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**Disclaimer**: Media Design School at Strayer reserves the right to make changes to the information contained within the Student Handbook, including policies and procedures, as required. Please refer to [www.mediadesignschool.com/student-information](http://www.mediadesignschool.com/student-information) for updated information.

# General

## Accreditation and Registration

Media Design School at Strayer (MDS) is registered as a Private Training Establishment (PTE) by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) under the provisions of the [Education and Training Act 2020](https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2020/0038/latest/LMS170676.html) and its subsequent amendments. NZQA, under the provisions, of the Act approves and accredits MDS’ qualifications.

NZQA uses External Evaluation and Review (EER) to review the current quality of performance within Tertiary Education Organisations (TEOs). In EER, NZQA evaluates an organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment. After an EER, NZQA categorises a TEO based on these evaluations and their level of confidence in the TEO. The categories are:

* highly confident (Category 1)
* confident (Category 2)
* not yet confident (Category 3)
* not confident (Category 4).

MDS is placed as a Category 1 (Highly Confident) TEO and is reviewed every four years.

## Disclosure of Information

Once receiving an offer of place, applicants will receive information regarding the following:

* Student fee protection via Public Trust
* Government funding (for domestic students only)
* Media Design School at Strayer’s [Withdrawal and Refund Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/Y0Y4qO/original/MDS_PL_MGT_001+Withdrawal+and+Refund+Policy+v.2)

## Tertiary and International Learners Code of Practice

Tertiary education providers have an important role in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all students.

The [Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021](https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/tertiary/the-code/the-code-for-learners/the-code-for-international-school-learners/) supports the wellbeing of tertiary and international learners enrolled with New Zealand education providers. It sets out the expectations that education providers must meet for the wellbeing and safety of their students.

NZQA is the administrator of the Tertiary and International Learners Code of Practice, responsible for monitoring and supporting providers to give effect to the Tertiary and International Learners Code of Practice.

You can download a copy of the [Tertiary and International Learners Code of Practice](https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/tertiary/the-code/the-code-for-learners/) from the NZQA website. The NZQA website also has a [summary of the Code of Practice](https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/tertiary/the-code/the-code-for-learners/the-code-summary-tertiary/).

# Fees

Tuition fees are published on the Media Design School at Strayer (MDS) website. The New Zealand Government funds domestic students through Student Achievement Component (SAC) funding. Government funding does not apply to international students and international student fees are published separately.

Fees listed are for each academic year of study. Fees are in New Zealand dollars.

## Government Funding – Domestic Students

TEC funds a set number of domestic students for all qualifications offered at MDS through SAC funding.

For the purposes of SAC funding, a domestic student is one of the following:

* A New Zealand citizen, which includes Cook Island, Niue, and Tokelau citizens
* A New Zealand permanent resident, currently residing in New Zealand
* An Australian citizen, currently residing in New Zealand
* An Australian permanent resident with a returning resident’s visa, currently residing in New Zealand
* Certain exchange students and dependents of diplomats.

## Student Fee Protection

All PTEs registered with NZQA are required to offer protection for student fees paid and other course-related costs.

Media Design School at Strayer has selected Public Trust to act as an independent trustee. As soon as fees are deposited with Public Trust, they are protected. As students progress through their course of study, the fees paid are gradually released to MDS.

In the unlikely event of any regulatory closure, Media Design School at Strayer, through Public Trust, will ensure that any refund owed to a student will be made in accordance with the [Education and Training Act 2020](https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2020/0038/latest/LMS202445.html) and the current [NZQA Student Fee Protection Rules 2025](https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/rules-fees-policies/nzqa-rules/student-fee-protection-rules/). For more information on Public Trust’s student fee protection, please visit the [Public Trust website](https://www.publictrust.co.nz/student-fee-protection/for-students/).

## Payment of Fees

Upon registering to a course of study at MDS, students accept full responsibility for payment of their fees on or before the start of their programme start date.

The following outlines the time frame and procedure for non-payment of invoices after the start date of the qualification:

**Day 8:** All fees must be paid in full. If any fees are still outstanding, the student must provide evidence that they have applied for a student loan, and is now obligated to pay fees in full, as per the [Withdrawal and Refund Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/Y0Y4qO/original/MDS_PL_MGT_001+Withdrawal+and+Refund+Policy+v.2).

**Day 15:** If there is still no evidence of a student loan application and a verification of study has not yet been received by MDS or fees receipted, the student will be restricted from all classes until this process is completed.

**Day 22**: If the student’s fees are still outstanding (with no exceptional circumstances), the student will be deregistered from their course of study and the appropriate authorities notified. No refund will be granted.

**Note:** It is the student’s responsibility to make up the time and learning for any lessons missed due to being suspended for unpaid fees.

### Outstanding Debts and Fees

Any outstanding debts or fees payable to MDS may be referred to a debt collection agency for recovery. This includes any costs incurred through damaged or lost equipment or resources loans. Administration and recovery costs are added to the original debt.

# Withdrawals, Refunds and Transfers

## Withdrawal and Refunds

Media Design School at Strayer (MDS) has specific rules about refund eligibility and value. These rules are set out in our [Withdrawal and Refund Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/Y0Y4qO/original/MDS_PL_MGT_001+Withdrawal+and+Refund+Policy+v.2).

### Domestic Students

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Circumstances** | **Fee refunds** | **Notes** |
| **Before the Programme Intake start date** | | |
| A student may withdraw before the start date of their programme. | A student is eligible for a full refund of the invoiced fees paid. | The [Withdrawal Form](https://www.mediadesignschool.com/sites/default/files/2025-09/Student%20Initiated%20Transfer%20and%20Withdrawal%20Form%20-%20Media%20Design%20School%20at%20Strayer.pdf) must be signed and received before commencement of the programme. |
| **Within 8 calendar days from the first day of the Programme start date** | | |
| A student may withdraw within eight calendar days from the first day of the programme start date. | A domestic student is eligible for a full refund of the invoiced fees paid, less $500 or 10% of the invoiced fees paid, whichever is the lesser amount. | The [Withdrawal Form](https://www.mediadesignschool.com/sites/default/files/2025-09/Student%20Initiated%20Transfer%20and%20Withdrawal%20Form%20-%20Media%20Design%20School%20at%20Strayer.pdf) must be signed and received before the eight-day period has elapsed. |
| **Outside 8 calendar days from the first day of the Programme start date** | | |
| A student may withdraw after eight calendar days from the first day of the programme start date. | No refunds are available in most circumstances.  A refund may be applied for on compassionate grounds. Refunds on compassionate grounds may be granted at the discretion of MDS. | The [Withdrawal Form](https://www.mediadesignschool.com/sites/default/files/2025-09/Student%20Initiated%20Transfer%20and%20Withdrawal%20Form%20-%20Media%20Design%20School%20at%20Strayer.pdf) may be filled out at any time for a refund request on compassionate grounds.  Evidence for these grounds must be supplied. Students may be liable for any unpaid fees for which they have been invoiced and any additional unpaid expenses incurred. |

Please note that upon withdrawal, [StudyLink](https://www.studylink.govt.nz/) will be informed. You must also reach out to StudyLink regarding your allowance or your student loan.

### International Students

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Circumstances** | **Fee refunds** | **Notes** |
| **Before the Programme Intake start date** | | |
| A student may withdraw before the start date of their programme. | A student is eligible for a full refund of the invoiced fees paid. | The [Withdrawal Form](https://www.mediadesignschool.com/sites/default/files/2025-09/Student%20Initiated%20Transfer%20and%20Withdrawal%20Form%20-%20Media%20Design%20School%20at%20Strayer.pdf) must be signed and received before commencement of the programme. |
| **Within 10 working days from the first day of the Programme start date** | | |
| A student may withdraw within ten working days from the first day of the programme start date. | A student is eligible for a full refund of the invoiced fees paid, less 25% for administrative fees | The [Withdrawal Form](https://www.mediadesignschool.com/sites/default/files/2025-09/Student%20Initiated%20Transfer%20and%20Withdrawal%20Form%20-%20Media%20Design%20School%20at%20Strayer.pdf) must be signed and received before the ten-day period has elapsed. |
| **Outside 10 working days from the first day of the Programme start date** | | |
| A student may withdraw after ten working days from the first day of the programme start date. | No refunds are available in most circumstances.  A refund may be applied for on compassionate grounds. Refunds on compassionate grounds may be granted at the discretion of MDS. | The [Withdrawal Form](https://www.mediadesignschool.com/sites/default/files/2025-09/Student%20Initiated%20Transfer%20and%20Withdrawal%20Form%20-%20Media%20Design%20School%20at%20Strayer.pdf) may be filled out at any time for a refund request on compassionate grounds.  Evidence for these grounds must be supplied. Students may be liable for any unpaid fees for which they have been invoiced and any additional unpaid expenses incurred. |

Please note:

* Upon withdrawal, Immigration New Zealand will be informed.
* If your visa is declined or cancelled, you may be eligible for a full refund of fees paid.
* For more information regarding refund requirements for international students, refer to the [Education (Refund Requirements for International Students) Notice 2012](https://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2012/0312/latest/whole.html#DLM4744745).

