

Ara Institute of Canterbury

Health, Science & Support

Te Ara Waioira, Pūtaiao me te Taunaki



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**GET
SET**



ara.ac.nz

STUDY GUIDE 2027

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.

Ara Timaru campus
163 km to the south



ARA
CITY
CAMPUS

ARA
WOOLSTON
CAMPUS

ARA
MANAWA
CAMPUS

New Brighton Beach

Te Kaha Stadium

Hagley Park

Port Hills

Avon River

WHY CHOOSE ARA?

1.

Smaller classes make a big difference

2.

You'll learn from people who've done the job themselves

3.

Industry experience is part of the learning experience

4.

Our facilities reflect modern workplaces

5.

Academic, learning & wellbeing support are always available

6.

Flexible pathways give you options

7.

Our qualifications are recognised around the world

8.

You'll graduate skilled, confident and prepared for what's next

What 'Ara' means

Ara is the Māori word for path or journey. It represents the learning process, the many pathways to success, and the routes and rivers that criss-cross the Canterbury Plains from the mountains to the sea.

The phrase *'Ara rau, taumata rau'* translates to *'many pathways, many opportunities'*.

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO SUCCEED.

Feel supported, every step

Support available includes:

- Learning and study support
- Disability and accessibility services
- Health and wellbeing services
- Counselling and advocacy
- Māori and Pacific student support
- International student support
- Career and study guidance

Learn, connect and belong

Campus life includes:

- Libraries and study spaces
- Sport and recreation facilities
- Student clubs and interest groups
- Student events and activities
- On-campus cafés
- Student accommodation

Access funding for your studies

Funding options include:

- Scholarships
- Student loans and allowances
- Financial hardship assistance
- Youth Guarantee funding
- Māori and Pacific training initiatives
- Support through StudyLink and Work and Income



Scan to view maps of each campus on our website.



HEALTH PROMOTION

Health promotion focuses on improving health and wellbeing across communities and populations. Health promoters look at what shapes health such as housing, income, culture, education and the environment, then work to reduce inequities. They develop strategies like education, public campaigns, supportive environments, better access to services and policy advocacy.

The work is collaborative, bringing together government, iwi, community organisations and workplaces. In Aotearoa New Zealand, health promotion is grounded in Te Tiriti o Waitangi and well-established public health principles.

Would this suit me?

Health promotion could be a good fit if you're interested in health and you want a non-clinical role. The work involves contributing to practical, long-term solutions that help individuals, whānau and communities live well. It requires collaboration, good communication and a solutions-focused approach – skills which are taught and developed throughout the programme.

Career Pathways

Entry Level

- Health promotion assistant
- Community wellbeing worker
- Peer educator
- Health coach
- Workplace wellbeing coordinator

Intermediate

- Health promoter
- Health promotion coordinator
- Community health advisor
- Programme facilitator
- Project officer
- Health, safety and wellbeing advisor

Advanced

- Health promotion manager
- Public health advisor
- Policy advisor
- Population health strategist
- Senior project manager

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

WHAT will I learn?

- Health promotion principles and key frameworks
- Te Tiriti o Waitangi in practice
- Social determinants of health and equity
- Behaviour change and healthy lifestyle approaches
- Advocacy, ethics and inclusive practice
- Planning, implementing and evaluating initiatives
- Research, evidence and critical thinking
- Sustainability and planetary health perspectives

HOW will I learn?

- Interactive workshops and active learning activities
- Case studies and real-world projects
- Guest speakers and industry kōrero
- Work-integrated learning placements (200 hours)
- Team-based learning and peer feedback
- Reflective portfolios and guided self-review

Industry connections

Industry input helps keep learning relevant, with advisory feedback, guest speakers and stakeholder events. You'll build networks through work-integrated learning placements in community and health settings, including opportunities with organisations such as

Te Whatu Ora, Pegasus Health and Māori and Pacific providers. Applied projects and supervision support you to practise professional communication and deliver initiatives that respond to real needs.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES
Bachelor of Applied Science (Health Promotion)	7	Christchurch	Full-time 3 years Part-time up to 6 years	February, July

Starter options

Starter courses can help you meet the academic entry requirements for higher-level programmes.

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

Please note: Some higher-level programmes have additional entry/selection criteria. See our website for full details.



Scan for more information on this subject



HUMAN NUTRITION

Human nutrition is the science of how the body uses food to function, grow and stay healthy. It looks at how nutrients are digested, absorbed and used, and how eating patterns influence health across the lifespan. Because diet is a changeable driver of long-term health, nutrition professionals often support individuals and communities to make practical, evidence-based choices.

Work in this field can span wellness, sport and performance, community health, policy and product development.

Would this suit me?

Human nutrition could suit you if you enjoy science and want to understand how food affects health and wellbeing. Through your study, you'll develop the skills to apply nutrition knowledge in practical ways, including working with others and communicating ideas clearly while taking culture, context and real-life constraints into account.

Career Pathways

Entry Level

- Nutritionist
- Wellness support coordinator
- Community health promoter

Intermediate

- Health coach
- Nutrition consultant
- Corporate wellness consultant
- Sports nutritionist
- Health promoter (nutrition focus)
- Policy support adviser

Advanced

- Registered nutritionist
- Public health nutrition adviser
- Sustainable nutrition consultant
- Food product developer
- Precision nutrition specialist
- Tele-health nutritionist

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

WHAT will I learn?

