

Bachelor of Arts Te Tohu Paetahi (BA)

level 7, 360 credits

Flexible Study Options

The Bachelor of Arts Te Tohu Paetahi (BA) allows students to pursue a particular interest (such as New Zealand History or te reo Māori) or a vocational pathway (such as Youth Work or Chaplaincy), while still engaging in core theological, biblical, and cultural formation. Its flexibility means the BA is often a good fit for students who are discerning their vocation, seeking a broader humanities education, or combining theology with another field of study.

Students enrolled in the BA choose specialisations, with the option to combine areas (e.g. Theology + Youth Work):

- History
- Youth Work
- Theology
- Te Reo Māori
- Chaplaincy (not offered in 2027)

Students can study towards the BA on campus in Henderson or Christchurch. This programme also allows for a range of flexible learning options, including a combination of on campus and Distance Learning courses, as well as part-time study.

2027 Fees

2027 fees will be confirmed in October 2026.

*NOTE: The programme is three years and annual fees may vary. A Student Services fee will apply. Please refer to Fee Schedule for more details (www.laidlaw.ac.nz/fees).



Programme Requirements

The BA is a three-year full-time (or part-time equivalent) programme. The usual programme structure is 24 courses at 15 credits each at Levels 5, 6, and 7; however, there are also 30-credit internship and practicum courses on offer in the programme.

Students enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts Te Tohu Paetahi (BA) choose a specialisation when enrolling, with the option to combine areas, enabling more tailored and vocationally relevant pathways.

The specialisations on offer in the BA in 2027 include: Te Reo Māori, Theology, History, and Youth Work. We expect to offer the Chaplaincy specialisation in 2028.

Please refer to the following pages for the specific requirements for your chosen specialisation.

Students enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts Te Tohu Paetahi (BA) must complete:

- a **minimum of 75 credits at Level 7**;
- the **four core courses** (required for all specialisations except the Te Reo Māori specialisation): *907.515 A Bicultural Relationships: Tikanga Kawenata*; *115.515 A Reading the Bible*; *219.615 A Ngākau Maia: Christian Confidence*; and *590.715 A Capstone: Integrative Practice*;
- the **required courses specific to their enrolled specialisation** (please see specialisations table below for more information);
- a **minimum of 120 credits within their specialisation**;
- a **minimum of 60 credits of the final 120 credits of the programme within their specialisation**;
- **360 credits across the programme**.

For a comprehensive list of courses that can be taken towards the BA, please refer to the BA Handbook published on the website: <https://www.laidlaw.ac.nz/prospectus-and-handbooks/>

READY TO APPLY? ANY QUESTIONS?

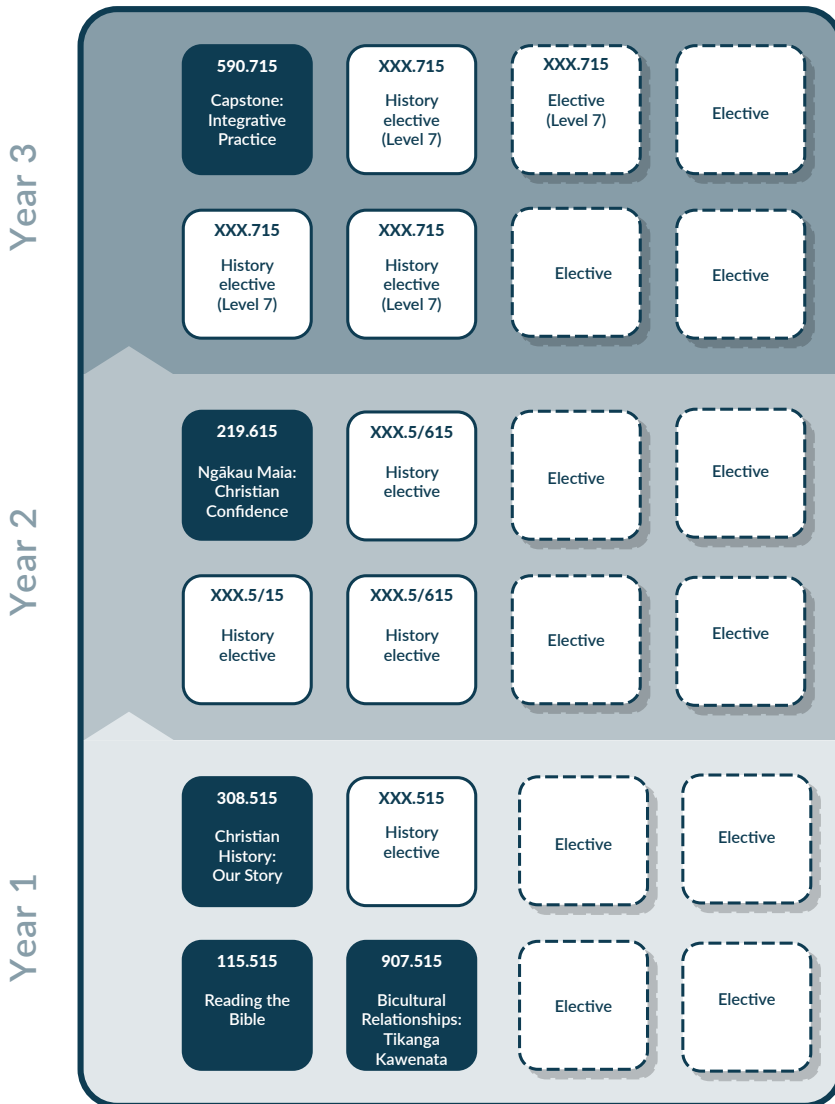
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History

