

'Ko Te Tangata' School Leaver Scholarship – 2026



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

The 'Ko Te Tangata' School Leaver Scholarship was established in 2019 and named 'for the people' in recognition of the University of Waikato's strong connection and commitment to the schools and communities within Aotearoa/New Zealand. The University has two main campuses – one in the Waikato and the other in the Bay of Plenty and was established thanks to the drive and determination of the people of our regions. The number of awards offered each year is at the discretion of the selection panel and is based on total available funding.

1. Purpose

- 1.1. To recognise the University of Waikato's strong commitment to the people of New Zealand.
- 1.2. To make the University of Waikato accessible to applicants with academic ability.

2. Eligibility and Selection Criteria

- 2.1. **To be eligible for consideration**, applicants must meet all following criteria:
 - 2.1.1. be studying at NCEA Level 3 (or equivalent) towards University Entrance in the year of application (GAP YEAR see clause 2.2).
 - 2.1.2. demonstrate a desire and academic readiness to study at the University of Waikato.
 - 2.1.3. be intending to enrol full-time (a full-time academic year comprises [120 points](#)) in an undergraduate degree programme¹ at the University of Waikato for the first time² in the year of tenure.
 - 2.1.4. be eligible for domestic fees status (i.e., be a NZ Citizen, NZ Permanent Resident, NZ Resident Class Visa holder, or Australian Citizen/Permanent Resident domiciled in NZ).
- 2.2. GAP YEAR - Applicants who are taking one 'gap year' in the year of application may also be considered, but must:
 - 2.2.1. not have done any degree-level study at another tertiary institution on their gap year.
 - 2.2.2. have achieved University Entrance.
 - 2.2.3. have adequately explained the reason for their GAP year.
- 2.3. New Zealand citizens who have studied NCEA L2 and above at an overseas secondary school and meet all other criteria can apply if they meet all other conditions.
- 2.4. The University recognises that family and financial circumstances are factors that may hinder the opportunity to study at university. **Applicants with NCEA L2 results below Merit will only be considered where:**
 - 2.4.1. demonstrated serious financial hardship and/or extraordinary personal circumstances is provided.
 - 2.4.2. the financial hardship and/or extraordinary personal circumstances are ratified by the school through the online Academic Assessment.

¹ This does not include diplomas, certificates, pathway to undergraduate study through programmes offered by the [University of Waikato College](#), or any programmes of study that are less than 240 points total. Te Tohu Paetahi, is acceptable only where used as a pathway into an undergraduate degree-programme. If a recipient's degree structure requires them to enrol in an alternative programme of study in their first year of study, they can request special consideration by completing the [scholarship variation request form](#).

² Candidates who have undertaken **Unistart** papers at the University of Waikato are **not** excluded by this clause.

- 2.5. **Selection is based on** the following criteria:
- 2.5.1. Academic achievements (calculations will be based on the best 80 credits across University Entrance (UE) equivalent subjects at Level 2 and above, from all years up to and including the year prior to application).
 - 2.5.2. Leadership positions within and outside school, including community involvement.
 - 2.5.3. Applicants who meet the [strategic priorities of the University of Waikato](#).
 - 2.5.4. After which, consideration will be given to applicants that meet criteria in Clause 2.4.
- 2.6. **To maintain eligibility**, recipients must meet all following criteria:
- 2.6.1. by the withdrawal deadline of A Trimester in the year following application, be accepted into an undergraduate degree programme at the University of Waikato.
 - 2.6.2. enrol full-time in at least two Trimesters in the year of award (i.e., 120 points, usually eight papers).
 - 2.6.3. If allowed deferral of the scholarship for any reason recipients must also:
 - a. gain at least a B grade average in their first year of study; and
 - b. enrol full-time (i.e., in 120 points) in both their first and second year of study.
 - 2.6.4. in their first year, all students who identify as Māori must take part in [Te Kāhui Pīreire](#) and all who identify as Pacific must take part in the [Imua Initiative](#). Students who identify as having both Māori and Pacific heritage can choose which to participate in but must choose one.
 - 2.6.5. Note also clause 6.2.

