

Nursing study and careers

Frequently asked questions



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SET**



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Study options and career opportunities

What nursing-related qualifications does Ara offer?

- New Zealand Diploma in Enrolled Nursing
- Bachelor of Nursing
- Graduate Certificate in Nursing

If I study nursing, what can I become?

- An Enrolled Nurse
- A Registered Nurse

What areas of nursing could I work in?

- Bone marrow transplant
- Cancer nursing
- Care of sick children
- Community nursing
- Coronary care
- District nursing
- Drug and alcohol
- Emergency department
- Forensic nursing
- Intensive care
- Medical nursing
- Mental health nursing
- Nurse educator
- Occupational health
- Operating theatre
- Plastic surgery
- Practice nursing
- Public health nursing
- Research
- Surgical nursing
- Women's health

Where do you teach your nursing programmes?

We deliver all nursing programmes in Christchurch. In Timaru we deliver the Bachelor of Nursing. We also deliver some nursing programmes, either partially or fully online.

What facilities do you have?

We have modern, well-equipped classrooms for tutorials and clinical simulation suites in Christchurch and Timaru.

What student support do you provide?

- Academic support
- Accommodation
- Childcare
- Disability services
- Health centre and counselling services
- International student support
- Library and learning resources
- Māori and Pacific support
- Recreation centre, student clubs and groups
- Scholarships and financial help
- Student advocacy
- Student support advisors



About Enrolled Nursing

What does an Enrolled Nurse do?

An Enrolled Nurse (or EN) works in partnership and collaboration with a Registered Nurse (RN) to deliver care to people in community, residential and hospital settings. ENs are registered with the Nursing Council of New Zealand and can work in all areas of health.

Tell me about the New Zealand Diploma in Enrolled Nursing programme

This is a full-time, Level 5 qualification that takes 18 months to complete and includes 700 hours of clinical practice in a variety of health settings.

The programme covers:

- Nursing as a discipline
- Applied structure and function of the human body
- Applied social science
- Clinical skills
- Rehabilitation
- Acute care
- Mental health

What are the practice areas Enrolled Nurses can work in?

- Aged care/dementia
- Community health
- Acute health
- Rehabilitation
- Mental health



What are the entry criteria for the New Zealand Diploma in Enrolled Nursing?

You must have achieved:

- NCEA Level 2, including 10 credits in Level 1 Mathematics/or Numeracy and 12 credits in Level 2 Science rich subjects

OR

- The New Zealand Certificate in Study and Employment Pathways (Level 3) Health and Science.

If English is not your first language, you must also have achieved:

- IELTS 6.5 in all subtests

How do I apply to study the New Zealand Diploma in Enrolled Nursing?

- Submit an application (online)
- Provide the 'Additional Requirements' form (available on the website), which includes providing two completed 'Referee Report' forms to be filled in by your referees
- Provide a personal statement (details on the website)

If I'm selected for the New Zealand Diploma in Enrolled Nursing programme, what else do I need to do before I start?

- Undergo a Police check (undertaken by Ara)
- Complete a health questionnaire and visit your doctor



About Registered Nursing

What does a Registered Nurse do?

Registered nurses provide nursing care to people with various medical conditions. They administer medication, monitor patient recover and progress, and educate patients and their families on disease prevention and post-hospital treatment.

Registered nurses attend to patients at the time of diagnosis and during the recuperation or recover phases. They explain reports to patients, conduct medical tests and interpret results. Nurses work very closely with doctors and therefore play a major role in the co-ordination and planning of a patient's care. They also communicate with family members and provide emotional support when necessary.

