



University  
of Otago

ŌTĀKOU WHAKAIHU WAKA



Campus and Collegiate Life Services

# Residents' Guide to Colleges

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# Welcome message from the Director

Nau mai, haere mai! Welcome to our residential colleges!

We are thrilled to have you join our vibrant community. Transitioning to collegiate life and the university environment can be both exciting and challenging, and this handbook is your go-to guide to navigate this journey smoothly.

Our colleges offer a supportive environment with comprehensive pastoral care, ensuring you have someone to turn to for personal and emotional support. Our academic support services are designed to help you succeed in your studies, and provide resources and assistance when needed.

Beyond your studies, we encourage you to dive into the rich social and sporting activities available. Whether it's joining a club, participating in sports or attending social events, there are countless ways to get involved and make lasting connections.

Additionally, the University campus is a hub of activity and opportunity, offering an array of experiences to enhance your collegiate life. Embrace all that it has to offer, and make the most of your time here.

Once again, welcome! We look forward to seeing you thrive in our community!

Ngā manaakitanga,

**James Lindsay**  
Director

Campus & Collegiate Life Services | Te Uru Kahika  
University of Otago | Ōtākou Whakaihū Waka

## About this guide

The Residents' Guide to Colleges is designed to help you transition to our collegiate community and should be read with the General Conditions of Residence and your college handbook. All the rules, regulations, policies and procedures in this guide form part of the contractual obligations for those who have accepted the offer of a place in one of our university-owned residential colleges.

# Privacy and confidentiality

## Privacy

At the University of Otago – Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka, we care about your privacy. We need to collect and use personal information about the people we deal with – students (including prospective students and students visiting from other institutions), alumni, donors, and users of our websites and applications – to meet our purposes. However, we know that we have a duty to care for that information and use it lawfully, fairly and respectfully.

Please refer to the University's Privacy Statement for information about the collection and use of information about students.

Most information about college students is collected and stored in Te Puna. This includes information you provided us when you applied for accommodation, and in correspondence or pre-arrival information gathered by individual colleges, which may include medical, dietary and special requirements.

Information about our residents is used mainly to ensure we can provide you with excellent pastoral care and academic support in accordance with our obligations under the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021.

Please note that if you are a domestic student under 18 years of age, we may contact your nominated caregiver/guardian if there is any concern regarding your wellbeing or safety, or if there are reasonable grounds for believing that the disclosure is necessary for your health, safety and wellbeing.

## Artificial intelligence tools

The University may use artificial intelligence tools to assist with certain administrative tasks. All AI assisted processes are overseen by University staff.

## Confidentiality

As a resident, you should be aware that study, behaviour and health matters are not confidential to individual staff members, but to the staff team. You should expect that individual Sub-Wardens (Kaiāwhina Whare) will share such matters with the college management team as necessary.

The Warden (Tautiaki) of the college has concern and responsibility for the whole college, and therefore all staff

members consult with the Warden over issues with residents. The Warden only shares personal or sensitive information with other staff on a "need to know basis".

Staff may suggest to residents that it would be more appropriate if some matters were shared with a professional from the Student Health Mental Health and Wellbeing team or with other outside agencies. Staff, including Sub-Wardens, will treat all residents' concerns and private details with respect and confidentiality. There are occasions when it may be necessary for the Warden or other members of the management team to contact or disclose information to relevant parties (e.g. parents/guardians, health professionals or financial guarantors).

This may occur when:

- We have concerns regarding the health or wellbeing of a resident.
- There is a clear or imminent danger to a resident or staff member, including Sub-Wardens.
- There have been serious breaches of the University and/or college guidelines or policies.
- Payment of accommodation fees is in arrears.

## Room checks

- If a staff member has serious concerns about your wellbeing and safety, or that of other individuals likely to be in your bedroom, a welfare check will be made, whereby a staff member will visit and enter your room.
- Routine checks are carried out during the year for maintenance and other reasons, but you will be given at least 24 hours' notice before the room is entered.

## Permission for use of image and statements

The resident agrees that the colleges have the ongoing right to use the resident's image and written and verbal statements in connection with the college.

Any resident who does not agree to this can withdraw their permission in writing to their college Warden.

# Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021

All colleges provide services consistent with the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021.

[education.govt.nz/further-education/information-for-tertiary-students/code-of-practice-pastoral-care-domestic-tertiary](https://education.govt.nz/further-education/information-for-tertiary-students/code-of-practice-pastoral-care-domestic-tertiary)

## International students aged under 18 years

In order for us to provide appropriate care for international students aged under 18 years, we follow the relevant provisions of the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021. A key part of that care is having designated staff who are responsible for checking on your wellbeing and safety, and for communicating with your parents or legal guardian.

The Code of Practice requires the University of Otago to document any transfer of care from your residential college to any other person. We must have approval from your parents or legal guardian before we transfer your care to someone else.

It is illegal under New Zealand law for those aged under 18 to consume or buy alcohol, and to smoke or buy cigarettes and vaping products.

By accepting a place in the college, you agree to the following conditions until the date of your 18th birthday:

1. Return to the college by 11pm each evening. If you anticipate being slightly late, the college shall be informed.
2. If planning to stay overnight elsewhere, you must give the college sufficient notice to obtain approval from your parents or legal guardian.
3. No guests are to stay overnight in your room.
4. No consumption of alcohol, cigarettes or vapes, regardless of whether they are consumed at the college or elsewhere.
5. Meet routinely – at least once a month – with a designated staff member (a senior member of college staff and/or the Team Leader, Student Support of the International Office) to discuss your wellbeing and safety.

Any international student aged under 18 years who breaches these conditions may face a consequence as outlined in our Misconduct section, or as outlined in clause 7 of the General Conditions of Residence of the accommodation contract.

## Concern for others

There are times when you might be worried or concerned about a fellow resident, friend or community member. We encourage you to start a conversation. You don't need to be an expert to reach out – just a good friend and a great listener.

Start a conversation with these four steps\*:

1. Ask R U OK?
2. Listen
3. Encourage action
4. Check in

\*Taken from: [ruok.org.au/](https://ruok.org.au/)

We encourage you to contact any staff member if you are worried about anyone, or you have not seen someone for a while.

You can do this by:

- Speaking to the on-call staff member.
- Calling the college's duty phone.
- Speaking to the staff member at reception.
- Speaking to any staff member.
- Emailing the college.