- Human digestion, absorption and metabolism
- Nutrients and their role in health
- Dietary assessment and nutrition planning
- Evaluating nutrition evidence and research
- Nutrition psychology and behaviour change
- Phytonutrients and functional foods
- Public health nutrition and policy thinking
- Cultural, social and environmental influences

HOW will I learn?

- Interactive classes with activities and discussion
- Practical sessions focused on real-life challenges
- Projects designed for individuals and communities
- 100-hour industry placements in years 2 and 3
- A final practicum project with a host provider
- Guest speakers bringing workplace perspectives

Industry connections

Learning is strengthened through industry practicums in the second and third year of study, with a final-year placement project completed with a practicum provider. Guest speakers add current, real-world insight and help link theory to what happens in workplaces. Teaching

staff are registered nutritionists with extensive industry experience, and classroom learning is designed to be practical and closely connected to real-life nutrition challenges.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES
Bachelor of Applied Science (Human Nutrition)^	7	Christchurch	Full-time 3 years Part-time up to 6 years	February, July

^This study area is a pathway to registration as a nutritionist.

Starter options

Starter courses can help you meet the academic entry requirements for higher-level programmes.

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

Please note: Some higher-level programmes have additional entry/selection criteria. See our website for full details.



Scan for more information on this subject



SPORT & EXERCISE

The area of sport and exercise focuses on how physical activity supports health, wellbeing and performance. Professionals in this field work with individuals, teams and communities to help people move more, move better and stay active across different stages of life. This can include coaching sport, performance analysis, designing exercise plans, supporting community

wellbeing, or helping athletes train safely and effectively. The work combines science, planning and people skills, using evidence to guide decisions while creating positive, motivating experiences through sport and exercise.

Would this suit me?

If you love sports and exercise and you're interested in helping people achieve better results in those areas, this could be the field for you. A genuine interest in supporting others is one of the biggest strengths you can bring. An analytical mindset helps too, along with strong people skills — listening, explaining ideas clearly, and adapting your approach to different individuals and settings.

Career Pathways

Entry Level*

- Personal trainer
- Fitness instructor
- Group exercise leader
- Gym floor instructor

Intermediate

- Sports coach
- Strength and conditioning coach
- Sport coordinator
- Community sport worker
- Exercise or health advisor

Advanced

- Sport performance analyst
- High-performance coach
- Strength and conditioning lead
- Sport development manager
- Programme manager

*Entry-level roles reflect outcomes of the Certificate in Exercise and may also suit degree graduates.

WHAT and HOW will I learn?

Certificate

- Practical fitness skills
- Basic anatomy and movement fundamentals
- Coaching basics and communication with diverse groups
- Designing simple, safe training sessions for general fitness
- Learning through practical classes, group activities and real-world tasks

Degree

- Deeper anatomy, physiology and applied sport science
- Exercise programming for health, performance and athletic development
- Coaching practice informed by diverse cultures and communities
- Sport performance analysis, data use and research skills
- Training methods for individuals, teams and athletes
- Event and programme coordination in sport
- Practical learning in gyms, sport spaces and applied science labs
- 100-hour industry placements in Year 2 and 3

Industry connections

Sport and exercise at Ara is shaped with industry input, so what you learn reflects current workforce needs. Teaching staff are active in the field and bring real experience into class. Degree students complete work

placements in their second and third year, gaining supervised hours in workplaces such as gyms, sports clubs, and community or health-focused programmes — building confidence, networks and work-ready skills.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES	
New Zealand Certificate in Exercise	4	Christchurch	Full-time 6 months Part-time up to 3 years	February, July	
Bachelor of Applied Science (Sport & Exercise)	7	Christchurch	Full-time 3 years Part-time up to 6 years	February, July	

Starter options

Starter courses can help you meet the academic entry requirements for higher-level programmes.

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES
New Zealand Certificate in Study and Employment Pathways (Health & Science pathway)	3	Christchurch and online^	Full-time 19 weeks Part-time available	February, July
New Zealand Certificate in Study and Employment Pathways (Pre-Health pathway)	4	Christchurch, Timaru	Full-time 19 weeks Part-time available	February, July

Please note: Some higher-level programmes have additional entry/selection criteria. See our website for full details.

^February only



Scan for more information on this subject



OSTEOPATHY

Osteopathy is a hands-on healthcare profession that helps improve how the body moves and functions. Osteopaths assess pain and movement issues such as back and neck pain, headaches and injuries, then use techniques like joint mobilisation, soft tissue work and gentle stretching to support recovery.

They take a whole-person view of health, considering lifestyle, environment and culture, and involve other registered health professionals when needed. Osteopaths are registered primary healthcare practitioners regulated under the Health Practitioners Competency Assurance Act.

Would this suit me?

Osteopathy could be a good fit if you're science minded, interested in how the body works and comfortable providing hands-on care. The work is quite technical, so it helps if you're good with detailed information and thinking things through in a logical way. You also need to be a good listener and communicator.

Career Pathways

Intermediate

- Registered osteopath
- Associate osteopath

Advanced

- Senior osteopath
- Self-employed osteopath
- Clinic director/Practice owner
- Specialist osteopath (e.g. sports, paediatrics, chronic pain)
- Osteopathy educator
- Researcher

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

WHAT will I learn?

