



VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF
WELLINGTON
TE HERENGA WAKA

TOHU PAETAHI TURE
BACHELOR
OF LAWS

2026





CONTENTS

Tohu Paetahi Ture—Bachelor of Laws	2
Degree structure	4
Graduate entry pathway into Law	6
Where can Law take you?	8
Planning for law school	10
Stepping stones along the way	11
Community and support	13
Contact us	<i>Inside back cover</i>



Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington has an overall five-stars-plus rating in the QS Stars university rating system, one of only 23 universities worldwide to do so. The University gained a total score of 966 out of a possible 1,000 points across eight audited categories, including maximum points for the employability and inclusiveness categories. Maximum points were awarded for 25 of the more than 30 indicators, including overall student satisfaction; further study; graduate employment rate; international diversity, support, and

collaborations; academic reputation; satisfaction with teaching; campus facilities; accreditations; art and cultural investment and facilities; disabled access; scholarships and bursaries; low-income outreach; and student cohort diversity.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington uses all reasonable skill and care to ensure the information contained here was accurate at the time it was prepared. However, matters covered by this publication are subject to change due to a continuous process of review, and to unanticipated circumstances. The University therefore reserves the right to make any changes without notice. So far as the law permits, the University accepts no responsibility for any loss suffered by any person due to reliance (either whole or in part) on the information contained in this publication, whether direct or indirect, and whether foreseeable or not.

TOHU PAETAHI TURE

BACHELOR OF LAWS

A CAPITAL CITY LAW DEGREE

Wellington's Faculty of Law is at the centre of legal and political action in Aotearoa New Zealand. Positioned among key legal institutions such as Parliament, the Supreme Court, the High Court, and esteemed law firms, we play a crucial role in shaping discussions on legal, policy, and governance matters that impact everyone in New Zealand.

WORLD-CLASS TEACHING

Our teachers and researchers have won national and international prizes for their teaching and research, and for their contributions to social debate and law reform. Their expertise feeds into what we teach and how we teach it, with students as an integral part of this world-class experience.

TIKANGA MĀORI AND YOUR LEGAL EDUCATION

All New Zealand law students are required to take a course in tikanga Māori. We have worked hard to develop our programmes to incorporate tikanga into the teaching of our compulsory courses. You will be better equipped to be a lawyer in Aotearoa but also assured of thriving wherever your law degree takes you.

BUILDING CAREER PATHWAYS

A Law degree opens up a world of possibilities beyond practising law in a firm. The skills you gain during your studies pave the way for a diverse range of career paths. Our Law graduates have gone on to become:

- ▶ Supreme Court judges
- ▶ Cabinet ministers, members of Parliament
- ▶ business leaders, chief executives, and international arbitrators
- ▶ ambassadors, policy analysts
- ▶ prize-winning journalists, actors, and comedians, and even a private secretary to King Charles III.

Your legal education equips you for success in various roles, allowing you to chart your own individual career journey.





“Welcome to our world-famous law school, renowned not just in New Zealand but globally.

“Don’t consider coming just because of our extraordinary location—the real reasons to study here are the opportunities and connections that Wellington offers. Don’t choose us only for our world-class scholars and teachers—choose us because they will challenge your thinking and equip you with the skills to make a real impact.

“This publication is just a glimpse into an exceptional community, one where you can belong, contribute, and shape your own future.”

Professor Geoff McLay
Dean of Law



DEGREE STRUCTURE

The Bachelor of Laws (LLB) is a full-time four-year degree comprising 480 points. It can be combined with a second degree to form a conjoint degree, which takes a minimum of five years' study. The LLB consists of 21 Law courses, MAOR 126, and a selection of non-Law courses that total at least 70 points.



100 LEVEL
**GET AN INTRODUCTION
TO THE FOUNDATIONS OF
LEGAL STUDY**



200 LEVEL
**BUILD YOUR LEGAL
SKILLS THROUGH THE
CORE SUBJECTS**



300 LEVEL
**DELVE INTO
SPECIALISED AREAS
OF CHOICE**

The following diagram will guide you through the degree structure. There are four core courses at 100 level, five core courses at 200 level, and two core courses and 11 further elective courses at 300 level.



