

Workplace
learning?

Making good
tertiary choices

Training?

Study?

01.



TERTIARY? WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

Primary, secondary, tertiary. Tertiary education is any form of learning that happens usually after completing secondary education. It may be study or training at a tertiary education organisation, or training in the workplace.

Many people doing tertiary study or training are recent school leavers, but not all. People of all ages, in all areas of work, continue to study or train to keep their knowledge and skills up to date.

KNOW YOUR OPTIONS

Tertiary courses range from transition programmes (school to work), practical and academic courses, through to postgraduate study and research. There are also lots of trade, technical and business qualifications you can get on the job through workplace learning. Look at what Industry Training Organisations offer, including apprenticeships.

BROADEN YOUR THINKING

It's tempting – and easier – to choose a path that follows on from a subject you did well in at school. But think about what other areas your skills and knowledge might lead to. Investigate the jobs beyond your own experience – and your friends' and family's. There are all sorts of jobs and career pathways that you may not have heard of.



EVERYONE CHANGES

There's a good chance that by the time you are 25 or 30, your career direction will be different from the path you took when you left school. Think about that.

On one hand, the decisions you make when you leave school are not the end of the journey. On the other hand, there's no point burning up too many years and wasting money on something you might not stick with. Do your best to explore widely and keep a range of options in mind until you are sure.

03.

FIND THE RIGHT QUALIFICATION

When you want to compare different qualifications and see which education organisations are offering them, you can use the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF). The NZQF is a comprehensive list of all quality-assured qualifications in New Zealand.

Go to www.nzqa.govt.nz/nzqf to search the New Zealand Qualifications Framework. Use keywords to search an area that interests you or use the drop-down menu under subject areas.

You can see what qualification type your chosen qualification is, and the level and the number of credits you will earn. All qualifications on the NZQF have an outcome statement. This provides an overview of the knowledge, skills and attributes you could expect to gain, and what further education or employment it may lead to.

You can also look at the Education & training section of the Careers New Zealand website, www.careers.govt.nz.



KNOW THE SETUP

In New Zealand there are lots of different ways to learn and places to study at tertiary level. There are eight universities, 20 polytechnics and institutes of technology, three wānanga, over 700 private training establishments (PTEs) and nearly 40 Industry Training Organisations (ITOs). To do workplace training or an apprenticeship, you'll need to have a job.

SHOP AROUND

You've found a tertiary course that seems right for you, but it's highly likely that other tertiary providers will be offering something similar. Look at the alternatives. The differences between what seem like similar programmes could help you clarify exactly what you want.



THINK ABOUT YOUR WHOLE LIFE

Think through all the changes you might need to make in your life. Do you want to move to another town or stay in your home town? Would you miss your friends and family? How will you keep up a sport or hobby you love? Do you want a big loan? Could you manage study or training as well as part-time or casual work? Are you prepared for a different style of learning and living?



UNDERSTAND QUALIFICATION LEVELS

The NZQF has ten qualification levels. Each level is based on the complexity of learning. Level 1 is the least complex and level 10 the most.

Levels 1–3 are broadly comparable to senior secondary education (eg, NCEA) and basic trades training; levels 4–6 to advanced trades, technical and business qualifications; and levels 7–10 are for advanced qualifications of graduate and postgraduate standard.

LOOK AT ALL THE ANGLES

Compare all aspects of the course. How long is it? What are the full costs of fees, books and materials? What are the ongoing costs of accommodation, living and travelling to and from classes? What learning support is there? Can you transfer your credits to another programme if you decide to change?

MEETING THE COSTS

Think about how you will cover the costs of your tertiary education. Applying for scholarships is one possibility. You might also be eligible for a student loan or allowance. If you decide to do workplace training, your course fees may be subsidised. Visit the Studylink website, www.studylink.govt.nz, to look at funding options for your study or training.



HOW USEFUL WILL YOUR QUALIFICATION BE?

Be sure you know how valuable your qualification will be in the job market or as preparation for further study or training. Check out the prerequisites for other courses you have in mind. Research your job prospects – look at job vacancies, talk to employers who are likely to employ you and ask others who have completed the course how their job hunting went.

CHECK OUT YOUR PROVIDER

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) manages quality assurance processes for the tertiary sector (except for universities which have their own system).

Before enrolling with a tertiary education organisation, you should check:

Is the education provider registered?

Registration with NZQA ensures that a private training establishment is providing a sound and stable learning environment. Institutes of technology and polytechnics, universities and wānanga are set up separately by government legislation so do not need to be registered.

Is the programme approved?

Programme approval confirms that a programme is based on clear and consistent aims, content, outcomes and assessment practices which lead to a recognised qualification.

Is the organisation accredited to run the programme?

Accreditation with NZQA confirms that an organisation can deliver an approved programme.

Has the organisation had a recent external evaluation and review?

External evaluation and review (EER) is a periodic evaluation of a tertiary education organisation. It provides an independent judgement of the organisation's educational performance.

For more information, including EER reports and a list of providers, see the Providers & partners section of the NZQA website, www.nzqa.govt.nz.

If you are a student from outside New Zealand, you should also check if the organisation has signed up to the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students.



EVERYONE'S DIFFERENT

Take, or make, opportunities to meet the tutors and look at the facilities if you can. Talk to people who are already in the course or job you are thinking about. Get a feel for the community that will be a big part of your life. Is it right for you?



LOOK AT HOW OTHERS DID

Information on how well tertiary providers are helping their students to achieve is available from the Tertiary Education Commission.

The information seeks to answer questions such as how many students are:

- successfully completing their courses?
- completing their qualifications?
- progressing to higher level study?
- being retained in study?

Check out the Learners & organisations section of the TEC website, www.tec.govt.nz.

GET ALL THE INFORMATION

Once you've chosen your education or training pathway, make sure, when you enrol or sign up, that you get full details such as dates, costs, refunds if you need to withdraw, information about resources, student support services and complaints procedures. Registered and accredited providers should have all of these.

MAKE THE DECISION THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU NOW

Do the best research you can and make the decision that's right for you at this stage of your life. But remember that you will probably be making new career decisions throughout your life. The decision you make now doesn't have to be forever. It's okay to change your mind, your plans, even your choice of career as you change as a person.



GETTING YOUR RESULTS ONLINE

Did you know you can order your Record of Achievement and School Results Summary from the NZQA website? Your tertiary provider may require these documents.



NEED INFORMATION AND ADVICE?

There's plenty of information out there, but a lot of it is designed to persuade you to follow a particular path. Careers New Zealand is one of your few sources of independent information and advice.



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY
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