing audio or video, creating social media content, and much more.

Would this suit me?

If you’re curious about the world, love hearing people’s stories and enjoy asking questions, journalism could be for you. You’ll succeed in journalism if you’re a good listener, can write clearly and stay calm under pressure. You’ll be organised and reliable, and care about getting things right.

Career Pathways

Presentation

- Newsreader
- Podcaster
- Presenter
- Sports commentator

Reporting

- Digital journalist
- International correspondent
- Multimedia reporter
- Radio journalist
- Show producer
- Video journalist

Communications

- Content creator
- Communications advisor
- Public relations
- Social media coordinator

NB: Advanced roles may require experience and/or further study.

WHAT will I learn?

- Audio and video editing
- Court reporting
- Interviewing and fact checking
- Multimedia news gathering
- Newsroom and studio workflows
- Podcasting
- Radio and screen presentation
- Social media and digital news
- Storytelling and scripting

HOW will I learn?

- Collaborative multi-platform projects
- Hands-on learning using industry standard equipment and software
- Producing and presenting live news content for commercial radio, screen and online platforms
- Small classes, whānau-style learning atmosphere
- Supported, paid industry placements of up to 24 weeks
- Work with and learn from industry professionals

Industry connections

At Ara's New Zealand Broadcasting School, you'll learn from tutors who are current media professionals and maintain strong connections to the industry. Alongside staff are a wide variety of guest tutors who work for some of New Zealand's biggest media companies, giving you the opportunity to make connections while

you study. You'll work in industry-standard news environments and studios, broadcasting and publishing live on radio, television and online. Degree students complete a supported, paid placement of up to 24 weeks with industry-approved providers.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES
Bachelor of Broadcasting Communications (Journalism)	7	Christchurch	Full-time 3 years	February

See the Creative Practice section for related postgraduate study options.

Starter options

New Zealand Certificate in Study and Employment Pathways (Open pathway)*	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES
	4	Christchurch	Full-time 19 weeks Part-time available	February, July

**If you don't meet the academic requirements for the degree, you can gain them via this starter course. Please note: completing the starter course doesn't guarantee entry to the higher-level qualification as other criteria may apply.*



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RADIO, AUDIO & ENTERTAINMENT

This field is about creating content that connects with audiences across radio, digital and social platforms. Radio professionals present shows, curate music and lead conversations that inform and entertain - often live to air. Every day is different in this dynamic industry.

You could find yourself producing content, engaging audiences online, analysing data to shape programming, or developing campaigns that bring brands and audiences together.

Would this suit me?

If you love music, are interested in marketing and branding, and enjoy storytelling and working with people, a career in radio could be for you. You'll thrive in this field if you're a confident communicator, a good listener and you can stay calm under pressure. You need to be adaptable and quick-thinking, able to work collaboratively in a fast-paced environment and communicate with a wide range of people.

Career Pathways

Presentation

- Audio storyteller/podcaster
- Event host
- Newsreader
- Radio announcer
- Sports commentator
- Voice actor

Content Production

- Audio engineer
- Audio programme designer/creator
- Content creator
- Creative writer
- Digital producer
- Documentary maker
- Show producer

Business

- Brand engagement specialist
- Data analyst (media/advertising)
- Digital and social media manager
- Event coordinator/manager
- Multimedia sales and account manager
- Promotions and marketing coordinator

NB: Advanced roles may require experience and/or further study.

WHAT will I learn?

- Audience research and insights
- Audio editing and mixing
- Client engagement and pitching
- Marketing and brand engagement
- Media business and sales
- Performance and presentation
- Promotions and event management
- Social media strategy and content creation
- Scripting and content development
- Video production fundamentals

HOW will I learn?

