

# New Zealand

## Demographics for New Zealand

Population:	4,035,461 (July 2005 est.)
GDP (by PPP method):	US\$92.51 billion
Currency (inc code):	New Zealand dollar (NZD)
Language(s):	English (official), Maori (official)
Internet country code:	.nz

## Primary and secondary education

New Zealand has a state education system in which the primary, intermediate and secondary levels are free, secular and compulsory for children aged between six and 16. While most New Zealand children attend some form of Early Childhood Education, formal education typically begins at the age of five years. Primary schools cater for children from Year 0 to Year 6 (about ages five to ten). Years 7 and 8 may be completed at a primary school, a separate intermediate school, or an area school. Area schools cater for students from primary to secondary school level in one, generally rural, location. Secondary schools (also known as high school or college) provide for students in Years 9 through 13 (about ages 13 to 18).

The New Zealand curriculum is developed and administered by the Ministry of Education, who also regularly review and audit all schools in order to ensure the curriculum is being followed accurately. The curriculum provides guidelines covering teaching, learning, assessment and good practice for all students in all New Zealand schools. The guideline structure allows a high degree of tolerance for the cultural and religious variations in local communities.

In 2002 a new qualification framework was introduced, the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA). This new qualification reflects the change in direction of education in New Zealand towards a greater balance in the acknowledgement of both academic and vocational achievement. Students in Years 11 to 13 are assessed on unit standards across a range of learning areas, earning credits that lead to the award of a National Certificate. Students wishing to enter university are required to attain the common entrance standard by achieving a minimum number of credits from an approved subject list, and meeting literacy and numeracy requirements.

### **Higher education**

In New Zealand the term tertiary education encompasses all post-school education and training. The recognition that tertiary education is a key enabler of social and economic development has led to dramatic change in the domestic tertiary education market in the last 30 years. Tertiary education has now become the norm rather than the exception, and universities in particular have had to accommodate the move from serving an elite segment of students, to a much broader market.

#### *Tertiary education providers*

The tertiary education sector is very diverse and includes 35 public institutions, including eight universities, 20 institutes of technology and polytechnics, four colleges of education and three Wānanga (Māori Tertiary Education Institutes). In addition there exists a diverse range of private training institutions. Institutes of technology and polytechnics offer a range of technical, vocational and professional programs, while universities are characterized by a wide diversity of teaching and research, especially at a higher level.

#### *Universities*

University education was established in New Zealand in 1869 and there are eight state-funded, multi-disciplinary and multi-faculty universities in New Zealand. While all eight universities offer a broad range of subjects in areas such as commerce/business science and the arts, they each have a different perspective, culture and often specialize in a particular area such as medicine, engineering or veterinary science. These eight universities constitute the national system of higher education and are autonomous, self governing and empowered to award their own degrees.

#### *Admission/application requirements*

Minimum entrance requirements to undergraduate programmes at New Zealand universities are governed by national regulations. For students with qualifications from New Zealand and other developed countries, this is usually

a successfully completed Year 13 qualification or equivalent. However, there is also an open entry policy for domestic students aged 20 years and over, regardless of secondary school achievement. Most students gain entrance to undergraduate study with a New Zealand Year 13 secondary school qualification. In recent years there has been a shift away from first-time students coming directly from secondary school, towards first-time students coming from employment.

#### *Qualifications*

Generally degree-level programmes are offered by universities, while polytechnics and other institutions predominantly offer more technical courses of study. A Bachelor's degree is a theory-based qualification and normally requires three or more years of full-time study. The highest level of undergraduate study is the Bachelor's degree with Honours, requiring an additional year of advanced study, which may include a research dissertation. Master's degrees typically require a further one-two years of study in one discipline or coherent field of study, and are often a combination of taught courses and research thesis. Doctorates involve around four years of full-time study beyond a Bachelor with Honours degree or postgraduate qualification, and require a substantial thesis of original, independent research. In 2003, 128,000 students were studying towards Bachelor's degrees, 10,900 towards Master's degrees and 3,800 towards Doctorate degrees.

#### *Governance and financial structure*

New Zealand universities have considerable responsibility for their own governance and management, with the main sources of income being from student tuition fees and the Government grant. While government policy and administration decisions are influential, this funding function is the government's main involvement with the universities. The Government grant has two components; tuition and research. The tuition component, based on domestic student numbers, represents most of the grant. Since 2004, the research funding component is gradually being converted from being based on postgraduate enrolments to being based on the quality of research in each institution. This new research funding mechanism is called the Performance Based Research Fund (PBRF).

#### *Accreditation structure and authority*

The universities in New Zealand have developed inter-institutional bodies responsible for maintaining standards that are internationally respected. Programme development and assessment is the focus of activity at inter-institutional levels.

## **Business education**

### *Providers*

A wide range of business programmes are offered in New Zealand, with the main providers of degree-level business education being universities. Each university has an academic division responsible for delivering business programmes, generally called a School, Faculty or College of Business. All eight universities offer undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and degrees, up to the level of Doctorates. Additionally, some universities offer short, intensive courses designed for the corporate market.

