



NZ101x | New Zealand Landscape as Culture: Islands (Ngā Motu)

Welcome to NZ101x!

New Zealand Landscape as Culture is a free course series that lets you explore the landscape of Aotearoa New Zealand and the culture which has developed amongst it. In our first course, Ngā Motu, learn about the islands of New Zealand, 42 degrees south of the equator and rich in stories.

Course Description

In this course, you will learn about the islands of New Zealand, or Ngā Motu o Aotearoa, where humans have lived for a thousand years. The indigenous Māori people of New Zealand tell a powerful origin story about our islands. New Zealanders take pride in being islanders as it is part of their story, national identity and culture.

Remote from other landmasses, you will learn how the islands of New Zealand have a unique geology and form part of the Pacific 'Ring of Fire.' Our long history of remoteness has been expressed by a New Zealand poet as 'Distance looks our way.' But the idea of distance is a

European one - who are we far away from? For the peoples of the Pacific we inhabit one group of islands in the Pacific, 'a sea of Islands.'

New Zealand is a bicultural nation. Māori voyagers named this chain of islands Aotearoa or land of the long white cloud. Colonisation by the British in the nineteenth century produced a complex history. You will hear about the Māori world view, and Pākehā, or European, New Zealand culture, from Dr Maria Bargh (Te Arawa and Ngāti Awa) who teaches politics in Te Kawa a Māui, the School of Māori Studies, and Professor Lydia Wevers, a specialist in New Zealand literature and history. With guest appearances from other experts, the course will also explore the geology, popular culture, politics, art and literature of landscape. You will learn to think about landscape as an expression of culture and be able to transfer these ideas to the landscape you live in.

Māori refer to their home landscape as 'whenua.' We will take you to the whenua called Aotearoa.

Course Schedule

The course is broken up into four modules, with one module for each week the course is live. Each module focuses on a guiding question that we explore each week. We don't want you to get too far ahead of us, so you'll only be given the content for each module on the last Friday of the previous module (00:00 UTC / 12 pm NZ time).

Below is a list short breakdown of each module and what you will learn in each.

What are island stories? - Week 1

10 to 17 November, 2017

In this first module, we explore some of the most popular narratives about the creation of New Zealand, some of its landscapes and how they got their names. We also delve into the story of Māui and how this story may have changed in recent interpretations.

How are islands made? – Week 2

17 to 24 November, 2017

In the second module of the course, we look at the link between Māori and other explanations about the creation of New Zealand.

Are oceans highways? – Week 3

24 November to 1 December, 2017

In the third module, we investigate the Polynesian ancestors of Māori and some of their voyages to and from Aotearoa New Zealand. We also explore how definitions of islands change our understandings of them.

How are islands also ideas? – Week 4

1 to 7 December, 2017

In this fourth and final module, we investigate how Pākehā culture has been informed by New Zealand's islands and their distance from Europe. We also look at the influence Māori and Pākehā understanding of islands has had on modern cultural artefacts.

Course components

In this course, you'll mostly learn by watching **short video lectures**. Each week has between 20 and 35 mins of videos, broken into short videos between 3 and 5 min long and interviews no longer than 10 minutes. We have also written descriptions of the videos which contain **related links** for you to explore further. Although we have endeavoured to link to as many accessible websites as possible, we cannot guarantee all will be accessible. However, none of the links will be necessary for assessment purposes.

At several points, you'll also be given **discussion activities** to help you delve deeper into the topics which you're interested in. This is an opportunity to discuss and explore the topics discussed in more depth with your classmates. While the forums will be moderated by Victoria University of Wellington Teaching Assistants, we won't be able to respond to all posts. Lydia and Maria will address some of the more important or interesting topics raised in the forums in weekly blog posts.

Discussion board behaviour standards

We want our discussion forums to be a fun and interesting part of the course that everyone can be part of. We therefore expect you to

behave like you would in a professional environment, such as at work or school. You must adhere to the following standards of behaviour.

- **Respect your fellow students.** We will not tolerate offensive or abusive behaviour towards others in the course.
- **Critique arguments not people.** We encourage lively discussions of the course material, but make sure you respond to what your classmates are saying rather than how they're saying it.
- **Refrain from swearing and offensive language.** There are children taking the course, plus offensive language tends to undermine the points you are making.

If you don't follow these rules, your post might be deleted or you may even be removed from the course.

There are also some guidelines for discussion forums which will make it easier for you and others to take part.

- Avoid TYPING WHOLE POSTS IN ALL CAPS. Some people read this as shouting. A few words as emphasis is ok, though
- Use your best spelling and grammar. Some of your fellow students don't have English as their first language, and this helps them to understand you.
- Avoid unnecessary symbols, abbreviated words, texting shorthand, replacing words with numbers, repeating letters or punctuation. Again, this helps others to understand what you're saying.

- If you're using the main discussion board rather than the links that are in with the course content, make sure you label your post with the right topic. It helps us keep things organised and will help keep your post from getting lost.

Assessment

Remember that by enrolling in an edX course, you agree to abide by the [edX honour code](#).

Once you reach the end of each module, you'll be given a **short quiz**.

There are four quizzes during the course and each is worth 25% of your final course grade.

- The quiz for the first week's module, 'What are island stories?', is due on **Monday 20th November at 00:00 UTC / 1 pm NZ time.**
- The quiz for the second week's module, 'How are islands made?', is due on **Monday 27th November at 00:00 UTC / 1 pm NZ time.**
- The quiz for the third week's module, 'Are oceans highways?', is due on Monday **4th December at 00:00 UTC / 12 pm NZ time.**
- The quiz for the fourth week's module, 'How are islands also ideas?', is due on **Sunday 10th December at 00:00 UTC / 12 pm NZ time.**

In order to achieve a passing grade in the course, you need an overall grade of **50%** across the four assessments.

Assessments are the **same for both audit and verified students.**

Not sure what we mean by verified and audit? Check out edX's [verified certificate information](#).

If you want to switch from audit to verified, the cut-off date for this change is the **1st of December.**