Leave of absence and transfer to another qualification will both be treated as withdrawal from the programme enrolment; thus, the rules in the above tables apply.

If you are entitled to a refund, it will be returned to whoever paid your fees. A refund may take up to three (3) weeks to be processed, excluding compassionate consideration, which may take longer.

Students will not be refunded for any student workbooks, equipment, or textbooks they have been supplied with during this period. Students must pay all outstanding payments and have returned all equipment and resources belonging to MDS before any withdrawal approval is given.

Please refer to the [Withdrawal and Refund Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/Y0Y4qO/original/MDS_PL_MGT_001+Withdrawal+and+Refund+Policy+v.2) for further information.

### Student Withdrawal Fee Refund Flow Chart

Please note, this diagram only applies to courses longer than 3 months.

## Transfers

Media Design School at Strayer supports the right of students to transfer from a course of study under some circumstances. To complete a transfer, students must contact Student Admin via email at [studentadmin@mediadesignschool.com](mailto:studentadmin@mediadesignschool.com) to request a transfer form.

### Compassionate Transfers

Compassionate transfers are granted under exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances often occur when a situation outside of your control is preventing you from completing your course of study successfully within the scheduled end date.

Exceptional circumstances include:

* Major trauma or injury
* High-risk situation or significant illness
* Death of an immediate family member
* Natural disaster or event impacting on a community or communities

If any of these circumstances occur, you should contact your lecturer and Programme Leader who will advise you on the next steps. This may involve a confidential discussion with the Counsellor or the Student Success Coach, who can assist with completing relevant documentation. The final decision will be made by the Programme Leader and Dean.

Applications for refunds due to compassionate consideration need to be accompanied by a full written explanation of the grounds upon which the application can be considered. Other supporting evidence may be requested (e.g., a doctor’s certificate).

If the transfer is granted, your course of study will be placed on hold, and you will re-enter your course of study in the following intake or year (if the course of study is offered), without needing to pay again for the approved components. If a transfer is approved, you are liable for all fees as invoiced, and no refunds will be granted.

**Domestic students:** StudyLink will be advised by MDS of any changes to your study. You must also speak with StudyLink to advise any changes to your study.

**International students:** Immigration New Zealand (INZ) will be notified of your situation. You will be responsible for obtaining a new visa, as well as any costs involved with the new course. INZ defines a full-time international student studying at a private training establishment (PTE) as being enrolled in a course of study that requires attendance of a minimum of 20 hours per week.

### Restart Transfer

If you enrol in a qualification but fail a number of components during your course of study and wish to stop and ‘restart’ as part of a following intake, the number of credits and EFTS completed must first be considered.

If you fail no more than 30 credits, then you must stay with the programme and re-sit the components as agreed in an Individual Learning Plan (ILP). The re-sit process must be followed in this case, and you will be charged for the components you have failed.

If you fail more than 30 credits, then you must withdraw and reapply for entry in the following year.

In this scenario, you are considered as a new enrolment, and you are liable for all fees as invoiced, and no refunds will be granted. If you are accepted onto the Restart Transfer, you will be invoiced for the full tuition for the year.

You may request Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for components already passed. If this is granted, then you do not need to retake these components and tuition fees will be reduced by the component fees.

**Domestic students:** StudyLink will be advised for Student Loan and Allowance purposes. StudyLink policy dictates that students undertaking a course that is 32 weeks – 52 weeks in duration must have at least 0.8 EFTS to be eligible for a student loan. If students are part-time students (full year or part year) they are eligible for a loan for their fees but not for their course-related costs and living costs. The student’s performance will be accessed by StudyLink.

**International students:** Immigration New Zealand will be notified of your situation. You have full responsibility for organising a new visa as well as any costs involved with the new course of study. Immigration New Zealand defines a full-time student studying at a Private Training Establishment (PTE) as being enrolled in the following:

* A course of study that requires attendance for a minimum of 20 hours per week
* At least three papers, or equivalent, per semester if the offered course is at level 7 or above on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework.

### Transfer to new Qualification

If you decide to change from the qualification in which you are enrolled into a new course of study, you must follow the withdrawal process for your current enrolment and reapply for entry to the new qualification in the following available intake as a new enrolment.

If the transfer is approved, you are liable for all fees as invoiced, and no refunds will be granted. If you are accepted onto the new qualification, you will be invoiced for the full tuition for the year.

**Domestic students**: StudyLink will be advised for Student Loan and Allowance purposes. Please note that if you are applying for a student loan through StudyLink for the next course of study, you will need to have successfully completed at least half of the EFTS of the current course of study to be eligible for StudyLink student allowance/loan.

**International students**: Immigration New Zealand will be notified of your situation. You have full responsibility for organising a new visa as well as any costs involved with the new course of study.

### Guide to Selecting Transfer Type

# Academic Information and Policies

## Student Information and Records

All information and data required for the Ministry of Education (MoE), Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), Immigration New Zealand (INZ) and NZQA compliance, and for MDS’ own records, is stored and processed in adherence with the [Privacy Act 2020](https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2020/0031/latest/LMS23223.html) and our [Privacy Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/REoZDZ/original/TGE-ANZ_PL_LG_004+Privacy+Policy+v8+%2820241017%29).

Media Design School at Strayer (MDS) is required to keep up-to-date records for all students**.** You must ensure your contact details, such as your name, phone number and email addresses, are kept up to date. If you need to make any amendments to your contact details, please visit Reception on Level 1 or via email: [reception@mediadesignschool.com](mailto:reception@mediadesignschool.com).

MDS is obligated to provide post-study outcomes data (graduates' destinations and earnings data after completing study) to TEC. Once you have completed your studies, you will be asked to provide your details so we can contact you as required.

## Release of Student Information

MDS is required to submit regular reports to the MoE. MDS is also required to release, or make available for audit, information that is specific to student enrolments. MoE, TEC and NZQA may access your attendance records, academic records and information regarding your student allowance and loan applications, as requested by an authorised officer of the said agencies.

Each student has a National Student Index (NSI) number that is used to track your enrolment, completion, or withdrawal at all New Zealand education institutions you are or have been enrolled at.

## Academic Records

A final academic transcript is provided at the conclusion of your course of study. The transcript is posted or emailed to your address or email of record at the time of qualification completion and uploaded to [My eQuals](https://www.myequals.ac.nz/). There is a one-time access fee for My eQuals, please refer to the [Academic Documents Section](https://www.mediadesignschool.com/student-life/student-information/academic-documents) on our website.

Reprints of official MDS documents (transcripts and award certificates) can be ordered for a fee by completing the [Request for Official Documents Form](https://forms.office.com/r/w1dNwBeXSN).

If you have legally changed your name and want academic documents reissued in this name, you will need to submit the [Change of Details Form](https://forms.office.com/r/7Qn0eaiqAx) and email the supporting documentation to Student Administration ([studentadmin@mediadesignschool.com](mailto:studentadmin@mediadesignschool.com)). Once you have been notified that the change of name is approved, please complete the [Request for Official Documents Form](https://forms.office.com/r/w1dNwBeXSN).

## Award of Qualification

To be awarded a qualification by Media Design School at Strayer, you must meet the following requirements:

* they meet all course requirements
* they have no outstanding fees
* there is no current suspension, exclusion or expulsion penalty on the student’s record, and
* they have not already graduated from that programme.

