



Why Tertiary Students Keep Coming Back to 48Hours

There's something slightly unhinged about deciding to make a short film in just 48 hours which is probably why so many tertiary students across New Zealand keep coming back every year.

The Vista Foundation 48Hours competition has become a rite of passage for so many emerging filmmakers around Aotearoa and the best part is you don't need a budget, industry connections, or years of experience to take part.

This competition has a habit of turning one intense weekend into stories people remember for years with student team Skyler Films describing "the collaborative aspect of the production was brilliant, everyone having something to add and figuring out ways to implement it. Good laughs, enthusiastic workers, and full commitment make up this film's production".



Massey University Students making use of their campus facilities to make their 48Hours film.

Forget practice. Make a movie.

You can learn a lot in the classroom, but creativity hits differently when the clock is counting down.

Teams are given a genre, character, prop, and line of dialogue on Friday night, then have until Sunday evening to write, cut, shoot, and survive to deliver a short film. There's no time to overthink things.

This competition pushes students creatively, tests teamwork under pressure, and creates the kind of memories that keep people coming back every year. You also end up with a completed short film for your portfolio. Pretty impressive for one weekend's work.



This church was open to using their church as a location for this 48Hours team.

You don't need experience to make something unforgettable.

Know a design student who's accidentally the funniest person in every group project? A classmate who can edit at lightning speed? A friend studying music who's always making beats in their bedroom?

Pull together your dream team. Collaborate with classmates, flatmates, and friends to turn ideas into something real.

Maybe it's your first time calling "action", or maybe you've survived a competition weekend before. Either way, it's the perfect chance to try a new role, sharpen your skills, and learn by doing. Make the most of your access to uni gear, studios, editing suites, and campus locations.



Winning spot prizes over the weekend is part of the fun!

Big screens, big prizes, bigger bragging rights.

Yes, there are sweet rewards and bragging rights involved. Teams get to screen their films in audience packed cinemas, compete for awards and cash prizes, and have their work seen by everyone from first-time filmmakers to industry veterans from around New Zealand.

The competition doesn't stop there. Grand Final winners get the opportunity to pitch to the New Zealand Film Commission for a Level Up Grant of \$25,000 to put toward a new film project.

The nationwide filmmaking sprint begins.

For one weekend every year, tertiary students across Aotearoa swap lecture theatres for film sets, turning campuses, and city streets into creative chaos zones.

Be a part of a nationwide filmmaking weekend where curious members of the public can expect to see film crews of students, amateurs and filmmaking professionals out and about, racing against the same 48-hour deadline.

Your short film's big moment.

So you've finished your film and caught up on sleep! Now you get to share your film with an eager audience! Films are screened in heats to packed audiences of students, filmmakers, judges, and fellow competitors from across Aotearoa.

The best films move on to the regional finals, with top teams competing for awards, prizes before national judges and Sir Peter Jackson's wildcard selections choose the finalists for the massive Grand Final event.

50% off for tertiary students

Tertiary students get 50% off. Contact joel@48hours.co.nz with your student ID to get a discount code.

Key Dates/Info: The Vista Foundation 48Hours 2026

- Early Bird Registration Opens: June 1st, 2026.
- The Shoot Weekend July 31st - August 2nd, 2026.
- The Genres: Announced at 7:00 PM on Friday, July 31st.
- 'Tertiary 50% off' deal - **More info**.
- Check out our **good advice** resources.
- **Photos Link**

Newsletter Blurb:

There's something slightly unhinged about making a short film in just 48 hours which is exactly why so many tertiary students across Aotearoa keep coming back every year. The Vista Foundation 48Hours competition gives students the chance to swap lecture theatres for film sets, collaborate with friends, sharpen creative skills under pressure, and screen their work to packed cinema and YouTube audiences across New Zealand. No experience required just ideas, teamwork, and a willingness to survive one very intense weekend.

Plus, tertiary students get 50% off registration. Early Bird registrations open June 1 2026. The shoot weekend runs from July 31 – August 2, 2026. Find out more: www.48hours.co.nz