- Small classes, whānau-style learning atmosphere
- Collaborative multi-platform projects
- Developing and launching a multi-platform FM radio station
- Hands-on learning using industry standard equipment and software
- Supported, paid industry placements of up to 24-weeks
- Work with and learn from industry professionals

Industry connections

At Ara's New Zealand Broadcasting School, you'll learn from tutors who are current media professionals with strong industry connections. You'll also work with guest tutors from across the industry, giving you opportunities to build your own networks while you study. You'll train in industry-standard studios, creating

live and recorded content, and collaborate on projects that reflect real-world expectations. You'll also complete a supported, paid industry placement, building practical experience across both the creative and commercial sides of the radio industry.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES
Bachelor of Broadcasting Communications (Radio, Audio & Entertainment)	7	Christchurch	Full-time 3 years	February

See the Creative Practice section for related postgraduate study options.

Starter options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES
New Zealand Certificate in Study and Employment Pathways (Open pathway)*	4	Christchurch	Full-time 19 weeks Part-time available	February, July

*If you don't meet the academic requirements for the degree, you can gain them via this starter course. Please note: completing the starter course doesn't guarantee entry to the higher-level qualification as other criteria may apply.



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SCREEN PRODUCTION

Screen production is the craft of creating video content for film, television, streaming and online platforms. It takes an idea and turns it into a finished story, from early planning and shooting through to editing and delivery. People in this field work in crews across roles like producing, directing, camera, lighting, sound and post-production. The work is creative and

technical, with clear workflows, tight deadlines and frequent problem solving. Strong communication and teamwork are essential, especially when plans change on set.

Would this suit me?

If you're excited by what you watch on screens of all sizes, then a career in the screen industry could be for you. It's a great choice if you like working with technology, solving problems, collaborating with others and being part of a creative team, whether in the studio, on-location or in the edit suite.

Career Pathways

Pre-Production

- Art director
- Producer
- Production manager
- Screenwriter
- Technical engineer

Production

- Camera operator
- Director
- Floor manager
- Sound recordist
- Vision mixer

Post-Production

- Colourist
- Digital content creator
- Post-production supervisor
- Sound designer
- Video editor

NB: Advanced roles may require experience and/or further study.

WHAT will I learn?

- Camera, lighting and sound
- Documentary and news making
- Editing and post production
- Music videos
- Short films
- Studio & outside broadcast production
- Studio production workflows
- Visual storytelling

HOW will I learn?

- Small classes, whānau-style learning atmosphere
- Collaborative multi-platform projects
- Hands-on learning using industry-standard facilities, equipment and software including a fully-featured studio and modern field camera kits
- Supported, paid industry placements of up to 24 weeks
- Work with and learn from industry professionals

Industry connections

You'll learn in programmes shaped with input from media professionals, with guest tutors and opportunities to shadow people in the workplace. Staff maintain active industry relationships and bring current

practice into the studio. Industry partners support mentoring, project supervision, work experience and paid placements, helping you understand real workflows and build confidence before you graduate.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES
Bachelor of Broadcasting Communications (Screen Production)	7	Christchurch	Full-time 3 years	February

See the Creative Practice section for related postgraduate study options.

Starter options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES
New Zealand Certificate in Study and Employment Pathways (Open pathway)*	4	Christchurch	Full-time 19 weeks Part-time available	February, July

*If you don't meet the academic requirements for the degree, you can gain them via this starter course. Please note: completing the starter course doesn't guarantee entry to the higher-level qualification as other criteria may apply.



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FASHION

Fashion design is about turning ideas into clothing and accessories people can wear and use. It blends creativity with function, so your work needs to look good and work well in real life. Fashion professionals research trends, culture and materials, then develop concepts into patterns, samples and finished pieces.

They may work on design, pattern making, garment construction, textiles, production planning or how collections are presented and sold. Sustainability and ethical choices are also part of modern fashion, shaping materials, processes and impact.

Would this suit me?

This could be a good fit if you're drawn to creative ideas and the way clothing can tell a story. You'll do well if you like experimenting, noticing details and turning inspiration into something real. If you're interested in sewing or garment construction, that's a bonus, but not essential.

