

TE KURA TOI WHAKAARI  
O AOTEAROA:  
NEW ZEALAND DRAMA SCHOOL

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ACADEMIC AND STUDENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

2019

## ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Entry to the School does not require formal qualification pre-requisites for admission to study on the following degree/diploma programmes:

- Bachelor of Performing Arts (Acting)
- Bachelor of Performing Arts (Management)
- Bachelor of Design (Stage and Screen)
- NZ Diploma in Scenic Construction and Properties
- NZ Diploma in Costume Construction

## SELECTION OF STUDENTS

All applicants must participate in a standard selection process, as determined by each Department, before an *offer of place* can be made.

Applicants will be considered on a case by case basis bearing in mind patterns of admission that have applied in previous years and the standing of the programme applied for.

Student admission numbers for any programme will be set by agreement with the Head of Department/Course (HOD/C) and the Strategic Lead Team (SLT).

The number of students admitted to a programme of study in any year is determined by the School's funding arrangements with the TEC and the School's resource and ability to deliver the programme to a desired standard.

## PROCEDURES

The selection process will be determined by each Department knowing the criteria and qualities required of successful applicants.

The selection process should be designed, to the best of its ability, to reveal and assess the expectations and aspirations, language proficiency, and academic potential of prospective students to engage in study and that these

attributes are appropriate for the intended programme of study at the level required.

In making an offer of a place to study there should be a realistic expectation that the student would succeed on the programme.

The HOD/C will appoint a selection panel consisting of relevant departmental staff and suitably qualified industry practitioners, where appropriate.

This selection process involves a review of adequate student application documentation and may include, but is not exclusive to, any of the following:

- participation in a selection workshop
- solo or group audition
- interview: face-to-face or mediated through other modes of communication
- review of academic records, personal statements, and supplied or elicited references
- medical examination or completion of a medical questionnaire
- observation of live student work, prepared work on video, or submitted portfolios
- assessment of English language ability

3

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The HOD/C, in consultation with the selection panel, will provide a list of candidates to whom will be sent an offer of place. A short list may also be drawn up in the event that initial offers of place are not taken up.

In the event of a dispute over admission numbers, or the inclusion or exclusion of a candidate or candidates for an offer of place, the HOD/C will present the case to the SLT at which a consensus resolution will be reached.

## ENROLMENT AGE RESTRICTION

Students who have not attained the age of 18 years prior to the first day of their chosen course of study cannot be enrolled at the School.

In exceptional circumstances an exemption to this age restriction may be granted for all courses EXCEPT the Bachelor of Performing Arts (Acting).

# PROCEDURES

Where an exemption is sought the relevant HOD/C or nominated departmental representative will make a written recommendation to the Director to request an Age Restriction Exemption for a student.

This exemption must be granted before an *offer of place* is made.

The Director's decision to support or decline the departmental recommendation will be proposed to the Academic Board who will review the documents and make a final and binding decision regarding an *offer of place*, in a timely manner in order to meet the required deadlines for enrolment into the relevant course.

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

### Introduction

Toi Whakaari welcomes international students and encourages applications to study from non-citizens. International students have the potential to make important contributions to grow the learning and social environment of the School. Toi Whakaari's teaching and learning model, which draws on mātauranga Māori and tikanga marae frameworks, encourages an approach that builds capacity in staff and students to meet difference in ways that enhance relationships, progress collaborative conversations and prepares a space of authentic meeting. The diversity offered by international students provides domestic students the benefit of negotiating working relationships with peers who bring varying cultural attitudes and qualities.

In terms of the Education Act 1989, an international student is defined as any person who is enrolled in study and is not a domestic student. Domestic students are citizens or permanent residents of New Zealand or Australia, or a citizen of the Cook Islands, Tokelau or Niue.

Toi Whakaari is a signatory to the *Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016*. The purpose of the Code is to support the Government's objectives for international education by requiring signatories to take all reasonable steps to protect international students and ensure, so far as is possible, that international students have a positive experience that supports their educational achievement while studying in New Zealand.

## Admission Requirements

Entry to the School requires that international students have

- achieved the age of 18 years by the first day of study of their elected programme of study. In exceptional circumstances an exemption to this age restriction may be granted for all programmes of study EXCEPT the Bachelor of Performing Arts (Acting). The procedure for applying for an exemption to this requirement is set out above.
- achieved a level of proficiency in the English language (the language of tuition delivery) as set out in the NZQA Acceptable evidence of English language proficiency 2017.