100-LEVEL CORE COURSES

- ▶ LAWS 121 Introduction to the New Zealand Legal System
- ▶ LAWS 122 Introduction to Case Law
- ▶ LAWS 123 Introduction to Statute Law
- ▶ MAOR 126 He Herenga Tāngata / Engaging with Māori in Professional Practice

200-LEVEL CORE COURSES

- ▶ LAWS 211 The Law of Contract
- ▶ LAWS 212 The Law of Torts
- ▶ LAWS 213 Public Law
- ▶ LAWS 214 Criminal Law
- ▶ LAWS 297 Legal Research, Writing and Mooting

300-LEVEL CORE COURSES

- ▶ LAWS 301 Property Law
- ▶ LAWS 312 Equity, Trusts and Succession

300-LEVEL ELECTIVES

These could include:

- ▶ Bill of Rights
- ▶ Climate Change and the Law
- ▶ The Criminal Justice Process
- ▶ Data Privacy
- ▶ Ethics and the Law (required if you wish to apply for admission to the Bar)
- ▶ Family Law
- ▶ Intellectual Property
- ▶ International Law
- ▶ Law and Sexuality
- ▶ Law of Armed Conflict
- ▶ Māori Customary Law
- ▶ Migration and Refugee Law
- ▶ Welfare Law
- ▶ Youth Justice.



GRADUATE ENTRY PATHWAY INTO LAW

The method of teaching law is different from other disciplines. Law students are empowered to demonstrate intellectual autonomy, critical thinking, independence of thought, and openness to new ideas through interactive and discussion-based learning.

If you're ready to start your journey into Law, and you already have a degree, take the graduate entry pathway.

The graduate entry pathway is an optimised pathway where you can start an LLB in Trimester 3 if you already have any non-Law Bachelor's degree. You'll start study with LAWS 111, a course designed specifically for graduates with previous experience of university study.

Taking this course means that you can complete your first year of Law in a single trimester by skipping the foundational university steps intended for students without university experience.

After completing LAWS 111 and MAOR 126, you will be eligible to apply for entry into second-year Law from the following year. Your degree could take from two and a half to three years to complete, if you decide to study full time.

You may also be able to transfer up to 70 points from your previous undergraduate degree, allowing you a possible exemption from part of the non-Law requirement of the degree. Speak to our Tītoko—Student Success team for more information.

[wgtn.ac.nz/titoko](https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/titoko)

FROM THE KĀPITI COAST TO COMMERCIAL LAW

Originally from the Kāpiti Coast, Kellee Candy chose to study for a Bachelor of Laws in the Wellington region not only to stay close to home but also because she says Wellington is a fantastic city to live in.

“The Law Faculty has a great reputation and so I didn’t feel the need to travel further for my legal education.

“I was able to ‘test out the waters’ with the Bachelor of Laws because, in the first trimester of study, you only need to take one Law paper [LAWS 121] and so this was a great way to see if Law was for me without making an enormous commitment. I enjoyed it so much that I never looked back!”

What stood out to Kellee from her time at law school were the transferable skills she learnt, in addition to the foundational law knowledge she received, and how this prepared her for her career and current role as a commercial solicitor.

“I learnt the foundations of several important areas of the law that I practise in now, including commercial law, contract law, and company law. These are areas of law that crop up every

day in my job. The lecturers I had in these subjects at Victoria University of Wellington were world class, and I still find myself going back to my lecture notes from time to time.”

At secondary school, Kellee didn’t think she would end up as a lawyer, but her love for debating and speech competitions led her friends, family, and teachers to encourage her to study for a Bachelor of Laws. While studying, she gained confidence and built connections through opportunities such as client interviewing, mooting, and negotiation competitions, turning her passion for debating into lifelong communication skills.

As for her unexpected career path into law, Kellee’s advice to future students unsure of their pathway beyond law school is that a Law degree can be valuable for a range of careers.

“The Law degree provides opportunities to work (or study) almost anywhere in the world in roles at a law firm, as in-house counsel, in government, and more. There are many potential transitions you can make with a law degree too, including into policy or corporate governance.”



“We need diversity in the legal profession and at university, and so your knowledge and opinions could make a real difference. I know so many different people who have different views, opinions, and ways of learning who have all succeeded in the law, so please don’t think it will be too hard for you or that you don’t have what it takes.”

Kellee Candy

Graduate, Bachelor of Laws
Student, Bachelor of Arts in Gender and Sexuality Studies
and Media Studies

WHERE CAN LAW TAKE YOU?

Our Law degree can take you anywhere. Our teaching focuses on giving you a strong foundation of legal knowledge, in addition to valuable transferable skills that will take you far in any career, at any time.