Career Pathways

Entry Level

- Fashion studio assistant
- Garment technician
- Styling assistant
- Machinist
- Pattern maker
- Merchandising assistant
- Fashion marketing/PR assistant

Intermediate

- Fashion designer
- Production coordinator
- Visual merchandiser
- Textile developer
- Design assistant
- Fashion PR/marketing manager
- e-commerce manager

Advanced

- Creative director
- Head of design
- Product manager
- Sustainability lead
- Brand manager
- Fashion designer/business owner

NB: Advanced roles may require experience and/or further study.

WHAT will I learn?

- Design thinking and creative process
- Research, concept development and storytelling
- Garment construction and craftsmanship
- Pattern making and fit development
- Textiles and materials
- Sustainable and ethical design approaches
- Digital tools for studio workflows
- Professional practice and industry readiness
- Cultural, ethical and industry-aware design practices

HOW will I learn?

- Practical and workroom learning
- Studio projects
- Practice-based research
- Lectures and seminars supporting design practice
- Iteration, critique and feedback
- Work-integrated learning and major projects

Industry connections

Ara is closely connected to the fashion industry through work-integrated learning. This includes guest speakers and project collaborations to help you develop work that reflects current practice. You'll also connect with

Fashion & Textiles New Zealand to support responsible, future-focused thinking. Ara has strong industry connections with Zambesi, Vicky Taylor (Taylor Boutique), Karen Walker and Swannndri.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES	
New Zealand Certificate in Fashion	4	Christchurch	Full-time 6 months	February, July	
Bachelor of Design (Fashion)	7	Christchurch	Full-time 3 years	February	

See the Creative Practice section for related postgraduate study options.



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VISUAL ART

Visual art is about developing a distinctive creative practice that explores ideas, perspectives and contemporary issues through making, experimentation and critical inquiry. Visual artists create artworks, installations and designed objects for galleries, public spaces, community projects and commercial clients.

They investigate how visual art can communicate, challenge and connect with audiences across gallery, community, cultural and digital contexts. Through studio projects, research, collaboration and reflection, they develop original creative responses using a range of materials, processes and emerging technologies.

Would this suit me?

If you're naturally drawn to making things, trying ideas and seeing what happens, you'll likely love applied visual arts. It suits imaginative people who enjoy working with materials, images and form. You need to be open to sharing work-in-progress, learning through trial and error and refining your ideas until they feel resolved.

Career Pathways

Entry Level

- Gallery assistant
- Studio assistant
- Exhibition assistant
- Art technician
- Community arts coordinator

Intermediate

- Independent creative practitioner
- Ceramicist
- Jewellery designer
- Sculptor
- Printmaker
- Mixed media artist
- Art educator

Advanced

- Self-employed artist
- Curator
- Arts manager
- Senior art educator
- Public art project lead
- Creative director
- Arts manager

NB: Advanced roles may require experience and/or further study.

WHAT will I learn?

- Creative thinking tools and idea generation
- Design principles and visual language
- Digital techniques for original creative work
- Drawing, observation and visual analysis
- Studio practice across 2D and 3D media
- Practice-based research and ethical practice
- Cultural, ethical and industry-aware design practice
- Professional practice, portfolios and exhibition work

HOW will I learn?