- Human anatomy and biomechanics
- Physiology and pathology
- Physical assessment and clinical testing
- Clinical reasoning and decision making
- Osteopathic treatment techniques
- Patient management and care planning
- Communication and therapeutic relationships
- Professional, safe and ethical practice
- Complex patient management and referral pathways

HOW will I learn?

- Classroom learning and guided tutorials
- Hands-on practical classes on treatment plinths
- Pair and small-group skill practice
- Supervised clinic sessions (1:4 supervision) in on-campus teaching clinic
- Clinical observation (160 hours by end of year 2)
- Supervised patient care (870 hours in years 3–4)

Industry connections

We work closely with key organisations including Osteopaths New Zealand and the Osteopathic Council of New Zealand to ensure your learning reflects current professional standards. You'll also learn from practicing

osteopaths across Canterbury who supervise students in our on-site and community clinics, giving you real-world experience.

Study options

Please note: Becoming a registered osteopath requires completion of both the Bachelor of Musculoskeletal Health and the Postgraduate Diploma in Osteopathy.

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES
Bachelor of Musculoskeletal Health	7	Christchurch	Full-time 3 years	February
Postgraduate Diploma in Osteopathy	8	Christchurch	Full-time 1 year	February

Starter options

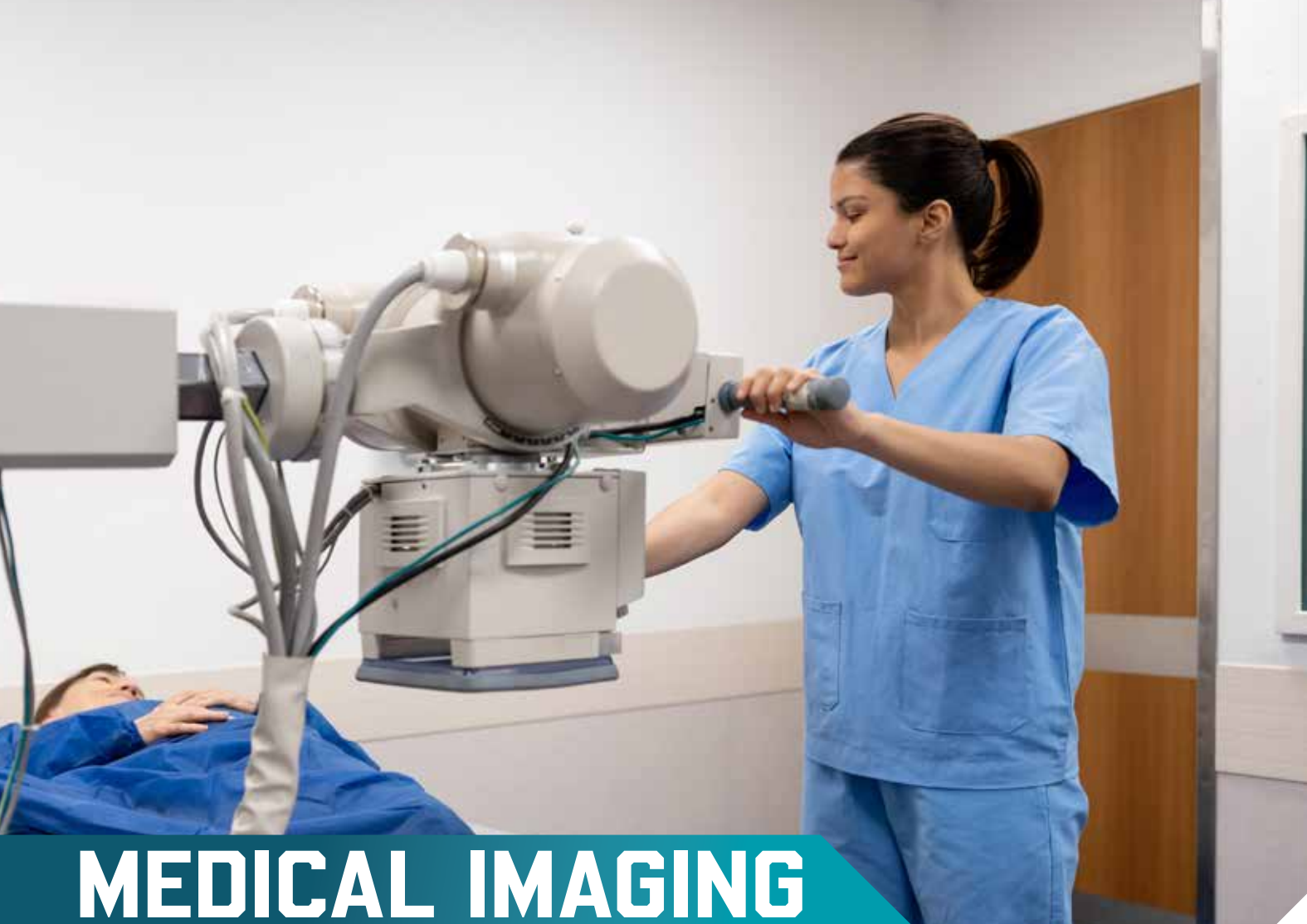
Starter courses can help you meet the academic entry requirements for higher-level programmes.