## Consent

In all relationship matters, it is essential that mutual respect and consent is followed by both parties. All residents of the college must be very clear on the meaning of sexual consent. Complaints of sexual activity without consent will be treated as serious misconduct and investigated in line with the University's Sexual Misconduct Policy and/or the NZ Police. [otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago711781.html](http://otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago711781.html)

The following are very good guidelines:

- Consent must be CLEAR. The absence of a no does not mean yes. Silence is not consent. No means no.
- Consent must be COHERENT. People who are asleep or incapacitated by drugs or alcohol cannot give consent.
- Consent must be WILLING. It is never given under pressure, whether that is emotional or physical manipulation or threats being used.
- Consent must be ONGOING. If someone consents to one sexual activity, that doesn't mean consent to all activities.

As a collegiate community, you are also responsible for each other. Please look after your friends and be pro-active in supporting anyone who is in potential danger or harm.

## For more information about consent

During the first weeks of the college year, Te Whare Tāwharau will come to the college and provide the CommUNity 102 workshop. This is a workshop designed with first-year students in mind, to explore ideas about relationships and to learn skills to create a community that looks out for everyone.

By taking the time to learn about consent and to consider your values, you are saying that you value having a community in which everyone thrives.

You may find these of use for further information about consent:

[youtube.com/watch?v=oQbei5JGiT8](https://youtube.com/watch?v=oQbei5JGiT8)

Male Survivors ([toah-nnest.org.nz](http://toah-nnest.org.nz))

[thewalrus.ca/what-consent-means-in-the-age-of-metoo](http://thewalrus.ca/what-consent-means-in-the-age-of-metoo)

[theglobeandmail.com/opinion/metoo-young-men-and-consent/article37341952](http://theglobeandmail.com/opinion/metoo-young-men-and-consent/article37341952)

## Reporting

The University of Otago's sexual violence support and prevention centre is called Te Whare Tāwharau. They offer free, confidential support for any student who needs assistance and are available for walk-ins and phone support.

[otago.ac.nz/te-whare-tawharau](http://otago.ac.nz/te-whare-tawharau)

If you have had an encounter or incident that leaves you feeling uncomfortable or uncertain, you are encouraged to seek help and support. You can approach any member of college staff, who will treat you with respect and care. A staff member may encourage you to seek additional assistance from the college management. You may also wish to contact a support agency.

Te Whare Tāwharau – 0800 479 379

NZ Police – 111

OUSA – 03 479 5332

Student Health – 03 479 8212

Healthline – 0800 611 116

OCASA Dunedin – 03 474 1592

Male Survivors Otago – 03 425 8018

Youthline – 03 477 2461

# Disciplinary process

We aim to have a community in which residents respect themselves and others, AND where healthy social interactions and academic pursuits are expected. Living away from home can take some adjustment, and we are here to assist you to learn the benefits of taking responsibility for yourself and your actions. The expectations, guidelines and policies we have outlined in this guide have been developed to help everyone have a productive and safe year. Should an incident occur, a disciplinary process may be worked through with you.

## Stages of the process



A resident is always entitled to a support person and to seek advice from other agencies prior, during and after the disciplinary process. Information on support services and referral agencies is available from college staff and is also available in this guide.

## Sanctions

Sanctions that are considered within the disciplinary process include but are not limited to:

- Formal and informal warnings.
- Requirements to undertake work and/or attend programmes.
- Counselling or medical appointments.
- Movement restrictions.
- Referrals to Police or to the University Proctor.
- Fines, reparation (including those made on groups of which the resident is a part, where individual responsibility cannot be attributed) and directions to make reparation to third parties.
- Restrictions on activities, including alcohol bans, and non-association or non-attendance requirements.
- Protective measures within the college to address any safety concerns.
- Suspension of the right of residence or termination of the contract, neither of which shall affect a resident's ongoing liability for fees.

If the incident alleges sexual misconduct, the college will follow the procedures and guidelines contained in the University of Otago's Sexual Misconduct Policy: [otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago711781.html](https://otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago711781.html)

This may involve the implementation of protective measures within the college to address any safety concerns.

Any formal investigation by the University in relation to sexual misconduct will be conducted by the University Proctor or their appointee, not by the college Warden. In such instances, when considering whether there has been a breach of college rules, the college may open a resident serious misconduct disciplinary procedure and rely upon the findings of the University investigation.

When a resident faces an allegation that amounts to criminal behaviour, or when the circumstances otherwise make it inappropriate for the resident to remain in the college while the matter is considered, the college Warden may suspend the resident from the college until such time as it may be appropriate to return to the college. In certain instances, in the best interests of the college community and/or the resident concerned, and irrespective of the nature of the suspended resident's role in an incident, it may be inappropriate for the resident to return to the college. In this case, their accommodation agreement will be terminated.

# Disciplinary process continued

## Appeals

When any decision is imposed by a person other than the Warden of the college, the resident shall be entitled to have that decision reviewed by the Warden of the college. When (a) a disciplinary sanction has been imposed by the Warden of the college, or (b) the resident is not satisfied with the outcome of a review performed by that person, or (c) action is taken by the college under clause 3.1(e) of the accommodation contract the resident may, within seven calendar days of being notified of the relevant decision, submit an appeal against the relevant decision to the University's Director of Campus and Collegiate Life Services ("the Director"). The grounds on which an appeal may be brought under this clause are (a) that the decision will cause unreasonable hardship to the resident; (b) that the decision was reached without giving the resident a fair hearing, or by a process that was otherwise unfair; (c) the resident wishes to put forward newly available information which could not have been provided when the decision was made; (d) the consequences of the decision are manifestly excessive having regard to the circumstances. An appeal shall be in writing and set out the grounds the resident relies on for the appeal.

The Director may determine any appeal as he or she thinks fit, or, in his or her absolute discretion, may refer the matter to an appeals panel for determination. Each appeals panel shall comprise not less than three persons appointed by the Director. An appeals panel shall regulate its own procedure and its decision on any matter shall be final.

## Appeal process

1

Resident is dissatisfied by the outcome of a decision made by college staff

2

Resident writes an appeal to the Warden of the college, or if imposed by the Warden, then to the Director of Campus and Collegiate Life Services

3

The Director may make a determination or refer to an appeals panel

4

Appeals panel appointed by Director

5

Appeals panel reviews the decision

6

Appeals panel decision delivered to resident. Decision is final

# Complaints process

The University of Otago is committed to providing a safe and fair study environment. Complaints are treated seriously, and the University will attempt to resolve them in a timely manner.