Graduates of the History specialisation will be prepared to bring the informed and contextual understanding required in public servants, community leaders, and those working in galleries, libraries, archives, and museums. They will be prepared with the critical thinking skills, contextual understanding, and informed citizenship to lead in a range of community contexts, as well as going on to further postgraduate study in other contexts.



Requirements:

Students enrolled in the History specialisation must complete:

- the required courses, including the BA core courses, indicated in dark teal on the programme map;
- an additional History elective at Level 5;
- at least three additional History electives at Level 5 or Level 6;
- at least three History electives at Level 7;
- a minimum of 75 credits at Level 7;
- 360 credits across the programme.

History electives offered in 2027 include:

- 310.615/715 Te Harinui: The History of Christianity in Aotearoa
- 315.615/715 Church and Treaty in Aotearoa
- 316.615/715 Haerenga
- 319.615/715 Reformation, Enlightenment and the Modern Global World

Hybrid Specialisations:

Students may want to complete a hybrid specialisation:

- History + Theology
- History + Youth Work
- History + Chaplaincy
- History + Te Reo Māori

For more information on these study pathways, including indicative programme structures, please refer to the BA handbook at <https://www.laidlaw.ac.nz/prospectus-and-handbooks/> or discuss with the BA Programme Advisor.

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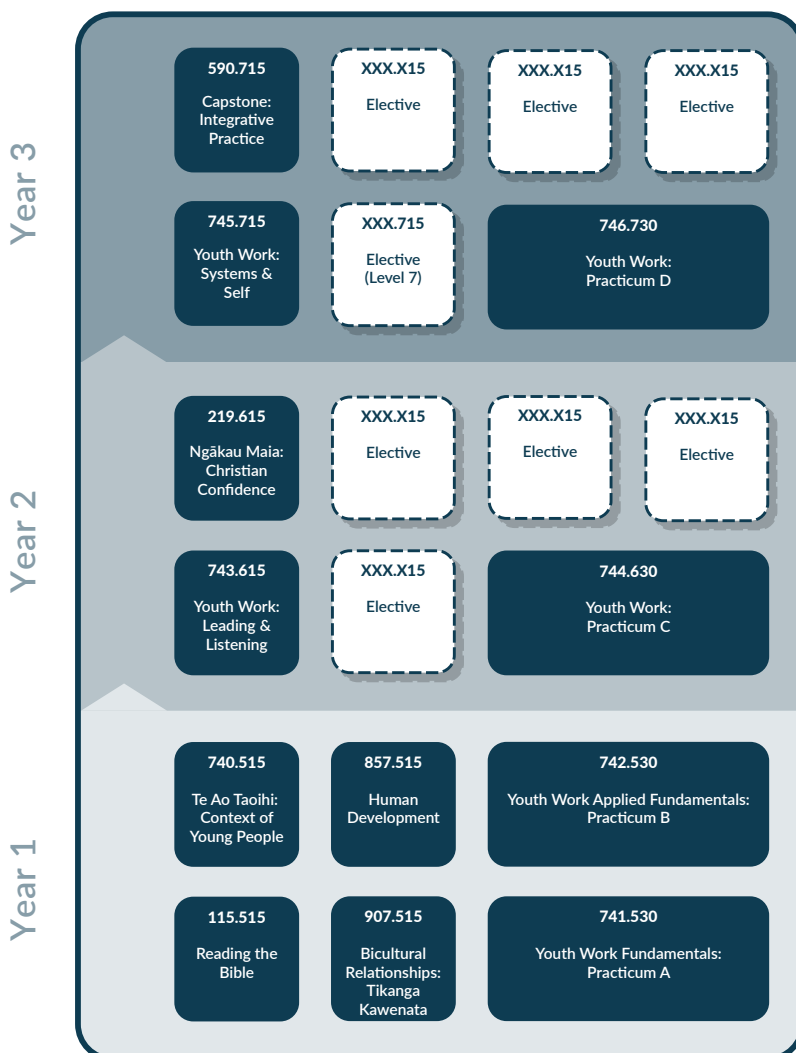
Youth Work