For more information see the [Graduation and Certification Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/z2N6M2/original/MDS_PL_AC_008+Graduation+and+Certification+Policy+v.5) and the [Graduation section](#_Graduation) of this Student Handbook.

## Attendance

Attendance for all scheduled classes (labs, tutorials, presentations, site visits and other classes) is mandatory.

You must also be on time. Media Design School at Strayer mimics the realities of the workplace, and you are expected to treat your study as if you were in the workplace.

**International students:** 100% attendance is a condition of your study visa.

#### Excused Absences

There are two exceptions to the attendance requirements: sickness and bereavement. It is your responsibility to provide evidence to MDS for an excused absence.

#### Sickness

You are required to provide a medical certificate for absences of three or more consecutive scheduled class days due to sickness. If you require an extended excused absence due to sickness, your attendance requirements will be assessed individually.

### Notification of Absence

If you are absent or running late, you must email [away@mediadesignschool.com](mailto:away@mediadesignschool.com) and include your lecturer, Programme Coordinator and/or Programme Director.

Notifications of absence must be made prior to commencement of scheduled class(es).

If you are absent for any reason, you will be responsible for catching up on any missed work or collecting any information provided by your lecturer(s) (e.g., handouts, formative assessments, summative assessments).

### Non-attendance of classes

Media Design School at Strayer is legally required to immediately inform StudyLink, for domestic students, or Immigration New Zealand (INZ), for international students, when:

* You cease to attend scheduled classes.
* Your attendance is unsatisfactory.
* You are considered no longer eligible to achieve your qualification.

Non-attendance will be addressed if you have an unexcused absence for three consecutive scheduled class days. If this occurs, the notification process is as follows:

1. You will be referred to the Counsellor or Student Success Coach, by Lecturer or Programme Director.
2. Lecturer or Programme Director will inform you of the reason for the referral.
3. The Counsellor or Student Success Coach will notify the lecturer of any response or outcome within 3 days of contact with the student.

If non-attendance continues:

1. You will be issued a first warning letter for non-attendance by your Programme Director.
2. For minor offence with no improvement, you will be issued a second warning letter by your Programme Director.
3. For major offence with no improvement, you will be issued with an Academic Probation Contract by your Programme Director.

Following the above measures, if non-attendance continues, your enrolment may be cancelled. Please refer to the Media Design School at Strayer [Academic Progression Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/a7Dk7o/original/MDS_PL_AC_003+Academic+Progression+Policy+v.6) for further information.

## Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of the learning and teaching system and an essential aspect of maintaining academic standards. Key points from Media Design School at Strayer’s [Assessment Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/Y0Y4Yr/original/MDS_PL_AC_005+Assessment+Policy+v.6) and [Assessment Procedure](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/yMNoMz/original/MDS_PR_AC_007+Assessment+Procedure+v.2.0) are summarised here, for ease of reference:

* **Feedback to students** will be provided in a timely manner, usually within two weeks of assignment submission, as outlined in section seven of the [Assessment Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/Y0Y4Yr/original/MDS_PL_AC_005+Assessment+Policy+v.6).
* **Overdue assessments** incur a 10% penalty per calendar day past the due date, for a maximum of five days, as outlined in section eight of the [Assessment Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/Y0Y4Yr/original/MDS_PL_AC_005+Assessment+Policy+v.6).
* **Special consideration** (e.g., extensions, re-assessment, adjustment to results, etc) may be requested where circumstances beyond a student’s control impact their assessment(s), as outlined in section nine of the [Assessment Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/Y0Y4Yr/original/MDS_PL_AC_005+Assessment+Policy+v.6) and [Assessment Procedure](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/yMNoMz/original/MDS_PR_AC_007+Assessment+Procedure+v.2.0).
* **Resubmission** may be requested where a student submits an assessment on time but does not achieve a passing grade, unless the assessment’s nature makes this impractical, as outlined in section ten of the [Assessment Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/Y0Y4Yr/original/MDS_PL_AC_005+Assessment+Policy+v.6) and [Assessment Procedure](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/yMNoMz/original/MDS_PR_AC_007+Assessment+Procedure+v.2.0).
* **Supplementary assessment** may be requested where an assessment is graded between 45 – 49%, or if a student has been granted special consideration, as outlined in section 11 of the [Assessment Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/Y0Y4Yr/original/MDS_PL_AC_005+Assessment+Policy+v.6) and [Assessment Procedure](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/yMNoMz/original/MDS_PR_AC_007+Assessment+Procedure+v.2.0).
* **Requesting a re-mark** may be initiated by a student who believes an assessment has been unfairly or inappropriately marked by emailing the Programme Coordinator within five working days, as outlined in section 12 of the [Assessment Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/Y0Y4Yr/original/MDS_PL_AC_005+Assessment+Policy+v.6) and [Assessment Procedure](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/yMNoMz/original/MDS_PR_AC_007+Assessment+Procedure+v.2.0).
* **Requesting a review of the final grade** may be initiated by a student who believes their final component grade is inappropriate or unfair by submitting a formal complaint within ten working days of the result’s release, as outlined in section 14 of the [Assessment Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/Y0Y4Yr/original/MDS_PL_AC_005+Assessment+Policy+v.6), section 13 of the [Assessment Procedure](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/yMNoMz/original/MDS_PR_AC_007+Assessment+Procedure+v.2.0).

In all cases, students should in the first instance contact their Learning Facilitator, Programme Coordinator or Programme Director, with assessment-related requests.

## Academic Integrity

Academic misconduct takes place when students act dishonestly in an assessment task or examination to gain an unfair advantage for themselves or other students. Examples of academic misconduct include plagiarism, cheating in examinations, collusion, and contract cheating. See section 6 of the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/w87y7a/original/MDS_PL_AC_002+Academic+Integrity+Policy+v.9) for more information on academic misconduct.

Acts of academic misconduct are considered to be misconduct as defined under the [Student Conduct Policy.](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/jDAKDg/original/MDS_PL_AC_014+Student+Conduct+Policy+v.5) All allegations of academic misconduct will be investigated by the Programme Director or Programme Coordinator (or delegate), and if substantiated will result in the provision of academic counselling and may result in penalties appropriate to the case.

Depending on severity, consequences may include a downgrade in the relevant mark, a Fail grade, suspension, exclusion, or expulsion. See section 8 of the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/w87y7a/original/MDS_PL_AC_002+Academic+Integrity+Policy+v.9) for more information on the penalties for academic misconduct.

## Academic Progression

While students have the primary responsibility for their academic performance, Media Design School at Strayer emphasises the pivotal role of academic and support staff in enabling student success. In the first instance, you should discuss the situation with academic staff for referral to your Programme Director or Programme Coordinator.

If the situation persists or in exceptional circumstances, where a situation outside of your control is affecting your studies, you may submit a request in writing to the Dean who will assess your request on a case-by-case basis.

If a student’s progress remains unsatisfactory, Media Design School at Strayer may impose conditions on the student’s continued enrolment, or the student may be excluded from continuing their studies. Please refer to the Media Design School at Strayer [Academic Progression Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/a7Dk7o/original/MDS_PL_AC_003+Academic+Progression+Policy+v.6) for further information.

# Student Learning

## Class Schedules

Class schedules are distributed at the beginning of each semester. All scheduled classes (including tutorials and off-site field trips) are mandatory.

## Recording Lectures and Audio-Visual Notes

Recording lectures, tutorials or taking audio-visual notes during any Media Design School at Strayer event, where permission has not been explicitly given, is strictly prohibited.

## Independent and Self-Directed Learning

In addition to class time (directed learning), you are expected to engage in self-directed learning. This learning plays a critical role in the education offered by Media Design School at Strayer and is a major component in gaining a qualification. All full-time students are expected to engage in at least 20 hours per week of self-directed learning.

## Online Teaching and Learning

Media Design School at Strayer has been approved by NZQA to provide a range of delivery modes to support blended teaching and learning. These include online (onshore and offshore), and face-to-face.

The inclusion of an online delivery mode utilises established tools within each programme and includes both synchronous and asynchronous teaching and learning.

Our virtual learning environment and learning management system ([MyLearn](https://mylearn.mds.ac.nz/)) has been integrated to support teaching and learning. MyLearn provides students with access to course materials, communication tools, online assessments, grades, attendance, and the ability to submit assignments electronically. Microsoft Teams is used for interactive tutorials, lectures, discussions, group forums and workshops.