## Selection of International Students

International students are required to participate in an equivalent selection process to that required of domestic students before an offer of place can be made. Modification to the components of the selection procedure may be required in acknowledgement that some international students will participate in the process, of necessity, at a distance.

5

International students will be required to achieve the same admission standards for entry as those required of domestic students.

Admission of international students to study at the School is on the basis that they are not taking a place that would otherwise be available to a domestic student. [Education Act 1989, 224(10)]

## DEFERRALS

### Deferral of commencement of study for new students

Toi Whakaari does **NOT** grant deferrals of commencement of study to new students once an offer of place has been received. If a candidate is unable to take up the offer then they must reapply under the same process as other candidates for entry the following year. Where there are considered to be exceptional circumstances an application for deferral of commencement may be made by the HOD/C or nominated departmental representative to the Director for consideration. In this case the Director's decision is final with no recourse to appeal.

## Deferral after commencement of study

Deferrals after commencement of study will not be granted automatically and requests for deferral will be considered on a case by case basis.

## PROCEDURES

### Request for deferral after commencement of a course of study

A student wishing to defer after the commencement of study on a particular course must make a written request to the HOD/C or nominated departmental representative.

The request will be duly considered and a written recommendation submitted to the Director.

In this recommendation the HOD/C or departmental representative will outline any conditions he/she believes are reasonably necessary for the student to fulfil in order to continue the course of study at a later date.

The Director will inform the student, in writing, of the decision, including any conditions, no later than 10 working days after the request for deferral has been made.

The Director's decision will be final with no recourse to appeal.

A copy of all correspondence will be kept on the student's file.

A deferral will be granted for a maximum period of 12 months ONLY. Continuation of study must be taken up no more than 12 months after date of withdrawal.

The student will undergo the normal Withdrawal and Exit Procedure and will be informed of the future start date for the course of study, as soon as this has been set.

If a student accepts an offer of deferral he or she will be required to confirm, in writing, to the School their intention to re-commence study at least three months prior to the specified starting date. Failure to do so may result in the student's deferral being withdrawn.

If the Director considers that the student has fulfilled all conditions detailed in the deferral offer, they will accept the student's request to re-commence study.

Normal enrolment procedures will follow.

In this matter the Director's decision will be final with no recourse to appeal.

## RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

There is no provision for exemption from specific course requirements on the basis of prior learning or current competency for entry into the:

- Bachelor of Performing Arts (Acting)

The Academic Board, on the recommendation of the Director, may give credit for prior learning or current competency, for entry into the following qualifications:

- Bachelor of Performing Arts (Management)
- Bachelor of Design (Stage & Screen)
- NZ Diploma in Scenic Construction and Properties
- NZ Diploma in Costume Construction

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7

Where Recognition of Prior Learning is approved it will generally be applied to the initial year of study on that specific programme of study. Exceptional circumstances may be considered for recognition of prior learning to enable entry into second or third year of a programme.

## PROCEDURES

A prospective student seeking credit for prior learning should forward a written request for Recognition of Prior Learning to the relevant HOD/C or a nominated departmental representative for consideration.

Requests must be made prior to commencement of study on the specific qualification programme. NO retrospective requests will be considered.

This request must include all supporting documentation with evidence of the applicant's relevant academic or industry experience or current competency.

The HOD/C or departmental representative will make a written recommendation to the Director that either:

- Recognition of Prior Learning will be unconditionally granted

- Recognition of Prior Learning will be conditionally granted
- Recognition of Prior Learning will not be granted

The Director will review all documentation and make a determination supporting or denying the departmental recommendation and forward this to the Academic Board in a timely manner in order to meet the required deadlines for enrolment into the relevant course.

The Academic Board will make a final decision with no recourse to appeal.

## ENROLMENT

Enrolment procedures are completed following an applicant accepting an *offer of place*.

Students will be required to enrol in a specific qualification study programme upon acceptance of the *offer of place*, and thereafter re-enrol annually in the relevant programme of study for that qualification

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8

## PROCEDURES

An *offer of place* is made to applicants by the Director and HOD/C or designated departmental representative from the relevant qualification programme, upon completion of the programme specific selection process.

