



OTAGO
POLYTECHNIC
Te Kura Matatini ki Otago

Rights and Responsibilities

of Students at Otago Polytechnic.

>
2009

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STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Otago Polytechnic
2009

When you sign the enrolment form, you agree to comply with and be bound by the policies and statutes of Otago Polytechnic.

Introduction

This booklet provides an overview of some of the policies and statutes that affect all students at Otago Polytechnic, both domestic and international. It gives an overview of policies that affect students and refers to the detailed policies that are available in full on the Polytechnic's Intranet <http://webit.tekotago.ac.nz/polybase/> or can be obtained from Otago Polytechnic Students' Association (OPSA) or school offices. Assistance with any of the issues covered in this booklet can always be obtained from Polytechnic staff or the OPSA office at the Forth Street campus Student Centre on Harbour Terrace, phone 477 6974, e-mail president@opsa.org.nz

A handbook for International Students outlining specific rights and responsibilities is given to all prospective and enrolling international students. This Handbook for International Students contains specific information which the Ministry of Education's 'Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students' requires.

Our Distinctive Contribution to Applied Teaching and Learning and Research

- We inspire capability
 - Our personalised approach to vocational learning motivates students and staff to reach their full potential, and to master new skills and knowledge
 - Our students and staff successfully apply their knowledge in practical and often innovative ways
 - We strive to equip people with the leadership and communication skills to succeed and to share their enthusiasm for learning
 - Our collaborative approach provides the stimulation as well as the confidence to excel.
- We build capability
 - By building Otago's capability we develop New Zealand's capability
 - Our graduates are work ready
 - In building capability we make a **special contribution**, supported by Centres of Excellence, through:
 - Education/training for advanced practice
 - Education for sustainability
 - Applied research and technology transfer
- We are a learner centred organisation
 - We respect the knowledge which learners bring
 - We provide flexible pathways and learning opportunities
- We act with integrity and are **guided** by:
 - Our respect for people
 - Our respect for the environment
 - Our respect for Kai Tahu as tangata whenua
 - Our engagement with our communities
 - Our willingness to be accountable

Structure of the Polytechnic

The Otago Polytechnic Council is the governing body of Otago Polytechnic. Members of the Council represent many sectors of the community – employers, trade unions, iwi, the Ministry of Education, staff and students. Council usually meets monthly and has defined responsibilities for governing the Polytechnic.

Council employs the Chief Executive, Phil Ker, who is responsible for managing the Polytechnic. The Chief Executive employs all other staff. Included in the Chief Executive's Leadership Team are:

Robin Day	Deputy Chief Executive
Khyla Russell	Kaitohutohu
Philip Cullen	Chief Operating Officer
Michael Collins	Chief Information Officer
Sue Thompson	General Manager Academic Services
Mike Waddell	General Manager Marketing, Communications & Customer Relations
Matt Carter	General Manager Human Resources
Chris Morland	Group Manager Business
Sally Pairman	Group Manager Health and Community
Alistair Regan	Group Manager Creative and Applied Technologies
Jean Tilleyshort	Group Manager Regions

Academic Board sets academic policy; it is made up of Head of Schools/Programmes, managers and elected staff and student representatives. It meets monthly and is usually chaired by the Chief Executive or nominee. The current chair is Dr Robin Day. Academic Board has a number of Standing Committees such as Research Advisory Committee, Research Ethics Committee, Postgraduate Committee, Academic Approvals Committee, Library Committee and Centre for Assessment of Prior Learning Board as well as a number of committees that are convened when necessary, eg Appeals Committee. Should you wish to raise a matter with any of these committees, please contact the Personal Assistant to the Deputy Chief Executive, who will be able to put you in touch with the relevant person.

The Polytechnic is divided into fifteen academic schools, groups of programmes with the main campus in Dunedin and a regional campus in Cromwell. Otago Polytechnic has a number of Community Learning Centres located in Dunedin and throughout Otago. Each academic area has a Head of School/Programmes, who is responsible for the academic management within their area. The Head of School/Programmes reports to their relevant Group Manager, as mentioned above.

Your Rights and Responsibilities

Otago Polytechnic provides a range of support services for its students, some of which are outlined below. Remember that if you are unsure of what to do, you can contact the Customer Services Centre located on the ground floor of F block, your school office or the Otago Polytechnic Students Association (OPSA), who are there to help and advocate for you. OPSA is located on the second floor of the Student Centre, Harbour Terrace.

The services below, and others, are also described in the Prospectus “Career Pathways” and in pamphlets available at the various facilities. There is a vast amount of information available for students on the Otago Polytechnic website, student portal and Blackboard - www.otagopolytechnic.ac.nz. We encourage you to become familiar with this information source.

