Wintec™
WAIKATO INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
New Zealand

Pre-Arrival Guide

For international students preparing to study at Wintec Hamilton, New Zealand



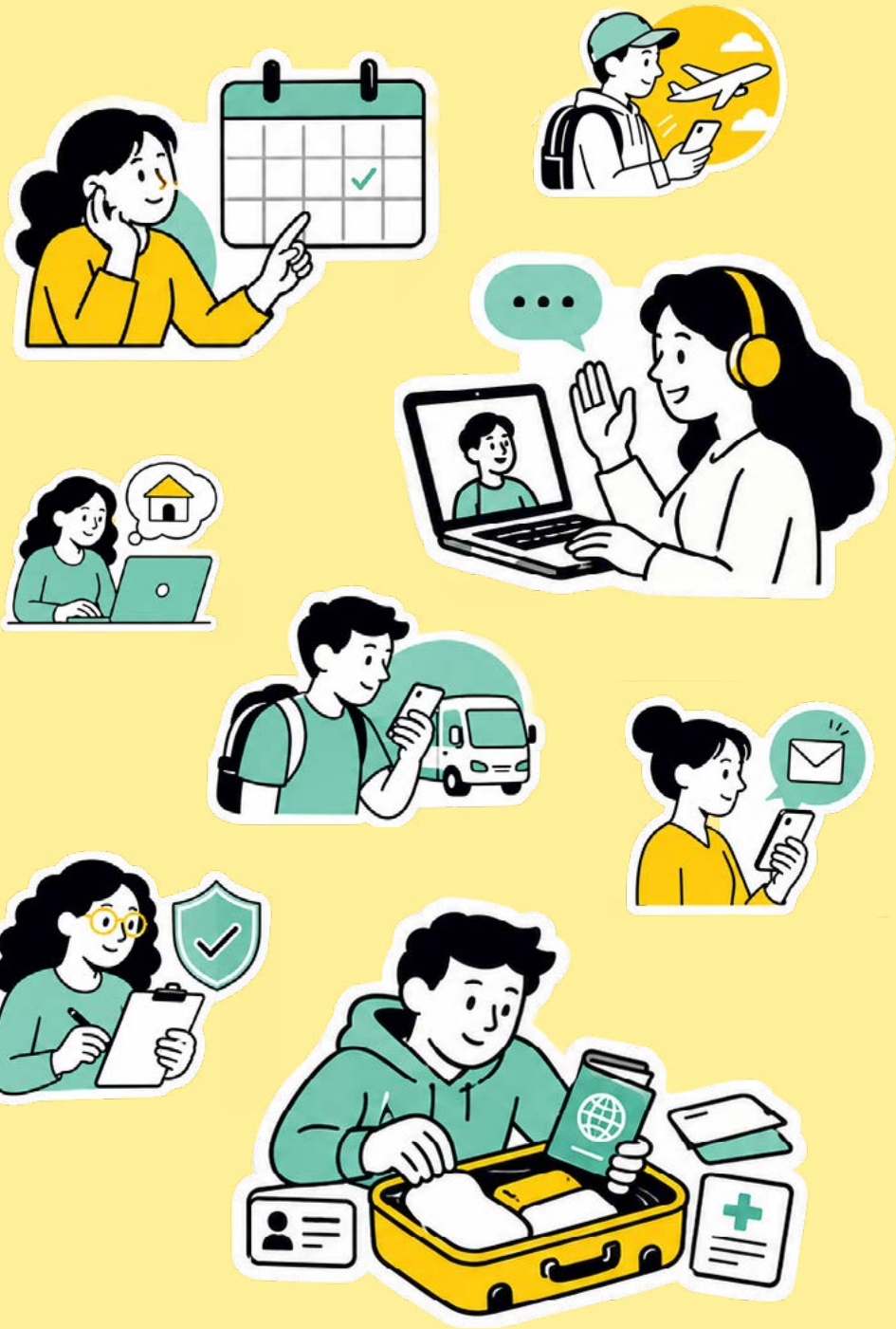
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Disclaimer
The information contained in this booklet is correct at the time of publishing October 2026. Please check the relevant programme pages at www.wintec.ac.nz for up to date information



We are excited to welcome you to Wintec and help you prepare for your journey to New Zealand. This guide brings together the most important information from your welcome email, pre-arrival webinar, and the original pre-arrival guide giving you the essential information you need for a smooth arrival and transition into life in Hamilton.