## Student Evaluations and Surveys

You will be invited to complete evaluations and surveys throughout your course of study. The results will be shared with the appropriate departments, and any related actions will be communicated to you through your lecturer or Programme Leader, including posters around the campus.

Course evaluation surveys will be undertaken within each programme, and the trends of the surveys will be used to make improvements to content and delivery.

## Copyright

MDS supports the legitimate use of third-party copyright material for the purpose of providing MDS educational activities. It is committed to the proper observance of copyright law, and to upholding the rights of copyright creators and users.

Students produce work using educational and academic software licences. It is a condition of these licences that they are not used in the production of any commercial work.

For more information, please review the [Copyright Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/PjWvW6/original/MDS_PL_MGT_006+Copyright+Policy+v.3).

## Intellectual Property

Students own the IP they create in the course of their studies unless there is a specific written agreement or exception to the contrary.

To participate in certain projects, including those which are externally funded, students may need to assign any right, title, or interest they may have in the IP. Where the student is a higher degree research student, the research thesis principal supervisor is responsible for identifying circumstances when the assignment of student IP is appropriate. Where a student is undertaking coursework, the Programme Director is responsible for identifying circumstances when the assignment of student IP is appropriate (e.g., work integrated learning placements).

For more detail, please see the [Intellectual Property Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/PjWvyA/original/MDS_PL_MGT_011+Intellectual+Property+Policy+v.2).

## Client Briefs - Production and Delivery

During your course of study, you may be requested to produce work using simulated client briefs and/or actual client briefs. No payment will be made to you for the work produced.

### Terms of Reference for Client Briefs – Non-commercial (unpaid)

* All work completed using Media Design School at Strayer’s software licenses must be non-commercial.
* Associated costs of client work (i.e., site transportation) are your responsibility.
* Media Design School at Strayer is not responsible for any production costs associated with client work.
* If you are working directly with a client, you must make sure the client is aware of any production costs that they will be responsible for (i.e., printing, plates, internet charges).
* You must inform the client of the time you are able to commit to the project.
* The client should be informed that they have no recourse from you, or Media Design School at Strayer should the work not meet the client’s expectations and/or time frame.

## Letters of Reference

Lecturers are not required to provide written references for students. If you wish to use a lecturer as a verbal referee, you must request permission from your Programme Director before you approach your lecturer.

# **Facilities**

## Campus Hours and Access

Students can access the campus during the following operating hours, using their Student ID card:

* **Monday to Friday:** 8:00 am to 9:00 pm
* **Saturday**: 10:00 am to 5:00 pm
* **Sunday**: Open to postgraduate students on alternating weekends

After 5:00 pm, access to the building is only available via the Tīramarama Way campus entrance. No students are permitted to be on campus outside of opening hours without the permission and direct supervision of an on-site staff member.

### Holiday Breaks

The campus is closed during all New Zealand observed public holidays, Auckland Anniversary Day, and our annual closedown over the Christmas period.

## Student ID Cards and Photos

### ID Photos

All students, regardless of their mode of study, must provide Media Design School at Strayer with a photo of themselves. Students can either send a photo of themselves to [reception@mediadesignschool.com](mailto:reception@mediadesignschool.com), or there may be an opportunity to have a photo taken at the Campus Orientation. All ID photos must meet the requirements below.

**Image Requirements**

Your Student ID photo must be:

* Recent (less than a year old)
* A full-front view of your face (not tilted), including your head and shoulders, with your eyes open
* Taken with a natural expression - smiling is fine, but no exaggerated or silly faces
* Taken without sunglasses - tinted prescription glasses may be worn, provided your eyes are clearly visible
* Taken without hats, head coverings, or headbands (except for religious purposes)

**Technical Specifications**

* Full colour
* Unedited (i.e., your appearance has not been digitally altered)
* File format: .jpeg, .jpg or .png
* File size: between 250KB and 5MB
* Orientation: Portrait
* Aspect ratio: 3:4
* Image size: between 900 and 4500 pixels wide, and 1200 and 6000 pixels high.

### Student ID Cards

**Issuing ID Cards**

All campus-based students are issued with an ID card within three weeks of submitting their ID photo. The earliest that an ID card can be issued is at Orientation, which usually takes place the week before the start of the semester.

If you wish to collect your ID card at Orientation or on your first day of your studies, you must provide a suitable photo at least one month prior to your start date.

Students studying remotely who wish to receive a physical ID card, must email Reception to request this, along with their postal address.

**Using ID Cards**

You must always carry your ID card with you while on campus, for two reasons:

* To protect fellow students, student work and equipment. This allows Media Design School at Strayer to identify anyone who is not authorised to be on campus; and
* To be able to move across the campus levels as your student ID card is also an access card.

If you are unable to produce your ID card when asked, you may be asked to leave the campus.

If you lose your ID card, you must inform the Student Services team so building access can be disabled for that card. You will also be responsible for obtaining a replacement card at your own cost.

## Smokefree Campus

Please note that MDS’ campus is a smokefree space. This includes the entrances to the building and balcony areas. All no smoking rules also apply to vaping.

## Visitors

For security and safety reasons, all guests must:

* sign in at reception upon arrival, using the QR code or guest book,
* sign out at reception using the same method, and
* be accompanied by a current student or staff member at all times.

You must obtain permission from the Campus Director if you wish to bring a visitor on campus. If you wish to bring a visitor into a class, you must also get permission from your lecturer or Programme Director.

No visitors are permitted during the weekend or after 5:00 pm on weekdays. No visitors may enter classes that are in progress or use any MDS computers, resources, or equipment.

## Internet Use

The internet must, at all times, only be used for educational and research purposes. Inappropriate use of the internet includes but is not limited to:

* activities prohibited by legislation
* downloading entertainment materials.

Except where required for the purposes of study, as determined by your lecturer or Programme Leader, this also includes:

* Gaming
* Online chatrooms
* Peer-to-peer file sharing
* Instant messaging

## Student Equipment and Resources

Media Design School at Strayer may loan equipment and resources to students including cameras, video cameras, and related equipment. The loan system relies on the proper use and care of the equipment and resources, and the return by the due date.

You must honour the loan requirements. If you fail to return equipment or resources by one week after the due date, you may be charged and invoiced at the full commercial replacement cost, plus an administration fee, and you may not have further access to borrowed equipment and resources.

If you have any outstanding equipment or resources fines at the conclusion of your course of study, you may have your debt referred to a debt collection agency and your academic records and transcript may be withheld.

## Facilities Maintenance

If you observe any part of the building or facilities that needs maintenance, aside from computers and technical equipment, please email [reception@mediadesignschool.com](mailto:reception@mediadesignschool.com).

### Food and Drink

Apart from bottled water, no food or drink may be taken into any classroom or labs. Food and drink may be consumed in the designated student lounge on Level 1, or the Tea Points on Levels 2, 3 and 4.

## Student Life

## Student Communications

Regular communications are sent to your MDS email addresses to keep you updated on news, events, and relevant information.

In addition, information and regular updates are posted on student notice boards throughout the campus and online via the [Student Information Hub](https://www.mediadesignschool.com/student-information), and [Discord](https://discord.com/invite/PBwhGwd2wX).

## Student Events

Media Design School at Strayer arranges several events throughout the year, both on and off campus, where you can showcase your work to influential members of the creative community and the general public. MDS also holds other events, such as film screenings and a range of other activities, for you to engage with other students and faculty.

## Student Executive

The Student Executive Committee is formed by currently enrolled students who serve as representatives, with different areas of responsibility. Led by the Chair, the Executive works closely with the Student Services team and plays a significant role in:

* Leading the student voice and to represent the student body.
* Promoting the interests of students.
* Supporting student engagement initiatives.
* Advising on engagement with Māori and Pacific communities.
* Supporting MDS to deliver on strategic equity objectives.
* Supporting the development of MDS policies.
* Advising on MDS’ academic structure.

## Clubs

Student clubs enrich the student experience and provide opportunities for students to make new friends, meet like-minded people and develop new skills.

For more information on clubs or to start your own, please contact the Student Services team or the Student Executive.

# Student Support and Guidance

Guidance and support at Media Design School at Strayer is available through different channels to ensure your learning needs are met and barriers to your progress are minimised. The first point of contact for guidance and support is your lecturer. You can also contact your Programme Director, Counsellor, Student Services staff or the Campus Director.

