

University of Waikato International Entrance Scholarship for School Leavers- 2026



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

The University of Waikato International Entrance Scholarship for School Leavers (formerly the International Excellence – NZ School Leavers Scholarship) was established in 2019. The Scholarship was set up to promote educational opportunities, foster internationalisation, and support talented onshore international students who are enrolling for the first time into an undergraduate programme at the University of Waikato.

The Scholarship is open to all international students currently in New Zealand, who have completed an entire year studying at NCEA Level 2 and/or 3 - or equivalent - at a New Zealand high school, in the year prior to enrolling in the degree and thus taking up the scholarship.

The Scholarship has a value of up to NZD\$15,000 and will be awarded automatically on enrolment into an undergraduate degree programme. Recipients will be called upon to become global ambassadors for the University of Waikato.

The Scholarship will be applied to tuition fees only and is not transferrable.

ELIGIBILITY, VALUE AND REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

1. Eligible students must:

- 1.1 have completed NCEA Level 3 with University Entrance, at a high school in New Zealand;
- 1.2 be applying to enrol full-time (120 points) for the first time in an undergraduate degree programme at the University of Waikato;
- 1.3 Candidates who are taking ONE 'gap year' in the year of application may also be considered provided they have achieved NCEA Level 3, or equivalent¹, in the year prior and have not commenced or completed another tertiary qualification during this gap year.
- 1.4 Students who have achieved University Entrance based on **NCEA Level 2**, and have an Offer of Place, may be considered by contacting the University at <https://www.waikato.ac.nz/study/contact/>. These students will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

2. The following students are **ineligible for the Scholarship:**

- 2.1. Returning students to the University of Waikato;
- 2.2. Students enrolling in programmes that are less than 12 months' duration;
- 2.3. Students coming to the University of Waikato via a sponsoring body or on a Guaranteed Credit Agreement or funded by Education New Zealand or New Zealand Government Scholarships;

¹ Alternative high school NCEA equivalencies may include the CIE, or IB (or similar) approved programmes.

- 2.4. Recipients of any other University of Waikato funded tuition-fees funding;
- 2.5. Offshore students and/or those who intend to study online.
3. Eligible students will initially be informed of their Scholarship when they receive their Offer of Place into an undergraduate degree programme. A formal scholarship offer will follow through the MyWaikato portal, normally within 14 days of the Offer of Place.
4. **To retain the Scholarship**, recipients must:
 - 4.1. Confirm acceptance of the Scholarship by the date requested in the Scholarship Offer or the offer will automatically lapse and no longer be valid.
 - 4.2. Complete enrolment and begin full-time study in A Trimester, B Trimester or C Trimester of the first year of tenure (the year of tenure is indicated in the title of these regulations). Deferral may be considered on a case-by-case basis. Applications to defer must be submitted via the [Scholarship Variation Request](#) online form.
 - 4.3. Remain an international student throughout the tenure of the Scholarship (i.e., not become a domestic student, not change residency status or be eligible to pay domestic fees).
 - 4.4 For recipients receiving the award for more than one year, they must also pass all papers each year and remain enrolled full-time.
5. In accepting the Scholarship, the recipient will be deemed to have read, understood and accepted the conditions of the Scholarship, and the [Scholarships Policy](#).
6. After accepting the Scholarship, recipients will receive an official Scholarship Offer Letter to assist in any student visa application.
7. The Scholarship will be applied directly to the recipient's tuition fees and will have a value and tenure as follows:
 - 7.1. One Year Tenure:** on enrolment, **NZD\$10,000** will be applied to the first year of full-time study.
 - 7.2. Two Years Tenure:** If the recipient has achieved NCEA Level 3 with Merit, or equivalent, then, in their second year of study at the University of Waikato, they will receive an **additional NZD\$3,000**. The year two payment is conditional on the recipient passing all papers in year one.
 - 7.3. Three Years Tenure:** If the recipient achieves NCEA Level 3 with Excellence, or equivalent, then they will receive an **additional NZD\$5,000** (NZD\$3,000 in their second year of study and NZD\$2,000 in their third year of study at the University of Waikato), both conditional on passing all papers in year one and two, respectively.
8. If a recipient is in receipt of a student allowance or any type of financial assistance, it is their responsibility to check their entitlement to other income and any tax implications.

9. If, during the tenure of the Scholarship, a recipient's circumstances changes in such a manner that their continued eligibility for the Scholarship may be affected, they must inform scholarships@waikato.ac.nz immediately.
10. The Scholarships Committee may terminate this Scholarship at any time, and recoup any funds disbursed, if the holder withdraws from the University of Waikato during the tenure of the Scholarship, brings the Scholarship or the University into disrepute², or is otherwise not complying with the conditions governing the Scholarship and/or the regulations of the University of Waikato.
11. The holder will have the right to appeal against any decision to terminate a Scholarship by writing to scholarships@waikato.ac.nz who will forward the appeal to the Scholarships Executive.
12. By accepting a Scholarship, the recipient agrees to participate in any reasonable publicity concerning the Scholarship arranged by the University of Waikato.
13. Any ambassadorial duties will be at the discretion of the International Office. Any queries in regard to these duties can be made to gowaikato@waikato.ac.nz.
14. The Scholarships Committee has the power to amend or vary these regulations provided that there is no departure from the main purpose of the Scholarship.

² See [Code of Student Conduct](#).