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

Please note: Some higher-level programmes have additional entry/selection criteria. See our website for full details.



Scan for more information on this subject



MEDICAL IMAGING

Medical imaging is a health profession that creates diagnostic images to help doctors find and monitor injury and illness. Medical imaging technologists (also called radiographers) position patients, use imaging equipment and produce diagnostic images while keeping radiation exposure as low as reasonably achievable. They work closely with patients and whānau, radiologists and wider clinical teams,

explaining procedures and responding to different needs. In Aotearoa New Zealand, practitioners need to meet Medical Radiation Technologists Board (MRTB) standards to register and practise.

Would this suit me?

This field could suit you if you're interested in how the body works and want a career that combines both health and technology. You'll do well if you're calm under pressure, enjoy practical problem solving and take care with detail. Empathy, resilience and clear communication are necessary when supporting people through examinations.

Career Pathways

Core role

- Radiographer (medical imaging technologist)

Specialisations

- CT
- Angiography
- Mammography
- MRI
- Molecular imaging (nuclear medicine)
- Sonography (ultrasound)

Advanced

- Senior medical imaging technologist
- Charge medical imaging technologist
- Clinical educator
- Modality specialist (CT, angiography)
- Quality and safety lead

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

WHAT will I learn?

- Human anatomy, physiology and pathology
- Radiographic positioning and technique
- Medical imaging science and physics
- Radiation protection and safe practice
- Communication, patient care and professionalism
- Te Tiriti o Waitangi and cultural responsiveness
- Research methods and evidence-based practice
- Specialist imaging modalities and protocols

HOW will I learn?

- Lectures and interactive tutorials
- Simulation practice in an x-ray suite
- 2400 hours of supervised clinical placement
- Online learning through Moodle and recordings
- Feedback from clinical tutors and supervisors

Industry connections

You'll build relationships with radiology departments across Aotearoa New Zealand through clinical placements, which may take you anywhere in the country. Placements are supervised by registered medical imaging technologists, with regular feedback

from clinical tutors and placement managers. Industry input through the Medical Imaging Advisory Committee helps keep learning aligned with current practice and technology, so you graduate ready for the pace and standards of modern imaging services.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES
Bachelor of Medical Imaging	7	Christchurch	Full-time 3 years	January, July

Starter options

Starter courses can help you meet the academic entry requirements for higher-level programmes.

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

Please note: Some higher-level programmes have additional entry/selection criteria. See our website for full details.



Scan for more information on this subject



MIDWIFERY

Midwifery supports wāhine and their whānau through pregnancy, labour, birth and the weeks following birth. Midwives provide health assessments, education and ongoing support, working in partnership with each woman so they can make informed choices about their care. They promote safe and positive birth experiences, recognise when additional care is needed and work collaboratively with other health professionals to

ensure the best outcomes. In Aotearoa New Zealand, midwifery is an autonomous profession with strong foundations in cultural safety and Te Tiriti o Waitangi responsibilities. Midwives are regulated by the Midwifery Council of New Zealand.

Would this suit me?

Midwifery could suit you if you're motivated to support wāhine and their whānau through pregnancy, birth and the postnatal period. You'll need to be calm under pressure, empathetic and culturally respectful. Strong communication skills, resilience and sound judgement are essential, along with a willingness to reflect, continue learning and work flexibly.

Career Pathways

Following graduation

- Registered midwife (Core) in birth centre, primary unit or hospital
- Lead maternity carer (LMC) midwife with a caseload in the community

Further opportunities

- Clinical midwife specialist
- Midwifery educator
- Midwifery manager
- Professional advisor
- Midwifery researcher

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

WHAT will I learn?

- Midwifery partnership, information sharing, informed choice and consent
- Physiology of pregnancy, labour, birth and the postnatal period
- Maternal assessment and wellbeing support
- Newborn development, assessment and early care
- Breastfeeding, lactation and infant feeding support
- Complications, emergencies, consultation and referral
- Cultural safety, Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Tūranga Kaupapa
- Evidence-informed practice, research and reflection

HOW will I learn?

- Face-to-face intensives/wānanga in Christchurch
- Weekly hui ākonga/tutorials and skills sessions
- Online modules, forums and virtual tutorials (2400 hours theory)
- Simulation-based education in purpose-built simulation space
- Supervised placements in the community, primary maternity units and hospitals (2400 hours clinical)
- Reflective portfolio and debrief sessions

Industry connections

Midwifery at Ara is shaped by close links with maternity service providers. You'll complete supervised practice placements with LMC midwives, as well as in primary units, hospitals and specialist maternity settings. Placements can include services such as Plunket,

gynaecology clinics and neonatal units. Industry feedback through Te Whatu Ora/Health New Zealand, New Zealand College of Midwives (NZCOM), local iwi and consumer representatives helps keep learning current.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES
Bachelor of Midwifery	7	See locations below	Full-time 4 years Part-time available	February
Locations: Christchurch with satellites in Nelson, Marlborough, West Coast, Mid/South Canterbury				

Starter options

Starter courses can help you meet the academic entry requirements for higher-level programmes.

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

Please note: Some higher-level programmes have additional entry/selection criteria. See our website for full details.



Scan for more information on this subject



ENROLLED NURSING

Enrolled nursing is a people-focused career supporting individuals who are unwell or managing health conditions. Enrolled nurses play a key role in people’s recovery, wellbeing and ongoing support. They’re valued members of the healthcare team, delivering safe nursing practice in a range of settings.