The world of work is changing at an exceptional pace and increasingly requires curious and agile lifelong learners. You will become a well-rounded, adaptable graduate who can demonstrate the ability to communicate, work collaboratively, think critically, and solve problems. These skills will give you a competitive edge when applying for jobs.

After law school, you can work in:

- ▶ a law firm
- ▶ a government department, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade or Ministry of Justice
- ▶ the corporate sector, as an in-house counsel or policy analyst
- ▶ academia.

The LLB can also add valuable skills to another degree in Arts, Commerce, or Science—or whatever you choose to combine it with. A conjoint degree with Law can lead to specialist areas of law practice, such as art, commercial, or environmental law. It can lead to more effective work in these other fields informed by the skills and knowledge that your law degree gives you.

Job prospects could include:

- ▶ academic
- ▶ in-house legal counsel
- ▶ journalist
- ▶ lawyer
- ▶ policy analyst
- ▶ politician.

Potential employers could include:

- ▶ corporate sector (as in-house counsel)
- ▶ large private law firms
- ▶ LexisNexis
- ▶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- ▶ Ministry of Justice
- ▶ universities (academia).

POSTGRADUATE PATHWAYS

While many Law graduates go straight into careers inside and outside the legal sphere, others pursue postgraduate study to further their knowledge.

Postgraduate study options

- ▶ Graduate Certificate in Law (GCertLaw)
- ▶ Postgraduate Certificate in Law (PGCertLaw)
- ▶ Graduate Diploma in Law (GDipLaw)
- ▶ Master of Construction Law (MConsLaw)
- ▶ Master of Laws (LLM)
 - ▶ by coursework
 - ▶ by dissertation and coursework
 - ▶ by thesis
- ▶ Master of International Trade (MIntTr)
- ▶ Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

THE HEART OF THE LEGAL SYSTEM

At a young age, Jimmy Fiso learnt that the law is a living being that evolves and constantly changes, whether we like it or not, governing our lives and affecting our future. He wanted to immerse his mind in legal thinking and decided to study for a Bachelor of Laws to equip himself with the legal skills needed to navigate the world and serve people.

“Studying in Wellington places you in the heart of Aotearoa’s legal system, meaning you have direct access to some of the greatest legal and political minds in the country, whether they be learned friends, distinguished lecturers, scholars, judges, practitioners, or politicians.”

A highlight of Jimmy’s time at Te Herenga Waka was being able to attend a guest lecture presented by Supreme Court Justice the Hon. Justice Sir Joe Williams.

“He spoke about his personal journey through the law and the direction he sees the law heading. This was memorable because his message reinforced the sense that the law isn’t some boring book; rather, it is a fascinating creature that warrants our attention. It was also great because Justice Williams is an alumnus.”

When Jimmy thinks about how studying Law has prepared him for his future, three things come to mind.

“The first is the value of having a community of learning to discuss ideas with. Second is the importance of asking the right questions. Third is to look at the bigger picture of why what I am doing, or trying to solve, actually matters. This way of thinking has equipped me with skills that are useful and transferable, as well as ensuring the work that I do is purposeful and meaningful.”



“Step out of your comfort zone and try talking to new people in lectures, tutorials, and study groups, or make new friends in other social settings.”

Jimmy Fiso

Student, Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Arts



PLANNING FOR LAW SCHOOL

SUBJECTS TO TAKE AT SCHOOL

There are no prerequisites or preferred subjects. Choose subjects that interest you, as these are generally the ones in which you will do well. Subjects such as Classics, English, and History can help with basic essay-writing skills, whereas Economics, Mathematics, Music, Physics, and the languages can encourage analytical thinking.

STUDYING LAW

Studying Law demands in-depth discussion and critical analysis. As a result, Law graduates acquire skills in communication, problem-solving, research, and critical thinking—all of which are prized by employers in many different fields.

COMBINING DEGREES

A Bachelor of Laws can be combined with any other degree, with the most popular combinations being a Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Commerce. Some complementary subjects include Accounting, Criminology, History, International Relations, Political Science, and Psychology.

ADMISSION AND ENROLMENT

You may enrol in the first year of a Bachelor of Laws provided you have a university entrance qualification and, if you are a school leaver, you meet Te Herenga Waka's Guaranteed Entry Score.

[wgtn.ac.nz/apply](https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/apply)



STEPPING STONES ALONG THE WAY

The following opportunities provide the stepping stones to help our students fulfil their career goals.

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The University is committed to supporting students who embody the key attributes of excellence, leadership, and commitment to community through scholarship opportunities. These opportunities also help remove the barriers to university study that exist for students facing hardship and disadvantage.