Applicants will be required to accept or decline this *offer of place* in writing.

By accepting an *offer of place* the student is agrees to abide by the policy and procedures of the School and becomes liable for payment of fees by the due date.

A deadline for receiving notification of acceptance or not will be set each year in relation to programme delivery commencement dates.

Each year, programme enrolment documentation must be completed prior to the commencement of programme delivery.

During enrolment all students are required to sign the following Enrolment Agreement (see below) prior to commencement of study.



This Enrolment Agreement will be provided with enrolment documentation prior to commencement of programme delivery each year.

Signed Enrolment Agreements will be filed on the Student's personal file.

### TOI WHAKAARI: NZ DRAMA SCHOOL Enrolment Agreement

*The School and the Student form a contractual relationship when the School enrolls the Student as a member of the School community. Following are the terms of that Agreement which the School and the Student accept are to govern their relationship along with the Policies of the School.*

***The School will:***

- 1. Use its best endeavours to provide the Student with tuition, supervision, assessment and support services of a professional standard in the course for which the Student is enrolled and in accordance with New Zealand Qualifications Authority, Tertiary Education Commission and Ministry of Education guidelines and regulations.*
- 2. Act reasonably and fairly in exercising its powers under the regulatory framework and this Agreement.*
- 3. Give reasonable notice of any changes to its course that may be required because of changes in funding, staffing or other reasonable cause.*

***The Student will:***

- 4. Observe New Zealand law and regulations including, but not limited to, those concerned with copyright, privacy, defamation, objectionable material and human rights.*
- 5. Observe the Policies, Rules and Regulations of the School and accept the jurisdiction of the School in matters related to academic progress and discipline.*
- 6. Use best efforts to fulfil the requirements prescribed by the School for the course*
- 7. Authorise the School to receive information from any person, authority or corporate body concerning the Student including, but not limited to, medical, educational and welfare information.*

***The School and the Student also agree:***

- 8. The Agreement is formed when signed by both parties.*
- 9. The Agreement will continue for the period for which the Student is enrolled by the School and will then end. However, clause 12 will continue to apply after the Agreement ends.*
- 10. The relevant Application for Enrolment, Fees Invoice, Offer of Place and Acceptance of Offer of Place, course outline(s), and material published in the School and Departmental Handbooks also form part of this Agreement, but*

*nothing else shall be incorporated into the contractual relationship between the Student and the School.*

11. *Liability for failure to perform this Agreement is excluded where that failure has been caused by circumstances beyond the control of the School or the Student.*
12. *Any dispute arising out of or in connection with this Agreement, or otherwise relating to the performance by the School or its staff of their responsibilities to the Student, shall be addressed through the grievance procedures and dispute resolution procedures prescribed by the School .*

## STUDENT LEARNING CONTRACT

### Expectations of Students

#### Attendance & Absence

Absenteeism severely disadvantages students from maximising their learning and is viewed with concern by the School.

The absence, or lateness, of one student impacts on the work of all students in the group.

School performances, productions, exhibitions, presentations and showcases are the equivalent of examinations in other tertiary institutions.

It is expected that students

- attend all timetabled classes on time, including; kōiwi, rehearsals, performances, workshops and presentations
- attend additional specified events when required.
- comply with any specific attendance requirements as detailed by each Department in relation to particular projects or productions.
- be punctual at all times.
- take responsibility for checking the displayed timetables and emails daily.

Failure to attend and unexplained or prolonged absence will result in Departmental Disciplinary Procedures being implemented (see Discipline section).

Unexplained and unsanctioned absence or lateness may affect a student's assessment.

It is a student's responsibility to ensure they catch up on work missed due to absence, in consultation with the supervising tutor or HOD/C.

## PROCEDURES

### Unanticipated absence and lateness

If a student is absent for any reason they must follow the relevant procedures as set out in the Student Handbook for notifying the School of their absence.

Students are required to notify the School as soon as practically possible, of lateness, illness, injury, or other circumstances requiring absence from scheduled classes.

Student's absence and lateness will be recorded.

Lateness may result in exclusion from class and any student excluded for lateness will be marked as absent.

Any other specific departmental procedures for reporting absence will be notified by tutorial or administrative staff during the first week study at the School usually through information contained in the departmental guideline booklets.