## Counselling Services

The counselling service provides individual counselling for personal and relationship issues. It also provides interventions for students with habitual absences and other behavioural concerns that consistently interfere with student learning. Counselling sessions aim to support students to identify solutions and reinforce a sense of ownership and control.

The type of counselling available at Media Design School at Strayer is brief intervention, not long-term therapy. If a student requires more than the standard five to seven sessions, the Counsellor may refer a student to another community counselling service off campus. They may also refer students with long-term or specialised counselling and medical needs to external (both public and private) mental health practitioners, including psychologists, psychiatrists, and general practitioners. To access counselling, students may contact [counselling@mediadesignschool.com](mailto:counselling@mediadesignschool.com) to connect with our Counsellor.

Academic staff refer students with habitual absences, tardiness, lack of concentration within the classroom, homesickness, low self-esteem, relationship conflict, work or family-related problems, and other behaviours that may impact the ability to study effectively.

Academic challenges, including understanding course content, missing deadlines, and maintaining a high degree of motivation for the course, should be referred to the Programme Director for academic support.

## Disability Services

Media Design School at Strayer (MDS) supports the right of disabled people to be involved in all facets of community life, including full and equitable participation in vocational and higher education. Reasonable services and adjustments will be designed to reduce or remove disability-related barriers and support student independent learning.

A student is not legally required or obliged to tell us about their disability during their admission process or while enrolled. A student may choose to tell us about their disability at any time during their enrolment. However, Media Design School at Strayer is not responsible for making individual accommodation for that student if they have not told us the required information about their disability along with an application for support.

Media Design School at Strayer is not required to make an accommodation if, after careful assessment, it is deemed that it will:

* cause unjustifiable hardship on Media Design School at Strayer
* compromise the inherent or essential requirements and standards of the programme or any of its components; or
* create a health and safety risk for the student, staff, other students or other members of the MDS community.

More information about disability support at Media Design School at Strayer is available on [our website](https://www.mediadesignschool.com/disability-support), including the [Disability Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/KKa9aB/original/MDS_PL_AC_016+Disability+Policy+v.2) and our [Disability Action Plan](https://www.mediadesignschool.com/sites/default/files/2025-09/Disability%20Action%20Plan%20-%20Media%20Design%20School%20at%20Strayer.pdf). To access disability support, students may contact [disability@mediadesignschool.com](mailto:disability@mediadesignschool.com) to connect with our Disability Advisor.

## Library Services

The library is located on Level 1 of the campus. The library can also be accessed [virtually](https://mediadesignschool.libguides.com/home) 24/7.

The library provides the following services and resources for your studies:

* Databases, articles, books, eBooks, journals, subject guides, visual collections and peer reviewed materials
* Academic skills support
* Academic integrity and referencing guides
* Copyright guide
* Study success workshops
* Live chat

If you wish to speak with the Campus Librarian, borrow resources or work on your assignments, you can visit the library on Level 1 or email: [library@mediadesignschool.com](mailto:library@mediadesignschool.com).

## IT Support

Media Design School at Strayer relies on the constant maintenance of all equipment to avoid experiencing major faults. To assist in this process, students should lodge any faults, technical problems, or service requests via the Helpdesk email at [helpdesk@mediadesignschool.com](mailto:helpdesk@mediadesignschool.com).

There will inevitably be times when technical problems may impact on your work and production. MDS has processes in place to ensure the risk of such impact is kept to a minimum.

You must ensure you save and back up your work to a personal external hard drive or cloud-based storage. Please do not assume that work saved onto local computers is secure, as MDS will not take responsibility for any lost or deleted work. You must keep within the set limits of server storage, as advised by MDS’ technicians.

# Health and Safety

It is important that you assess any risk in the working environment, and you remain safe at all times. All of us are responsible for health and safety on campus, and during study-related activities.

You must ensure that you are aware of the health and safety risks, whether this be in the classroom or offsite (i.e., shooting a film, meeting with clients, visiting industry, or for any other reason that pertains to your course of study). If you travel in another student’s vehicle, you do so at your own risk. Please refer to the [Workplace Health and Safety Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/LBveBz/original/MDS_PL_HR_012+Workplace+Health+and+Safety+Policy+v2) for more information.

## Incident Reporting

All incidents, injuries, near misses and hazards must be reported, either by informing a staff member or notifying reception. This is vital for maintaining a safe environment for the campus community. An investigation will occur, and actions will be noted.

If an accident results in a serious injury, MDS will call an ambulance or will transport you to an emergency clinic or hospital. If the injury is minor, you are advised to contact a doctor as soon as possible.

## Security

Security measures are in place to lessen potential risk and ensure the environment is safe for all students and staff. Breaches that fall within the parameters of the [Student Conduct Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/jDAKDg/original/MDS_PL_AC_014+Student+Conduct+Policy+v.5) may result in disciplinary action or other appropriate penalties or sanctions.

Security cameras are positioned in key areas of the campus on all levels to keep the environment safe. Footage captured may be used as evidence of misconduct, theft, or unauthorised access.

## Emergency Contact

Media Design School at Strayer’s emergency contact number is: 021 575 671. This number is active and available 24/7 for all students who need to contact a staff member in an emergency, outside of working hours.

## Fire and Evacuation Procedures

Fire and evacuation procedures are given to you as part of your orientation. Procedures are also clearly posted on the [Student Information Hub](https://www.mediadesignschool.com/student-information#safety-procedures), [Discord](https://discord.com/invite/PBwhGwd2wX) and beside the stairwells on each floor of the building.

During some emergencies, it is important to know how to evacuate the building. If you hear the evacuation alarm:

* Evacuate immediately through the nearest fire exit.
* Do not linger to collect personal belongings.
* Do not carry anything that can be spilt or dropped (at least one hand should be free).
* Do not use the lifts.
* Do not run.
* Do not endanger yourself or anyone else.
* Follow all instructions given by the fire wardens.
* If you require assistance, wait in the stair landing.
* At street level, beware of the traffic and remain on footpaths.
* Keep clear of the front of the building to allow emergency services access.
* Once out of the building, go to the assembly areas on Tīramarama Way.
* Do not re-enter the building until the fire wardens have given the 'all clear' announcement from the fire wardens.

# **Student Conduct**

The [Student Conduct Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/jDAKDg/original/MDS_PL_AC_014+Student+Conduct+Policy+v.5) provides guidance on the standards of conduct that are expected of students. While it does not address every possible issue concerning student conduct, it provides a framework for appropriate behaviour.

The policy is divided into two sections: the Student Charter and Managing Complaints of Misconduct.

* **Student Charter**

This section outlines the expectations that you, as a student, can have of us, and the student code of conduct. Broadly, students can expect to be treated with fairness, study in a safe, productive and stimulating academic environment, and have access to timely and accurate information. The Code of Conduct within the Student Charter covers acting with honesty and integrity, courtesy and respect, appropriate use of Media Design School at Strayer’s (MDS) resources, fair treatment and use of social media.

* **Managing Complaints of Misconduct**

This section outlines the principles for investigating, resolving, penalising and recording an alleged student misconduct. It also includes a provision of a student’s right to appeal a determination made under this policy, provided they meet the appeal criteria.

If a circumstance or situation arises that is not expressly covered by the Student Conduct Policy, students must comply with the underlying principles of the policy.

A breach of the Student Conduct Policy may result in suspension, exclusion or expulsion from MDS.

Please refer to the following policies for further information:

* [Sexual Misconduct Prevention Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/A9B798/original/MDS_PL_MGT_012+Sexual+Misconduct+Prevention+Policy+v3)
* [Student Conduct Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/jDAKDg/original/MDS_PL_AC_014+Student+Conduct+Policy+v.5)
* [Student Conduct Procedure](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/oGkZGw/original/MDS_PR_AC_006+Student+Conduct+Procedure+v.2)
* [Student Complaints Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/lkyjy1/original/MDS_PL_AC_015+Student+Complaints+Policy+v.2)

Disciplinary Procedures

You must abide by all Media Design School at Strayer (MDS) policies, processes, and rules, as summarised in this Handbook and published on our [website](https://www.mediadesignschool.com/policies-and-procedures). The [Student Conduct Procedure](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/oGkZGw/original/MDS_PR_AC_006+Student+Conduct+Procedure+v.2) outlines MDS’ disciplinary procedures, and should be read in conjunction with the [Student Conduct Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/jDAKDg/original/MDS_PL_AC_014+Student+Conduct+Policy+v.5).