### *Programs*

The undergraduate degrees offered by the universities often differ in title but are generally similar in curriculum. The majority of universities award a generic degree, such as a Bachelor of Commerce or a Bachelor of Business, with the additional specification of the major area of study, for example BCom (economics). To fulfil the requirements of a major, students must complete core components of work as well as elect additional study according to degree requirements and individual interests. A Bachelor with Honours degree requires a further year of advanced study in the major area, often requiring a dissertation, and is denoted BCom (Hons).

Master's students can study towards the generalist Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree, or specialize in a particular field, for example a Master of Commerce (MCom) in marketing. Admission to a specialist Master's degree is based on documentary evidence (including the academic record) of the applicant's ability to undertake postgraduate study in a specialist field of enquiry or professional practice. The minimum entry qualification is a Bachelor's degree or equivalent.

MBA programs around New Zealand are very diverse, offering students part-time and full-time programmes that range from 15 months to four years. Executive MBA programs, targeted at working executives, are also offered by a number of universities and are largely delivered outside normal business hours. MBA applicants are required to hold a Bachelor's degree, an acceptable professional qualification, or have appropriate experience in management or administration. Entry criteria for MBA programmes include the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) and interviews, reflecting the professional focus of this degree.

Doctoral research in New Zealand involves a sustained, rigorous and systematic approach to a specific body of knowledge, culminating in a research thesis. The thesis must show originality and independence, and make a significant contribution to knowledge in the particular field. Admission into a business Doctorate (PhD) programme in New Zealand requires students to have obtained either a first or second class pass in a Bachelor with Honours degree or a Master's degree. Students are required to consult with a PhD

advisor or the head of a relevant department, and submit a research proposal for acceptance by a higher degrees committee or equivalent. The completed thesis is submitted for examination by three people with standing in the field, and the candidate may also be required to defend the thesis in an oral presentation.

### *Faculty*

Although varying across the different universities, the staff complement at New Zealand business schools has been strengthened by many international staff members. The strong drive towards internationalization and the limited domestic population means that academics are often recruited from overseas posts. Additionally, a major part of the motivation for seeking accreditation with international agencies is the desire to send positive signals about the business school to prospective high-quality academic staff. In attracting new staff, both from New Zealand and internationally, the new PBRF system will provide important signals to potential academic staff seeking a high-quality research environment. Business schools also contract the services of the business community to enhance the curriculum with relevant professional input from the world of business.

### *Students*

Of all New Zealand university graduates in 2003, 27.1 percent graduated with a degree in business, with 53 percent of these business graduates being female. Enrolments in business programs have remained a relatively constant proportion of the overall growth of universities, as a percentage of total enrolments. In 2003 New Zealand universities awarded 4,195 Bachelor or Bachelor with Honours degrees, 851 Master's degrees and 21 Doctorates in business. Business programmes attract high numbers of international students, accounting for 45.2 percent of all international graduates of New Zealand universities in 2003.

### *Governance and financial structure*

Business schools are generally autonomous divisions within each university. Schools are allocated a proportion of the income generated by tuition and research activities, according to the priorities of the university. Business schools derive additional income from commercial research and consultancy activities as well as corporate sponsorship.

### *Authorisations/accreditation*

Some business schools in New Zealand have gained, or are seeking, accreditation with international accreditation agencies. This is largely in response to the limited domestic market for students and staff, as well as the strong drive to internationalize. The two most prominent of these are EQUIS

and AACSB International, whose international accreditation systems seek to raise the standard of business and management education worldwide. A number of business schools in New Zealand have also been accredited with the Association of MBAs, signalling a commitment to delivering internationally recognised programmes for business executives.

Estimated number of institutions providing:

- Undergraduate business degrees = 25.
- Master's business degrees = 10.
- Doctorate business degrees = 10.
- Issues facing New Zealand business schools.

In recent years, there has been considerable change in the environment within which business schools operate, at university, national and international level. It is expected that this turbulence will continue, and New Zealand business schools must continue to learn and adapt. The most significant issues facing business schools are the tightening job market, funding changes and the pressure to limit fee increases.

The research-output focus of the Government's PBRF funding scheme has heightened the competition for highly qualified staff in a time when the recruitment of quality staff is already a problem, given the decline internationally in doctoral graduates. New Zealand business schools also face continual pressure for academic staff remuneration that maintains international competitiveness in recruitment and retention.

While individual universities are permitted to set their own student fee levels (therefore influencing the degree of funding received from fees), there is strong pressure from student unions to freeze or even reduce fees. Further, the government has recently announced a policy to attract increased international postgraduate enrollments that has the potential to impact on fee levels and dictate supervisory requirements for international students.

Additionally, the tertiary market continues to evolve, and business schools must address issues such as the growth in the number of Māori and Tangata Pasifika (Pacific Island peoples) entering university, along with the increase in the number of school leavers who do not have the foundation skills needed to commence degree-level study. With predictions of increasing growth in higher education services, and demand for continuing education among mature age students, business schools are required to continually modify their program offerings to cater to the needs of the changing student market. The increasing requirement for technology-rich education also places financial pressure on business schools for the frequent improvement of information technology services.

**Professor David Buisson**

*Dean, School of Business, University of Otago*

## Sources

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