- Studio projects and workshops
- Lectures and seminars supporting design practice
- Real briefs and industry-informed challenges
- Iteration, critique and feedback
- Work-integrated learning and major projects

Industry connections

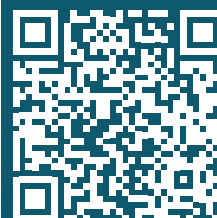
At Ara, you'll connect with the creative sector through briefs that reflect real-world problems, industry critique and opportunities to show work publicly. Our industry network supports activities such as professional discipline competitions, the Christchurch Art Show, BEST Awards and ECC Dowse awards. You may also take part in pitches and presentations with Christchurch

City Council, building confidence, networks and a strong portfolio. We have strong connections with the local visual arts community through The Centre of Contemporary Art Toi Moroki (CoCA), a leading art gallery in Ōtautahi Christchurch, and The Physics Room, a contemporary art space.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES	
New Zealand Certificate in Creativity	4	Christchurch	Full-time 6 months	February, July	
New Zealand Certificate in Digital Media and Design	4	Christchurch	Full-time 6 months	February, July	
Bachelor of Design (Applied Visual Art)	7	Christchurch	Full-time 3 years	February	

See the *Creative Practice* section for related postgraduate study options.



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VISUAL COMMUNICATION

Visual communication is the practice of solving communication problems with images, words and layout. Designers in this space create brands, campaigns, publications, packaging, websites and social content that help organisations connect with audiences. They research users, shape messages,

develop concepts and turn ideas into clear, consistent visuals across digital and print. Day to day, they might design a logo system, build a campaign look and feel, create information graphics or refine typography for readability. Many work in design studios, agencies, in-house teams or freelance.

Would this suit me?

If clear and engaging design catches your attention, and you enjoy problem solving and critical thinking, this area could suit you. It helps if you have an eye for detail, and you enjoy experimenting and collaborating. Being a team player is important too, as good visual communication relies on contributions from different specialists, like copywriters, social media planners, photographers, videographers and media buyers, all working towards one clear message.

Career Pathways

Entry Level

- Junior designer
- Design studio assistant
- Production artist
- Content creator
- Marketing assistant

Intermediate

- Graphic designer
- Web designer
- Motion graphics designer

Advanced

- Art director
- Creative director
- Brand strategist
- Design manager
- User experience UX designer

WHAT will I learn?

- Creative thinking and idea generation
- Visual language and design principles
- Image and text communication
- Typography and layout systems
- Information design and interpretation
- Branding, persuasion and campaign design
- Professional practice, design philosophy and ethics
- Research, contextual studies and project development
- Cultural, ethical and industry-aware design practice

HOW will I learn?

- Studio projects and workshops
- Lectures and seminars supporting design practice
- Real briefs and industry-informed challenges
- Iteration, critique and feedback
- Work-integrated learning and major projects

Industry connections

Through studio projects and professional practice, you'll work on briefs that reflect real design problems and may include external clients. Industry input shows up through guest experts, critiques and opportunities to enter competitions and showcases such as the

BEST Awards and PITCH. Some final projects may be undertaken in a workplace setting, helping you build a portfolio aligned with current industry expectations. Ara has a range of industry relationships including with Strategy, Plato, McCarthy Studio and Zoo Creative.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES	
New Zealand Certificate in Creativity	4	Christchurch	Full-time 6 months	February, July	
New Zealand Certificate in Digital Media and Design	4	Christchurch	Full-time 6 months	February, July	
Bachelor of Design (Visual Communication Design)	7	Christchurch	Full-time 3 years	February	

See the Creative Practice section for related postgraduate study options.



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GAME ANIMATION

Game animation brings together art, game theory, storytelling, and digital technology to create engaging screen-based experiences. People in this field create the characters, environments, and movement that define the look and feel of games and animated media. They translate linear narratives and interactive ideas into cohesive visual designs that support rich storytelling and enhance player experiences.

Their work can include concept development, sequential art, 2D and 3D assets, and animation across video games, film, and television. They often work collaboratively with other creative and technical specialists, using contemporary digital tools within production pipelines to bring ideas to life on screen.

Would this suit me?

If you're passionate about animation or games, as well as drawing or creating digitally, and you love the thought of turning ideas into immersive worlds, characters and stories, this area could be a great fit. You'll need to be imaginative, curious, willing to take on creative challenges, and committed to continually refining your work, as well as being able to work both independently and as part of a team.