If you have concerns about your treatment by the University, a staff member or a student, the first thing you should normally do is try to resolve the problem directly with the person(s) concerned. Whenever possible, issues should be resolved by a process of discussion, co-operation and conciliation.

If a problem cannot be resolved directly, it may be appropriate to seek help from a staff member in your department and/or from one of the support services. Formal University policies also detail processes and authorities for dealing with different types of problems.

Check out the university's students complaints process: [otago.ac.nz/study/student-complaints](https://otago.ac.nz/study/student-complaints)

## College complaint management

Our senior college staff are empowered to attempt to resolve most complaints. If a complaint cannot be resolved at this level, it will be forwarded to the Director of Campus and Collegiate Life Services or a delegated authority.

When investigating a complaint, a staff member will:

- Gather and analyse all relevant information, clarifying any confusion which may have occurred.
- Decide on the appropriate action to resolve the complaint.
- Where possible, discuss the issue with the complainant in an informal setting.
- When necessary, regularly update the student on the progress of an investigation until the matter is finalised/resolved.
- Record and report as per college policy.

# Complaints process continued

## How to make a complaint

It is hoped that most complaints can be resolved informally, directly with the staff member or team concerned. If your complaint relates to college matters (such as pastoral care, events, cleaning, catering or maintenance issues), please contact your Warden in the first instance.

If you have concerns about our application process, please contact the Student Accommodation Centre (SAC) at [accommodation@otago.ac.nz](mailto:accommodation@otago.ac.nz)

Complaints can be made directly to any college staff member or through Te Puna.

Members of the community are encouraged to talk directly with a staff member when a concern arises. Many issues or complaints can be resolved through informal means.

We understand that sometimes matters are of such significance that informal resolution is inappropriate. In such instances, a formal complaint is necessary, and the appropriate procedure, as detailed below, will be followed.

Any formal complaint should be raised with the Warden of your college. Where your complaint is about or involves your Warden, a complaint can be made to the Senior Warden of Colleges or, if it is about or involves that person, to the Director of Campus and Collegiate Life who may appoint a nominee to deal with the matter.

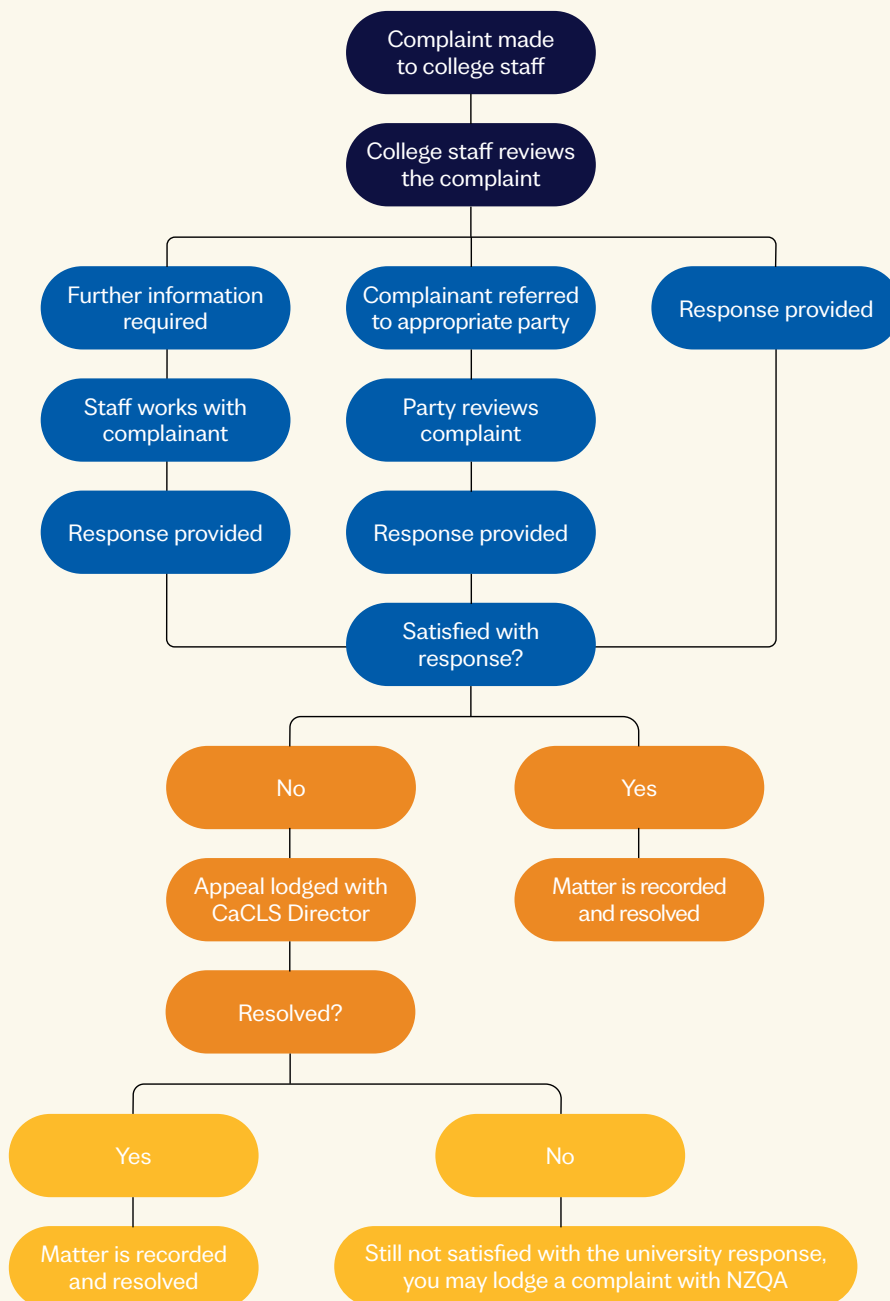
- When a complaint is received, the Warden or their nominee will discuss the matter with the complainant to seek any necessary clarification before deciding what action, if any, should be taken. The complainant may have a support person with them during this meeting.
- The Warden or their nominee will investigate the complaint. This may include contacting other members of the community or other individuals as necessary.
- Depending on the nature of the complaint, the Warden or nominee may refer the complaint and/or any investigation to the Senior Warden of Colleges, the Proctor or any other person as necessary.

