About the PhD

A Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is a globally recognised postgraduate research degree and the highest academic degree you can achieve. As a doctoral candidate, you will undertake three to four years of research. This will culminate in a thesis of original research that contributes significantly to knowledge and understanding in your discipline. Your thesis will be directed by your supervisors, then assessed by external examiners appointed by the University.

Why a PhD at the University of Auckland?

World-class reputation
The University of Auckland is among the top 1% of universities globally. We are the highest-ranked and most innovative University in the country, and the only New Zealand institution leading research centres and institutes. We have the most comprehensive research offerings of any university in the country, supported by the highest level of research funding.3

Leading research
We are New Zealand’s largest research organisation, supporting 60 research units, centres and institutes. We have the most comprehensive research offerings of any university in the country, supported by the highest level of research funding.3

www.auckland.ac.nz/research

Extensive specialisations
We offer PhD studies in over 100 subjects, across all faculties and institutes:

- Arts
  www.arts.auckland.ac.nz
- Business
  www.business.auckland.ac.nz
- Creative Arts and Industries
  www.creative.auckland.ac.nz
- Education and Social Work
  www.education.auckland.ac.nz
- Engineering
  www.engineering.auckland.ac.nz
- Law
  www.law.auckland.ac.nz
- Medical and Health Sciences
  www.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz
- Science
  www.science.auckland.ac.nz
- Liggins Institute (health research)
  www.liggins.auckland.ac.nz
- Auckland Bioengineering Institute
  www.abi.auckland.ac.nz

Outstanding academic community
We have the highest concentration of top-ranked researchers in New Zealand, and they support the greatest number of doctoral candidate completions in the country.4 Members of our thriving doctoral community regularly publish papers, attend international conferences and make significant contributions to global research.

Enriching environment
Discover our rich local culture, unique landscape and the reason our city’s exceptional standard of living is among the best in the world.

THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND KEY STATISTICS

RANKED

The University of Auckland is the highest performing university in New Zealand, and ranks within the global Top 100 universities in the QS rankings for 2023

Each year the University awards

225 new University of Auckland Doctoral Scholarships

Auckland is ranked

1st in the world for quality of living by the 2021 EIU ranking (Economist Intelligence Unit)

On average during their studies, doctoral candidates attend

3 conferences and author 3 publications

More than

3000 doctoral candidates; around 50% international

We have the highest concentration of top-ranked researchers in New Zealand

Cover attributions:
1 QS World University Rankings 2023
2 Reuters Top 75: Asia Pacific’s Most Innovative Universities 2019
3 Performance Based Research Fund: Improving Research Quality. The results of the PBRF 2015 Quality Evaluation
4 Times Higher Education University Impact Rankings 2022
5 QS World Rankings by Subject 2022
How we support you

Domestic fee rates
New international PhD candidates who live in New Zealand during their doctoral study pay the same annual tuition fees as New Zealand students. In 2022, that is just NZ$7,454.40 per annum (excluding compulsory fees).

Generous scholarships
A range of scholarship options is available for international PhD candidates, including country-specific funding, the University of Auckland Doctoral Scholarships and project-specific funding.

Automatic research funding
Research support funding is available automatically to all PhD candidates. Postgraduate Research Student Support (PReSS) is a monthly payment for up to four years, intended to cover research costs and contribute to research-related travel, conference attendance and research consumables.

Doctoral development
The University offers a comprehensive range of services to support doctoral candidate development. You could benefit from in-person workshops, online learning and a range of other resources and unique opportunities to help you refine your skills and employability.

English language development
Our English language pathway helps anyone with a conditional offer to meet our language requirements. Once in the programme, you can explore our English language enrichment opportunities to support your studies.