Students are expected to explain any absence to all relevant tutors, and arrange to make up the missed work.

If a student is physically unable to participate actively in a class they should try, public health issues being taken into consideration, and sit in on the class if at all possible.

A student who is absent due to illness or injury for more than two consecutive days must present a medical certificate or equivalent as soon as possible.

### Anticipated absence

Students needing anticipated leave of absence must request a formal Leave of Absence in advance, from the appropriate HOD/C or designated departmental representative, prior to the leave being taken.

Leave of Absence Forms are provided for making such requests.

The HOD/C or department representative will reasonably consider the request and grant, decline or grant it subject to conditions.

In circumstances where a student feels that a request for leave has been unreasonably withheld they may appeal to the Director, whose decision will be final.

Leave subsequently taken that has not been granted will adversely affect the student's assessment of the work missed and may invoke Departmental Disciplinary Procedures being implemented. (see Discipline section)

In the event of serious or long-term sickness or injury, or other circumstances requiring a long-term leave of absence, a student must receive approval from the HOD/C and the Director.

If leave is granted, students must comply with any prescribed requirements for completing missed work.

A student must immediately declare any health issues, which may affect on-going participation in their programme, to a Supervising Tutor or the HOD/C

## Academic Progression

### Progression during an academic year

Students should ensure that they attempt all assignments across the year.

Progression through the academic year is dependent upon a student successfully completing all their 'core' or 'essential' units/assessments each term.

Departmental handbooks outline which units and/or assessments are 'core' or 'essential' components for that particular course of study.

Failing to successfully complete any core or essential unit/assessment has implications for the student's Learning Contract and will result in their inability to progress academically.

In the case where a student is clearly failing and will be unable to progress the School may require them to withdraw from the course prior to the completion of the academic year.

### Progression into a subsequent year of study or graduation

Progression into a subsequent year of study or progression to graduation is not automatic. Students must have successfully completed all units for each year of study to progress into the next year.

## Retaking units

Any student who fails one or more units may apply to retake them the following year. Permission to retake will not be granted automatically.

Programmes of study at Toi Whakaari are holistic in nature and many of the projects/assignments are interwoven and dependent on work arising from concurrent projects in other units. Because of this coherence, students will normally be required to retake all parallel projects alongside those that they failed to complete successfully. In certain circumstances permission to retake will only be granted on condition that the whole year is repeated.

## Progress Meetings

Students concerned about their academic progress should, in the first instance, speak to the relevant tutor in their department.

Students are advised to use mid-year progress meeting to ensure that they are fully aware of any problems that might result in non-completion later.

## PROCEDURES

A student who fails a 'core' or 'essential' unit/assessment should, in the first instance, speak to the relevant tutor in their department.

A meeting with a departmental representative and the Student Registrar will be held to discuss the implications and options on future academic study at the School. A student is entitled to bring a support person with them to this meeting if they wish.

The outcome of this meeting will be to ascertain the best course of action for the student and the School. Outcomes may include that the student withdraws from study, the School may withdraw the student's place at the School or a proposal to re-take unit(s) is made. The School may impose conditions on any option to return to study.

The student will be informed in writing of the result of this meeting, including any conditions applied.

If a student is granted the option to return to study a place will be held for them on the appropriate course of study for the following year.

In the case of a first year who wishes the option to return to study be deferred for a year or more their place may not be guaranteed and they may be required to go through the application process again for the year they wish to return in.

In the event that a student is unhappy with the outcome of these processes they may address their complaint to the school via the procedures outlined in the Student Grievance Resolution Policy.

## ACCESS TO TUTORIAL STAFF

The School provides regular opportunities for students to meet with tutorial staff in order to:

- receive clarification of the curriculum, course requirements, assessment tasks and general learning questions
- receive feedback and assessment of their progress in meeting course requirements
- understand all relevant School procedures
- to advise of personal issues which may be affecting learning

## PROCEDURES

Each department will outline the timetable for tutorial sessions.

Staff will provide tutorial support and guidance appropriate to the method of delivery for each course of study so that students can plan their learning programme to achieve their learning goals.

This support should take into account individual tutor workload.

Students can approach teaching staff within School hours to request an appointment.