There are two types of misconduct: academic and non-academic.

Academic misconduct occurs when students fail to comply with the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/w87y7a/original/MDS_PL_AC_002+Academic+Integrity+Policy+v.9) and/or the principles relating to academic integrity in the Student Conduct Policy, and intentionally seek an advantage for themselves or another student by cheating in any form. Such breaches are dealt with under the Academic Integrity Policy in the first instance, but may be referred for action under the Student Conduct Policy where the breach is repeated or significant.

Non-academic misconduct occurs when students breach other provisions of the [Student Conduct Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/jDAKDg/original/MDS_PL_AC_014+Student+Conduct+Policy+v.5), and fail to act in a manner that upholds the standards of the MDS community.

# Student Complaints

Media Design School at Strayer (MDS) encourages students and staff to engage in positive communication that benefits MDS and the classroom. MDS wishes to foster an environment of continuous improvement and expects both staff and students to raise concerns early to allow preventative measures to be put into effect.

Courtesy, mutual respect, confidentiality and procedural fairness, along with other principles, guide MDS in resolving student complaints. Refer to section 4 of the [Student Complaints Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/jDAKDg/original/MDS_PL_AC_014+Student+Conduct+Policy+v.5) for further information.

Types of Complaint

Complaints are classified as either academic or non-academic.

* **Academic complaints** are complaints about the delivery of a student’s enrolled subjects.
* **Non-academic complaints** are complaints about the services and facilities provided by MDS or about non-academic decisions made by MDS. Non-academic complaints also include complaints about unfair treatment committed by another member of the MDS community, which may include:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * Discrimination * Harassment * Victimisation | * Vilification * Bullying |

## Complaint Resolution

MDS has a four-step approach to address student complaints. However, the procedures and timelines for handling specific types of complaints may vary. Refer to [the Student Complaints Process Flowchart](#_Student_Complaints_Process) below for an overview of the internal complaints and appeal process.

There are no fees for lodging complaints internally.

### Informal Discussion

Complaints should be resolved informally whenever possible through discussion between the student and the person directly responsible for the decision or behaviour. Both parties must explore options for resolving the issue promptly and to do so in a courteous and respectful manner.

If uncomfortable raising the complaint directly with the person who is the subject of the complaint, seek advice from the Programme Director (for academic matters) or Campus Director (for non-academic issues). However, there is no compulsion to resolve complaints informally.

### Formal Complaint

If the issue cannot be resolved informally, or if the student is dissatisfied with the initial decision regarding the matter, they may ask for a formal review of their complaint. The formal complaint will be reviewed and decided by the Programme Director (for academic matters) or Campus Director (for non-academic matters). Refer to the [Formal Complaint Procedure](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/WeYRe0/original/MDS_PR_AC_002+Formal+Complaint+Procedure+v.3) for further information.

### Internal Appeal

A student may appeal of the outcome of their formal complaint within 20 working days of receiving the written response if they believe the results are unfair, or incorrect because the process has been incorrectly followed and/or criteria incorrectly applied or new evidence is available that was not available to the original decision maker.

Appeals on the grounds that the student disagrees with the outcome will not be heard.

A complainant can appeal the decision in writing. Refer to the [Internal Appeal Procedure](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/MM1K1r/original/MDS_PR_AC_003+Internal+Appeal+Procedure+v.3.0) for details.

### External Review

If all internal avenues have been exhausted, the only remaining option for further appeal is external. No further internal review or appeal is available.

Students can appeal Media Design School at Strayer (MDS) decisions externally by seeking assistance from relevant agencies such as the [NZQA](https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/contact-us/complaint/education-provider/), [Human Rights Commission](https://tikatangata.org.nz/about-us/how-we-can-help), [WorkSafe New Zealand](https://www.worksafe.govt.nz/), [Study Complaints](https://www.studycomplaints.org.nz/). Refer to the [External Review Procedure](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/23Na3y/original/MDS_PR_AC_004+External+Review+Procedure+v.3.0) for further information.

A student may seek external review at any stage of the complaint process, though it is expected they will first use internal processes. If MDS is notified of formal external inquiry or legal action, the internal process will be suspended until the external action is completed.

#### Study Complaints | Ngā Amuamu Tauira

[Study Complaints | Ngā Amuamu Tauira](http://www.studycomplaints.org.nz) is a free and independent service to help domestic and international tertiary students resolve dispute with their New Zealand education providers.

They can assist with:

* Financial matters
* Contractual matters
* Redress claims

It’s easy to get started, simply get on touch by:

* Phone: 0800 00 66 75
* Email: [help@studycomplaints.org.nz](mailto:help@studycomplaints.org.nz)

### Student Complaints Process Flowchart

A diagram of a flowchart

Description automatically generated

## Anonymous Complaints

Anonymous complaints are accepted and permitted under the [Student Complaints Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/lkyjy1/original/MDS_PL_AC_015+Student+Complaints+Policy+v.2); however, the ability to investigate and resolve such complaints may be limited due to the lack of information. If you wish to remain anonymous, you should contact the Programme Director (for academic matters) or Campus Director (for non-academic issues) to explore whether and how informal resolution of your complaint can be achieved while preserving your anonymity.

Please note:

* Anonymous complaints cannot be lodged formally. If a formal resolution is required, the complainant must provide their identity to allow a thorough investigation and resolution process.
* While MDS respects the desire for anonymity, complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if the complaint requires further action or disclosure by law.

## False Allegations

If it is determined that you have submitted a false allegation, disciplinary action may be taken under the [Student Conduct Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/lkyjy1/original/MDS_PL_AC_015+Student+Complaints+Policy+v.2).

## Record Keeping

Media Design School at Strayer (MDS) keeps appropriate records of all complaints for at least five years and allows parties to the complaint appropriate access to these records, consistent with the provisions of our [Privacy Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/REoZDZ/original/TGE-ANZ_PL_LG_004+Privacy+Policy+v8+%2820241017%29).

# Graduation

During your last day of study at Media Design School at Strayer, you are required to:

* Complete a departing student checklist
* Return all equipment and resources
* Provide your permanent address and contact details to receive information on academic records, graduation and industry events
* Settle any outstanding invoices
* Complete a post-study survey.

## Graduation Ceremonies

Graduation ceremonies are generally held once a year – usually in April. On successful completion of your course of study, you will be notified of the date of your graduation ceremony.

As qualifications are conferred at the graduation ceremony, your qualification certificate cannot be issued until this date. However, if you meet all requirements for graduation, you will be provided with an academic record stating that you have passed your qualification, regardless of the delay between course completion and the graduation ceremony.

If you cannot, or choose not to attend graduation, you may have your certificate sent to you and graduate in absentia.

You cannot attend a graduation ceremony or receive your academic record if you have unpaid invoices or outstanding equipment and resources.

More information is available in our [Graduation and Certification Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/z2N6M2/original/MDS_PL_AC_008+Graduation+and+Certification+Policy+v.5) on our website.

## Alumni

Media Design School at Strayer (MDS) encourages our alumni to share their successes by keeping us informed of their career progression and graduate outcomes.

Alumni and employers may also be asked to participate in surveys conducted by MDS to document alumni outcomes, such as employment and further education, for government reporting purposes.

### What happens to my work when I have completed my qualification?

Upon completion of your course of study, the IT department will delete all class folder and home folder data from server storage. All final works will be moved from the storage volume to the archive volume. Please refer to our [IT Use Policy](https://cdn.intelligencebank.com/au/share/RyzZ/2RdvP/GXjBYd/original/TGE-ANZ_PL_IT_002+IT+Use+Policy+v4.0) for further information.

Faculty and the marketing team will determine the most appropriate student work to keep for marketing purposes. The work will be copied onto an external hard drive before the archives are deleted, immediately after graduation.

Lecturers will select the most appropriate student work for external moderation and create a reel of final student work for the next scheduled graduation.

# International Students

Media Design School at Strayer (MDS) welcomes students from all countries. For international students who have English as a second language, it is important that additional time is invested to ensure full understanding of your studies. International students must have proof of a current student visa, as well as health and travel insurance, to study in New Zealand.