Dedicated advice
Teams of expert advisers provide support throughout your studies. The International Office provides student advice around visas, opening a bank account and living in a new country. Once enrolled, the School of Graduate Studies answers questions about your programme. Before that, please contact us at www.askauuckland.ac.nz or postgraduate@auckland.ac.nz

Accommodation
We can help you find quality accommodation in the heart of Auckland City, whether you are a single student, part of a couple or bringing your family. Choose from University residences or private accommodation.

www.accommodation.ac.nz

Preparing to apply

Entry requirements
Acceptance on to the programme is subject to staff availability for supervision, and appropriate facilities. You must demonstrate an ability to research independently and possess a high level of theoretical understanding. You must also have completed a significant research project, dissertation or thesis during your qualifying degree. You can check your eligibility using our online calculator. All PhD candidates must have a GPE of 6.0 or above.

www.gpecalculator.auckland.ac.nz

You will need an overall IELTS academic score of 6.5 with no band less than 6.0, or approved equivalent.

www.auckland.ac.nz/doctoralentry

Find a supervisor
You can apply to the PhD programme without first finding a supervisor, but having a supervisor will speed up your application. Search Discovery Profiles, our online database of researchers and experts, to find detailed information about potential supervisors.

https://profiles.auckland.ac.nz/

You can also browse the research going on in our different faculties and schools and find a supervisor to match your research interests.

auckland.ac.nz/findasupervisor

*You may apply for the PhD programme and receive a conditional offer if you have not yet met English proficiency requirements.

New Zealand’s borders are open and all international student visas are being processed as normal. Detailed instructions on how to apply for your student visa can be found on our website:

auckland.ac.nz/visa-information

Dr Hamed Minaezaeim was studying his PhD in Bioengineering at the Auckland Bioengineering Institute (ABI) when he developed a device to make the chest physiotherapy exercises prescribed for children with lung disorders a fun thing to do.

The device, BreatheHero, was developed in collaboration with a team of researchers at the University, and has won several awards including the UniServices prize in the Velocity $100,000 Challenge.

For his PhD Hamed focused on the lung, using mathematical modelling to develop a framework to track changes in diseased lungs more precisely than is currently possible. He was supervised by Dr Alys Clark and Professor Meryn Tawhai, both internationally recognised pioneers in lung modelling research.

Hamed began his studies in mechanical engineering in Iran before winning a scholarship to Stellenbosch University in South Africa, where he completed a Masters in Mechatronics Engineering. He decided to follow up on his passion for biomedical engineering and moved to Auckland to study at the ABI.

“It is one of the best multidisciplinary bioengineering institutes in the world,” he says. “It’s a multicultural institute with so many incredibly talented students and researchers who are researching cutting edge technology and science to reshape the future.”

Hamed is now employed as a Research Health Intelligence lead at Mahitahi Haurua. He is leading a data analytic team to better identify where the gaps are in healthcare systems and how to address that.
How to apply for a PhD at the University of Auckland

PhD applications may be submitted at any time during the year.
Apply online at www.auckland.ac.nz/doctoralapplications

Step 1. Check your eligibility
www.auckland.ac.nz/doctoralentry

Step 2. Choose your area of interest
Decide on your potential research topic, then check our active research in that area by exploring:
- Faculty and department websites
- Discovery Profiles
  https://profiles.auckland.ac.nz/
- Find a supervisor
  auckland.ac.nz/findasupervisor
Note: You may nominate a supervisor in your application, but it is not necessary.

Step 3. Prepare your documentation
You will need electronic copies of:
- Undergraduate and Postgraduate academic transcripts
- Initial Statement of Research Intent
- Curriculum vitae (résumé)
- English language test results

Step 4. Apply online
www.auckland.ac.nz/doctoralapplications
You will receive an acknowledgment email with your Application for Admission login details. You can use these details to keep track of your application status.

English language pathway
If you do not meet the English language requirements, we have two English language pathways that can help:
Foundation Certificate for Academic Purposes (FCertEAP)
www.ela.auckland.ac.nz/fcerteap
Fast-track programme: English Pathway for Postgraduate Studies (EPPS)
www.ela.auckland.ac.nz/epps

Application help
Follow our step-by-step guide for doctoral applications, admissions and enrolment.
www.auckland.ac.nz/doctoralapplications
Find an official agent or overseas representative who can help you with the application process in person.
www.auckland.ac.nz/overseasrep
Get answers to your questions using our online help tool. www.askauckland.ac.nz
Email us at postgraduate@auckland.ac.nz for application help.