They work alongside registered nurses and other health professionals, taking responsibility for their own practice within the enrolled nurse scope. In Aotearoa New Zealand, enrolled nurses have a strong foundation in cultural safety, including Te Tiriti o Waitangi and kawa whakaruruhau.

Would this suit me?

Enrolled nursing could suit you if you enjoy helping people and want a healthcare role. It’s a good fit if you’re calm, organised, and ready to learn in real clinical settings. You’ll do well if you communicate clearly, work well in a team and care about culturally safe practice.

Career Pathways

Following Graduation

- Enrolled nurse in settings such as:
- hospital or community
 - aged residential care
 - rehabilitation
 - mental health/addiction
 - primary or community health services

Advanced Opportunities

- Senior enrolled nurse
- Enrolled nurse team leader
- Clinical coordinator

NB: Advanced opportunities require experience and/or further study.

WHAT will I learn?

- Human body systems and how health is maintained
- Nursing assessment, care planning and evaluation
- Evidence-informed practice and clinical reasoning
- Culturally safe practice and Te Tiriti o Waitangi-informed care
- Professional, ethical and legal responsibilities
- Hauora, population health and health determinants
- Mental health and addiction support
- Safe medication management and accountability

HOW will I learn?

- Lectures and small tutorial groups
- Blended learning: online and face-to-face
- Simulation and skills practise in the Clinical Practice Suite
- Case studies, problem-based learning activities
- Supervised clinical placements (minimum 700 hours)
- Mentoring with enrolled nurse preceptors

Industry connections

Clinical placements connect you with health providers across Canterbury and the West Coast. You’ll gain experience in a range of settings such as community health, acute care, aged care, mental health, disability, and primary, secondary and tertiary services.

Throughout your placements you’ll be supported by nurse preceptors and clinical lecturers, helping you build confidence, capability and professional networks before you graduate. Nursing Advisory Committee input ensures our teaching is aligned with current practice and community needs.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES
New Zealand Diploma in Enrolled Nursing	5	Christchurch and regionally^	Full-time 18 months	March
Professional Development for Enrolled Nurses	5	Christchurch and online	Various	Various

^Satellites are located on the West Coast and in South Canterbury.

Starter options

Starter courses can help you meet the academic entry requirements for higher-level programmes.

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES
New Zealand Certificate in Study and Employment Pathways (Health & Science pathway)	3	Christchurch and online*	Full-time 19 weeks Part-time available	February, July

Please note: Some higher-level programmes have additional entry/selection criteria. See our website for full details.

*Online option starts in February only.



Scan for more information on this subject



REGISTERED NURSING

Registered nurses provide clinically and culturally safe care to support people through a wide range of health needs and life stages. They assess health needs, plan and deliver care, administer medicines, monitor progress and respond to changes. They work in partnership with patients and whānau, and alongside doctors and other health professionals. Nurses use clinical and scientific knowledge, culturally appropriate

communication and evidence to support people to manage their health needs and to improve outcomes for communities. Registered nursing in Aotearoa New Zealand is grounded in Te Tiriti o Waitangi and recognises te ao Māori as essential to safe, effective care. Registered nurses must meet Nursing Council of New Zealand standards of competence and be registered to practise.

Would this suit me?

Registered nursing could suit you if you want purposeful work supporting people through illness and change. It helps to be calm under pressure, careful with details and comfortable following clear processes. Strong communication and teamwork are important, along with respect for different cultures and worldviews. A willingness to learn hands-on clinical skills and reflect on practise is important.

Career Pathways

Following Graduation

- Registered nurse in settings such as:
- Hospitals/acute care
 - Community/primary care
 - Aged care
 - Mental health
 - Cosmetic industry

Advanced Opportunities

- Clinical nurse specialist
- Charge nurse manager
- Nurse educator
- Nurse practitioner
- Nurse leader
- Nurse prescriber
- Research/policy advisor

Advanced opportunities may require experience and/or further study.

WHAT will I learn?

- Person- and whānau-centred nursing care and holistic health screening
- Clinical reasoning and safe decision-making
- Pathophysiology, pharmacology and medicines management
- Therapeutic communication and professional relationships
- Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- Cultural safety
- Evidence-based practice, rangahau and research skills
- Leadership, teamwork and professional accountability

HOW will I learn?

- Lectures and small tutorial groups
- Blended learning: online and face-to-face
- Simulation and skills practise in the Clinical Practice Suite
- Case studies, problem-based learning activities
- Supervised clinical placements (minimum 1000 hours)
- Mentoring with registered nurse preceptors

Industry connections

Clinical learning is supported through partnerships with a range of health providers. Placements can include Māori health services, community settings, acute care, aged care and mental health.

You'll be supervised and supported by registered nurse preceptors and clinical teaching staff, helping you link theory to practice, build confidence and develop work-ready skills.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES
Bachelor of Nursing	7	Christchurch, Timaru	Full-time 3 years	Dates to be confirmed
Graduate Certificate in Nursing [^]	7	Christchurch and online	Part-time up to 6 years	Various

[^]After graduating, you can continue developing your skills or move into specialist areas with the Graduate Certificate in Nursing.