- The complaint will be investigated with a level of formality appropriate to the nature of the concerns raised and will be treated as confidential as far as reasonably possible. However, all complaints must be managed in accordance with the principles of natural justice. This means that any person responding to a complaint has the right to be fully informed of the details and to present their perspective. They are also entitled to have a support person present during any discussions related to the complaint. Additionally, details of the complaint may be shared with others who may have relevant information to contribute to the investigation.
- The Warden (or nominee) will decide what steps will be taken as a result of the findings of the investigation.
- Complainants will be informed of the outcome of the investigation.
- If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they may write to the Director of Campus and Collegiate Life Services within seven working days for a review of the process: [campus.collegiatelife@otago.ac.nz](mailto:campus.collegiatelife@otago.ac.nz)
- Complainants can also go through a mediation process.
- The resident can also pursue the matter under a Dispute Resolution Scheme established under Section 536 of the Education and Training Act 2020.

You can report any complaints or possible breaches of the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 directly to NZQA: [studycomplaints.org.nz](http://studycomplaints.org.nz)

Please note that the Division of Campus and Collegiate Life Services (CaCLS) is required to keep a log of all complaints/breaches of the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021.

## The complaints process



# Emergency procedures

## Evacuation

For emergency and evacuation procedures, please refer to your college handbook.

## Earthquake safety

During an earthquake, follow these three key steps to protect yourself:

### 1. DROP

Get down on your hands and knees immediately. This position protects you from being knocked over and allows you to crawl to safety if needed.

### 2. COVER

Protect your head and neck. If a sturdy table or desk is nearby, crawl under it for shelter. If no shelter is available, move to an interior wall or corner away from windows, and cover your head and neck with your arms.

### 3. HOLD ON

Hold on to your shelter until the shaking stops. Be ready to move with it if it shifts. If you don't have shelter, continue to protect your head and neck with your arms.

The closer you are to your safe spot, the less likely you are to be injured by flying debris or falling objects.

Regularly practice Drop, Cover, and Hold On in all areas where you spend time (home, school, work). Use a sturdy piece of furniture or sit against an interior wall if nothing is available. Avoid windows, glass, and objects that may fall.

## Additional safety guidelines

Indoors: Stay inside until the shaking stops and it is safe to exit.

Outdoors: Move to a clear area away from buildings, trees, streetlights, and power lines.

If instructed to evacuate or if the alarm sounds, head to your nearest designated evacuation area and wait for instructions from staff or emergency responders.

Practicing these steps at least twice a year can significantly reduce your risk of injury during an earthquake.

# College lockdown

## Threat to life on campus

If a serious threat to life has been identified on campus, the following procedures will be followed:

- The college will be locked down.
- All curtains will be closed.
- Switch your mobile phone to silent so you can make and receive communications. Switch off other electronic devices such as laptops.
- Move away from all windows and doors.
- Move to a higher floor where practical.
- Remain quiet.
- Follow the instructions of senior staff.  
Await instructions from emergency services.

## Threat to life in college Run, hide, fight

Short, clear actions you can use immediately. Prioritize your safety and the safety of others.

1. RUN – get away if you can (best option).
  - Move quickly to the nearest safe location – leave the area immediately.
  - Have an escape route and backup plan in mind before you need it.
  - Leave your belongings (backpacks, books, laptops) behind.
  - Keep your hands visible while fleeing so responding officers can see you are not a threat.
2. HIDE – if you cannot safely run.
  - Hide where the attacker is least likely to find you and out of their line of sight.
  - Lock and barricade doors (use heavy furniture if available).
  - Turn off lights, radios, and monitors; silence and disable vibration on your phone.
  - Remain quiet and low; spread out if you're with others to reduce a single target.
  - Stay hidden until law enforcement tells you it's safe; don't open the door for anyone until identity is confirmed.
3. FIGHT as a last resort and only when your life is in imminent danger.
  - Use aggressive, decisive action to survive – improvise weapons (chairs, bottles, fire extinguishers) and target the assailant's vulnerable areas.
  - Attempt to incapacitate the attacker long enough to escape.
  - If others are present, coordinated resistance can increase chances of success.

# Pandemic safety

In the event of a pandemic, all residents are expected to be prepared and adhere to:

- Ministry of Health directives and guidelines.
- Ministry of Education directives and guidelines.
- University of Otago guidelines.
- Instructions from college and University staff.
- Social distancing guidelines and restrictions.
- Sanitising requirements.

You should have your own medical kit and masks.

## Pandemic guidelines

During a pandemic University colleges will remain open unless closed by the Ministry of Education.

It is imperative at all levels that you advise a staff member when you are feeling unwell, and if you have any symptoms of a contagious or highly spreadable illness (e.g. COVID-19, flu, or measles) you should follow the medical advice you receive and are strongly encouraged to isolate in your room until you are symptom-free. When you are isolating, a staff member will deliver your meals and check on you. Should you need anything while in isolation, contact the duty phone.

The college will act in accordance with up-to-date advice from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and University of Otago management. For up-to-date COVID-19 information from the University of Otago visit: [otago.ac.nz/coronavirus](https://otago.ac.nz/coronavirus)

The University will follow government advice and guidelines in the event of outbreaks or changes in alert levels.

The University continues to highly recommend the use of masks in teaching spaces and settings where physical distancing is difficult to achieve. They can also be worn by those who feel more comfortable doing so, and we would ask that decision to be respected by our community.

## Emergency preparedness

In preparation for an emergency, you should have a small personal emergency kit (grab bag) that is kept in your room.

Minimum requirements:

- Emergency contact information. A written copy of key phone numbers (in case your phone is lost or dead).
- Ensure "Next of Kin" is saved clearly in your phone contacts.
- Torch (flashlight). Preferably LED, with spare batteries.
- Strong outdoor shoes. Easy to grab and durable enough for walking long distances or debris-covered areas.
- Personal medications. At least a 3-day supply, including any inhalers, EpiPens, or essential prescriptions.
- Hand sanitizer or antiseptic wipes, for hygiene when water is not available.
- Survival (emergency thermal) blanket.
- Bottled water.
- Non-perishable food, such as muesli bars, energy bars, or similar lightweight, high-energy snacks.

