Building Biology and Ecology
Institute of New Zealand

BBE Certificate in Ecological Building and Design

Learn to design and build homes that are healthy, sustainable and beautiful to live in. Online, from anywhere, in your own time.

2027 intakes open: the next intake starts Monday 1 February 2027

Enrol Now www.bbe.org.nz/enrol

Course Prospectus 2027

Do You Dream About Buildings That Are Healthy, Sustainable and Beautiful to Live In?

Buildings that bring people and nature closer together, and let our planet flourish? The BBE Certificate shows you what it takes, so you can use it in your own home or build it into your career.

Since 1990
teaching in New Zealand

Nearly 400
students so far

CC35100
registered charitable trust

100% online
study from any country

Who We Are

The Building Biology and Ecology Institute of New Zealand (BBE) is a not-for-profit charitable trust, with its national office in Wellington. Building biology began in Germany, and affiliated institutes now work across Europe, Australia, India, the UK and the USA.

We have never advertised. Our students find us by word of mouth, and course fees fund our research and the free information we share.

BBE trustees, representatives and advisors at the Rotorua conference.

Education

The Certificate, booklets and the BBE newsletter, for homeowners and professionals.

Research

Healthy materials, indoor climate, energy and water, tested against the evidence.

Advocacy

We speak up for healthier, more sustainable buildings, with councils and government.

Who the Certificate Is For

Anyone who cares about a healthier, more sustainable built environment. No prior learning is needed.

Homeowners and Self-Builders

Planning a new home, a renovation or a healthier place to live? You will learn how to make good choices of site, design, materials, energy and water, and why they matter for your health.

Professionals and Students

The Certificate adds ecological expertise to the training you already have in architecture, architectural technology, construction, engineering, landscape or interior design, urban planning or natural health.

What You Will Be Able to Do

- Assess an existing building for occupant health and sustainability
- Explore other ways to design and build
- Choose natural building materials and construction methods
- Plan renewable, on-site energy
- Collect and use water well, and treat and restore wastewater

What Graduates Do With It

- Add the respected BBE knowledge base to their design and building credentials
- Become BBE-trained architects, designers and builders
- Set up ecological interior design businesses
- Plan their own building project with BBE ecological principles

In Their Words

"I am an Ecological Interior Stylist and the Course really helped me define my business. I learnt a huge amount and it helped that each project could be based on real situations. I came out of the Course with a fixed plan for my own home and garden, as well as guiding principles for my business."

Janette, Ecological Interior Stylist

"I would highly recommend the BBE Online Course to anyone looking for a sustainable building course to complement their current qualification, job or special interest. I thoroughly enjoyed studying through the BBE and found the Certificate Course easy to follow, comprehensive and interesting."

Tiffany, Eco Centre

How the Course Works

Five online modules of about 80 hours each, 400 hours in all. Plan on about 10 hours a week for study and assignments.

Start With Module 1

Module 1 comes first. After that you take the other four in any order you like.

One Module Each Intake

Each module runs for 8 weeks, with five intakes a year. Take one module per intake and you finish in about a year.

Tutored Throughout

A BBE tutor assesses your work and gives you feedback, so you know you are on track.

Real Projects

Each module has 5 topics and 3 assignments, which you can base on your own home, site or clients.

Assessed on Competency

All work is assessed internally against clear standards, not graded on a curve.

All You Need

A computer, broadband internet, good English and basic computer skills. Notes, videos and assessments are all online.

A Free Archicad Licence

Interested in architecture or architectural technology? BBE students can apply for a free Graphisoft Archicad education licence. Training is online through Graphisoft or elsewhere, and simpler free programmes suit other students.

Standing and Recognition

The course was first accredited through ITPQ and run with Aoraki Polytechnic. BBE now runs it on its own. It is no longer NZQA accredited, and is pitched at the level of NZQA Level 5. BBE has kept and improved the original standard.

Recommended Reading

No texts are required. These books line up closely with the course:

- *The Healthy House*, Sydney and Joan Baggs
- *A Deeper Shade of Green*, Johann Bernhardt (ed.)
- *The New Natural House Book*, David Pearson
- *Sustainable Home Guidelines*, Waitakere City Council
- *A Pattern Language*, Christopher Alexander
- *The Transition Handbook*, Rob Hopkins

Five Modules

Each module takes about 80 hours, or 8 weeks at about 10 hours a week.