Starter options

Starter courses can help you meet the academic entry requirements for higher-level programmes.

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

Please note: Some higher-level programmes have additional entry/selection criteria. See our website for full details.



Scan for more information on this subject



LABORATORY TECHNOLOGY

Laboratory science supports healthcare, research and industry by testing and analysing samples to provide reliable information. People in this field follow set procedures to collect, label, handle and prepare specimens, carry out tests, analyse and record results and contribute to quality processes.

They work carefully with equipment and chemicals, follow health and safety rules and communicate clearly with colleagues. Laboratory technicians can work in a wide range of areas including environmental monitoring, human health, food testing, veterinary diagnostics and industrial product development.

Would this suit me?

This area could suit you if you're detail-focused, methodical and interested in how science is applied in real-world settings. You might enjoy practical tasks, working with data and following steps accurately. It helps to be patient, reliable and comfortable collaborating with others while taking responsibility for your own work.

Career Pathways	Entry Level	Intermediate	Advanced
	- Laboratory assistant - Sample reception assistant - Quality assistant - Production laboratory assistant - Patient services assistant	- Laboratory technician - Quality assurance technician - Microbiology technician - Environmental technician - Research assistant - Sample analyst - Medical laboratory technician	- Senior laboratory technician - Laboratory supervisor - Quality lead - Technical specialist - Laboratory manager - Research coordinator - Qualified medical laboratory technician

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

WHAT will I learn?

- Professional practice, teamwork and workplace communication
- Applied microbiology and chemistry
- Quality assurance standards and processes
- Laboratory safety and hazard management
- Accurate measurement and instrument use
- Handling, storage and tracking of samples
- Laboratory calculations, data analysis and interpretation
- Infection control principles and practice
- Ethical, legal and privacy requirements

HOW will I learn?

- Laboratory sessions and practical workshops
- Case studies and scenario-based activities
- Project and assessment portfolio work
- Work-integrated learning in real or simulated settings
- Online and face-to-face learning options
- Industry-informed learning

Industry connections

Our laboratory science programmes are driven by industry needs, so what you learn reflects workplace practice and expectations. At Level 5, you'll build practical skills through hands-on lab learning aligned to industry standards. At Level 7, you'll undertake

260 hours of work-integrated learning in a laboratory workplace, gaining real experience before you graduate. Across both levels, you'll develop confidence in safe practice, quality systems and the communication and teamwork skills employers seek.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES	
New Zealand Diploma in Applied Science	5	Christchurch	Full-time 1 year Part-time up to 3 years	February, July	
Graduate Diploma in Laboratory Technology*	7	Christchurch	Full-time 1 year Part-time up to 3 years	February, July	

*Requires a Bachelor of Science or recent relevant experience.



Scan for more information on this subject



COMPANION ANIMAL MANAGEMENT

Companion animal management involves the day-to-day welfare and care of companion animals in settings such as kennels, catteries, shelters, day care centres and pet sitting services. The work focuses on domestic companion animals including cats, dogs, rabbits, guinea pigs, rodents and birds. It centres on duty of care, with a focus on fear-free, low-stress handling,

understanding behaviour, noticing health changes and maintaining clean, comfortable environments. It also involves following animal welfare legislation and local legislative requirements for the operation of animal welfare facilities.

Would this suit me?

This area suits people who love being around animals and enjoy practical, hands-on work. It's a good fit if you're patient, reliable and pay attention to detail, especially when animals rely on consistent routines. Being able to work as part of a team, follow clear procedures and cope with the less glamorous parts of animal care is important.

Career Pathways

Entry Level

- Kennel or cattery assistant
- Doggy day care attendant
- Pet sitter / dog walker
- Animal technician

Intermediate

- Animal shelter attendant
- Kennel or cattery supervisor
- Animal welfare support officer
- Animal training assistant

Advanced

- Facility manager (kennel/cattery/day care)
- Shelter supervisor or team leader
- Animal welfare educator
- Pet care business owner

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

WHAT will I learn?

- How to support the wellbeing of companion animals
- Basic anatomy and how body systems function in companion animals
- Feeding and nutrition for different species and life stages
- Normal and undesirable behaviours
- Body language, fear-free, low-stress handling
- Health checks, basic first aid and recognising illness
- Creating safe, comfortable housing and enrichment
- Legal and ethical expectations in temporary companion animal facilities
- Hygiene, safety and biosecurity practices

HOW will I learn?

- Face-to-face theory classes with online learning support
- Hands-on simulated sessions
- Small-group practical work with a tutor
- Work placements (120 hours) across two companion animal facilities covering a range of animal species
- Guest speakers and off-site industry visits
- Scenario-based problem solving and enrichment projects

Industry connections

We work with local industry and community partners to support your learning through real-world experience. You'll complete at least 120 hours of practicum across a minimum of two companion animal care facilities, giving you supervised, hands-on practice in day-to-day animal

care. Learning is strengthened through guest speakers and off-site visits, and you'll also do applied tasks like feeding and care routines, welfare assessments and enrichment design to build confidence and work-ready skills.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES
New Zealand Certificate in Animal Management (Companion Animal)	4	Christchurch	Full-time one year	February

Starter options

Starter courses can help you meet the academic entry requirements for higher-level programmes.