Have close at hand ready to grab in case of an evacuation:

- Warm clothing (jacket or similar).
- Your mobile phone if you have one.

Additional extras that would be useful:

- Personal toiletry items.
- Small plastic bags.
- Whistle and light sticks.
- Copies of important documents.

# Alcohol and drugs

The Student Code of Conduct states that “During your time at University, you must understand the consequences of the risks you take, including drinking and drug use. The reality is that excessive use of alcohol or drugs may result in physical injury, sexual misconduct, brain damage, involvement with the courts or harm to others. Intoxication does not excuse offensive or criminal behaviour. If you are concerned about your binge drinking or drug use, confidential medical and counselling help is available through the University’s Student Health Service.”

## Alcohol

Campus and Collegiate Life Services (CaCLS) acknowledges and respects the rights of individuals to consume alcohol legally and responsibly. The rules and guidelines outlined in this guide are designed to encourage personal responsibility in making decisions about alcohol use or abstinence. These decisions should be guided by personal values, social responsibility, compliance with New Zealand law, and the promotion of health and wellbeing for oneself and others.

Individuals who choose to consume alcohol are fully responsible for their behaviour while under its influence. If a breach of alcohol rules or guidelines occurs, or if the college management team has concerns regarding alcohol use, they will intervene and establish clear behavioural expectations.

According to Amohia te Waiora ([alcohol.org.nz](http://alcohol.org.nz)), children and young people are particularly vulnerable to the negative effects of alcohol on memory and learning, as the brain continues developing into the mid-20s. Individuals up to 25 years of age are at higher risk of alcohol-related harm than older adults. This includes a greater likelihood of injuries and accidents, increased risk of alcohol dependence, and lower alcohol tolerance. Other risks that disproportionately affect young people include unprotected or unwanted sexual activity, assault, legal issues, and negative impacts on social life, finances, and work or study.

# Alcohol and drugs continued

## Drinking “responsibly”

Alcohol is an intoxicating drug that can get in the way of our decision making. We can also make mistakes when it comes to judging our own tolerance.

You may recognise some of these risky ways of thinking:

- “I am drinking the same amount as my mates, so I’ll be okay.”
- “I only drink beer, which is lower in alcohol, so I’ll be fine.”
- “I can’t taste the alcohol, so it doesn’t affect me.”

These are just some of the many myths related to what counts as a “safe” or “responsible” drinking level. In reality, this level is zero.

## Low-risk drinking advice

To reduce long-term health risks, have at least two alcohol-free days each week and drink no more than:

- Two standard drinks a day for women.
- Three standard drinks a day for men.
- 10 standard drinks a week for women.
- 15 standard drinks a week for men.

To reduce your risk of injury, do not drink more than:

- Four standard drinks at a time for women.
- Five standard drinks at a time for men.

Low-risk is not “no risk”. These limits can be a helpful guide, but individuals are different based on:

- Rate of drinking.
- Body type or genetics.
- Existing health problems.

- Medication.
- Sensitivity to alcohol.
- Age.
- How much you’ve eaten.

## Alcohol and youth

Drinking is a leading cause of death and social issues in young people. Intoxication is associated with:

- High risks of injuries.
- Aggression and violence.
- Dating violence.
- Worsening academic performance

People under the legal drinking age should not be drinking.

Taken from [resources.alcohol.org.nz/resources-research/alcohol-research/nz-statistics](https://resources.alcohol.org.nz/resources-research/alcohol-research/nz-statistics)

## Aim to drink less

You can reduce your drinking in steps. Remember, any reduction helps lower your health risks. Every little bit counts. It’s time to pick a new target. What will your weekly drinking target be?

Tips to help you stay on target

- Stick to the limits you’ve set for yourself.
- Drink slowly.
- Drink lots of water.
- For every drink of alcohol, have one non-alcoholic drink.
- Choose alcohol-free or low-alcohol beverages.
- Eat before and while you’re drinking.
- Have alcohol-free weeks and do alcohol-free activities.

## Low-risk drinking



The Amohia te Waiora ([alcohol.org.nz/](http://alcohol.org.nz/)) provides information, advice, research and resources aimed at breaking the cycle of alcohol harm in Aotearoa.

### For more info about safe drinking

[alcohol.org.nz/help-advice/is-your-drinking-ok](http://alcohol.org.nz/help-advice/is-your-drinking-ok) [drinkaware.co.uk/advice/staying-safe-while-drinking/how-to-stay-safe-at-uni/hellosundaymorning.org](http://drinkaware.co.uk/advice/staying-safe-while-drinking/how-to-stay-safe-at-uni/hellosundaymorning.org)

# Alcohol and drugs continued

## Illegal drugs

The University has adopted a zero-tolerance position regarding the possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs by members of its colleges while on University property or while attending college events. Where the disciplinary process establishes that the resident has committed a breach of this policy, the contract will automatically be terminated by the Warden, but this sanction may be reviewed through the appeals process.

## Legal substances

At any given time, a substance can be classed as legal and yet it can have serious effects on your mental and physical health, some of which are not yet known. The legality of substances is something that can change suddenly as a result of the government passing laws. The fact that a substance has become illegal after you purchased it will not be accepted as an excuse by the law or the college. While we recognise that some readily available substances are classed as legal, we cannot condone the use of these substances due to the unknown health effects they have. Our expectation is that you will not have any drugs apart from your prescribed medication or over the counter products. The only "legal substance" that we allow to be used at a college is alcohol, and this is subject to college rules and current legislation. Any resident found in the possession of, under the influence of, or using a legal high will face disciplinary action.

## Drug paraphernalia

The colleges do not condone the use of illegal drugs or legal highs. The presence of drug utensils or any drug-related paraphernalia on college grounds or within the community will not be tolerated. Anyone found in possession of, or using, such items will face disciplinary action, which may include suspension or termination of residence from the college community. Please note that suspension or termination of residence due to possession, use, or distribution of drugs or related paraphernalia does not relieve the resident of responsibility for any outstanding annual residential fees.

## Smoking and vaping

The University of Otago is a smoke-free and vape-free campus. This includes all college buildings and grounds. Please ensure that you follow the regulations related to smoking and vaping both at the college and in the wider University area.