Otago Polytechnic is committed to providing an environment that is enjoyable, safe and secure for all students, staff and visitors.

All Polytechnic students and staff should be guided by principles of openness, fairness and respect, and should be able to engage in the activities of learning in a manner that strives for excellence.

The rights and responsibilities in this document apply to all students and staff, and act as a guide to the policies and practices within the Polytechnic.

Rights

- our commitment to you is to create an environment where you have all the information and tools required to succeed in your study. The services you should expect are to receive clear, accurate and up to date course advice for all courses
- to have quality learning and teaching experiences from enthusiastic teachers who communicate effectively with you
- to be informed about what is expected of you as a student
- to have access to information that will assist in your course, including relevant policy and procedures that affect you as a student
- to be supported in your learning with up-to-date information and course content by staff who are sufficiently current and up-to-date in their respective areas of expertise
- to receive clear information on how and when assessments will be conducted
- to receive fair, timely and constructive information on your performance in your course
- to be able to provide feedback about the course / programme and teaching that you are engaged with, without fear or anxiety about giving that feedback
- to receive feedback on changes to the course / programme as a consequence of feedback provided by students
- to have reasonable opportunities to have a say about how the Polytechnic operates
- to be treated with respect by students and staff
- to learn in an environment that is free from bullying, harassment or discrimination
- to have access to clear and appropriate procedures for dealing with grievances
- to have reasonable access to facilities, student support services, and appropriate resources
- to be members of a students' association

You have the right to a safe and supportive environment, and should feel comfortable asking questions or clarifying information with staff. Should you have any concerns or feel you are being disadvantaged, a good place to start is talking to the Programme Manager, your Head of School/Programmes, OPSA or Student Services. Policy *AP603 Student Complaints* is on our intranet site “Polybase” and will guide you through the process of making a complaint. The complaints process consists of a number of stages; there is a choice for the student at each stage and there are also prescribed practices for both students and staff.

Unacceptable Behaviours

The following behaviours are not acceptable at Otago Polytechnic, and may result in disciplinary action being taken: *

- disruptive behaviour which interferes with the rights and learning opportunities of others
- language and imagery which is offensive (may be verbal, written or electronic)
- hand gestures of an offensive nature
- carrying or being under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol
- any threatening or acts of aggression, bullying or intimidatory behaviour
- stealing
- vandalism
- any other criminal behaviour that is likely to result in police or legal investigation.

* refer to "Complaints / Discipline" below

Responsibilities

There are a number of general rules within Otago Polytechnic policies which are set to protect people's health, safety, your rights and the rights of others.

In exercising your rights as a student you are expected to accept the following responsibilities:

- to take responsibility for your own behaviour and to take responsibility for your own learning including
 - to be self-motivated and self-directed including undertaking preparation work when expected
 - to actively participate in your course of study
 - to put your best efforts into your study
 - to meet all obligations about when work is due
 - to submit work which is your own
 - to keep to time with classes and timetables or agreed appointments
- to treat all individuals and property with respect
- to have awareness for the well-being and safety of others
- to participate in providing constructive and useful feedback on courses / programmes when asked
- to promote an environment that is safe and free from bullying, harassment and discrimination
- to make yourself aware of policies procedures and rules and to abide by them
- and to use the resources and facilities of the Polytechnic with regard to others

The above responsibilities also apply to staff.

E-mail Account

E-mail is a formal means of communication used by the Otago Polytechnic and Bill Robertson Library. You **must** activate the live@EDU account that has been set up for you through the enrolment process. Important communications regarding network notices, library notices, recalls and fines, urgent notices from the Polytechnic management and OPSA are distributed via this e-mail system.

We acknowledge that you may have an existing and preferred e-mail account; however, we strongly recommend that you place a 'forward' or 'rule' on your live@EDU account so that you do not miss important notices.

Complaints / Discipline

Should a complaint be made against you, you will be requested to attend an interview with the Head of School/Programmes to investigate the allegation and determine a pathway forward. The complaint may be referred to the General Manager Academic Services for resolution (refer to policy *AP603 Student Complaints*).

If you break the rules, you may be subject to disciplinary procedures. The Deputy Chief Executive has the power to decide on a range of disciplinary measures including suspending you, cancelling your academic results and fining you (refer to policy *AP602 Student Discipline*).

Privacy

The Privacy Act 1993 is primarily concerned with good personal information handling practices, and contains twelve information privacy principles dealing with collecting, holding, use and disclosure of personal information and assigning unique identifiers (see www.privacy.org.nz).