We offer a range of scholarships for all levels of study. Some examples are the Colin Aikman Award, valued at up to \$10,000, to provide opportunities to study in areas affecting the South Pacific; the Fleur Knowsley Law Scholarship, valued at \$8,000, for those facing financial hardship; the Quentin-Baxter Memorial Scholarship, valued at up to \$3,500 over three years, for Māori and Pasifika students who demonstrate personal qualities, academic ability, and contribution to their community, and face financial hardship; and the LexisNexis Law Student Scholarship, valued at up to \$6,250, for those who consider themselves disadvantaged in regards to either economic, educational, or social circumstances.

i wgtn.ac.nz/scholarships

INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Postgraduate Law students are given the opportunity to participate in an internship as part of their study. Students are placed with a law office, court, voluntary organisation, government department, or similar agency.

CLERKSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Many law firms have summer clerk programmes that enable students to gain experience and progress to law clerk roles after completing their degree. Some law firms that have provided clerkships are Bell Gully, Buddle Findlay, Chapman Tripp, Simpson Grierson, and many others.

FINDING COMMUNITY AND OPPORTUNITY

When Helena Palmer first considered university, she was certain of one thing—she would never go to law school. Growing up in a legal and public service household, she had seen the demands of the profession firsthand. Yet, five years later, as she nears the completion of her Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and History, Helena's perspective has transformed. Not only has she embraced her legal studies, but she is also considering a future in legal practice.

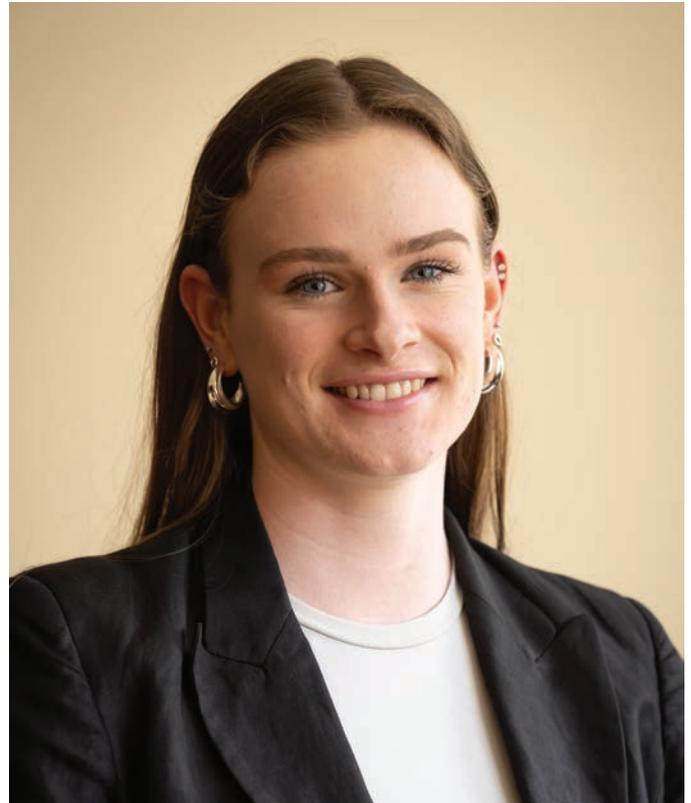
Choosing Te Herenga Waka was a natural fit. Helena spent her early years in the Wellington suburb of Karori before moving to Auckland, so returning to Wellington felt like coming home. The city's proximity to New Zealand's legal and political institutions make it the perfect environment for a law student. She has taken full advantage of the University's location by sitting in on Supreme Court hearings, attending Parliament's Question Time, and visiting the Beehive.

Beyond academics, Helena's involvement in student clubs has been a defining part of her university experience. As president of the Victoria University of Wellington Law Students' Society (VUWLSS) and a member of Generation Vote, she has found immense value in the connections and opportunities these organisations offer.

"The mahi in these roles has been incredibly challenging and rewarding, but the big part for me is the community that clubs like these represent," she says.

To incoming students, Helena offers one key piece of advice: "Figure out what you want out of your time at university. This may change—and that's fine—but knowing what you want to walk out with will motivate you to pursue it."

Helena's journey is a testament to the power of embracing new opportunities. Through her studies, leadership, and community engagement, she has made the most of her time at Te Herenga Waka and encourages future students to do the same.



"There are so many opportunities at this university for whatever you might be interested in. The key is to find your community and make the most of the experiences available to you."