## Understanding addiction

During your first year, you may be exposed to new experiences, activities, or substances that you may not have encountered at home. In some cases, these behaviours may already exist in your life, but with newfound independence, they can sometimes escalate and become difficult to manage.

Addiction occurs when you lose control over doing, taking, or using something to the point that it causes harm to yourself or others. Any activity or substance that you engage with frequently and compulsively—especially to relieve stress or enhance your mood—has the potential to become addictive. Common addictions include:

- Alcohol.
- Cigarettes (tobacco).
- P (meth), cannabis and other illegal drugs.
- Prescription medicines.
- Gambling.
- Gaming and social media.
- Sex and porn.
- Work and study.

Addiction is considered a mental illness and can be treated similarly to other mental illnesses with therapy, medication and lifestyle changes.

Support services are listed on page 21.

# Safety, security and maintenance

## Harmful digital communications

Under the Harmful Digital Communications Act 2015, it is illegal to make a visual recording of another person without their knowledge or consent if the recording shows them naked, partially naked, or engaged in any activity involving dressing or undressing (e.g., showering or using the toilet). These are considered intimate visual recordings and are illegal even if the recording is not shared or shown to others.

Any allegation that a resident has made an intimate visual recording of another resident – or any other person – will be treated as serious misconduct. If proven, this may result in the termination of the resident's contract, with no offer to rehouse them in another college.

## Cyber safety

Residents are expected to comply with University of Otago guidelines regarding internet and communications usage as outlined in the Information and Communications Technology Regulations available on the University of Otago website. Residents are also required to comply with the University's Student Code of Conduct which states that students have the right to be safe and free from harm or intimidation in their interactions with others, including interactions via electronic media.

## Electrical appliances

It is a health and safety requirement that all portable non-specialised electrical equipment (e.g. extension cords, multi-boxes, personal appliances and computers) are checked and registered as safe by a certified electrical contractor. You are expected to have your electrical equipment tested prior to or when you arrive at the college. Technicians will be available at the college on a specified day to test your equipment.

## Room security and insurance

We recommend that your bedroom door is locked when you are out and when you are asleep. You are responsible for the contents of your room, and the college will not accept responsibility for loss or damage due to theft or accident. Residents are strongly advised to ensure that their possessions are adequately covered by an all-risk insurance policy.

## Fire safety equipment

All bedrooms are fitted with smoke alarms for your protection. For fire safety reasons, additional kitchen appliances, dehumidifiers, heaters, electric blankets, or any other home appliances are not permitted within the college. Similarly, candles, incense, burners, or any item with a naked flame are prohibited in bedrooms, common areas, and corridors.

Smoke alarm sensors are highly sensitive to ensure your safety in the event of a fire. Tampering with smoke detectors, sprinkler heads, or any fire safety equipment, including covering sensors or misuse of fire equipment, is a breach of Fire and Emergency NZ regulations and will be treated as serious misconduct by the college.

Certain items, such as hair dryers, hair straighteners, and aerosol sprays (including deodorants), can activate smoke alarms. To prevent accidental alarms, these items must only be used in bathroom areas and are not permitted in bedrooms.

Fire regulations also require hallways and shared spaces to be kept clear. Obstructing smoke alarms or sprinklers with clothing or personal items is dangerous and may result in damage or false alarms. False alarms account for the majority of Fire and Emergency Service callouts. Residents may be charged for false alarm call-outs, whether the alarm was triggered accidentally or deliberately.

# Additional information

## Managing food allergies in college dining

The University's colleges are committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and enjoyable dining experience for all students. To help us support your needs, it's essential that students with food allergies notify their college team before arrival, and maintain open communication throughout their time in residence.

If you have a food allergy, please speak directly with a staff member at the dining area counter at each mealtime. Special dietary meals can be prepared separately to help minimize the risk of allergen exposure.

Although our catering team follows strict food safety protocols, shared dining environments carry an inherent risk of cross-contamination. This may occur through shared utensils or trace ingredients from suppliers. For this reason, students with known allergies should avoid consuming food directly from the dining room servery.

If you have a severe allergy, it is especially important to work closely with college and catering staff to plan and manage your meals. A proactive approach is the best way to reduce risk and ensure a safe and enjoyable college experience.

Our trained staff are here to help. By working together and keeping communication open, we can create a dining environment that is both safe and welcoming for everyone.

## Maintenance

During the year, please let us know quickly if any repairs are needed so they can be fixed as soon as possible. If your room or floor needs something fixed, file a maintenance request through Te Puna.

[college-accommodation.otago.ac.nz/StarRezPortalX](https://college-accommodation.otago.ac.nz/StarRezPortalX)

By sending a request, you agree for someone to enter your bedroom/area of the building to begin remedying the issue in a timely manner. You are responsible for any deliberate or avoidable damage to your room, whether this damage was caused by you or by your guests.

## Room cleaning and bed linen

Bathrooms and other common areas are cleaned regularly. Your cleaner will enter your bedroom at least twice a week to vacuum and/or empty your rubbish bin. You'll be informed of the cleaning schedule specific to your room. Please keep your room tidy – cleaners are responsible for cleaning, not tidying.

Only college-supplied bed linen is laundered by the college. Fresh sheets and pillowcases are available weekly. Linen exchange days are communicated within each college.

## Pets

Residents may not keep or bring pets into college buildings. This includes cats, dogs, birds, rodents, reptiles, and other animals.

Cold-water goldfish may be kept in a small bowl, but filters, heaters, pumps, or any other electrical equipment are not permitted. Aquaria are not allowed.

If you require a service animal, please contact the Student Accommodation Centre after submitting your accommodation application to discuss your needs.

## Weapons

Firearms, archery equipment, weapons, and replica weapons – including knives, swords, BB guns, and spear guns – are strictly prohibited on college grounds. Items deemed to fall under this category must be permanently removed or surrendered for the duration of residence.

A Police-approved firearm storage facility is available through the Proctor's Office for A-category firearms only. Firearms must be delivered in person to the Campus Watch office – couriers are not accepted. A firearms licence is required for drop-off and pickup. This free service is available 24/7 with 24 hours' notice.

Brightly coloured plastic water pistols may be kept but not used indoors or near buildings. Permission for their use may be withdrawn at any time.

