

COVID-19: INTERNATIONAL PHD STUDENT ENROLMENT FROM OVERSEAS

Students are required to remain updated on any policies or regulation changes, which are detailed in this document. Please check this document regularly for updated information.

Under New Zealand's Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) guidelines, international PhD students must normally be residing within New Zealand (NZ) in order to be eligible for domestic tuition fees.

Normally, students are permitted to travel overseas for research related purposes (i.e. data collection), for up to a maximum of one year.

The TEC requirements for residing in NZ have been temporarily relaxed due to the disruption to travel for international PhD students due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Immigration New Zealand (INZ) are not currently processing visa requests for international students based overseas. We will notify students when this is updated.

We have provided details below that will guide international PhD students who have been:

- admitted and currently unable to travel to NZ; or,
- enrolled and currently *overseas* on research related purposes and are unable to travel back to NZ;
- enrolled and currently *residing* in NZ but wishing to travel overseas for data collection.

Please Note: Given the uncertainty of COVID-19 globally, doctoral students must discuss with supervisors alternative ways to gather their data if disruption continues, or discuss the option of different data sets to answer research questions. This is necessary if students are unable to access people or locations that they had anticipated would provide information for their research. It is advisable that an alternative research plan be discussed early between the student and supervisor for implementation if the original research plan proves impracticable so that doctoral studies can be completed within the timeframe.

LIMITED BORDER EXEMPTION FOR RETURNING DOCTORAL STUDENTS

AUT will be supporting doctoral students' return and transition back to study in New Zealand after the recent announcement by the New Zealand Government allowing 250 eligible PhD students return to New Zealand to continue their study.

There is no application process and the University is currently working to identify students who are eligible based on the prioritisation criteria and will contact those who are eligible directly to guide them through each stage of the process. [Visit AUT Student Hub Online for further details.](#)

Students who are not currently eligible should continue to work with their supervisor and check for updates on this page.

NEW STUDENTS

Students who have been admitted and wish to start their enrolment in the PhD programme should:

- complete a PGR30 form in consultation with your supervisors (if you are able to enrol this will be sent by your supervisor/department administrator);
- confirm a possible start date with your supervisor/department administrator;
- submit a study plan (with your supervisors), which includes timeframes, that outline how you will undertake your study over the next 12 months. This should also detail how you will conduct supervision meetings;
- complete a supervision agreement and submit (a template will be sent) this to your faculty. The study plan should be attached to this.
- Confirm that you have suitable on-going internet access through your own internet provider. AUT are unable to provide internet access offshore.

You will be enrolled for an initial 6-month period. Your enrolment will be reviewed and renewed on an ongoing basis until the New Zealand borders are re-opened for students to travel to New Zealand.

You may defer the start of your study for up to 18 months if you are not ready to commence. You can email your supervisor to request this and they will forward your email to the appropriate faculty office. Please note that scholarships are not automatically deferred if you defer your Offer of Place. You must contact the Scholarships Office to apply to defer your scholarship separately.

All conditions will need to be met prior to commencing your PhD study:

- ***Where there is a Research Methods (RM) condition and a paper is offered on-line, you can commence study at the same time;***
- ***If there is not an on-line option for the RM paper, then you will not be permitted to commence the PhD.***

EXISTING STUDENTS

Current Students Based Overseas

Students who enrolled and commenced their studies in New Zealand and travelled overseas for personal reasons or for data collection before the NZ borders closed and who are currently unable to travel back to NZ:

- We expect that you have already commenced working with your supervisors while overseas. You should have already negotiated timeframes and how you will conduct supervision meetings and note arrangements in your next progress report. If you not started this then you will need to submit a study plan (with your supervisors), including timeframes, that will guide how you undertake your study over the next 12 months including how you will conduct supervision meetings.
- If you are unable to work from overseas you can submit a PGR6 form requesting a leave of absence. Please note, if this extends beyond 18 months arrangements will be discussed with you individually.

Current Students Based in New Zealand

The University will not be approving any travel or funding for travel outside of the country to undertake data collection for students currently residing in NZ. Students need to be aware that the University has no responsibility or obligation to a student should they decide to travel against advice.

As mentioned above (page 1), if you have already completed your PGR9 but are not able to undertake travel to the proposed research location, please discuss with your supervisors what alternate plans you might be able to make.

Please Note: This could involve a restructure of your research plan.

WHEN NZ BORDERS RE-OPEN

When Immigration New Zealand is processing and issuing student visas again, border restrictions are lifted, and students are able to travel to New Zealand, international PhD students will be required to do so in order to remain eligible for the domestic tuition fees scheme.

The University is not able to lobby Immigration New Zealand on behalf of students, and their families, in order to facilitate the visa application process.

Students who are unable to, or choose not to, relocate to New Zealand once border restrictions are lifted will be required to pay international tuition fees.

Upon arrival in New Zealand students will be required to quarantine at a government nominated quarantine facility and will be responsible for any associated quarantine fees.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The tuition fees are required to be paid before you can commence.

Note: If you have been awarded an AUT scholarship this may be used to pay the fees; any stipend components will not be paid until you are residing in New Zealand for up to three years. Please note – no retrospective payments will be made.

- AUT's web-site for International Students which includes information about living in NZ
<https://www.aut.ac.nz/international>
- Information about applying for a student visa in New Zealand and what is required
<https://www.aut.ac.nz/international/preparing-for-your-trip-to-new-zealand/student-visas-and-permits>

[Contact your Faculty Postgraduate Office for more information with regards to your enrolment study overseas.](#)