The Student Administration and Student Services teams are available to assist with the needs of international students.

## Emergency Contact

Media Design School at Strayer’s emergency contact number is: 021 575 671. This number is available 24/7 for all students who need to contact a staff member, in an emergency, outside of working hours.

## International Student Support

Media Design School at Strayer provides general support and assistance to students arriving in Auckland with information on accommodation, transport, setting up a bank account, and medical resources as required.

### Life Coaching

The life coaching service is available to help new students adjust to life at MDS and in Auckland. All new international students are required to attend a session upon starting their studies at MDS. This service is facilitated by a qualified and registered counsellor.

The coach will assist new students with any queries regarding accommodation, medical services, coping strategies for home sickness and culture shock, self-care, and avenues for academic support.

Sessions are 30 minutes to an hour. They are one-off but students are welcome to request a follow up session.

## Our Responsibilities to International Students

International students and their families can expect Media Design School at Strayer (MDS) to:

* Provide clear, sufficient, and accurate information, so you can make informed choices regarding your education.
* Give clear information on your legal obligations and rights, including refund policies and termination of enrolment under any contracts entered into with MDS.
* Check that you have the prescribed insurance cover.
* Provide a safe and supportive environment for study.
* Ensure (as far as practicable) you live in accommodation that is safe and appropriate.
* Provide you with a comprehensive orientation programme to support you in your study and outline your obligations.
* Monitor agents to ensure they provide reliable information and advice regarding studying, working and living in New Zealand.
* Ensure the educational instruction on offer is appropriate for your expectations, English language proficiency and academic capability.
* Have proper policy processes in place to safeguard student fees paid and provide an appropriate refund if you withdraw or your course closes.
* Ensure you have access to proper and fair procedures for dealing with complaints and grievances.

### What if something goes wrong?

If you have concerns regarding how MDS, or your agent, is treating you, you should first contact the relevant party and follow their complaints procedure. MDS has an internal complaints procedure to ensure any complaints are met with a fair result. Please view the [Student Complaints](#_Student_Complaints) section for further information.

If MDS’s procedure does not address your concerns, you can contact [NZQA](https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/tertiary/the-code/the-code-for-learners/learner-complaints/) (regarding breaches of the [Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021.](https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/tertiary/the-code/the-code-for-learners/the-code-for-international-school-learners/) NZQA has the legal authority to investigate potential breaches to the [Tertiary and International Learners Code of Practice](https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/tertiary/the-code/the-code-for-learners/the-code-for-international-school-learners/). NZQA will consider the information you provide and advise you whether NZQA can accept it for investigation as a formal complaint. If NZQA does carry out a formal complaint investigation, both you and MDS will have the opportunity to provide information.

## Medical and Travel Insurance

All international students must have current medical and travel insurance for the duration of their planned period of study in New Zealand. This can be arranged by MDS prior to commencement of the course of study. Students can choose to have their own insurance as long as it meets the minimum standards of the [Tertiary and International Learners Code of Practice](https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/tertiary/the-code/the-code-for-education-providers/code-resources-for-school-signatories/insurance-for-international-learners/).

The travel insurance policy should cover the following aspects:

* Loss of baggage and personal effects
* Personal liability
* Accident and injury, repatriation, search and rescue
* Disruption of travel plans in and out of New Zealand
* Cost of health cover, while in New Zealand and in any transit countries.

All international students who have not purchased insurance through MDS are required to present proof of insurance on arrival and will need to complete a [Waiver Declaration and Check List Form](https://www.mediadesignschool.com/sites/default/files/2025-09/Insurance%20Waiver%20Declaration%20and%20checklist%20Form.pdf).

Please contact the Registrar via email: [studentadmin@mediadesignschool.com](mailto:studentadmin@mediadesignschool.com) for further information.

## Working in New Zealand

Immigration New Zealand (INZ) requires specific visas for specific activities i.e., work, student, visitor or residency. Full details of visa requirements, advice on rights to employment in New Zealand, while studying and reporting requirements are available on the [INZ website](https://www.immigration.govt.nz/).

## Driving in New Zealand

All up to date information regarding New Zealand’s traffic laws, and driver and vehicle licenses, can be found on the [Waka Kotahi (New Zealand Transport Agency) website](https://www.nzta.govt.nz/).

[Resources on driving in New Zealand](https://www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/driving-in-nz) are available in different languages.

# Emergency and Health Services

## Emergencies

In an emergency, call 111 (for Fire, Police or Ambulance).

You can find more information about the [111 Emergency Service](https://www.govt.nz/browse/law-crime-and-justice/crimes-and-emergencies/111-emergency-service/) online.

### Auckland Public Hospitals with Emergency Departments

* [Auckland City Hospital](https://info.health.nz/locations/auckland/auckland-central/auckland-city-hospital)
* [Middlemore Hospital](https://info.health.nz/locations/auckland/auckland-east-south-counties-manukau/middlemore-hospital)
* [North Shore Hospital](https://info.health.nz/locations/auckland/auckland-north-west/north-shore-hospital)
* [Waitākere Hospital](https://info.health.nz/locations/auckland/auckland-north-west/waitakere-hospital)

## Non-emergencies

### Police

For non-emergency police reports, you can call [105](tel:105) or [make a report](https://www.police.govt.nz/use-105) online on the police 105 website. Alternatively, you can go to your [local Police station](https://www.police.govt.nz/contact-us/stations) or Community Constable.

### Doctors and GPs

[Healthpoint](https://www.healthpoint.co.nz/) provides up-to-date information regarding healthcare providers, referral expectation and services offered.

### Pharmacies

[Healthpoint](https://www.healthpoint.co.nz/pharmacy/) provides up-to-date information regarding providers and services offered.

### Auckland Outpatient Mental Health Services (Adult, requires GP referral)

* [Auckland DHB Community Mental Health Services (Adult)](https://www.healthpoint.co.nz/public/psychiatry/community-mental-health-services-adult-auckland/)
* [Counties Manukau DHB Community Mental Health Services (Adult)](https://www.healthpoint.co.nz/public/psychiatry/community-mental-health-counties-manukau/)
* [Waitematā DHB Community Mental Health Services (Adult)](https://www.healthpoint.co.nz/public/psychiatry/mental-health-services-waitemata/)

# External Support Services

This is a non-exhaustive collection of supports and resources available outside of Media Design School at Strayer. Several services may provide services which may span across several categories.

## Government Departments and Ministries

You can find a full list of all government-related organisations on the [NZ Government website](https://www.govt.nz/organisations/). You can also access several of these organisations’ services without using Wi-Fi or mobile data, though the [Zero Data portal](https://www.zero.govt.nz/).

* [Creative New Zealand](https://www.creativenz.govt.nz/)
* [Department of Conservation](https://www.doc.govt.nz/)
* [Department of Internal Affairs](https://www.dia.govt.nz/)
* [Immigration New Zealand](https://www.immigration.govt.nz/)
* [Inland Revenue | IRD](https://www.ird.govt.nz/)
* Kāinga Ora | Homes and Communities
* Manatū Taonga | Ministry for Culture & Heritage
* [Ministry for Ethnic Communities](https://www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz/)
* [Ministry for Pacific Peoples](https://www.mpp.govt.nz/)
* [Ministry of Education](https://www.education.govt.nz/)
* [Ministry of Health](https://www.health.govt.nz/)
* [Ministry of Justice](https://www.justice.govt.nz/)
* [New Zealand Customs](https://www.customs.govt.nz/)
* [New Zealand Qualifications Authority](https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/)
* Oranga Tamariki | Ministry for Children
* Tertiary Education Commission
* Te Whatu Ora | Health New Zealand
* Waka Kotahi | New Zealand Transport Agency
* Whaikaha | Ministry of Disabled People
* [WorkSafe](https://www.worksafe.govt.nz/)

## Auckland Council

* [Auckland Council](https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/Pages/default.aspx)
* [Auckland Libraries](https://www.aucklandlibraries.govt.nz/)
* [Auckland Transport | AT](https://at.govt.nz/)
* [Discover Auckland](https://www.aucklandnz.com/)
* [Tātaki Auckland Unlimited](https://aucklandunlimited.com/)
* [Watercare](https://www.watercare.co.nz/)