# Support services

Alcohol and Drugs Helpline	0800 787 797	<a href="http://alcoholdrughelp.org.nz">alcoholdrughelp.org.nz</a>
AskOtago	0800 80 80 90 03 479 7000	<a href="http://otago.custhelp.com">otago.custhelp.com</a>
Campus Watch	03 479 5000 0800 479 5000	<a href="http://otago.ac.nz/proctor/campuswatch">otago.ac.nz/proctor/campuswatch</a>
Career Development Centre	03 479 8244	<a href="http://otago.ac.nz/careers">otago.ac.nz/careers</a>
Chaplains	03 479 8497	<a href="http://otago.ac.nz/chaplain">otago.ac.nz/chaplain</a>
Disability Information and Support	03 479 8235	<a href="http://otago.ac.nz/disabilities">otago.ac.nz/disabilities</a>
Dunedin Public Hospital	03 474 0999	
Dunedin Urgent Doctor and Accident Centre	03 479 2900	<a href="http://dunedinurgentdoctors.co.nz">dunedinurgentdoctors.co.nz</a>
Gambling Helpline Aotearoa	0800 654 655	<a href="http://gamblinghelpline.co.nz">gamblinghelpline.co.nz</a>
Healthline	0800 611 116	
International Office	03 479 7000	<a href="http://otago.ac.nz/international">otago.ac.nz/international</a>
Lifeline Aotearoa	0800 54 33 54 Text 4357	<a href="http://lifeline.org.nz">lifeline.org.nz</a>
OCASA Dunedin	03 474 1592	<a href="http://ocasa.org.nz">ocasa.org.nz</a>
OUSA Support	0800 12 10 23	<a href="http://ousa.org.nz">ousa.org.nz</a>
OUSA Club and Socs	03 479 5960	<a href="http://ousa.org.nz/clubsandsocs">ousa.org.nz/clubsandsocs</a>
Pacific Island Centre	03 479 8278	<a href="http://otago.ac.nz/pacific">otago.ac.nz/pacific</a>
Quitline (Smoking)	0800 778 778	<a href="http://quit.org.nz">quit.org.nz</a>
Social Impact Studio	03 479 8631	<a href="http://otago.ac.nz/social-impact-studio">otago.ac.nz/social-impact-studio</a>
Suicide Crisis Helpline	0508 82 88 65	
Student Health	03 479 8212 0800 479 821	<a href="http://otago.ac.nz/studenthealth">otago.ac.nz/studenthealth</a>
Student Learning Development	03 479 8801	<a href="http://otago.ac.nz/hedc/students">otago.ac.nz/hedc/students</a>
Te Huka Mātauraka (Maori Centre)	03 479 8490	<a href="http://otago.ac.nz/maoricentre">otago.ac.nz/maoricentre</a>
Te Whare Tāwharau Sexual Violence Support and Prevention Centre	0800 479 379 03 479 3790	<a href="http://otago.ac.nz/te-whare-tawharau">otago.ac.nz/te-whare-tawharau</a>
Unipol/Recreation Services	03 479 5888	<a href="http://otago.ac.nz/recreation">otago.ac.nz/recreation</a>
1737 – Need to talk?	Text or call 1737	<a href="http://1737.org.nz">1737.org.nz</a>

# University policies and procedures

As a University of Otago student, you have agreed to abide by the University's policies and procedures.

There are four key documents for consideration while staying in the college:

- Code of Conduct – The purpose of the Code of Student Conduct is to promote the University's academic aims and a sense of community through the cultivation of mutual respect, tolerance and understanding. To this end, the University expects that students will not engage in behaviours that endanger their own or others' safety and wellbeing. Students are expected to conform to the standards contained in the Code of Student Conduct off campus as well as on campus.
  - Ethical Behaviour Policy – The purpose of this policy is to promote ethical interactions between members of the University community and to provide an environment of safety, respect and dignity so members can participate fully in all aspects of University life.
  - Student Charter – The University is committed to scholarship through excellence in teaching, research and service, and to the provision of a stimulating campus environment for the development of lifelong learning skills. The purpose of the Charter is to advance those aims, to acknowledge the University's commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi and to promote good relations between the staff and administration of the University, and its undergraduate and postgraduate students.
  - Sexual Misconduct Policy – This policy sets out options for reporting sexual misconduct and the process for responding to reported incidents of sexual misconduct.
- The University reserves the right to pursue through its disciplinary procedures matters that are also being, or may also be, addressed by the legal system or under any of the above-mentioned University policies. For more information:
    - [otago.ac.nz/proctor/otago670687.pdf](https://otago.ac.nz/proctor/otago670687.pdf)
    - [otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/ethical-behaviour-policy](https://otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/ethical-behaviour-policy)
    - [otago.ac.nz/about/otago005275.html](https://otago.ac.nz/about/otago005275.html)
    - [otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago711781.html](https://otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago711781.html)

# Positive wellbeing and self-care

When we think of success in a university setting, we often think of academic success alone, without pondering the individual life success stories that help lay the groundwork for wider academic success. These personal success stories are set against the background support provided by the college and its staff. This support and guidance can best be described using Te Whare Tapa Whā, the four cornerstones of Māori wellbeing.

## Taha hinengaro – mental and emotional wellbeing

College staff are available for on-site support 24 hours a day through floor Sub-Wardens and Wardens who are professionally trained in pastoral care, with an emphasis on inclusivity in all areas. Guidance, individual check-ins, and tools for successful living are provided. Mental health services are readily available, backed up by support networks and structures, whether they be in person, by phone or online.

## Taha whānau – social wellbeing

We encourage those who attend a college to actively engage in the social aspects of college life, get to know others, form friendships and bonds, and participate in the many regular social activities the college provides.

## Taha tinana, physical wellbeing

Physical wellbeing starts in the kitchen, with the college providing healthy and nutritious meals, working with those students with dietary requirements to create meal plans.

Healthcare for everyday bumps, bruises and colds is provided by first aid trained pastoral staff at the colleges, with further professional healthcare provided through Student Health and associated University and community healthcare providers. Provision is also made for assisting those with physical or mental disabilities, from providing wheelchair access to a location, through to study notes from Disability

Information and Support, and beyond. Physical wellbeing also encompasses the provision of opportunities for physical activity, with college staff actively providing regular sporting, recreational and cultural activities to promote a healthy, active lifestyle. These activities are typically run within and between the colleges, and through University teams, clubs, societies and groups.

