



Froilan's Story

A University Partner Success Story

Foundation Journey at UP International College

Q1. Tell us about yourself

My name is Froilan Hernandez. I studied the Foundation programme at UPIC and now I'm in my first year at AUT, doing a Bachelor of Engineering Honours majoring in Electrical and Electronic Engineering (as of July 2025).

Q2. Can you tell us a bit about your background?

I'm originally from the Philippines, but I grew up in Qatar. I moved there when I was around 9 years old because my parents decided to work in the Middle East. Even though I lived in Qatar for most of my life, I still studied under the Philippine curriculum, which really helped keep me connected to my roots.

Q3. Why did you choose to study in New Zealand?

New Zealand just felt like the right place. It's peaceful, and the education system is very supportive. I wanted to study in an environment that gives me the freedom to grow both academically and personally. Another reason is that I have an uncle who lives here, and during my time at UPIC, I actually stayed at his place.

Q4. How did you first hear about the Foundation programme?

My uncle connected us with someone from an agency that helps students study abroad. He recommended the Foundation programme at UPIC because it matches well with the K-12 curriculum I followed in Qatar. Since I was aiming for AUT, UPIC just seemed like the right pathway.

STUDENT PROFILE

NAME

Froilan Steve Tolentino Hernandez

NATIONALITY

Philippines

PROGRAMME COMPLETED

Auckland University of
Technology Certificate in
Foundation Studies
(Accelerated)

UNIVERSITY PROGRAMME

Year 1, Bachelor of
Engineering (Honours) –
Auckland University of
Technology

Q5. How was the Foundation programme?

It was a good transition from UPIC to AUT. There's a subject called Tertiary Studies where they teach you how to manage time, plan your courses, and keep a good study-life balance. That subject really helped me prepare for university life.

Q6. What kind of subjects did you have at Foundation?

I took academic writing, physics, and a few others like media studies. But my favourite was physics.

There was this one teacher, George Monk, who really changed how I looked at the subject. He always said, "Don't overcomplicate it. Just simplify."

That really stuck with me.

Q7. Did the Foundation programme help you with your current studies at AUT?

Definitely. Algebra and physics from UPIC helped me a lot, especially with subjects like statics in engineering. I already had a taste of what's coming, so I wasn't totally caught off guard.



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*“Focus on study life balance.
Make friends and memories.
College isn't just about grades.
Use your time wisely because it
goes fast.”*

Q8. What was the social experience like at UPIC?

It was really diverse. I met a lot of students from Southeast Asia like Myanmar, Vietnam, and Singapore. We all had the same goal, so we helped each other. We made a promise that no one gets left behind. Most of us got into AUT, and even though we're doing different majors now, we still run into each other in the hallways and catch up when we can.

Q9. You're a student ambassador. Can you tell us more about that?

I'm a student ambassador for UPIC, and my role is to support students who are interested in studying at AUT after the Foundation programme. If you want to know more, you can check out our stories, photos, and videos at aut.up.education. You can also chat with me and other ambassadors through the website. We are happy to share our experiences!

University Life at AUT

Q10. Why did you choose AUT?

AUT really stood out to me because of how they balance student life and academics. Plus, they focus on hands-on learning. You are not just reading theories, you are actually doing stuff. And they offer employability support too, which is great.

Q11. What's campus life like at AUT?

Right now, I spend most of my time in the WZ building on the city campus, which is the main space for engineering and computer science students. The vibe on campus is pretty focused but still friendly. In the coming years, we'll start working on big projects, and I'm excited to use what I've learned in a real hands-on way.

Q12. What are your future goals?

Right now, I'm doing a Bachelor of Engineering Honours, majoring in Electrical and Electronic Engineering. I haven't decided on a specific job yet, but I'm really interested in robotics and automation systems. I want to stay and work in New Zealand for as long as I can, and hopefully get citizenship one day.

FROILAN IS SHAPING HIS FUTURE.

To shape yours, enrol with UP Education, New Zealand.

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