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES
New Zealand Certificate in Study and Employment Pathways (Health & Science pathway)	3	Christchurch and online^	Full-time 19 weeks Part-time available	February, July

Please note: Some higher-level programmes have additional entry/selection criteria. See our website for full details.
^Online option starts in February only.



Scan for more information on this subject



VETERINARY NURSING

Veterinary nursing is a hands-on healthcare profession supporting veterinarians to treat and care for companion animals. Veterinary nurses assist with surgery, monitor anaesthesia, carry out diagnostic tests and imaging, and support patients through treatment and recovery.

The role also involves working closely with pet owners, explaining care plans, preventative health, nutrition and behaviour with empathy and professionalism. In Aotearoa New Zealand, veterinary nursing is a recognised allied veterinary profession with clear expectations around safe, high-quality care.

Would this suit me?

Veterinary nursing may suit you if you care deeply about animal wellbeing and enjoy practical, detail-focused work. You'll develop the skills to work calmly within a team of professionals in a busy clinical environment, assist with medical procedures, and support animals and their owners during stressful times. Strong teamwork and clear communication are essential.

Career Pathways

Entry Level

- Veterinary assistant
- Animal care assistant
- Kennel attendant
- Clinic receptionist

Intermediate

- Registered veterinary nurse
- Medical veterinary nurse
- Surgical veterinary nurse
- Anaesthesia nurse
- Emergency/critical care nurse
- Referral centre nurse

Advanced

- Head/charge veterinary nurse
- Clinical team leader
- Veterinary practice manager
- Veterinary nurse educator
- Veterinary industry representative
- Biosecurity or compliance officer

NB: Entry-level roles may be available while studying or before registration as a registered veterinary nurse. Advanced opportunities require experience and/or further study.

WHAT will I learn?

- Companion animal patient handling and monitoring
- Surgical preparation and theatre support
- Anaesthesia monitoring and recovery care
- Diagnostic sampling, testing and radiography basics
- Medical patient care
- Medicines, treatments and fluid therapy
- Infection control and safe clinical practice
- Client communication, education and support
- Professional ethics, teamwork and record keeping

HOW will I learn?

- Face-to-face classes
- Weekly small-group simulation clinic practice
- Surgical and dental sessions at an offsite training clinic
- Blended online resources and training videos
- Guest speakers from veterinary and animal health sectors
- Work-integrated learning placements (750 hours)

Industry connections

Veterinary nursing at Ara is built around work-integrated learning. You'll complete at least 750 hours of practicum in veterinary clinics and other suitable animal facilities. On campus, you'll

practise with simulation models plus anaesthetic and dental equipment. Industry input from groups such as the New Zealand Veterinary Association keep learning current and ensures you graduate job ready.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES
New Zealand Diploma in Veterinary Nursing	6	Christchurch	Full-time 2 years	February

Starter options

Starter courses can help you meet the academic entry requirements for higher-level programmes.

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES
New Zealand Certificate in Study and Employment Pathways (Health & Science pathway)	3	Christchurch and online^	Full-time 19 weeks Part-time available	February, July

Please note: Some higher-level programmes have additional entry/selection criteria. See our website for full details.

^Online option starts in February only.



Scan for more information on this subject



SUPPORT WORK

Support work involves working within the community sector to provide individuals and whānau with guidance and connection to wider social and community services, such as mental health, addiction and disability support. Support workers listen, build trust and help people identify goals, access services and strengthen everyday skills.

Work is grounded in Te Tiriti o Waitangi and culturally responsive practice, with a strong emphasis on ethics, safety and respect for identity. Roles are often team-based, with some independent work under guidance.

Would this suit me?

This area could suit you if you care about people and want a job with purpose. You might enjoy listening, problem-solving and helping others navigate services. It helps to be respectful of different cultures, calm in challenging situations, resilient and confident setting clear boundaries.

Career Pathways

Intermediate

- Support Worker
 - Community
 - Whānau
 - Refugee
 - Youth
 - Mental health
 - Addiction
 - Residential
- Caregiver
- Day programme facilitator
- Social justice advocate

Advanced

- Team leader
- Service coordinator
- Case manager
- Community development coordinator
- Programme manager
- Registered social worker

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

WHAT will I learn?

- Intra and interpersonal skills
- Te Tiriti-informed, culturally responsive practice
- Ethical practice, privacy and boundaries
- Person-centred, strengths-based support approaches
- A variety of practice models for wellbeing
- Legislation, policy and community services knowledge
- Risk awareness, de-escalation and safety
- Reflective practice, supervision and self-care

HOW will I learn?

- Facilitated classroom discussions and learning activities
- Role plays and simulated scenarios
- Case studies and problem-solving projects
- Portfolios and reflective learning tasks
- Online activities
- Supervised work placement (200 hours)

Industry connections

You'll build work-ready skills through 200 hours of supervised practicum in approved health and wellbeing organisations, in either mental health and addiction support or whānau, community and social services

settings. Kaiako visit you onsite to support your learning, encourage reflective practice and gather feedback. Programme content is shaped by sector consultation and real workplace expectations.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES	
New Zealand Certificate in Health and Wellbeing (Mental Health and Addiction)	4	Christchurch, Timaru	Full-time 1 year Part-time up to 4 years	February, July [^]	
New Zealand Certificate in Health and Wellbeing (Whānau, Community and Social Services)	4	Christchurch, Timaru	Full-time 1 year Part-time up to 4 years	February, July [^]	

[^]Christchurch only

Starter options

Starter courses can help you meet the academic entry requirements for higher-level programmes.