Start here

Read the checklists first, then return to the sections that apply to you. Please keep this guide handy before you travel and during your first week in New Zealand.

Pre-arrival checklist

Use this checklist as soon as your visa is approved, and again in the week before you travel.

- Check your programme start date. Search the Wintec website for your programme and click 'Your First Day'.
- Book your flights so you can arrive at least one week before your programme starts, if possible.
- Arrange accommodation before you travel.
- Book airport transport from Auckland Airport to Hamilton, especially if you arrive late at night.
- Read your Welcome Letter and save a copy on your phone.
- Attend the online pre-arrival webinar or watch the recording if available.
- Check your StudentSafe insurance start date. If arriving more than 31 days before your programme starts, contact Wintec about extra cover.
- If you have a pre-existing medical condition and want it covered, complete the required insurance form within the required timeframe.
- Prepare your passport, visa, Offer of Place, receipts, insurance information and any medical information.
- Bring your laptop, chargers, plug adapter and phone.
- Pack any prescription medication in original packaging and carry a doctor's letter if needed.
- Bring warm clothing, especially for winter. Hamilton can feel colder than expected.
- Read New Zealand biosecurity rules and complete the New Zealand Traveller Declaration.
- Join the Wintec International Students Facebook group, using your Student ID number when requested.

Your most important first steps

Moving to a new country is a big step. These are the actions that will make your arrival much smoother.

Before you travel	When you arrive in New Zealand	After enrolment
Arrive at least one week before your programme starts, if you can.	Visit the Student Enrolment and Information Centre in A Block, City Campus.	Check your Wintec email regularly. Read your Welcome to Wintec email from the International Centre
Arrange accommodation and airport shuttle before leaving home.	Bring your passport and visa. Enrolment must be completed in person.	Use your Welcome to Wintec email to access the student portal, timetable and Student ID card information.
Read your Welcome Letter from the International Centre carefully and attend the pre-arrival webinar.	Attend International Student Orientation and your Programme Induction.	Apply for a Student Buddy if you would like friendly student support.

Important! Your timetable is available after enrolment. Wintec cannot provide class days and times before you complete enrolment in person.



What to bring and what not to bring

Important items to bring

Passport and visa documents.

Offer of Place from Wintec and receipts for tuition or accommodation payments.

Other official identification, such as driver licence or national ID card.

Insurance documents in English, if you didn't choose Studentsafe insurance.

Laptop, phone, chargers, cables and a New Zealand plug adapter.

A small amount of New Zealand cash for the first few days.

Prescription medication in original packaging, plus a doctor's letter if appropriate.

Warm clothing and a waterproof jacket or umbrella.

Receipts or photos of valuable items such as your laptop or camera, for insurance purposes.

Traditional clothing or cultural items if you would like to share your culture at student events.



New Zealand biosecurity rules

New Zealand has strict border rules to protect the environment, farming and native plants and animals. If you are unsure about an item, declare it. The most important thing is to be honest.

Do not bring, or make sure you declare

Fresh fruit and vegetables, meat or animal products, honey, seeds, plants, flowers, and dirty outdoor equipment. This can include food from the plane. If in doubt, declare it on your Traveller Declaration.



At the airport

- Have your passport and completed New Zealand Traveller Declaration ready.
- Collect your luggage after passport control.
- Follow Customs and Biosecurity instructions. Bags may be x-rayed or checked by detector dogs.
- Ask staff if you are unsure. New Zealand airport staff are used to answering questions from travellers.

Weather & Clothing

Hamilton enjoys a mild climate year-round with warm summers, cool winters, and changing seasonal weather.

Hamilton weather can change quickly, so dressing in layers is recommended. Being prepared for both sunshine and rain will help you enjoy your time in Hamilton throughout the year.



Summer (Dec-Feb):
Warm and generally settled, with average daytime temperatures around 21–26°C.



Autumn (Mar-May):
Mild days and cooler evenings, with average temperatures around 15–22°C and occasional rain.



Winter (Jun-Aug):
Cool and often unsettled, with average daytime temperatures around 10–14°C and crisp mornings.



Spring (Sep–Nov):
Mild and changeable, with average temperatures around 13–20°C, with a mix of sunshine and showers.

We recommend packing comfortable everyday clothing, light layers, a waterproof jacket or umbrella, comfortable walking shoes, personal toiletries and medications, and a New Zealand power adaptor (Type I plugs).

Accommodation and airport shuttle

Please arrange accommodation before you arrive in New Zealand. The International Centre can help you understand the accommodation options.