3. Value, Tenure and Awarding

- 3.1. The value of each Scholarship is **\$5,000** and will be allocated towards one of the following:
- 3.1.1. **Accommodation Fees only:** recipients from secondary schools outside the Waikato and Bay of Plenty Regions are strongly encouraged to use their scholarship towards accommodation in the [University Halls of Residence](#)³, and are expected to apply for accommodation before the closing date (see [here](#)).
 - 3.1.2. **Tuition Fees only.** In all cases, the [Student Services Fee](#) is **not** covered by the scholarship. Where tuition fees are less than the total amount awarded any remainder will be forfeited.
- 3.2. The tenure of the Scholarship is one calendar year (i.e., January to December inclusive).
- 3.3. Successful applicants will be advised of the offer of a scholarship via their MyWaikato portal and must accept the offer by the prescribed date or the offer will lapse.
- 3.4. In accepting the Scholarship, the recipient:
- 3.4.1. will be deemed to have read, understood, and accepted the conditions of the Scholarship and the [Scholarships Policy](#).
 - 3.4.2. agrees to participate in any publicity concerning the Scholarship arranged by the University of Waikato.

4. Application

- 4.1. The closing date for online applications is **31 August each year**.
- 4.2. As part of the online application process, each applicant must provide information on the following:

³ Staying in the halls of residence has demonstrably beneficial outcomes for students, including higher academic achievement through inclusion in a supportive community environment.

- 4.2.1. Leadership roles/positions within and outside of school.
- 4.2.2. Why the applicant wants to study at the University of Waikato.
- 4.2.3. What impact a scholarship would have on the applicant's ability to study.
- 4.2.4. If applicable:
 - a. Financial hardship and/or extraordinary personal circumstances.
 - b. Gap year activities during the year of application.
- 4.2.5. The name and contact details for the teacher in charge of the IB programme at the applicant's school (if applicable).
- 4.2.6. Any other information of relevance to the Selection Panel (if applicable).
- 4.3. An online Academic Assessment will be requested from the applicant's secondary school. The school will be contacted directly by the University to obtain the assessment. Applicants are encouraged to speak with their school's career advisor (or equivalent) about their report.

5. Selection Panel

- 5.1. The Selection Panel will comprise the Chair of the Scholarships Committee (or nominee) in the Chair, the Scholarships Manager (or nominee), the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Māori (or nominee); the Deputy Director of Strategic Engagement (or nominee), a member of the Future Students Team nominated by the Deputy Director of Strategic Engagement, and a Pacific staff member (nominated by the Assistant Vice-Chancellor Pacific).
- 5.2. The Selection Panel's decisions are final and no further correspondence will be entered into following the selection meeting.

6. Other Conditions

- 6.1. If a recipient is in receipt of a student allowance, another scholarship, or any type of financial assistance, it is their responsibility to check their entitlement to other income and any tax implications.
- 6.2. Recipients who take up this scholarship are expected to complete at least four trimesters of full-time study at the University of Waikato (i.e., 240 points). Those who withdraw their enrolment before the end of this period will normally be required to pay back the full sum of monies received.
- 6.3. Recipients must remain enrolled full-time for the period of tenure. Should a recipient withdraw from any papers, without adding sufficient papers to maintain an overall enrolment in a minimum of 120 points for the academic year, the University may ask for the Scholarship to be repaid.
- 6.4. The Scholarship may not be held in conjunction with any other University of Waikato funded scholarship or any other University of Waikato funding that includes either a tuition fees credit or accommodation credit as a component. The exception is where:
 - 6.4.1. a scholarship is for specifically for financial hardship.
 - 6.4.2. the other scholarship regulations state specifically that it may be held with the 'Ko Te Tangata' Scholarship.
- 6.5. The Scholarship may be held in conjunction with any other scholarship, award or prize, unless the conditions of the other award preclude this.
- 6.6. Through the School of Graduate Research and Student Services Division, the University monitors students' performance and reserves the right to impose further conditions where a student's conduct is unsatisfactory.

- 6.7. The Scholarships Committee may terminate this Scholarship at any time, and recoup any funds disbursed, if the holder withdraws from the University of Waikato, brings the Scholarship or the University into disrepute⁴, or is otherwise not complying with the conditions governing the Scholarship and/or the regulations of the University of Waikato. The holder of a Scholarship shall have the right to appeal to the Scholarships Executive against any decision to terminate the Scholarship.
- 6.8. The Scholarship is not refundable to the student under any circumstances, although (in the case of fees payment) a student who withdraws from the University may (under the provisions of the Fees Regulations) apply for a refund of tuition fees paid that were not covered by the Scholarship.
- 6.9. 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.

⁴ See [Code of Student Conduct](#).