Graduates of the Youth Work specialisation will be equipped to work with rangatahi and young people across Aotearoa New Zealand as skilled and ethical professionals, including for non-profits, government agencies and other public sector bodies, churches, schools, hospitals, and anywhere where young people are served.

Students enrolled in the Youth Work specialisation will complete 120 credits of practicum across the programme, allowing for integration of theory and practice.

Those who have completed the Certificate in Community Youth Work (CertCYW) may enter directly into the second year of the Youth Work specialisation.

Applicants to the Youth Work specialisation will attend a group interview and will be police vetted to meet the requirements of the Children's Act 2014.



Requirements:

Students enrolled in the Youth Work specialisation must complete:

- the required courses, including the BA core courses, indicated in dark teal on the programme map;
- a minimum of 75 credits at Level 7;
- 360 credits across the programme.

Hybrid Specialisations:

Students may want to complete a hybrid specialisation:

- Youth Work + Theology
- Youth Work + History
- Youth Work + Chaplaincy
- Youth Work + Te Reo Māori

For more information on these study pathways, including indicative programme structures, please refer to the BA handbook at <https://www.laidlaw.ac.nz/prospectus-and-handbooks/> or discuss with the BA Programme Advisor.

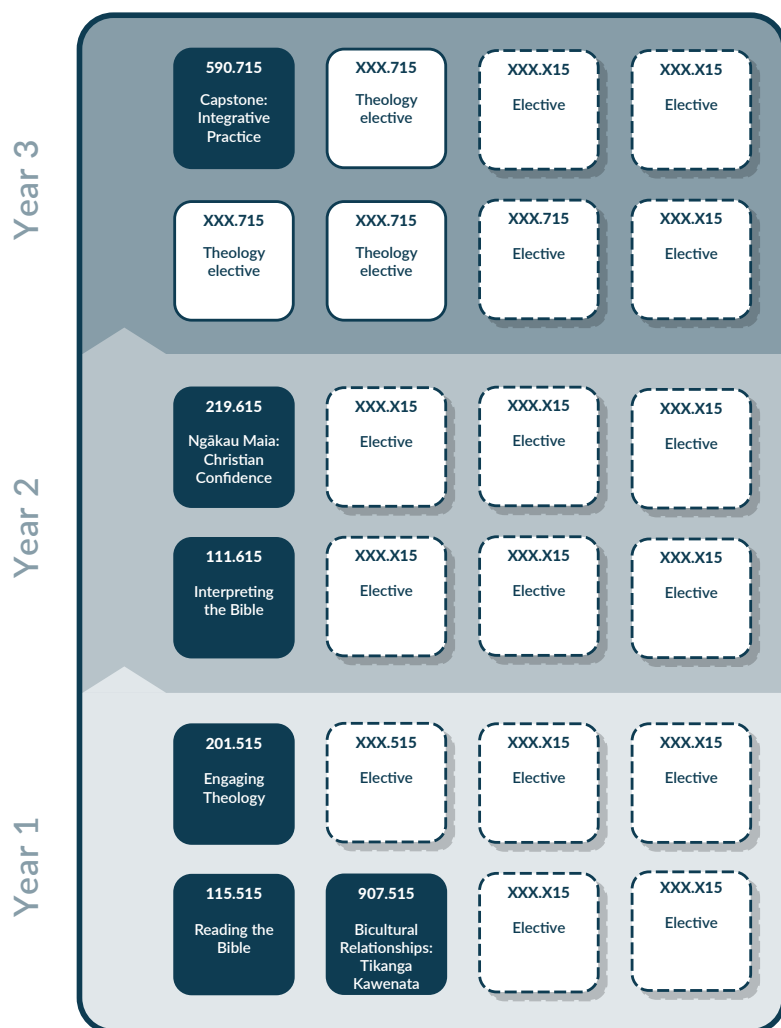
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Theology