Career Pathways

Entry Level

- Junior animator
- Game art assistant
- Asset creator
- Storyboard artist
- Production assistant

Intermediate

- Game animator
- 3D modeller
- Concept artist
- Game developer
- Interactive media designer
- Texture artist

Advanced

- Lead animator
- Senior game artist
- Animation director
- Creative director
- Studio lead
- Art director

NB: Advanced roles may require experience and/or further study.

WHAT will I learn?

- Visual storytelling and narrative design
- Sequential art and image making
- 2D and 3D creation
- Game design and animation industry production workflows
- Research-led creative practice
- Portfolio development and professional presentation approaches
- Cultural, ethical and industry-aware design practice

HOW will I learn?

- Studio-based projects
- Lectures and tutorials
- Collaborative briefs and peer critique
- Digital tools and online resources
- Client-based and industry-informed projects
- Work-integrated learning in year three

Industry connections

Industry links are built through studio projects, external briefs and work-integrated learning. As projects become more advanced, you may work with external clients, respond to real-world briefs and receive feedback from industry representatives. These connections help

you to test your skills in practical settings, understand professional expectations and graduate with a strong portfolio and work-ready experience. Ara has a range of industry connections in this space, including with Cerebral Fix and Knife Games.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES	
New Zealand Certificate in Digital Media and Design	4	Christchurch	Full-time 6 months	February, July	
Bachelor of Design (Game Animation)	7	Christchurch	Full-time 3 years	February	

See the Creative Practice section for related postgraduate study options.



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CREATIVE PRACTICE

Postgraduate study in creative practice is a trans-disciplinary area of study that supports individual conceptual thinking and domain-based knowledge. It also deepens the relationship between theory and practice. Relevant creative domains of practice include visual art, design, music theatre, film, animation, photography, fashion and broadcast media.

Postgraduate study in this space builds on existing expertise to strengthen conceptual capabilities and enhance creative abilities. Creative practitioners may work independently or collaboratively, shaping projects, performances, exhibitions, publications and other outcomes that contribute to cultural life, professional practice and public conversation.

Would this suit me?

This area may suit you if you already have a creative undergraduate degree and you want to refresh your thinking or take your practice further. Both recent graduates and established creative practitioners can benefit from further self-directed study within an academic structure of support. You'll need initiative, discipline and the ability to work independently, while also being open to critique, reflection and new ways of thinking about your work and its context.

Career Pathways

Study in this area can help you take your practice further by deepening your thinking, sharpening your creative direction and giving you the framework to develop substantial self-directed work. Building on your existing skills, it can support you to refine your ideas, strengthen your research capability and position your work more confidently within professional, cultural and academic contexts. It can also open pathways into more independent creative practice, advanced professional opportunities and further postgraduate study.

WHAT will I learn?

- Contemporary theory and discourse
- Practice-based research methodologies
- Research proposal development
- Contextual and cultural analysis
- Critical reflection and exegesis
- Self-directed project development
- Critique and presentation practice
- Domain-based knowledge development

HOW will I learn?

- Seminars and discussion-led learning
- One-to-one supervision
- Critiques and milestone presentations
- Self-directed studio or project work
- Blended face-to-face and online learning

Industry connections

Established creatives will already have industry connections, which will be enhanced through new portfolio outcomes and stronger conceptual skills. If you've recently completed undergraduate study, you'll build confidence and capability through the critique and

supervision processes of authentic creative projects with established practitioners. Ara's creative practice programmes strengthen critical feedback, sharpen professional judgement and support work-readiness across a range of creative fields.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES	
Postgraduate Certificate in Creative Practice	8	Christchurch	Full-time 1 year (2 semesters)	February	
Master of Creative Practice	9	Christchurch	Full-time 18 months (3 semesters)	February	



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this subject



BARBERING

Barbering is the craft of cutting, styling and grooming hair, often with a focus on shorter styles, fades and beard work. Barbers combine technical skill with a strong service mindset, starting with a client consultation then delivering a precise finish that suits the person's face shape, hair type and lifestyle.