Otago Polytechnic works within the twelve principles to ensure student information is secure and used for its intended purpose. Information regarding academic progress may be shared between relevant staff and the Student Induction and Retention Advisor, on a “need to know” basis to arrange appropriate support.

The principles give individuals the right to access personal information and to request correction of it.

Finding the Right Programme

Information about available programmes and qualifications is published in the Prospectus “Career Pathways” which comes out every year, usually in the preceding May, on Otago Polytechnic’s website. Staff can give you more information if you need it. Recruitment advisers will give you help with general issues about programmes. They can be contacted through the marketing office.

Application / Enrolment

When you sign your Application/Enrolment form you agree to comply with and be bound by the rules and regulations of Otago Polytechnic. Before you can be enrolled it is necessary for you to provide the staff in Customer Services, Forth Street, or at our Cromwell campus, a verified (certified) copy of a formal document that proves you are who you say you are. This document is usually a Birth Certificate or Passport. A Marriage Certificate or Deed Poll document may also be required if your name differs from that on your Birth Certificate or Passport. Staff in Customer Services or at our other campuses can explain this to you if you are not sure. The Ministry of Social Development also requires us to collect certain information. Make sure that you fill out all the mandatory fields in your enrolment form or it may hold up your enrolment, your loan, your allowance, your results, or all four. Enrolment is not complete until you have provided all required documentation and information.

In a 1999 referendum, Otago Polytechnic students voted to stay with compulsory Students’ Association membership. This decision is binding on the Otago Polytechnic. You pay your Otago Polytechnic Students’ Association (OPSA) fees as part of your enrolment. OPSA provide support and advice to all students including distance students.

If your programme lasts longer than one year, you will have to enrol again each year and we will need to re-confirm your details for each separate year or separate programme you attend. You may be asked to complete another form or amend your details on a pre-printed form if any of your details are incorrect or have changed.

Note: International Students please refer to the Handbook for International Students.

Fees

An indication of fees for 2009 is available in our 2009 Prospectus “Career Pathways”, Programme Information Sheets or the Otago Polytechnic website.

Full fee payments are due within 14 days of the date of the invoice or by the programme/course start date, whichever is the latter.

We accept a number of payment methods including cash, EFT POS, cheque, credit card or student loan.

If you haven't paid your fees, your enrolment is not complete. You might still be able to go to classes if you're waiting for a student loan or if you prove that your employer is going to pay. If you don't pay you may be asked to leave the programme. Outstanding unpaid fees will result in debt collection processes being implemented. This is undertaken through a debt collection agency.


If a student owes the Otago Polytechnic money for fees or any other item, the student will be prevented from graduating or receiving their awards until the debt has been paid in full. Students may also be prevented from re-enrolling in further courses of study. If you have difficulty paying, talk to the Student Fees Co-ordinator or the Customer Services Manager. In special circumstances, you can be given a short time to make final payment.

Note: International Students please refer to the Handbook for International Students.

Large Cash Payments for Course Fees

Cash payments over \$500 will not be accepted at Customer Services. Bank deposit slips for Otago Polytechnic are available at Customer Services and the International Centre. Students can either take the money and the deposit slip to Otago Polytechnic's Westpac Bank and pay their fees directly, or take the deposit slip to their own bank for payment of their fees by transfer to Otago Polytechnic.

Thinking of leaving or changing your programme?

- 
- Finding that your programme is too tough, or not what you expected
 - Family and personal problems getting in the way of study
 - Feeling isolated
 - Struggling to cope financially, or worried about debt

Students often have doubts about whether to continue with their studies. It may be that something has happened recently that makes you question whether staying on is the right thing to do. Or, it could be a gradual build up of pressures that makes you question your ability to cope. It is at these times that leaving Otago Polytechnic may seem to provide a quick solution to a seemingly unsolvable problem. But, this may not be the right decision.

Have you stopped to think it through?

You will need to think about your academic options

- should you suspend your studies
- should you transfer programmes
- do you need additional study support

You will need to think about finances

- are you getting all the money that you are entitled to
- are you worried about getting into debt
- do you need to think about financial consequences of leaving Otago Polytechnic

You will need to think about employment

- do you need help with seeking employment
- do your CV and job hunting skills need updating
- do you need help with finding part-time work

It is very important that you allow time to reflect on these things. It is advisable that you discuss your thoughts and plans with someone in the first instance.

What to do ...

Talk to Jane Wilson, Career Service, or Kitty Keogh, Student Support Advisor – drop in to see Jane in F109 or Kitty in the Student Centre, first floor. Phone either on 0800 762 786 or e-mail careers@tekotago.ac.nz or kittyk@tekotago.ac.nz.