Graduates of the Theology specialisation will be prepared for a range of contextual ministry roles in faith-based contexts, including youth ministry, and children's and family ministry in church and denominational settings. Graduates will be equipped for roles in faith-based not-for-profit organisations which require a mature Christian foundation to inform the character and work of their employees.

Graduates who hybridise a Theology specialisation will be uniquely prepared to integrate a biblically and theologically-informed worldview and mature formation with the knowledge and skills learnt in the other specialisation for vocational roles in faith-based contexts, and bivocational career paths.



Requirements:

Students enrolled in the Theology specialisation must complete:

- the required courses, including the BA core courses, indicated in dark teal on the programme map;
- the required courses, indicated in solid outline on the programme map;
- at least three Theology electives at Level 7;
- a minimum of 75 credits at Level 7;
- 360 credits across the programme.

Hybrid Specialisations:

Students may want to complete a hybrid specialisation:

- Theology + Youth Work
- Theology + History
- Theology + Chaplaincy
- Theology + Te Reo Māori

For more information on these study pathways, including indicative programme structures, please refer to the BA handbook at <https://www.laidlaw.ac.nz/prospectus-and-handbooks/> or discuss with the BA Programme Advisor.

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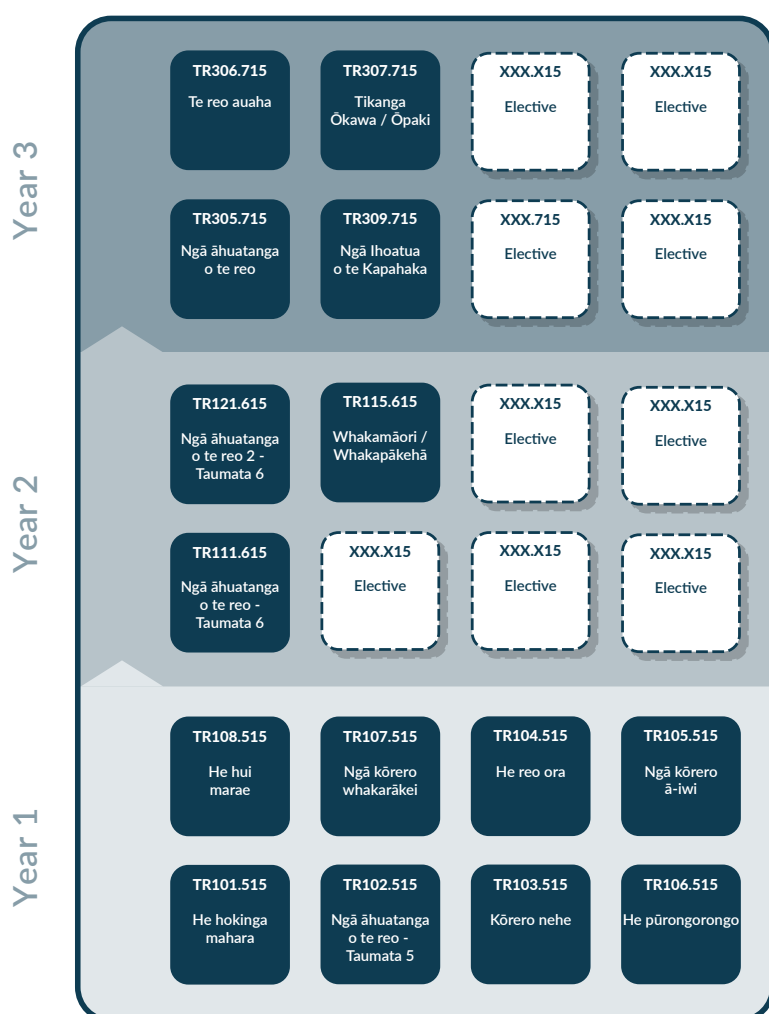
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Te Reo Māori

