



Health Bridging Certificate (Level 3 and 4)

Location

Dunedin or online with compulsory block courses

Duration

Across one year full-time (17 weeks per level) or two years part-time

Delivery

A mix of online and face-to-face teaching in Dunedin or online with three compulsory block courses in Dunedin or Porirua (Whitireia Polytechnic Campus) per semester. You must have access to the internet to complete this qualification.

Credits

120

DescLevel

120

Intakes

February

Apply

Now

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**Don't have the academic requirements
you need to enter one of our diploma- or
degree-level healthcare programmes?**

This programme will help you bridge the gap!

Gain confidence, study skills and knowledge in a supportive environment with the guidance and advice from experienced teachers, and benefit from the blended, flexible delivery format, allowing you to fit study around other commitments.

During semester one (Level 3), you will study core courses such as Communication Skills and Study and Career Skills and progress to courses such as Function of the Human Body and Introduction to Careers in Health in semester two (Level 4).

Successful completion of this programme may help you meet the academic entry requirements for entry into:

- [New Zealand Diploma in Enrolled Nursing \(Level 5\)](#)
- [New Zealand Diploma in Wellness and Relaxation Massage \(Level 5\)](#)
- [Bachelor of Nursing](#)
- [Bachelor of Midwifery](#)
- [Bachelor of Occupational Therapy](#)
- [Bachelor of Social Services](#)
- [Bachelor of Applied Science](#)

These programmes also have non-academic entry requirements, so you may need to plan ahead!

This programme is made up of two qualifications:

1. New Zealand Certificate in Study and Career Preparation (Level 3) - studied during semester one starting in February
2. New Zealand Certificate in Study and Career Preparation (Level 4) - studied during semester two starting in July.

Entry requirements

- Open entry.
- If English is not your first language, you must provide:
 - New Zealand University Entrance OR
 - Overall Academic IELTS 5.0 with no individual band score lower than 5.0 (achieved in one test completed in the last two years), OR
 - Acceptable alternative evidence of the required IELTS ([see here for NZQA proficiency table](#) and [here for list of recognised proficiency tests](#)).
- [International students](#) will be individually assessed to ensure you are ready for this study. Click [here](#) for your country's equivalent entry criteria.

If you need to improve your English Language skills, we offer a [wide range of English programmes](#).

Entry straight to Level 4

If you meet the below requirements, you will be able to apply for entry straight into Level 4. This six-month certificate starts in July every year. [Click here for the Level 4 only programme](#).

- New Zealand Certificate in Study and Career Preparation (Level 3), or equivalent.

- If English is not your first language, you must provide:
 - New Zealand University Entrance OR
 - Overall Academic IELTS 5.5 with no individual band score lower than 5.0 (achieved in one test completed in the last two years), OR
 - Acceptable alternative evidence of the required IELTS ([see here for NZQA proficiency table](#) and [here for list of recognised proficiency tests](#)).
- [International students](#) will be individually assessed to ensure you are ready for this study. Click [here](#) for your country's equivalent entry criteria.

COVID-19 vaccination information

Please note that while you don't need to provide evidence of your Covid-19 vaccination status to apply for this Level 3 or Level 4 health bridging programme, you will need to provide evidence of your vaccination status if you want to apply for one of our health diplomas or degrees when you successfully complete this programme.

Moving into our health-related degrees

Due to the high demand for places, successful completion of the this programme will not automatically guarantee you entry to our health-related degrees.

Progression to Bachelor of Nursing

- A minimum B+ average pass, achieved across the four courses during semester two, is required to meet the entry requirements for the Bachelor of Nursing. This must include at least a B+ in Human Biological Science 2.
- These programmes also have non-academic entry requirements including language requirements for non-native speakers of English, so you may need to plan ahead!
- Nursing applicants for whom English is a second language will also need to meet the language requirements for the [Bachelor of Nursing](#), which is an IELTS overall band score (academic) of 6.5.