## Info for International Students

* [Education New Zealand](https://enz.govt.nz/)
* [Immigration New Zealand](https://www.immigration.govt.nz/)
* [NauMaiNZ](https://www.naumainz.studywithnewzealand.govt.nz/)
* [NZ Ready](https://nzready.immigration.govt.nz/)
* [Safeswim](https://safeswim.org.nz/)
* [Signing up with a healthcare provider](https://info.health.nz/services-support/asian-migrant-and-refugee-health/signing-up-with-a-healthcare-provider)
* [Student's Guide to Auckland](https://attract.aucklandnz.com/study-work-and-live)
* [Study with New Zealand](https://www.studywithnewzealand.govt.nz/)
* [Water Safety New Zealand](https://www.watersafetynz.org/staying-safe)

## Safety

### Emergency Services

* [Fire and Emergency New Zealand](https://www.fireandemergency.nz/)
* [New Zealand Police](https://www.police.govt.nz/)
* [St Johns Ambulance](https://www.stjohn.org.nz/what-we-do/st-john-ambulance-services/https:/www.stjohn.org.nz/what-we-do/st-john-ambulance-services/)

### Crime

* [105 (Non-Urgent Police Reporting)](https://www.police.govt.nz/use-105)
* [Crimestoppers](https://crimestoppers-nz.org/)

### Emergency and Disaster Preparedness

* [Auckland Emergency Management](https://www.aucklandemergencymanagement.org.nz)
* [Civil Defence](https://www.civildefence.govt.nz/) (NZ Government)
* [GeoNet (NZ Government)](https://www.geonet.org.nz/)

### Water Safety

* [Safeswim](https://safeswim.org.nz/)
* [Water Safety New Zealand](https://www.watersafetynz.org/)

### Travel & Transport

* [Automobile Association | AA](https://www.aa.co.nz/)
* [Drive | Learn to Drive (NZ Government)](https://drive.govt.nz/)
* [Safe Travel (NZ Government)](https://www.safetravel.govt.nz/)

## Health

### Directories

* [Family Services Directory](https://www.familyservices.govt.nz/directory/)
* [Health Information and Services (NZ Government)](https://info.health.nz/)
* [Healthline](https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/services-and-support/health-care-services/healthline)

### Addiction Support

* [Alcohol and Drug Helpline](https://alcoholdrughelp.org.nz/helpline/)
* [Alcoholics Anonymous Aotearoa](https://aa.org.nz/)
* [Community Alcohol and Drug Services - Auckland](https://info.health.nz/locations/auckland/community-alcohol-drug-services)
* [Gambling Helpline New Zealand](https://gamblinghelpline.co.nz/)
* [Narcotics Anonymous Aotearoa](https://nzna.org/)
* [Odyssey (Private Drug Rehabilitation Centre)](https://www.odyssey.org.nz/)
* [Safer Gambling Aotearoa](https://www.safergambling.org.nz/)
* [Quitline (Quit Smoking)](https://quit.org.nz/)

### Sexual Health

* [Auckland Sexual Health Services](https://info.health.nz/locations/auckland/auckland-sexual-health-services)
* [Pregnancy Counselling Services](https://www.pregnancycounselling-nz.org/home)
* [Sexual Wellbeing Aotearoa](https://sexualwellbeing.org.nz/)
* [Well Women and Family](https://www.wellwomenandfamily.co.nz/)

### Mental Wellbeing

* [Anxiety New Zealand Trust](https://www.anxiety.org.nz/)
* [Are You OK (Family Violence Helpline)](https://www.areyouok.org.nz/)
* [Counselling Services Centre (24/7 Sexual Violence Crisis Response Service)](https://cscnz.org.nz/service/crisis-response/)
* [Depression.org.nz (24/7 Helpline)](https://depression.org.nz/)
* [Eating Disorders Association of New Zealand](https://www.ed.org.nz/)
* [Help (Support for Sexual Abuse Survivors)](https://www.helpauckland.org.nz/)
* [Lifeline Aotearoa (24 Hour Counselling)](https://www.lifeline.org.nz/)
* [Lifeline Aotearoa (24 Hour Suicide Crisis Helpline](https://www.lifeline.org.nz/services/suicide-crisis-helpline))
* [Mental Health Foundation](https://mentalhealth.org.nz/about)
* [Safe to Talk (Sexual Harm Helpline)](https://www.safetotalk.nz/)
* [Shine (Domestic Abuse Helpline)](https://www.2shine.org.nz/)
* [Small Steps](https://www.smallsteps.org.nz/)
* [The Lowdown](https://www.thelowdown.co.nz/)
* [Youthline](https://www.youthline.co.nz/)

## Community Support

### Advocacy and Rights

* [Aratohu Tenant Advocacy](https://tenant.aratohu.nz/)
* [Auckland Action Against Poverty](https://www.facebook.com/AAAPNZ/)
* [Beneficiaries Advocacy & Information Service](https://www.bais.org.nz/)
* [CCS Disability Action](https://www.ccsdisabilityaction.org.nz/)
* [Citizens Advice Bureau](http://www.cab.org.nz)
* [Community Law Centre](https://communitylaw.org.nz/)
* [Consumer Protection (NZ Government)](https://www.consumerprotection.govt.nz/)
* [Employment New Zealand (NZ Government)](https://www.employment.govt.nz/)
* [Health & Disability Commissioner (NZ Government)](https://www.hdc.org.nz/)
* [New Zealand Council of Trade Unions](https://union.org.nz/)
* [Ombudsman (NZ Government)](https://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz/get-help-public)
* [Privacy Commissioner (NZ Government)](https://www.privacy.org.nz/)
* [Public Trust](https://www.publictrust.co.nz/)
* [Rainbow Rights](https://rainbowrights.nz/)
* [Raise the Bar](https://raisethebar.net.nz/)
* Study [Complaints](https://www.studycomplaints.org.nz/)
* [Te Kāhui Tika Tangata | NZ Human Rights Commission](https://tikatangata.org.nz/)
* [Tenancy Services (NZ Government)](https://www.tenancy.govt.nz/)
* [WorkSafe New Zealand (NZ Government)](https://www.worksafe.govt.nz/)
* [Young Workers Resource Centre](https://www.ywrc.org.nz/)
* [YouthLaw](https://youthlaw.co.nz/)

### Disability

* [ADHD New Zealand](https://www.adhd.org.nz/)
* [Altogether Autism](https://www.altogetherautism.org.nz/)
* [Autism New Zealand](https://autismnz.org.nz/)
* [Blind Low Vision NZ](https://blindlowvision.org.nz/)
* [Brain Injury NZ](https://brain-injury.nz/)
* [CCS Disability Action](https://www.ccsdisabilityaction.org.nz/)
* [Disabled Persons Assembly NZ](https://www.dpa.org.nz/)
* [Disability Support Services (NZ Government)](https://www.disabilitysupport.govt.nz/)
* [National Disabled Students’ Association](https://www.ndsa.org.nz/)
* [New Zealand Relay Service (Communication support for people with communication disabilities)](https://www.nzrelay.co.nz/)

### Social Services and Financial Support

* Accident Compensation Corporation | ACC (NZ Government)
* [Auckland City Mission](https://www.aucklandcitymission.org.nz/)
* [StudyLink](http://www.studylink.govt.nz) (NZ Government)
* [Work and Income](https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/) (NZ Government)

### Migrant Services and Multilingual Support

* [Asian Family Services](https://www.asianfamilyservices.nz/Home)
* [Asian Health Services](http://www.asianhealthservices.co.nz/)
* [Belong Aotearoa (Auckland Migrant Services)](https://www.belong.org.nz/)
* [Chinese New Settlers Services Trust](https://www.cnsst.org.nz/)
* [Connecting Now (Telephone interpreting services)](https://connectingnow.co.nz/)
* [Migrant Action Trust](https://www.migrantactiontrust.org/)
* [Vagus Centre (Chinese Mental Health Support)](https://cmh.org.nz/%e9%a6%96%e9%a0%81/)

### Rainbow Support

* [Burnett Foundation](https://www.burnettfoundation.org.nz/)
* [Gender Minorities Aotearoa](https://genderminorities.com/)
* [OutLine (LGBTQIA+ Support Service)](https://outline.org.nz/)
* [Rainbow Rights](https://rainbowrights.nz/)
* [Rainbow Youth](https://ry.org.nz/)