Graduates of the Te Reo Māori specialisation will be equipped to enter a wide range of roles that leverage both their language skills and cultural knowledge. They can work as Te Reo Māori educators, Māori media professionals, and content creators, or serve as cultural advisors (pou-tikanga) in government, social services, and healthcare settings. Opportunities also exist in community and education sectors, including roles as chaplains, and Māori affairs consultants, as well as in business, tourism, and the arts, where graduates can promote Māori culture, support Māori communities, and advise on integrating tikanga Māori into various industries. These graduates will be vital in preserving and advancing Te Reo Māori and Māori values across New Zealand society.

Applicants to the Te Reo Māori specialisation will meet with a kaiako to discuss course workload and commitment and may be required to complete a pre-entry assessment.



Requirements:

Students enrolled in the Te Reo Māori specialisation must complete:

- the required courses indicated in dark teal on the programme map;
- a minimum of 75 credits at Level 7;
- 360 credits across the programme.

Hybrid Specialisations:

Students may wish to complete a double specialisation:

- Te Reo Māori + Theology
- Te Reo Māori + Chaplaincy
- Te Reo Māori + Youth Work

For more information on these study pathways, including indicative programme structures, please refer to the BA handbook at <https://www.laidlaw.ac.nz/prospectus-and-handbooks/> or discuss with the BA Programme Advisor.

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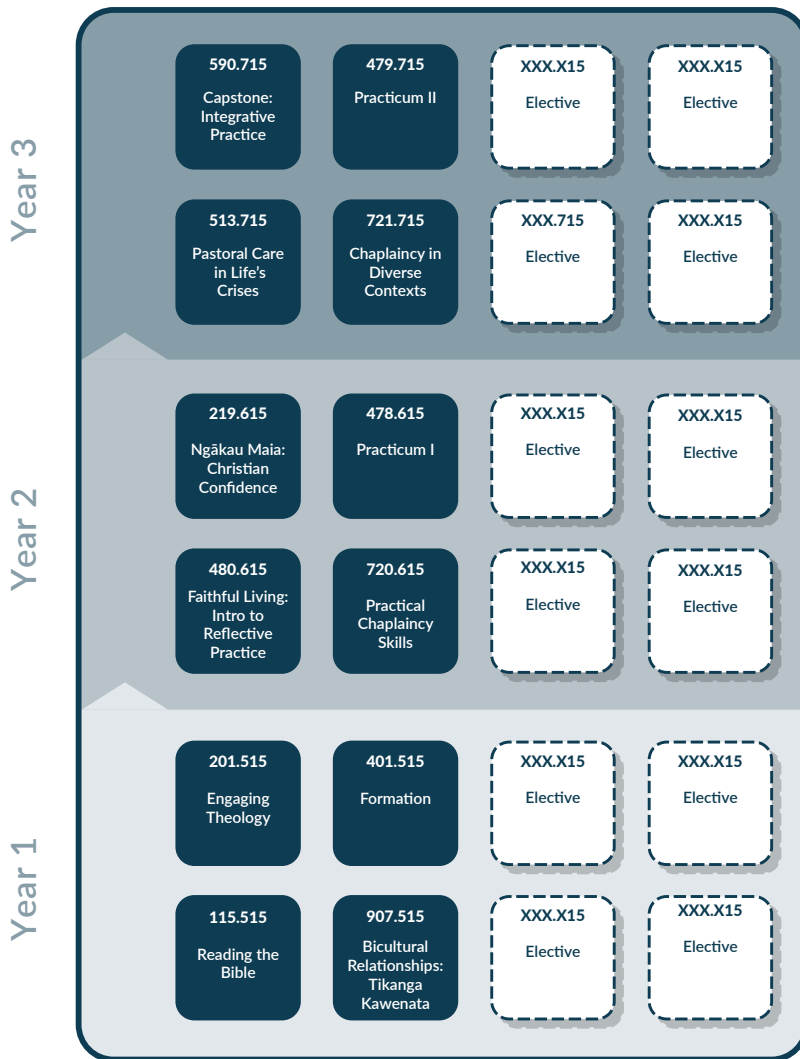


Chaplaincy

Please note that the Chaplaincy specialisation is not being offered in 2027.