Progression to Bachelor of Midwifery

- Midwifery Council states that applications from applicants under 20 who have met the academic entry criteria to the Bachelor of Midwifery via the Health Bridging Programme will be assessed on their individual merits.
- A minimum B+ average pass, achieved across the four courses during semester two, is required to meet the entry requirements for the Bachelor of Midwifery. This must include at least a B+ in Human Biological Science 2.
- These programmes also have non-academic entry requirements including language requirements for non-native speakers of English, so you may need to plan ahead!
- Midwifery applicants for whom English is a second language will also need to meet the language requirements for the [Bachelor of Midwifery](#), which is an IELTS overall band score (academic) of 7.0.

Please contact Otago Polytechnic to discuss your pathway to a health-related degree. Email info@op.ac.nz or phone 0800 762 786.

You will study

This programme is made up of health and community courses taught by blended delivery. Weekly tutorial attendance is required.

Tutorials will be held on campus if you are based in Dunedin and online if you are based elsewhere.

If you are studying by distance, you are also required to attend three compulsory block courses per semester, either in Dunedin or at Whitireia Community Polytechnic, Porirua.

SEMESTER ONE (Complete all)

Course name	Level	Credits
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Communication Skills

Learn how to communicate clearly using a range of appropriate media	3	15
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Personal and Study Skills

Develop focused skills for career and study pathways	3	15
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Human Biological Science 1

Gain an underpinning knowledge of chemistry, cell biology, human anatomy and physiology, in terms of normal function within a healthy environment	3	15
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Mathematics for Health

Gain essential numeracy skills and statistical knowledge relevant for health professionals in the healthcare sector	3	15
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Total		60
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SEMESTER TWO (complete all)

Course name	Level	Credits
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Skills for Successful Tertiary Study

Learn how to access and use information technologies for academic and/or vocational purposes	4	15
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Building Communication Competence

Build the skills to communicate and collaborate as a speaker and a listener in a learning group	4	15
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Human Biological Science 2	4	15
Understand and apply the basic structure and function of major body systems		
Introduction to Careers in Health		
Progress personal goals for career development in the health profession	4	15
Total		60

Block course dates (for those studying online)

March 2025

- Porirua: Sat 22 February, Sun 23 February
- Dunedin: Mon 24 February, Tues 25 February

April 2025

- Porirua: Sat 5 April, Sun 6 April
- Dunedin: Mon 7 April, Tues 8 April

June 2025

- Porirua: Sat 7 June, Sun 8 June
- Dunedin: Mon 9 June, Tues 10 June

July 2025

- Porirua: Sat 19 July, Sun 20 July, Mon 21 July
- Dunedin: Mon 21 July, Tues 22 July, Wed 23 July

September 2025

- Porirua: Sat 6 Sept, Sun 7 Sept
- Dunedin: Mon 8 Sept, Tues 9 Sept

November 2025

- Porirua: Sat 8 Nov, Sun 9 Nov
- Dunedin: Mon 10 Nov, Tues 11 Nov

Your workload

This is a full-time programme and you should expect to spend around 40 hours per week accessing required learning resources, completing assignments and undertaking self-directed study.

Health and Safety

The Bioscience for Health and Applied Structure and Function of the Human Body courses incorporate practical laboratory sessions, some of which involve chemicals and animal tissue.

Additional costs

We recommend the text '*Introduction to the Human Body: The Essentials of Anatomy and Physiology*' by Gerard J. Tortora and Bryan Derrickson (7th edition or later).

Student loans/allowances

Student loans and allowances are for domestic students only. For information about student loans and allowances please visit the [Studylink website](#). It is important to apply for your student loan/allowance at the same time as you apply for this programme, due to the length of time Studylink take to process. Loan/allowance applications can be cancelled at any time if you decide to withdraw your programme application or if it is unsuccessful.

Recognition of prior learning

If you have extensive knowledge and skills due to practical experience in this area, enquire about our recognition of prior learning process at [Capable NZ](#). You may have already gained credits towards this qualification.

Intakes:

Course	Description	Dates
26-DUN-S1H	Dunedin	February 2026 - Dunedin on Campus
26-WEL-S1H	Wellington	February 2026 - Distance with Porirua block courses
26-DIS-S1H	Distance	February 2026 - Distance with Dunedin block courses

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