

Introduction to **Sustainability and Outdoor Education**



ara.ac.nz

Kia ora, welcome

For over 25 years, Ara has provided high quality, adventure-based sustainability and outdoor education programmes. Our graduates are highly sought after and can be found working in a wide range of areas, both here and overseas.

The sustainability and outdoor education experience at Ara is a dynamic blend of adventure, learning and personal growth. You'll be encouraged to embrace the opportunity to engage in a wide range of outdoor activities, from climbing and kayaking to biking and swimming, all in a single day. You'll be challenged to think critically, broaden your perspectives, and develop skills that not only bring out your best but also empower you to make a positive impact on others and the world.

A strong sense of community will fuel your journey, as you connect with like-minded, outgoing individuals who share your passions and ideas. Memorable trips and hands-on experiences will enhance your learning, making your education both practical and exciting. Whether it's brewing coffee on a tramp or pushing through hours in the library, each moment is a chance for you to grow, explore, and thrive in an environment that fosters both adventure and intellect.



Instagram



FB



Why study sustainability and outdoor education at Ara?

Supportive learning environment

Through whanaungatanga and manaakitanga, we foster a supportive learning environment in which everyone feels included and valued.

Highly qualified educators and industry experts

Our tutors have extensive industry experience, from guiding and instructing to environmental advocacy and sustainability leadership. They're passionate about the outdoors and committed to providing high quality education. Strong industry links and external industry experts support current, relevant and authentic learning experiences.

Work-integrated learning

Theory content is skilfully woven into practical field trips and applied in real-world contexts. You'll have opportunities to follow your own passions and gain hands-on experience alongside industry professionals.

Excellent facilities

Our well-stocked gear shed enables you to hire outdoor equipment to go on your own adventures and gain valuable personal skills and experiences.



Courses and pathways



New Zealand Certificate in Outdoor and Adventure Education (Level 4)

Kickstart your career with foundational skills in outdoor and adventure education. Gain practical training in various outdoor activities and an introduction to sustainability concepts.

Duration: One year, full-time

Career pathways: Entry-level roles in outdoor education, guiding and adventure tourism

New Zealand Diploma in Outdoor and Adventure Education (Level 5)

Elevate your expertise with advanced skills and knowledge in outdoor education and sustainability. This programme includes leadership training and specialised outdoor activities.

Duration: One year, full-time

Career pathways: Outdoor instructor, adventure tourism guide, conservation roles

Bachelor of Sustainability and Outdoor Education (Level 7)

Unique in New Zealand, this degree integrates sustainability with outdoor education. Prepare for education and leadership roles through a blend of theory and practical experience. It's a broad degree that allows you to tailor

your learning to meet the needs of a variety of career aspirations including teaching, conservation, outdoor instruction and guiding.

Duration: Three years, full-time (up to 6 years part-time)

Key components: Outdoor activities, health and wellness, geography, environmental science, professional practices, leadership and safety. Electives include climate change, adventure therapy, Māori studies and various adventure pursuits.

Career pathways: Teaching, conservation, outdoor instruction, guiding, leadership roles.

Graduate Diploma in Sustainability and Outdoor Education

This programme is designed for degree holders (e.g. practising teachers) looking to specialise or transition into sustainability and outdoor education. It will equip you with advanced knowledge and skills specifically tailored to professionals. The graduate diploma is linked to the Bachelor of Sustainability and Outdoor Education, connecting you to a wide range of peers.

Duration: One year full-time

Career pathways: Advanced roles in education, conservation, sustainability and leadership positions in outdoor and adventure organisations.

Degree graduates

Georgia

Port Hills and Banks Peninsula
Park Ranger, Christchurch
City Council



After finishing my degree, I spent a year gaining experience in the industry at a few different places: Rotoiti Outdoor Education Centre, Lands Edge, the NZ Kayak School and a few more. Then over summer of 2023/2024, I worked a seasonal position as a biodiversity park ranger for the Christchurch City Council. I'm now full-time ranger for the Port Hills and Banks Peninsula. This awesome job includes pest animal work, pest plant work, threatened species management, occasional fencing jobs, as well as heaps of fun conservation projects to get involved with!