Graduates of the Chaplaincy specialisation will be prepared for work as chaplains in a great variety of employment and voluntary contexts, including in churches, hospitals, hospices, schools, marae, community organisations, branches of the military, businesses, prisons, workplaces, and other non-profit entities.

Applicants to the Chaplaincy specialisation will attend a group interview and will be police vetted to meet the requirements of the Children's Act 2014. Applicants must be at least 20 years of age on or before the first day of semester.



Requirements:

Students enrolled in the Chaplaincy specialisation must complete:

- the required courses indicated in dark teal;
- a minimum of 75 credits at Level 7;
- 360 credits across the programme;
- a minimum of 75 credits from the recommended electives. (Please refer to BA handbook for details of recommended electives.)

Hybrid Specialisations:

Students may want to complete a hybrid specialisation:

- Chaplaincy + Theology
- Chaplaincy + History
- Chaplaincy + Youth Work
- Chaplaincy + Te Reo Māori

For more information on these study pathways, including indicative programme structures, please refer to the BA handbook at <https://www.laidlaw.ac.nz/prospectus-and-handbooks/> or discuss with the BA Programme Advisor.

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Graduate Profile Outcomes

By the end of this programme graduates will be able to:

1. **Embody leadership grounded in the Gospel, in community, and across vocations and society.**
2. **Think integratively about Christian faith, identity, traditions, and the world, articulating their worldview with confidence, intelligence, creativity, and respect.**
3. **Practise critical thinking, transferable skills, and ethical behaviour when addressing societal issues and professional responsibilities.**
4. **Engage in interpersonal relationships in complex contexts with awareness, and excellent communication and collaborative skills.**
5. **Outwork their faith and vocation in relationship to whenua, and within the context of whānau, hāpu, and iwi, upholding a commitment to te Tiriti o Waitangi.**

Graduates of the Te Reo Māori specialisation will also be able to:

6. **Ka whakaaturia te mātau me te māia ki te reo Māori mā te whakawhiti kōrero ki ngā horopaki ōkawa, ōpaki anō hoki. Ka matatau ki ngā āhuatanga o te reo me te mārāma ki te tatao ki ngā tikanga Māori.**

Graduates of the Theology specialisation will also be able to:

7. **Integrate biblical and theological knowledge with lived experience, evaluating how the centrality of Christ shapes their perspective and ministry in the world.**

Graduates of the History specialisation will also be able to:

8. **Research, interpret, and communicate historical knowledge, with a focus on Aotearoa New Zealand, critically engaging with primary and secondary sources and diverse historiographical perspectives.**

Graduates of the Chaplaincy specialisation will also be able to:

9. **Critically apply biblical, theological and practical skills to provide chaplaincy care across diverse contexts, offering spiritual support, pastoral presence and ceremonial leadership.**

Graduates of the Youth Work specialisation will also be able to:

10. **Critically integrate youth development theory and contextual understanding with ethical youth work practice to uphold Mana Taiohi and support holistic aspirations of young people.**

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Frequently Asked Questions

Why should I study a BA at Laidlaw?

A BA at Laidlaw offers a unique opportunity for:

- **Integrated Christian formation.** Laidlaw's BA is shaped by a Christian worldview, with faith integrated across the curriculum, teaching, assessment, and community life rather than confined to electives.
- **Flexible specialisations and hybrid pathways.** Students choose specialisations rather than rigid majors, with the option to combine areas (e.g. Theology + Youth Work), enabling more tailored and vocationally relevant pathways.
- **A vocationally integrated humanities degree.** Academic study is combined with practice through practicums, internships, and field-based learning in several specialisations.
- **Small cohorts and relational learning.** Classes are smaller and relational, emphasising mentoring, dialogue, and reflective practice rather than large lecture-based delivery.
- **A coherent common core shaped by a Christian worldview,** with faith integrated across the curriculum, teaching, assessment, and community life rather than confined to electives. Most students complete shared core courses focused on biblical engagement, Christian confidence, bicultural relationships, and integrative practice, giving the degree a clear identity.

When do applications open?

Applications for 2027 will open on 22 June 2026:

<https://www.laidlaw.ac.nz/apply/>

Expressions of Interest for the Te Reo Māori specialisation will open on 8 June 2026:

<https://ihorangi.ac.nz/apply/>

How much does it cost?