Accommodation options

- Student Village - close to campus, meals included, shared facilities.
- Student Apartments - on campus, cook your own meals, shared facilities.
- Homestay – live with an approved host family. For more information, please visit newzealandhomestay.co.nz/wintec-students

For accommodation and airport shuttle questions:
International_Accommodation@wintec.ac.nz

Students under 18. Students under 18 must live in Wintec-approved accommodation, with a parent, or with a designated caregiver. Under-18 students cannot rent a flat, room, house or apartment.

Travelling from Auckland Airport to Hamilton

Auckland Airport is about 120 km from Hamilton. Travel time is usually around 1.5 hours by car, but this depends on traffic and your transport option.

Option	Good to know	Approximate cost/notes
Wintec airport shuttle	Door-to-door support. Book early.	Approx. $170, confirm current cost.
Taxi or private transfer	Convenient but expensive.	Approx. $300-$400
InterCity bus	Check schedule before booking. May not suit late arrivals.	Approx. $20-$50 to Hamilton Transport Centre. Journey can take 2.5-4 hours.

Transport and driving in New Zealand



Public transport in New Zealand may be more limited than you expect. Hamilton does not have a metro or train system for daily city travel. Buses may not run early in the morning or late at night, and travel can take longer than expected.

- Plan your route to campus before your first day.
- Download a real-time transport app, such as Transit App, and check bus routes before relying on them.
- If you study at Rotokauri Campus, check bus options carefully. These campuses are not within easy walking distance of the city centre.
- For some programmes, placements may be across the Waikato region. Nursing, Education and Social Practice students should think about transport early.

Driving

- If possible, obtain a full driver licence before you arrive.
- Bring an English translation if your licence is not in English.
- If you will need a New Zealand licence, start preparing early after arrival.
- If you buy a car, make sure you understand registration, warrant of fitness, insurance and safe driving in New Zealand. Tips for buying a used car.

Getting Around Hamilton



You will receive a Bee Card for Hamilton's public bus system, preloaded with travel credit.

To catch a bus, wait at the bus stop and signal the driver by raising your hand. Tap your Bee Card when you get on and again when you get off.

Your homestay family will help you learn how to travel safely between home and campus.

Insurance, health and wellbeing

International students must have approved medical and travel insurance while studying in New Zealand. Most Wintec international students use Studentsafe Inbound Learners insurance.

- Studentsafe usually starts 31 days before your programme start date.
- If you arrive earlier than this, contact the Student Enrolment team to arrange cover from your arrival date. international@wintec.ac.nz Additional charges may apply.
- Review the policy benefits before you travel, here Studentsafe Inbound Learners Insurance.
- If you have a pre-existing medical condition and want it covered, complete the required Medical Risk Assessment Form within 30 days of arriving. If you do not declare it, it may not be covered. Form available at Studentsafe Inbound Medical Risk Assessment Form.

Contact the Studentsafe team on 0800 486 004 or email help@insurancesafenz.co.nz

Health and wellbeing support

Wintec has health services and support teams available to students. You can also contact International Student Support if you are unsure where to go for help.

Normal feelings. It is normal to feel excited, nervous, homesick, tired or overwhelmed at times. Settling into a new country takes time. Please be patient with yourself and ask for support early.



Banking, cost of living and shopping

Banking

A New Zealand bank account is safer than carrying large amounts of cash. Some banks allow you to start the process before you arrive. It can take time, so start early if you can.



ANZ



ASB



BNZ

Cost of living

Living costs in New Zealand may be higher than in your home country. NauMai NZ is a helpful starting point for information about money, banking, cost of living, healthcare, work and wellbeing: naumainz.studyinnewzealand.govt.nz

Shopping after arrival

Starting life in a new country can feel overwhelming, but finding the essentials doesn't have to be. Whether you need food, electronics, bedding, kitchenware, or other household items, Hamilton has a wide range of stores to support your transition. Use the map to locate key shopping destinations and make your first weeks in New Zealand easier and more comfortable.