Tell me about the Bachelor of Nursing programme

This is a full-time, Level 7 degree qualification that takes three years to complete. It includes between 1100 and 1500 hours of clinical practice in a variety of health settings

Christchurch intakes: January, March and July

Timaru intakes: March and July

For more information on application opening and closing dates: [visit intakes](#)



The theory components covered by the programme include:

- Cultural safety
- Māori health
- Bioscience, social and behaviour science
- Health systems and policy
- Nursing assessments and clinical practice decision making
- Therapeutic communication skills
- Pharmacology
- Pathophysiology, genetics and disease states
- Treaty of Waitangi
- Health promotion
- Ethics and law
- Research and evidence-based practice
- Organisational structure and leadership
- Information technology

You'll also undertake clinical practice in these areas:

- Continuing care (year one)
- Mental health (year two)
- Medical – surgical (year two)
- Family, whānau and community (year three)
- Transition to Registered Nurse practice (year three)

What are the academic entry criteria for the Bachelor of Nursing for school leavers?

You must have achieved:

- University Entrance: NCEA Level 3 (60 credits at Level 3) which must include 14 credits at Level 3 in:
 - English OR an approved literacy subject
 - Biology OR physical education OR chemistry
 - One other subject from the list of approved subjects

AND

- Numeracy – 14 credits at Level 1 or above
- OR

You must have achieved the New Zealand Certificate in Study and Career Preparation Level 4 (Health pathway)

If English is not your first language, you must have evidence of a recent English language assessment.

What are the academic entry criteria for the Bachelor of Nursing for mature students?

If you don't have the necessary academic requirements, you need to complete the pre-entry course offered by Ara.

Recent successful study at tertiary level will be considered on an individual basis as evidence of meeting the entry criteria.

Qualifications in related subjects and work and life experience are also taken into account.

What are the personal entry requirements for the Bachelor of Nursing programme?

It's essential that you are:

- able to relate well to others
- able to apply yourself to study and work
- in good health (and you meet the requirements of the HPCA Act)

What is the selection process Bachelor of Nursing programme?

As there are more applicants than there are places, we need to apply a selection process. This process has four steps.

Processing of applications

This involves checking that each application is completed fully and academic criteria are met.

Selection

This involves assessing each applicant's educational qualifications, personal qualities and evidence of life experience.



Ranking of applicants

Once an applicant is deemed to have met the entry criteria, ranking is based on their personal statements and referee reports, with preference given to those who demonstrate they can meet the requirements of the Nursing Council of New Zealand, such as possessing suitable attributes for the profession. Applicants who aren't initially accepted but who meet entry criteria are waitlisted in order of ranking.

Applicants offered places

This involves offering places to successful applicants (either with or without conditions) and referring unsuccessful applicants to our health pathway programme, with a view to applying again.

How do I apply to study the Bachelor of Nursing programme?

- Submit an application (online)
- Provide the 'Additional Requirements' form (available on the website), which includes providing two completed 'Referee Report' forms, to be filled in by your referees
- Provide a personal statement (details on the website)

If I'm selected for the Bachelor of Nursing programme, what else do I need to do before I start?

- Undergo a Police check (undertaken by Ara)
- Complete a health questionnaire and visit your doctor

What does it cost to study a diploma or degree in nursing at Ara?

New Zealand Diploma in Enrolled Nursing (Year 1) domestic fees:

\$8,789 – \$9,000 per year (2026 fees)

Bachelor of Nursing (Year 1) domestic fees:

\$8,570 – \$9,535 per year (2026 fees)

Other expenses will include: purchasing Clinical Key (approx. \$314 (Enrolled Nursing) or \$517 (Bachelor of Nursing)) which gives access to online textbooks at a very reduced price compared to hard copies; textbooks (approx. \$800 in Year 1), uniforms and travel, indemnity insurance, stationery, any health-related vaccinations and any other health requirements e.g. MRSA test, printing.

What is required to practise as a Registered Nurse once I complete my qualification?

You'll need:

- A New Zealand Nursing Council Annual Practising Certificate, which requires ongoing professional development and nursing in clinical practice
- To meet legislative requirements including the HPCA Act (2003)

APPLY NOW

ara.ac.nz

City campus

130 Madras Street, Christchurch
Mon-Fri, 8.30am - 4.30pm

Timaru campus

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

Connect with us:

Connect with us here:

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