2027 fees will be released in October 2026. They are likely to increase slightly from the 2026 fees published in the fee schedule: <https://laidlaw.ac.nz/fees>

How do I find out more?

Full programme information about the BA is available on our website: <https://www.laidlaw.ac.nz/prospectus-and-handbooks/>

If you have more questions, we encourage you to fill out an enquiry form:

<https://laidlaw.typeform.com/study-enquiry>. A staff member can then call you to talk about your potential study pathway.

You may also like to come to our next Open Night: <https://www.laidlaw.ac.nz/open-nights/>

If you want to experience being a student, sign up for Student for a Day [here](#). You could sit in on a class, tour the campus, meet some other students and staff, and maybe even join us for Community Morning Tea or Community Lunch.

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Frequently Asked Questions

What is the difference between a BA at Laidlaw and a BA at university?

Both lead to a formal Level 7 bachelor's degree on the New Zealand Qualifications and Credentials Framework (NZQCF). While a university BA is typically a broad, discipline-based humanities degree, Laidlaw's BA is a deliberately integrated programme that combines academic study, Christian formation, cultural engagement, and vocational preparation, particularly for students seeking to serve and lead in their communities.

Should I choose a BTh or a BA?

The Bachelor of Theology has been designed to give students the best foundation possible for pursuing biblical and theological study. The required courses in this programme mean graduates will walk away with sound biblical and theological knowledge, exegetical skills, and embedded formational practices that provide an excellent foundation for further theological study, ministry training, or postgraduate theology.

The Bachelor of Arts offers greater flexibility. It allows students to pursue a particular interest (such as New Zealand history or te reo Māori) or a vocational pathway (such as Youth Work or Chaplaincy), while still engaging in core theological, biblical, and cultural formation. Because of this flexibility, the BA is often a good fit for students who are discerning their vocation, seeking a broader humanities education, or combining theology with another field of study.

The BA is also a strong option for students considering secondary teacher training following the BA, as it can enable study across a wider range of teachable subjects, depending on the chosen specialisation(s).

In short, choose the BTh if you are primarily focused on theological depth and ministry-oriented study; choose the BA if you want a broader, more flexible degree that integrates theology with other disciplines and vocational pathways.

I'm currently enrolled in another programme at Laidlaw. Can I enrol in the BA instead?

We generally recommend that you stay enrolled in your current programme.

If you are enrolled in the Diploma of Christian Studies, Certificate in Community Youth Work, Te Reo Ihirangi, or Te Reo Maruata, we recommend finishing your programme. Once you complete your programme, all of your courses could potentially be transferred into the BA (some time limits apply).

I'm currently enrolled at another provider but I want to study the BA at Laidlaw instead. What are my options?

Depending on what you are currently studying, you may be able to get some cross credits. We encourage you to fill out this enquiry form so a staff member can discuss your options with you:

<https://laidlaw.typeform.com/study-enquiry>.

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Frequently Asked Questions

Will I be able to get a student allowance and/or student loan?

The Bachelor of Arts Te Tohu Paetahi is an accredited programme and is approved for student allowances and student loans.

We are unable to confirm your eligibility for StudyLink. We encourage you to visit <https://www.studylink.govt.nz/> to check your eligibility.

If you apply for the BA, we recommend applying for StudyLink at the same time. (They prefer to receive applications by mid-October to ensure they can process everyone on time for a Semester One start.)

What are my study options after completing a BA?

A Bachelor of Arts from Laidlaw opens up a range of postgraduate study and vocational pathways, depending on your specialisation and interests.

Depending on your BA specialisation(s), you may be able to progress into further professional or postgraduate study, including:

- **Graduate Diploma in Education (Secondary)*** – particularly for graduates with Te Reo Māori, Theology, History, or a suitable hybrid of these, who are considering secondary teaching. **Subject to approval of programmes currently under development, graduates also may be able to study towards a GradDipEd with a specialisation in Primary or ECE teaching.*
- **Graduate Diploma in Theology** – for students who want to deepen their theological study beyond the BA.
- **Graduate Diplomas in other subject areas**, depending on your academic background and career goals.

Because the BA is designed to be flexible and interdisciplinary, it works well for students who are still discerning their next steps, as well as those with a clear vocational goal in mind. Whether you're aiming for teaching, postgraduate study, ministry, community leadership, or another people-focused profession, the BA provides a strong foundation and multiple pathways forward.

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