Claudia

Teacher



I graduated in 2020. After spending some time instructing locally around Christchurch, I realised I wanted to further my education. I went on to study a Graduate Diploma in Science (Geography), a Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching and Learning and a Masters in Teaching and Learning. After teaching outdoor education and agriculture, I now have a permanent role at a high school in Fairlie. This journey has reinforced my love for the outdoors and constant self-improvement, offering me countless adventures and challenges.

Megan

Planning and Performance
Manager, Department of
Conservation



I've had a variety of roles since graduating, from trapping work around Arthur's Pass to protect the Kākāriki Karaka, to guiding tramping trips around the South Island and various roles at the Department of Conservation. I started at DOC as an intern working on signs and now I lead the planning and performance team in DOC's Eastern South Island operations team. I love being able to talk all day about our visitor experience, biodiversity and community work. The challenges we face make every day interesting. The outdoor skills I gained at Ara allow me to stay sane as I get outside as much as possible outside of work. I can't emphasise enough how handy the presentation, facilitation and critical thinking skills I gained through the degree have helped me get to where I am now.

Matt

Tutor



When I completed my degree in 2018, I had a great foundation for the start of my teaching career. Taking my knowledge and experience from previous placements, I worked as a tutor at the alternative education program Te Kupenga O Aranui for five years, alongside at-risk youth. Fast forward to now and I'm a Youth Tutor teaching the Level 2 Certificate in Foundation skills with the New Zealand Institute of Sport. I'm passionate about pushing my students outside their comfort zone and ensuring they're given all the tools they need to be successful.

Ella

Instructor



Post graduating, I opted for sunshine filled summers – sea kayak guiding in the Abel Tasman National Park for two seasons. In the off months I did some casual instructing and hospitality work to fill time. After deciding to change things up, I now work full-time as an outdoor instructor for Whenua Iti Outdoors, a not-for-profit organisation that focuses on experiential learning inspiring positive change for rangatahi of Te Tau Ihu.

Kristian

Health and Safety Manager
/Ziplines Team Lead,
Rotorua Ziplines



After graduating, I spent two years working as an outdoor instructor in Invercargill, guiding and teaching outdoor activities. After deciding to pursue my passion for kayaking, I moved to Rotorua to be close to the Kaituna River. I now hold a leadership role at Rotorua Ziplines, where I oversee safety protocols and operations, ensuring our activities meet high standards while delivering unforgettable experiences for clients. My journey reflects how a career in adventure tourism can combine passion with purpose, applying what I learned in the classroom to real-world settings.

Dylan

Event Coordinator



Soon after graduating in 2015, I moved to Wales to become a raft guide, then I brought those skills home to work on the Dart River in Queenstown. I then completed a Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainability and Adaptation which led me to a role with ACT Sustainability, before I moved into the world of Outward Bound where I was an instructor turned sustainability and research lead. I've recently taken up a role within the Graeme Dingle Foundation as an event coordinator.

Ready to make a difference?

Join us at Ara and embark on a journey that combines your passion for the outdoors with a commitment to sustainability. Our programmes are designed to ensure you're work-ready

upon graduation, with substantial fieldwork and outdoor activity experience.

Help shape a sustainable future – apply today to start in February or July.



Our partners/relationships:

- Qualworx/OutdoorsMark Audited
- Department of Conservation Concessionaire
- New Zealand Outdoor Instructions Association(NZOIA) Accredited
- Education Outdoors New Zealand (EONZ)
- Untouched World
- Surfing New Zealand

Want to know more?

For details of all Ara courses, including full entry criteria and how to apply, visit **ara.ac.nz/search**

ara.ac.nz

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