Helena Palmer

Student, Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and History

President, Victoria University of Wellington Law Students' Society



COMMUNITY AND SUPPORT

CHAT TO OUR STUDENT ACADEMIC SERVICES TEAM

Our friendly Student Academic Services team includes designated Māori and Pasifika engagement advisers who provide holistic support and advance the academic interests of Māori and Pasifika students.

JOIN A STUDENT-LED GROUP

As part of an active student community, like-minded individuals can take advantage of the numerous social events, educational development opportunities, and career advice evenings facilitated by our many student-run groups.

Law Students' Society

The Victoria University of Wellington Law Students' Society is the representative body for Law students, run by Law students.

The society works with other representative groups at the law school to improve the lives of students during their time at university. It has two main roles as an organisation—advocacy for Law students and running events for them. The events are educational, career-based, competitive, or social.



Asian Law Students' Society

Since 2014, the Asian Law Students' Society has provided a supportive community for Asian Law students. It prides itself on creating a space for Asian Law students to celebrate their diverse cultures and connect with those from shared backgrounds.

Feminist Law Society

The Feminist Law Society is a group of Law students of all genders who are passionate about gender equality and social justice at the law school and in wider society. It seeks to be inclusive, intersectional, and aware of multiple layers of oppression.

Ngā Rangahautira

Māori Law Students' Association

Ko Ngā Rangahautira tētahi rōpū e tautoko ana i ngā mahi a ngā akonga Māori e whai ana i te tohu ture. Ko ngā mahi a Ngā Rangahautira, he tautoko, he akiaki i ngā akonga ki te whāi i tēnei rākau ture a te Pākehā. He rōpū awhina, tautoko i ngā akonga Māori ki te whakanui i tō tātou Māoritanga i roto i te ture.

Ngā Rangahautira is the Māori Law Students' Association. Its primary focus is to assist and support Māori Law students with their studies at the law school by fostering a commitment to tikanga Māori and ngā ture Pākehā.

Pasifika Law Students' Society

The Pasifika Law Students' Society was established by students with the aim of encouraging and maintaining Pasifika success and growth within the Faculty of Law while providing a social and supportive environment.

Rainbow Law Students' Society

At Te Herenga Waka, our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual/agender (LGBTQIA+), and takatāpui communities are known as the rainbow communities. The Rainbow Law Students' Society aims to make it easier for students to connect and find support throughout their law school adventure.

GAINING AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE WIDER COMMUNITY

Etienne Wain decided to study for a Bachelor of Laws at Te Herenga Waka because he wanted to learn about the rules governing society and why they are the way they are.

“I wanted to know about how to change the law, thinking especially of tangata whenua, Asian communities, queer people, and disabled people, and the ways that the legal system does not serve them currently.”

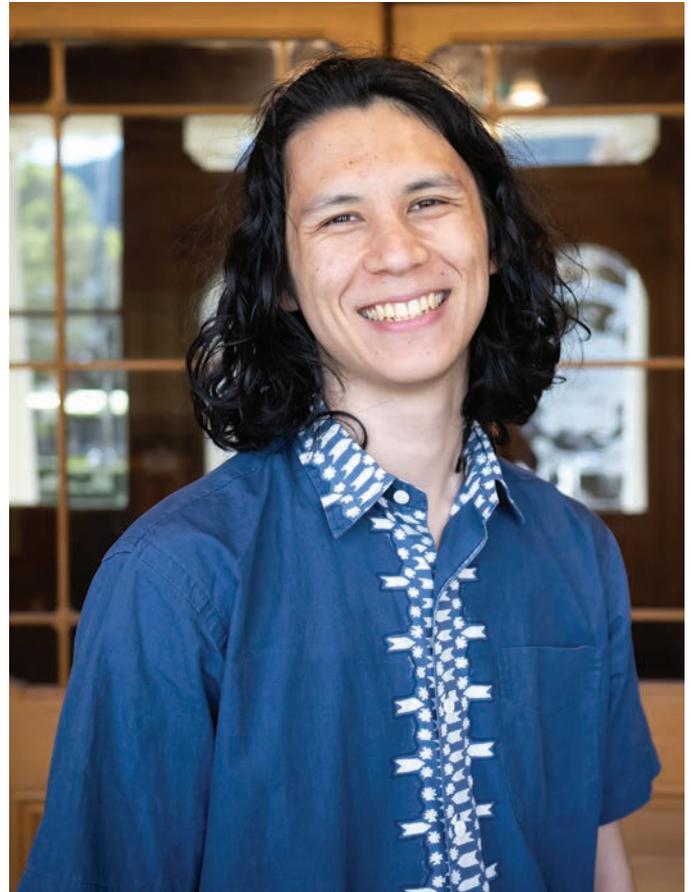
His undergraduate studies have since led him to pursue a PhD with Te Kauhanganui Tātai Ture—Faculty of Law. His research focuses on Te Tiriti o Waitangi, tangata Tiriti, and constitutional transformation.

