

New Zealand

Wide open spaces and a friendly population characterise New Zealand for many international students.

Agent views

'We receive lots of enquiries for courses in New Zealand. Students choose [this] country because they can obtain quality education at a reasonable cost compared to other leading education providing countries. New Zealand also scores in terms of the peaceful, friendly, clean and green environment which [it] offers.'

Achinto Roy, New Zealand Centre for Education, New Zealand

'Students are interested in an alternative to Australia, quality education and a reasonable cost of living. They are also interested in studying somewhere exciting and different. [I think] it is a beautiful, clean, safe country with fantastic opportunities for outdoor activities, such as skiing, sailing and hiking. We tell [students] to expect a country [with a] similar landscape to Norway.'

Keeley Johansson, Bjorknes Worldwide Education, Norway

'Students enjoy their stay in New Zealand. It is rather unusual for Russian students that the country is so small and it seems at the end of the world. Russian students are from cities and New Zealand is like a big village for them. Life in New Zealand is quiet and comfortable, where they can combine studies and pleasure - sports and different activities.'

Alexey Surin, Direct Talk, Russia

Originally called *Aotearoa*, meaning 'land of the long white cloud', by the indigenous Maori population, New Zealand has a number of distinctive geographical characteristics that international students find fascinating. The three active volcanoes on the country's North Island form the southern tip of the Pacific Rim of Fire which circles the Pacific Ocean, and, while there are no active volcanoes left on the South Island, hot springs, volcanic vents and other signs of volcanic activity dot the landscape.

Kathy Stanley, from the International School of English Language at Christchurch Polytechnic on the South Island, points out that the alpine thermal resort of Hanmer Springs is only a 90-minute drive from Christchurch. Apart from visiting the 'attractive hot pools' that are the focal point of the resort, Stanley says, 'While in Hanmer, there is the opportunity [for students] to bungee jump, ride in a jet boat, horse trek, mountain bike [and go on] forest walks.'

Its distinctive scenery gives New Zealand a special appeal for students wanting to take part in a variety of outdoor sports. Les Brighton, International Manager at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch - a city situated on the edge of a long-extinct volcano - says that the university offers students over 100 cultural, sporting and religious clubs and societies. 'It is very easy to get out of the city into the countryside and the mountains or the coastline,' he says. '[There is] windsurfing, skiing - five ski fields within an hour-and-a-half drive of the campus - kayaking, bush walking and easy access to the scenic tourist spots of the Southern Alps.'

The country's geographical features are also inextricably linked to the indigenous Maori culture, which attributes special significance to the physical landscape. Students studying at the Waikato Institute of Technology in Hamilton are given the opportunity to experience some of this rich culture first-hand. '[We arrange an] annual *Marae* trip to Rotura,' says Irene Robb, International Manager at the university. '[Students] stay in a Maori village and learn about Maori culture.'

The prevalence of wide open spaces and the relatively small population provide a haven for sports enthusiasts, but

also give the country a reputation for offering visiting students a high quality of life. 'Some big city attractions we may lack,' says Adrian Kerr, Director of Aoraki International College in Timaru. 'In virtually every other area we have rich options. Easy [access] to recreational and cultural activities is a major plus. We have students in choral groups, church groups, social clubs, community conversation groups and soccer teams.'

Brighton agrees that the smaller size of cities in New Zealand has advantages for students. 'Christchurch is the largest city in the South Island with 360,000 people,' he says. 'It is big enough to have lots of things going on - concerts, cultural activities, extensive sports opportunities, city-wide events and festivals - yet is small enough to be able to get around quickly and easily.'

In addition, the New Zealand people have a reputation for friendliness and openness to strangers and Kerr points out that host families play a vital role in introducing international students to the local way of life. 'Host families will generally involve their student in their interests and New Zealand host families have a focus on sports, hobbies and away-from-home activities,' he says.

According to Peter Wilkins, International Manager at the Eastern Institute of Technology in Hawke's Bay, 'Two [highlights of their stay] stand out for most of our students: the supportive and caring way in which they are taught and the support and care of their host family parents.'

Selection of education institutions in New Zealand

	Location	Use agents	No. of students	% os studs
Aoraki Polytechnic	Timaru	✓	1,200	8
Auckland University of Technology	Auckland	✓	16,000	10
Bay of Plenty Polytechnic	Tauranga	✓	2,000	3
Capital Language Academy	Wellington	✓	400	100
Christchurch Polytechnic	Christchurch	✓	5,000	8
Eastern Institute of Technology	Hawke's Bay	✓	12,200	2.5
Manukau Institute of Technology	Auckland	✓	22,000	8
Northland Polytechnic	Whangarei	✓	3,400	4
Otago Polytechnic	Dunedin	✓	3,650	6
Tairāwhiti Polytechnic	Gisborne	✓	4,500	3
University of Canterbury	Christchurch	✓	11,500	10
Waikato Institute of Technology	Hamilton	✓	13,000	6