Day to day work includes scissor and clipper cutting, traditional wet shaving, beard trimming and shaping, plus maintaining clean, safe tools and workspaces. Many barbers build their brand through social media and repeat clients.

Would this suit me?

Barbering could suit you if you're hands-on, people focused and keen on style and grooming trends. You'll do well if you're reliable and comfortable chatting with different people. Attention to detail and good time management help, along with resilience when it gets busy, a positive attitude and willingness to learn.

Career Pathways

Entry Level

- Junior barber
- Barbershop assistant
- Trainee barber
- Grooming assistant

Intermediate

- Barber
- Senior barber
- Barber stylist
- Mobile barber

Advanced

- Barbershop manager
- Barbershop owner
- Barber educator
- Platform artist

WHAT will I learn?

- Scissor cutting techniques
- Classic cuts and modern styles
- Clipper work and fading
- Traditional wet shaving techniques
- Beard trimming, shaping and design
- Client consultation and customer service skills
- Cultural and historic influences on barbering
- Professional standards including barbershop health and safety practices
- Business systems for working in a barbershop
- Professional communication and behaviour

HOW will I learn?

- Hands-on practice in a professional barbershop
- Real client appointments to build confidence
- Tutor feedback and skills coaching
- Combination of theory and practical activities and assessments
- Work experience in industry
- Industry guest speakers and insights
- Community outreach pop-up barbershop

Industry connections

Through work experience placements, you'll gain an understanding of real barbershop routines and workplace expectations. Guest speakers and industry professionals will share current trends, techniques and career insights, while Ara's membership of Hair & Barber New Zealand provides access to resources, free

entry to national competitions and opportunities to learn from industry leaders. You'll also be encouraged to enter Barber Crusade competitions, helping you build confidence, grow your professional network and showcase your skills.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES	
New Zealand Certificate in Commercial Barbering	4	Christchurch	Full-time 1 year	February	



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BEAUTY THERAPY & COSMETICS

Beauty therapy and cosmetics is a client-focused personal services field that combines skin care, body treatments, hair removal and make-up. Beauty therapists consult with clients, assess needs, plan services, carry out treatments safely, and recommend products and aftercare. Work is usually hands-on in salons, spas and beauty clinics, with some roles based

in retail counters or working freelance for events. Days often include appointments, maintaining treatment rooms and equipment, completing client records, and supporting sales and customer service while keeping strong hygiene standards.

Would this suit me?

This area could suit you if you enjoy working with people and want a role that blends care, detail and creativity. You'll be comfortable listening, explaining options and building trust. It helps if you're interested in skin care, make-up and wellbeing, and you're organised, steady and happy to work in a busy, client-facing environment.

Career Pathways

Entry Level

- Salon assistant
- Beauty clinic receptionist
- Cosmetics retail assistant
- Junior make-up assistant

Intermediate

- Beauty therapist
- Skin care therapist
- Spa therapist
- Make-up artist

Advanced

- Senior beauty therapist
- Electrologist
- Salon manager
- Product company representative
- Account manager
- Salon owner

WHAT will I learn?

- Professional standards, hygiene, health and safety
- Client consultations and tailored treatment planning
- Advanced electrical facial treatments and devices
- Advanced body therapies and massage techniques
- Advanced hair removal, including electrolysis
- Anatomy, physiology and treatment-related science
- Skin and body conditions, advice and referral
- Business operations, sales and client care

HOW will I learn?