“As new developments in the legal system occur, being familiar with Te Tiriti o Waitangi and tikanga is becoming increasingly crucial for legal professionals. My legal study has prepared me for my career by giving me the opportunity to learn about these areas from leading Māori scholars.”

Etienne says being able to join the Asian Law Students’ Association at law school has been a real highlight.

“Being part of a community with other Asian students, supporting each other and participating in events such as talent nights and study sessions, has made me feel much more at home at law school.

“Studying Law in Wellington also has the definite advantage of being able to visit the Supreme Court during a hearing or Parliament during question time. It’s very cool to be able to see the workings of these legal institutions first hand, in a way that isn’t possible anywhere else.”



“Keep in mind that it is not an individual pursuit. Having a community around you—whether that consists of your whānau, friends, cultural or faith-based groups, or anyone else—is absolutely vital.”

Etienne Wain

Graduate, Bachelor of Laws with Honours



FURTHER SUPPORT

Tītoko—the Centre for Student Success provides comprehensive support for students across all faculties and schools at the University. Tītoko can assist with questions about study, student administration, support services, and student life.

Every student has access to a student success adviser, who can provide more in-depth support. Our student success advisers are organised into subject area teams, many of which are located in faculty offices.

The Tītoko team for Law students, based at Pipitea campus, is experienced in working with Bachelor of Laws students, including those doing conjoint degrees. They can help with

queries such as planning your degree, second-year selection, mapping out your core 200- and 300-level courses, and choosing your electives. Student success advisers can also help connect you to other support areas in the University such as Manawa Ora—Student Wellbeing, Te Ratonga Penapena Pūtea—Student Finance, and Te Taiako—Student Learning.

Many factors contribute to students' level of engagement, including previous education, health, family commitments, and their social, cultural, and financial background. The Faculty of Law acknowledges this diversity by ensuring the support provided is equitable, fair, and inclusive.

CONTACT US

[wgtn.ac.nz/llb](https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/llb)

[wgtn.ac.nz/apply](https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/apply)

STUDENT SUCCESS

The Student Success team supports you through your study, from enrolment to graduation. Get help with choosing your degree, planning your courses, or changing your degree programme.

Student success advisers

Room RHG19, Ground Floor, Rutherford House, Pipitea Campus

Māori and Pasifika engagement advisers

If you are a Māori or Pasifika student studying Law, get help with tutorials, mentoring, and study skills sessions.

For Māori students:

cecilia.tuiomanufili@vuw.ac.nz

For Pasifika students:

marina.wall@vuw.ac.nz

ADMISSION AND ENROLMENT

You can apply for admission up to two years in advance of the year you plan to start studying. Apply through our student portal, Pūaha. Once you have met the requirements, you will receive either a conditional or an unconditional Offer of Place.

After receiving your Offer of Place, you will be invited to select your courses once course enrolment is open. You select courses for one academic year at a time.

The closing date for applications for limited-entry courses every year is 1 December. All applications must be received by this date to be considered for second-year selection, returning 200-level LAWS courses, and 300-level LAWS elective ballots and oversubscribed courses.

[wgtn.ac.nz/puaha](https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/puaha)

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Entry in the Bachelor of Laws requires standard New Zealand University Entrance or equivalent.

There are no prerequisite secondary school subjects for the Bachelor of Laws, but useful subjects to prepare for this degree include English, Classics, and History.

[wgtn.ac.nz/study](https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/study)

OTHER STUDENT RESOURCES

Disability support

[wgtn.ac.nz/disability](https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/disability)

Māori student support

[wgtn.ac.nz/awhina](https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/awhina)

Pasifika student success

[wgtn.ac.nz/pasifika](https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/pasifika)

Rainbow student support

[wgtn.ac.nz/rainbow](https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/rainbow)

Refugee-background student support

[wgtn.ac.nz/refugee-background-students](https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/refugee-background-students)

Scholarships

[wgtn.ac.nz/scholarships](https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/scholarships)

Student services and support

[wgtn.ac.nz/student-support](https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/student-support)



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