Wherever possible, staff will deal with the request within twenty four (24) hours. No student should have to wait more than seven (7) days for an appointment.

Students can approach the Student Registrar or Director's Executive Assistant for an appointment with the Director at any time. The same timelines will apply as for other staff member appointments.

# TEACHING AND DELIVERY

The teaching approach at Toi Whakaari reflects the strategic direction of the School. Its diversity and strength combines academic rigour and embodies best practice, with the aim of providing a learning environment that enhances the capabilities, potential and intellectual independence of students on a life-long basis.

Although the development of key competencies necessary for professional life will be a priority of the teaching, emphasis will be placed on fostering research and exploration skills through practical application in context.

Importance will be placed on providing opportunities for students to test their limitations and develop their strengths as practitioners in film and theatre, through a range of structured projects, process-led courses, experience in the field, and artistic collaboration.

## PROCEDURES

15

The School's commitment to respect, preserve and enhance teaching and the student learning experience is demonstrated through:

The appointment of appropriately qualified staff to deliver discipline specific programmes

The provision of student supports necessary to meet the requirements of the teaching and learning process irrespective of mode of study.

Departments delivering each qualification programme publishing and making available to each student at the commencement of study for the year relevant curriculum documentation which will detail:

- Course Outlines
- Graduate Profiles
- Course Delivery

At the commencement of each assessment task or project Departments will provide students with task or project specific:

- Learning Outcomes
- Assessment Criteria

Ongoing review and revision of programme content and delivery based on peer-review and including input from students, internal and external experts and appropriate national and international monitoring processes.

Facilitating access for students to appropriate pastoral care, academic advice, infrastructure facilities and services, and student learning support.

## COURSE EVALUATION

Ongoing review of curriculum documentation and course delivery will be conducted within each programme, in consultation with stakeholders, in line with New Zealand Qualifications Authority guidelines and requirements.

Annual internal and external monitoring processes are in place to evaluate the delivery of programmes.

Student evaluation of their course provides essential information for guest tutors, departmental staff, the Curriculum Committee, the Academic board, independent auditors, resource managers and administrators regarding such matters as:

- Effectiveness of delivery
- Relevance of curriculum content
- Departmental resources
- Facility resources
- Overall student satisfaction

## PROCEDURES

Student evaluation will be collected and reviewed regularly, through processes outlined in each programme's curriculum documentation.

Student feedback is organised, administered, analysed and evaluated by each department, then reported through the Curriculum Committee to the Academic Board.

Internal review and external independent audits of evaluation processes are carried out in accordance with NZQA requirements.



Annual monitoring and reporting on the quality of delivery of undergraduate programmes is completed by an approved external monitor.

The degree monitor's recommendations are reviewed and actioned by staff, and the Curriculum Committee before being reported to the Academic Board.

Twice yearly surveys of the student body are conducted to request feedback on administrative systems, infrastructure and resources provided for their learning. These are organised, analysed and reported on by the Student Registrar.

Students have representation at governance level on the sub committees of the Board of Trustees; Engagement Committee, PPR Committee and the Academic Board.

Student Board representatives are elected by the student body.

Ongoing review of programmes and course delivery is carried out through evaluation and feedback from relevant stakeholders, and at meetings of the following groups:

- Tuition Staff
- Administrative and Library Staff
- Industry Advisory Panels and/or Industry Professionals
- Curriculum Committee
- Academic Board

## DEVELOPING NEW PROGRAMMES

In developing new programmes the School will ensure that the programmes are based on the needs of students and other stakeholders, and incorporate the requirements of funding and standard-setting bodies.

New programmes must follow the procedures and requirements as set out by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA).

## PROCEDURES

In developing new programmes, the following procedures will take place:  
A proposal will be examined in the light of the School's strategic direction as articulated in the Strategic Plan.

The aims of the proposed programme or change of programme, will be clearly articulated and discussed as appropriate with:

- Staff teams
- Students involved
- The Curriculum Committee
- Academic Board
- Board of Trustees

All current NZQA Accreditation and Approval processes will be followed.

The programme proposal or changes to an existing programme, will then be submitted to NZQA and/or other qualifying bodies for approval.

This ACADEMIC AND STUDENT POLICY & PROCEDURES policy was approved by the Toi Whakaari Academic Board on 22 February 2019.

Policy due for review before February 2022