- Tutor-led classes, tutorials and demonstrations
- Hands-on practice in training salons
- Supervised services in our on-campus clinic
- Work-integrated learning in clinic or industry
- Portfolios, projects and practical assessments
- Blended learning using online resources

Industry connections

Your learning is shaped by industry expectations and feedback, with guest speakers, seminars and specialist demonstrations. You'll develop work-ready skills in realistic training salons, then apply them in our

on-campus clinic for real clients. Work-integrated learning is built into the programme, and in some cases you may complete it in an industry setting to strengthen your confidence and professional practice.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES	
New Zealand Certificate in Skincare and Cosmetics	3	Christchurch	Full-time 6 months	February, July	
New Zealand Certificate in Beauty Therapy	4	Christchurch, Timaru	Full-time 1 year	February, July [^]	
New Zealand Diploma in Beauty Therapy	5	Christchurch	Full-time 1 year	February	

[^]Christchurch only



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information on
this subject



HAIRDRESSING

Hairdressing is a hands-on trade that combines technique, creativity and people skills to help clients look and feel their best. Hairdressers consult with clients, analyse hair and scalp needs, recommend products and services then deliver treatments, styling, cutting and colouring. The work is fast paced and physical, with strong focus on hygiene, safety and

professional presentation. It can offer flexible hours, steady demand and opportunities to specialise, freelance, travel or run a business. Many stylists start in salons and progress as they build speed, confidence and a loyal client base.

Would this suit me?

Hairdressing could suit you if you enjoy working with people and like learning by doing. A good stylist is curious about trends, listens well and stays calm when things get busy. You'll need patience, resilience and pride in your work, plus steady hands and willingness to practise and take feedback.

Career Pathways

Level 3 graduates

- Salon assistant
- Junior hairstylist
- Apprentice hairstylist
- Shampoo and styling assistant

Level 4 graduates

- Hairstylist
- Colour technician
- Freelance stylist
- Barber

Advanced

- Senior stylist
- Salon manager
- Salon owner
- Educator
- Product representative

WHAT will I learn?

Level 3

- Client consultation and communication
- Hair and scalp analysis
- Shampooing and hair treatments
- Basic cutting techniques
- Colour application basics
- Blow-drying and finishing
- Setting, moulding and long hair-up styling
- Health, safety and hygiene

Level 4

- Advanced cutting, styling and colour techniques
- Colour removal, smoothing, and chemical reformation services
- Basic cutting and combination cutting techniques
- Fashion trends and creative styling approaches
- Professional social media setup (utilising social media to promote services)
- Client portfolio development

HOW will I learn?

- Tutor demonstrations and guided practice
- Practice on mannequins and models
- Supervised salon-style sessions with clients
- Industry-led demonstration days
- Work experience in a salon
- End-of-year showcase of your work

Industry connections

At Ara, you'll learn in an environment shaped by current salon practice, with support from industry salons, product companies and guest speakers. Industry-led demonstrations and work experience will help you build confidence with clients and understand workplace expectations. Through Ara's membership of Hair &

Barber New Zealand, you'll also gain access to industry resources, free entry to national competitions and opportunities to learn from industry leaders. An end-of-year showcase lets you present your work to industry professionals.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES
New Zealand Certificate in Hairdressing (Salon Support)*	3	Christchurch, Timaru	Full-time 1 year	February
New Zealand Certificate in Hairdressing (Professional Stylist)	4	Christchurch	Full-time 1 year	February

*Available free through Youth Guarantee. Conditions apply.

Starter options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES
New Zealand Certificate in Salon Skills (Introductory)*	2	Christchurch, Timaru	Full-time 6 months	February, July

*Available free through Youth Guarantee. Conditions apply.



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APPLY NOW

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City campus

130 Madras Street, Christchurch
Mon-Fri, 8am - 4.30pm

Manawa campus

276 Antigua Street, Christchurch
Mon-Fri, 8.30am - 4.30pm

Woolston campus

Ensors Road, Christchurch
Mon-Fri, 8am - 4.30pm

Timaru campus

32 Arthur Street, Timaru
Mon-Fri, 8am - 4.30pm

Connect with us:

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