MODULE 1 Start here

Principles of Ecological Building and Design

The core principles, and how to assess a building for health and sustainability.

- Sustainable building
- Healthy building
- Unhealthy indoor air, temperature and moisture
- Unhealthy indoor electroclimate
- Assessing a building and site

MODULE 2

Building and Site Design

Holistic and bio harmonic design, then apply it to a small design project.

- Holistic design
- Different ways of approaching design
- The psychological effects of buildings
- Eco-communities
- Land development and landscape

MODULE 3

Materials and Construction

How to assess building materials, from timber to earth and strawbale.

- Assessing building materials
- Traditional versus modern building materials
- Natural building materials
- Ecologically sound construction practice
- Traditional and alternative construction

MODULE 4

Energy and Renewable Energy

Passive solar design, energy efficiency and renewables, then design your own energy system.

- Renewable power
- Using less power
- Natural heating and cooling
- Natural cooking and food storage
- Designing an energy system

MODULE 5

Water and Wastewater

Rainwater, water conservation, compost toilets and wastewater, then design your own water system.

- The nature of water
- Healthy water supply
- Looking after water
- Restoring water to the environment
- Designing a water system

Your Certificate

Complete all five modules and receive the BBE Certificate in Ecological Building and Design from the Building Biology and Ecology Institute of New Zealand.

Enrol Now

Your Year, Module by Module

An example for a February start, taking one module per intake:

Module 1	Intake 1, from Monday 1 February 2027	Start here
Your choice	Intake 2, from Monday 5 April 2027	any order
Your choice	Intake 3, from Monday 7 June 2027	any order
Your choice	Intake 4, from Monday 9 August 2027	any order
Your choice	Intake 5, from Monday 11 October 2027	Certificate by December

2027 Intake Dates

Five intakes a year, each 8 weeks, with a one-week break between.

Intake 1	Starts Monday 1 February 2027
Intake 2	Starts Monday 5 April 2027
Intake 3	Starts Monday 7 June 2027
Intake 4	Starts Monday 9 August 2027
Intake 5	Starts Monday 11 October 2027

Can't wait? An informal Summer School runs over December and January. **Missed a start date?** You can still enrol, then catch up or set your own schedule for handing in assessments.

Fees and Ways to Pay

All prices are in New Zealand dollars. BBE is not GST registered, so no GST is added. Pay securely online by card.

Start With Module 1

NZD 375

Try the course with one module. Everyone starts here.

Best value: save 20%

All Five Modules

NZD 1,500 paid once

Pay for four modules and the fifth is free. You save NZD 375.

Next Modules, One at a Time

NZD 375 per module

After Module 1, pay for each module as you go, in any order.

Monthly Payment Plan

NZD 187.50 a month

All five modules in 10 monthly instalments (NZD 1,875 in total). The plan ends automatically after the 10th payment.

Your fees do more than teach. BBE is a charity, so every enrolment helps fund our research and the free information we share.

Enrol Now

How to Enrol

It takes about five minutes.

1

Choose Your Option

Go to www.bbe.org.nz/enrol and pick Module 1, all five modules, or the payment plan.

2

Pick Your Intake

Choose your start date and pay securely online. Your receipt arrives by email straight away.

3

Start Learning

Jenny, our Education Co-ordinator, emails your login and welcome pack before your intake starts.

Why Study With BBE

- Taught in New Zealand since 1990
- Study from home, in your own time
- Save 20% when you enrol in all five
- Free Archicad education licence
- Tutor feedback on every assignment
- Start small with one module
- Or spread the cost over 10 months
- Fees support a charitable trust

Ready to Get Started?

Begin with Module 1 at the next intake, on Monday 1 February 2027.

Enrol Now | **See the Certificate Page**

Questions? Email Jenny Rattenbury, Education Co-ordinator
info@bbe.org.nz · **www.bbe.org.nz**

Unpaving the way to a restorative built environment