Physical security is also available 24 hours a day at colleges and on campus through Campus Watch, the Proctor, and through security and staffing provided directly at the college.

## Taha wairua – spiritual wellbeing

Colleges are multicultural, and socially and religiously diverse, and as such there is a range of support services and guidance available to students – from the Māori and Pacific Island Centres, through Chaplaincy Services, to OUSA LGBTQIIA+ support and guidance.

From the moment students step through the college doors, they are welcomed and fully included in life at the University of Otago. The University places strong emphasis on fostering a safe, inclusive, and transparent environment, where students have easy access to information and guidance on their rights and responsibilities. Comprehensive services and support networks empower students to care for their wellbeing, maintain personal health, and ensure their safety throughout their time at any of the University of Otago colleges.

# General behaviour expectations (house rules)

Each college has its own rules to promote and encourage resident safety. These rules may be found in the college handbook.

## Harassment, bullying, discrimination and anti-social behaviour

The college community aspires to be an inclusive community, and we believe that all members of the community have the right to study and live in an environment that is free from any form of anti-social or malicious behaviour.

Bullying is any repeated unreasonable behaviour directed at an individual or group that may cause physical or psychological harm, including cyberbullying.

The University does not tolerate any form of harassment, abuse (whether written, electronic, physical, spoken, or published), assault, or anti-social behaviour. Examples of anti-social behaviour include, but are not limited to: name-calling; disruptive conduct; abusive language or actions; physical violence; unwanted physical or non-verbal contact; unwanted electronic messages or harmful digital communications; intentional or reckless sharing of intimate visual material; stalking; sexual assault or harassment; exclusion; and derogatory comments or language.

We will not accept any behaviour that harms, threatens, or undermines a person's dignity, including bullying, harassment, abuse, coercion, intimidation, assault, or any malicious or anti-social conduct.

Any proven incident of harassment may result in the offending resident being excluded (termination of residency) from the college.

If you feel you have been subjected to any of the behaviour listed above, we recommend you take the following steps:

- Make sure you are safe.
- Talk with a staff member to decide if you wish to make a complaint.
- Seek advice and get support from a staff member.
- Or take a look at the support services available at the University of Otago: [otago.ac.nz/services](https://otago.ac.nz/services)

We also expect that you will uphold and maintain a standard of good conduct in or at all other University of Otago residential colleges. You can expect that any behaviour or conduct that raises concern or is deemed inappropriate while present at any other college will duly be reported to us. This may initiate a conduct process, as outlined.

# Accommodation fees

You have a contract with your college. On acceptance to the college, an account will be established for you and it will be charged according to the payment option you have selected. Invoices will be sent for accounts with upfront or quarterly instalments. Residents choosing a weekly payment option must have an automatic payment set up in time for the first payment. Your account balance can be accessed via Te Puna, an account statement can be requested, and messages will be sent regarding upcoming and overdue payments. College administration staff will assist with any queries you have about your account.

## Early departure and liability for fees

If you withdraw from the college before the end of your contract, you are still liable for fees in line with your contract and this guide. Please read your contract – General Conditions of Residence in a University-managed Residential College – for further information: [otago.ac.nz/accommodation/apply-for-accommodation/terms-and-conditions](http://otago.ac.nz/accommodation/apply-for-accommodation/terms-and-conditions)

Please note that should several residents leave the college prior to the end of their contract, a replacement resident is deemed to fill the place of the first, or next person to have vacated the college, regardless of which room this replacement resident moves into. You are encouraged to talk with your college Warden early if you are considering leaving.

### Withdrawal fee framework

- Early withdrawal penalty: \$500
- Accommodation fees: You will be liable for up to six weeks of fees from the date you give formal written notice, or until your room (space) is filled by another resident – whichever comes first.
- Notice requirement: You must provide written notice and complete the college's withdrawal form to begin the process.

### Withdrawing at the end of semester 1

If you give notice prior to the end of semester 1 and withdraw at that time:

- You will be charged the \$500 penalty, and
- Up to four weeks of accommodation fees from the date you give notice, if you provide less than four weeks' notice, or

- No accommodation fees from the date you give notice, if you give a full four weeks' notice before the semester ends and your space is filled.

For this policy, a semester is defined as 19 weeks of the 38-week accommodation contract.

### Discretionary reductions

The college may reduce or waive the penalty and/or accommodation charges in cases of serious or unforeseen circumstances, such as:

- Significant physical or mental health challenges.
- Bereavement.
- Serious family crisis or emergency.
- Other unforeseen situations that prevent you from continuing study.

You may be asked to provide supporting documentation for your situation. Requests are considered carefully, and decisions are guided by university policy and decided by the Campus and Collegiate Life Services Divisional Office to ensure fairness and consistency across all colleges.

### Next steps if you are considering withdrawal

If you are thinking about leaving the college:

- Speak with your Warden as soon as possible to discuss your situation.

### Period covered by college fees

Residential fees cover the period Saturday of "move-in weekend" through to 24 hours after your final second semester examination, or as agreed by the Warden. If you arrive before opening day or leave after the final day of your contract, you will be charged for extra days. No refund or reduction is available in respect of any period of absence from the college during any of the period of residence, unless specially mandated by the University with regards to specific events. Subletting your room is prohibited, as is having guests stay in your absence.

# Accommodation fees continued

## Fees arrears

The University Fees Statute 2011 applies in respect of amounts due under this contract. The failure to make payment of any amounts due may have the consequences described in section 6.1 of the Statute. Any student who is in arrears with their fees, or fails to make a due payment, will be contacted (as will their guarantor).

Should the problem persist, the Warden is required to notify the University. In this instance, any person in arrears may:

- Incur additional fees as prescribed by the University Council.
- Be excluded from classes, and/or from re-enrolling until the debt is cleared.
- Have the final award of qualification withheld by the Council.
- Have any official record or results withheld and may not be issued with an official transcript.
- Have access to the means of changing course withheld.
- Have access to course materials, including materials provided electronically and other University resources and services, withheld.

Please refer to [otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago003199.html](http://otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago003199.html)

Further, the resident may also have their residency terminated. A debt collection agency will be engaged, when necessary, with collection costs being charged to the resident.

Please raise payment issues with administration staff or the Warden as early as possible. This enables time to investigate the support options available to you before your study is impacted.





University  
of Otago  
ŌTĀKOU WHAKAIHU WAKA