Refund of Fees

If you formally withdraw from a programme or part of a programme, you may be entitled to a partial refund. The refund policy is detailed and can be found in full in *AP303.09 Domestic Students Withdrawal and Refund Policy for Year 2009 ("Refund Policy")* or *AP306.07 International Students Withdrawal and Refund Policy for Year 2009*.

The key points of Otago Polytechnic's refund policy are specified in the Terms and Conditions of Enrolment, a copy of which is provided on pages 9-10.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

(including Credit Transfer, Cross Credits and Assessment of Prior Experiential Learning)

The Polytechnic wants to give you credit for study you have already finished or for work or other experience you may have that will help you with your programme. If this is formal tertiary study completed at this or another recognised tertiary institution, you may be eligible for credits to be transferred to your programme of study. Informal learning in the form of work or other life experience may also be recognised. Crediting previous study or experience is covered by the Academic Board policy *AP501 Recognition of Prior Learning*.

If you want us to recognise things you have already done, please contact the Head of School/Programmes, advise what it is you have done, provide evidence and ask for it to be recognised. We will then set up a process which enables you to demonstrate that you possess the required skills and knowledge to be credited with the appropriate units of learning. This process often needs to be quite comprehensive.

For credit transfer and cross credits you will be required to provide evidence of any prior achievements such as NZQA Record of Learning, Result Transcript or Academic Transcript from another education provider. As the cost varies for RPL this will be discussed on an individual basis.

Attendance at Classes

Your programme will most likely have some attendance requirements and these will be made clear to you in writing at the start. Where there are attendance requirements, failure to meet these requirements may result in failure of the course.

If you are sick and unable to attend or there is some other valid reason preventing you from attending, you should let your teaching staff know as soon as practicable.

Note; International Students please refer to the Handbook for International Students.

Assessments

As a student you are entitled to assessments that are valid, fair and reliable. The Polytechnic policy is set out in *AP900 Assessment*.

Important points regarding this policy are:

- You will be informed in writing of the dates and times of your assessments in the first two weeks of your programme. You will also be informed in writing of any procedures that pertain to resits or re-submissions.
- There are definite rules regarding cheating and plagiarism (using someone else's work and pretending it is your own). Breaking these rules may result in academic penalty (see policy *AP607 Cheating*).
- You have the right to see your marked exam script and a marking schedule for written assessments.
- If you believe you have been unfairly treated in an assessment, you have the right to appeal the decision. Often these misunderstandings can be cleared up with your lecturer but if you are not satisfied you should follow the process set out in *AP600 Academic Appeal Process for Students*. Note that the appeal process contains time constraints which must be met.
- If you are prevented from sitting an assessment, you may be eligible for an aegrotat mark. (An aegrotat mark is an estimate of the mark you would have achieved if you could have sat the assessment. It is

based on your previous assessment results.) The procedure for aegrotats is set out in policy *AP907 Impaired Performance/Aegrotat*.

- If you are prevented from doing your best in an assessment because of illness or circumstances beyond your control, you may be eligible for consideration because of impaired performance. See policy *AP907 Impaired Performance/Aegrotat* for procedures.

If you have any concerns about how you are assessed you may wish to discuss this with your Lecturer, Head of School/Programmes or OPSA.

Completion of your Programme

Students are entitled to an award on successfully completing a programme, except for those on some very short courses. This may be a certificate, diploma, undergraduate degree or a postgraduate degree. Some shorter programmes may have less formal ceremonies to hand out certificates and diplomas but you have the right to graduate formally if your programme is full-time for one year or more and has been approved by Academic Board for inclusion in the Graduation Ceremony.

The Polytechnic holds two graduation ceremonies during the year, usually in March and December. These are special occasions celebrating your success. You will be allowed to invite guests and you will be required to wear appropriate academic regalia when collecting your award. In order to graduate, you will need to have met some conditions such as successfully completing your programme and having paid all fees including library fines. You would normally expect to graduate at the next available graduation ceremony following your successful completion of your programme.

See policies *AP1002 Academic Dress at Graduation Ceremonies* and *AP1003 Graduation Ceremonies*.

Terms and Conditions of Enrolment

This is a copy of the Terms and Conditions of Enrolment from the enrolment form for domestic students. The terms and conditions for international students are similar and can be found on the international enrolment form. In signing the declaration on the enrolment form you accepted these terms and conditions.

FEES:

Confirmation of enrolment will be provided in the form of an invoice.

Payment is due within 14 days of the date of the invoice and NO LATER than the programme start date. (*Note, this does not apply to student loan payments*).