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

Please note: Some higher-level programmes have additional entry/selection criteria. See our website for full details.



Scan for more information on this subject



SOCIAL WORK

Social work is a profession focused on advocating for and supporting individuals, whānau and communities to improve wellbeing, address social injustice and create positive change. In Aotearoa New Zealand, social workers practise across government, community and iwi organisations, responding to issues such as child wellbeing, family harm, health and disability,

mental health, addictions, justice and community development. The profession is grounded in social justice, human rights, respect for diversity and collective responsibility, with a strong emphasis on culturally responsive practice and honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Would this suit me?

This area could suit you if you're people focused and motivated to make a positive difference. Throughout your study, you'll develop strong communication skills and the ability to think critically and make ethical decisions. A willingness to reflect on your own perspectives and learn alongside others in a supportive community will help you succeed in this field.

Career Pathways

Entry Level

- Community support worker
- Social services assistant
- Youth worker
- Family support worker
- Outreach worker
- Residential support worker

Intermediate

- Social worker
- Case manager
- Child and family practitioner
- Community development worker
- Mental health practitioner
- Justice sector practitioner

Advanced

- Clinical social worker
- Practice supervisor
- Team leader
- Service manager
- Policy advisor
- Specialist ACC practitioner

NB: Entry level roles may be available while studying or before registration. Advanced roles require experience and/or further study.

WHAT will I learn?

- Social justice, human rights and collective responsibility
- Te Tiriti o Waitangi-centred practice
- Social work theories and perspectives
- Relationship building and interpersonal communication skills
- Ethical decision making in complex situations
- Cultural responsiveness and reflective self-awareness
- Advocacy, equitable access and resource navigation
- Community development approaches and social change

HOW will I learn?

- Face-to-face classes
- Rōpū manaaki tutorials (support and feedback)
- Marae-based learning, including noho marae
- Work-integrated placements
- Community development project in Year 2
- Talanoa kōrero rōpū support (Māori, Pacific)

Industry connections

You'll build networks through work-integrated learning each year, including professional placements (120 days) and a community development project. Ara partners with local social service agencies to host students and provides training for practitioners who support and

supervise learners. Local social workers contribute as guest speakers, and an advisory committee helps shape key programme events. Placement partners include Oranga Tamariki, Te Whatu Ora, Ara Poutama Aotearoa, Emerge and the Salvation Army.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES
Te Ata Māhina – Bachelor of Social Work	7	Christchurch	Full-time 3 years Part-time up to 6 years	February

Starter options

Starter courses can help you meet the academic entry requirements for higher-level programmes.

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

Please note: Some higher-level programmes have additional entry/selection criteria. See our website for full details.



Scan for more information on this subject



PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION

Professional supervision is a dedicated space for critical reflection that supports safe, effective practice and helps improve outcomes for tangata whai ora (service users). It isn't line management or performance oversight. Professional supervisors work alongside practitioners to strengthen practice competence, support professional development and maintain holistic wellbeing.

Good supervision is built on ethical, culturally responsive relationships and clear boundaries. At Ara, interprofessional supervision — where supervisors and supervisees may come from different people-serving professions — is also recognised. Ara's approach is kaitiakitanga informed, weaving te ao Māori perspectives with established supervision practice.

Would this suit me?

Professional supervision suits experienced practitioners working in people-serving fields such as health, social services, education, justice and community settings. It's for people who value reflective, ethical practice and want to strengthen how supervision supports professional development and wellbeing. This includes work within teams, across organisations and in interprofessional settings.

Career Pathways

Graduates may move into professional supervision roles as part of their current work, become independent professional supervisors in private practice or take on senior practitioner and people leader positions where kaitiakitanga-informed professional supervision supports safe, culturally responsive practice. These skills are valued across health, education, social, legal and community settings, including multi- and interdisciplinary teams.

WHAT will I learn?

- Reflective supervision practice
- Kaitiakitanga-informed supervision approaches
- Culturally responsive supervision relationships
- Ethical and safe practice frameworks
- Critical reflection for practice development
- Relational skills and boundary setting
- Supporting supervisee wellbeing and resilience

HOW will I learn?

- Five intensive two-day wānanga blocks
- Live online sessions and guided kōrero
- Self-paced online learning activities
- Simulated supervision practice and peer feedback
- Work-integrated learning in professional contexts
- Guest speakers and community of practice

Industry connections

Learning is grounded in real practice across people-serving professions. The programme is shaped by an advisory group and guest speakers, helping keep learning current and relevant. Work-integrated learning is built into your own professional context, with

opportunities to apply tools in the workplace, practise through simulated scenarios and peer feedback, and develop skills within an interprofessional community of practice.

Study options

	LEVEL	LOCATION	DURATION	INTAKES
Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Supervision	8	Online*	Part-time up to 2 years	February

**Most of your study is online, but you'll also attend five, two-day on-site wānanga in Christchurch.*



Scan for more information on this subject

APPLY NOW

ara.ac.nz

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:

Free call (New Zealand): 0800 24 24 76

Email: info@ara.ac.nz



Disclaimer: The information contained in this document is correct at the time of production (October 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.