Hamilton New Zealand

Your Essential Map

Shopping Malls

Electrical Items & Adapters

Groceries

Household Goods

Shopping Malls

1. **Centre Place** - 501 Victoria Street, CBD
2. **Chartwell Shopping Centre** - 201 Hukanui Road, Chartwell
3. **The Base** - Te Rapa Road & Wairere Drive, Te Rapa

Electrical Items & Adapters

4. **Noel Leeming** - Cnr Ward & Anglesea Street, CBD
5. **JB Hi-Fi** - The Base, Te AWA Shopping Mall Shop 2A
6. **Harvey Norman Electrical Outlet** - Tristram Street, CBD

Groceries

7. **Woolworths** - Cnr Anglesea & Liverpool Street, CBD
8. **Pak'nSave** - 17 Mill Street, Whitiora
9. **Wellmart Asian Supermarket** - 25 Vialou Street, CBD
10. **New Save Asian Supermarket** - 130-136 Tristram Street, CBD
11. **Firdaus Halal Meats** - Shop 4, Fifth Avenue, Enderley
12. **Muzzammil Halal Ltd** - 162 Clarkin Road, Fairfield

Household Goods

13. **Kmart** - Bryce Street, CBD
14. **The Warehouse** - Cnr Ward & Anglesea Street, CBD
15. **Briscoes** - 15 Ulster Street, Whitiora



Enrolment, timetable, orientation and first days

Your first few days in New Zealand checklist

- Rest after your flight and make sure you know your accommodation address.
- Contact family or supporters at home to let them know you have arrived safely.
- Go to the Student Enrolment and Information Centre in A Block, City Campus, with your passport and visa.
- Complete your enrolment in person. This cannot be done online and no one else can do it for you.
- Ask when to expect your Welcome to Wintec email from the Student Enrolment team.
- Check your Wintec email and student portal once you receive access.
- View your timetable after enrolment is completed.
- Find your classrooms and check travel time before your first class.
- Attend your Programme Induction with your Centre/Faculty.
- Attend International Student Orientation. This is compulsory and attendance will be recorded.
- Apply for a Student Buddy if you would like support from a current student.
- Buy food, bedding, a SIM card and any household items you still need.
- Start opening a New Zealand bank account if you have not already done this.

Event	What it covers	How to find details
Programme Induction	Your classes, teachers, learning expectations and programme information.	Search the Wintec website for your programme and click “Your First Day”, or ask at Student Enrolment, A Block.
International Student Orientation	Settling into New Zealand, support services, safety, wellbeing, student life and how Wintec works.	Check your email regularly for details.

Study, culture and settling in

Studying in another country is more than starting classes. It also means learning a new culture, new systems and new ways of communicating.

What to expect

- New Zealand English may sound fast or different at first. You will get used to it.
- Many New Zealanders already have established friend groups, so making connections may take time.
- Hamilton has a relaxed lifestyle. It may feel quieter than larger cities.
- Many shops close around 5 pm, supermarkets are usually open later, and restaurants may close earlier than you expect.
- Takeaway and delivery food can be expensive.

How to prepare

- Watch New Zealand movies, TV or Chasing Time English to practise listening to New Zealand accents.
- Use English often, on and off campus.
- Ask if you do not understand something. It is okay to ask questions.
- Make small talk with classmates and staff. Simple conversations help build confidence.
- Join student events and activities. Doing things gives you something to talk about and helps you meet people.
- Be patient. Most students become more confident over time.

Student Buddy Programme

After enrolment, you can apply for a Student Buddy. A Buddy is a current student volunteer who can help with friendly, general questions such as campus navigation, transport, shopping, weather, social activities and student life.

Buddy boundaries. Student Buddies are not staff. They cannot give official advice about visas, academic problems, medical matters, legal issues, money, or emergencies. For serious or urgent matters, contact Wintec staff or emergency services.

Staying connected, support and emergency contacts

Who to contact

Question or support needed	Contact
Offer, enrolment, timetable, fees, visa or delays	international@wintec.ac.nz
International student support, settling in, wellbeing or general advice	internationalhelp@wintec.ac.nz
Accommodation and airport shuttles	international.accommodation@wintec.ac.nz
Students under 18	u18international@wintec.ac.nz
Student Exchange and Manaaki Scholars	studyabroad@wintec.ac.nz
Wintec International Students Facebook group	Request to join, provide your Student ID number and agree to the group rules.

Emergency contacts

- Emergency services - Police, Ambulance, Fire: 111
- Wintec International Centre 24/7 after-hours emergency: 021 703 730
- Wintec Security 24/7: 0800 852 900
- Hamilton Police Station: 07 858 6200
- Wintec International Centre: 1st Floor C Block, Mon–Fri, 8:30 am – 4:00 pm
- Wintec Health Services: behind A Block, Mon & Fri 9:00 am – 3:30 pm | Tue–Thu 8:30 am – 3:30 pm. Phone: 07 834 8869
- Embassies in New Zealand: www.mfat.govt.nz/Embassies