Any student who wishes to dispute the fees due must do so within one month of receiving the invoice or statement. A request to review the fees or account balance must be made within this month, in writing to the Customer Services Manager, Otago Polytechnic. At the discretion of Otago Polytechnic, and with just cause, this period may be extended. Once the request is received, the review will be completed within seven (7) working days. Once the review is completed, any outstanding balance is due immediately. Depending on the programme or course, fees charged will be one or several of: Student fee, Students' Association fee, Internet fee, ID card/Library Card fee, Examination fee(s), Student Health Levy, NZQA Unit Standards fees, Clinical Access fee, and Application Processing fee. Failure to pay any invoice(s) by the due date means you will then be liable for all costs and expenses (including legal costs, debt collection agent fees, and this may affect your credit rating) which may be incurred in the recovery or attempted recovery of the overdue amount from you. Under these circumstances Otago Polytechnic may give to, or obtain from, any relevant third party information held about your personal or commercial credit arrangements. Academic Results for a student will be withheld for any course or programme where fees or any other debt remains unpaid. A student will be prevented from graduating or receiving their award(s) until their debt has been paid in full. The student will also be prevented from re-enrolling in further courses of study.

CANCELLATION OF PROGRAMME OR COURSE:

Enrolment in a programme or course is conditional upon and subject to sufficient numbers of students enrolling in the programme or course.

WITHDRAWALS AND/OR REFUNDS:

The key points of Otago Polytechnic's refund policy are summarised below. If you have any questions, contact your school or Customer Services.

Make sure you understand the refund policy before enrolling.

If you want to leave your programme or course, you must formally withdraw by filling out a withdrawal form (available from the School Administrator) and then returning it to the School Administrator. Withdrawal is confirmed from the date this form is received by Otago Polytechnic, and will be used when processing your withdrawal in the Student Management System (SMS). Verbal notice will not be accepted as intention to withdraw.

Please Note: If you have more than two consecutive weeks of non-attendance in classes, or non-participation in required online activities associated with your programme or course, and we are unable to contact you, you will be informally withdrawn.

DATE OF ADVICE OF WITHDRAWAL	CLASSIFICATION	REFUND DUE (OF FEES PAID)	LESS ADMINISTRATION CHARGE PER WITHDRAWALFORM	ACADEMIC RESULT
Before the programme start date.	Not Started	100%	No Fee	No Result Recorded
After the programme start date but before the last withdrawal date as shown on the Invoice.	Withdrawal	90%	\$50.00	Withdrawn
After the last programme withdrawal date but before 80% of the course duration is completed.	Withdrawal	Nil	Nil	Withdrawn
After 80% of the programme duration completed.	Any withdrawal from a programme will not be processed in the SMS.	Nil	Nil	Did Not Complete (DNC) or Grade Attained
Final result entered or programme completed.	Any withdrawal from a programme will not be processed in the SMS.	Nil	Nil	Result or Grade Attained

Compassionate Consideration: if you withdraw after 10% of your course has passed you will receive no refund unless you qualify for compassionate consideration. Compassionate consideration, which provides for a refund of up to 50% of that course, may be considered for the following reasons:

- Medical, supported in writing by a health professional
- Work related, supported by a letter from an employer and supported by the Head of School/Programmes
- As a result of a decision made jointly and confirmed in writing by the Head of School/Programmes and the student that to continue the course would be inappropriate.

An exit interview with either the Student Support Advisor or the Career Counsellor may be required as a part of the withdrawal process.

PRIVACY (PERSONAL INFORMATION):

The Polytechnic collects and stores information about students to comply with various statutes and/or regulations, to enable us to make decisions regarding your academic progress, and to provide you with evidence of your academic achievements. This information may be also shared with other Otago

Polytechnic schools/areas on a “need to know” basis, and is used to arrange appropriate support for students.

Where it is relevant, personal information may be disclosed to other agencies such as, but not limited to: the Ministry of Education, Audit New Zealand, New Zealand Qualifications Authority, Skill New Zealand, industry training organisations, industry licensing and registration bodies, other tertiary institutions and providers of work experience for students in courses with a practical component.

In addition, when required by law, we will release information as directed. An information matching agreement exists between the Ministry of Social Development and Otago Polytechnic, which allows payment of loans and allowances. We will provide information to Otago Polytechnic Students’ Association for its membership records.

You have the right to see and correct information which has been collected by us. Please contact the Chief Operating Officer (0800 762 786) if you wish to enquire about personal information held by Otago Polytechnic.

Finally

We are keen that your time with us is enjoyable, positive and rewarding.