

27 February 2023

Visa information for international students at education providers affected by Cyclone Gabrielle

Immigration New Zealand (INZ) is aware that some education provider campuses have been damaged by Cyclone Gabrielle and have been forced to close temporarily.

This affects your immigration status because your current student visa requires you to study at the location specified on your visa which may not be currently possible.

We understand that this is a difficult time for you and we would like to help.

What you can do now

Talk to your education provider to discuss what study options are available for you.

You may be able to temporarily study online or you may be able to temporarily study at a different campus, if that is an option.

If you no longer want to study, you will either need to apply for a different type of visa or depart New Zealand.

We know that these are important decisions to make, and we are here to support you. If you need to talk to us, please refer to the contact details provided at the end of this page.

Switching to online study if your campus is closed

Normally, international students are not allowed to study their course fully online. However, we are offering flexibility for students impacted by Cyclone Gabrielle.

If your education provider offers you an option to study online you may do this on your current student visa for up to two months.

Your education provider will tell us if you take this option, and we will add a note to your immigration file. You will be expected to return to in-person study as soon as it is possible to do so. Your education provider will inform you on when it is safe to return to campus.

Moving to another campus or location

Normally, relocations require a variation of conditions or a new student visa. However, we are offering flexibility for students impacted by Cyclone Gabrielle.



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If your education provider gives permission for you to relocate to another campus so that you can continue studying, you may do that on your current student visa for up to two months. No variation of conditions is required. Your education provider will need to tell us if you take this option, and we will add a note to your immigration file.

If you are planning to permanently relocate, or change education provider, a variation of conditions or new student visa will be required. Please check our website for information on how to apply.

What to do if you no longer want to study

If you no longer want to study but still hold a student visa, you should consider either applying for a different type of visa or returning to your home country. Your education provider will advise us that you are no longer enrolled and you will receive communication from us advising you what to do next.

Working full-time on the cyclone recovery until your campus reopens

You can only work in line with the conditions on your student visa. If you want to stop studying and work full-time you will need to apply for a suitable work visa.

Helping as a volunteer does not count as work, however we encourage you to ensure you prioritise your welfare and studies during this time and not take on too much. More information about volunteering can be found on our website:

[Can I do unpaid work while studying in New Zealand? | Immigration New Zealand](#)

Applying for other visas

You may apply for any type of visa but you must meet the criteria for that visa category for it to be granted. You can refer to our website to find out more about the criteria for the different visa categories.

How to contact us

If you are impacted by Cyclone Gabrielle and wish to discuss your circumstances you can email us at:

INZstudentcontact@mbie.govt.nz

This email address is only for students and providers affected by Cyclone Gabrielle.

You can also call 0508 55 88 55 to talk to us.

If you require immigration advice on your individual circumstances, you will need to contact a Licensed Immigration Adviser. Please refer to www.iaa.govt.nz for a list of Licensed Immigration Advisers.

We understand that this is a difficult time for you and we would like to help. Please reach out to us via the email address or phone number above if you need to.