




Tēnā koe 

Thank you for your email of 31 January 2019 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information regarding assistance paid by StudyLink:

- *The number of applications for student allowance, assistance, loans through StudyLink per month for the last five years, to date - or January 31.*
- *The number of applications rejected for student allowance, assistance, loans through StudyLink per month for the last five years, to date - or January 31.*
- *A tally of student allowance, assistance, loans per institution (by name) for NZ.*
- *Money spent/granted on student allowance, assistance, loans for the financial years of 2018, 2017 and 2016.*
- *List reasons for rejected applications for years Jan 1, 2018 to Jan 31, 2019.*

The Ministry publishes a large amount of data regarding StudyLink assistance, which might be of interest to you. This information is available at www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/studylink/index.html.

The Ministry provides financial assistance to New Zealand's students through StudyLink to help them succeed in their studies. The Ministry provides assistance through two main schemes: Student Allowance and Student Loans.

Student Loans help students pay their course fees, including tuition fees, administration charges, course related costs and living costs. I have interpreted your request for information regarding 'assistance' as referring to the components that make up Student Loans outside tuition fees. These components have been reported separately where data is available.

The Student Allowance is a weekly payment for eligible students to help with living expenses during study. This payment does not need to be paid back and is income tested. More information about the Student Allowance is available here: www.studylink.govt.nz/products/a-z-products/student-allowance/index.html#null

Please find enclosed the following tables:

- Table One shows the number of applications for Student Allowance and Student Loans between 01 January 2014 and 31 December 2018.
- Table Two shows the number of Student Allowance applications declined between 01 January 2014 and 31 December 2018.
- Table Three shows the number of Student Loan applications declined between 01 January 2014 and 31 December 2018.
- Table Four shows reasons Student Loan applications were declined for 2018.
- Table Five shows reasons Student Allowance applications were declined for 2018.

A number of very low figures have been suppressed in Table 3 in order to protect the privacy of natural persons. This information is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs any public interest in this information.

Please find attached to the email, Table Six, an excel spreadsheet containing information regarding applications for Student Allowance and Student Loan by institution (where known).

You asked for money spent on student allowance, assistance and loans for the financial years of 2018, 2017 and 2016. The Ministry records this information by calendar year due to the way enrolments work for the majority of students i.e. the vast majority of students enroll at the beginning of the calendar year. Please find enclosed the following tables:

- Table Seven shows money spent on Student Loans for the calendar years 2016, 2017 and 2018.
- Table Eight shows money spent on Student Allowance for the calendar years 2016, 2017 and 2018.

For the 2018 Academic year, the Government introduced one year of fees-free tertiary education and a \$50 a week increase to student allowances and loan entitlements. This change is reflected in the decrease in 2018 tuition fees in Table Seven and the increase in money spent on the Student Allowance and Accommodation Benefit in Table Eight.

The principles and purposes of the Official Information Act 1982 under which you made your request are:

- to create greater openness and transparency about the plans, work and activities of the Government,
- to increase the ability of the public to participate in the making and administration of our laws and policies and
- to lead to greater accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

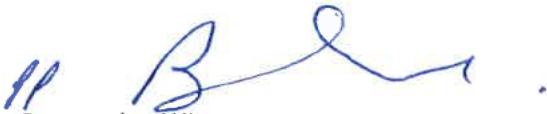
This Ministry fully supports those principles and purposes. The Ministry therefore intends to make the information contained in this letter available to the wider public shortly. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter on the Ministry of Social Development's website. Your personal details will be deleted and the Ministry will not

publish any information that would identify you as the person who requested the information.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding assistance paid by StudyLink, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Cassandra Wise

Manager, Issue Resolution, Service Delivery

Table One: Number of applications for Student Allowance and Student Loans between 01 January 2014 and 31 December 2018.

| | Student Allowance | Student Loan |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Application created | Number of Applications | Number of Applications |
| January 2014 | 21,223 | 40,868 |
| February 2014 | 17,669 | 31,587 |
| March 2014 | 8,696 | 13,154 |
| April 2014 | 4,363 | 6,490 |
| May 2014 | 5,254 | 7,942 |
| June 2014 | 8,262 | 11,908 |
| July 2014 | 10,572 | 15,381 |
| August 2014 | 4,652 | 5,996 |
| September 2014 | 4,360 | 6,115 |
| October 2014 | 9,430 | 14,839 |
| November 2014 | 18,347 | 28,816 |
| December 2014 | 24,417 | 52,504 |
| Total for 2014 | 137,245 | 235,600 |
| January 2015 | 18,446 | 36,354 |
| February 2015 | 16,677 | 30,583 |
| March 2015 | 8,128 | 12,850 |
| April 2015 | 3,855 | 5,870 |
| May 2015 | 5,387 | 8,593 |
| June 2015 | 8,022 | 12,564 |
| July 2015 | 10,112 | 15,252 |
| August 2015 | 4,731 | 6,267 |
| September 2015 | 4,441 | 6,941 |
| October 2015 | 11,564 | 21,500 |
| November 2015 | 17,972 | 32,635 |
| December 2015 | 21,445 | 47,821 |
| Total for 2015 | 130,780 | 237,230 |
| January 2016 | 15,810 | 30,130 |
| February 2016 | 16,646 | 28,705 |
| March 2016 | 7,215 | 10,861 |
| April 2016 | 4,042 | 6,000 |
| May 2016 | 5,312 | 8,824 |
| June 2016 | 7,809 | 13,658 |
| July 2016 | 9,382 | 14,381 |
| August 2016 | 4,875 | 6,438 |
| September 2016 | 3,834 | 6,005 |
| October 2016 | 10,580 | 21,847 |
| November 2016 | 16,802 | 32,243 |
| December 2016 | 20,113 | 47,312 |
| Total for 2016 | 122,420 | 226,404 |

| | Student Allowance | Student Loan |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Application created | Number of Applications | Number of Applications |
| January 2017 | 14,686 | 28,642 |
| February 2017 | 14,723 | 26,093 |
| March 2017 | 7,795 | 11,626 |
| April 2017 | 3,262 | 4,750 |
| May 2017 | 5,348 | 8,839 |
| June 2017 | 6,804 | 12,198 |
| July 2017 | 8,581 | 14,027 |
| August 2017 | 4,365 | 6,180 |
| September 2017 | 3,694 | 6,176 |
| October 2017 | 11,322 | 24,584 |
| November 2017 | 15,519 | 30,636 |
| December 2017 | 18,655 | 43,583 |
| Total for 2017 | 114,754 | 217,334 |
| January 2018 | 14,983 | 26,221 |
| February 2018 | 15,211 | 24,196 |
| March 2018 | 6,796 | 9,241 |
| April 2018 | 3,438 | 4,773 |
| May 2018 | 5,307 | 8,202 |
| June 2018 | 7,111 | 11,113 |
| July 2018 | 8,997 | 13,101 |
| August 2018 | 4,209 | 4,972 |
| September 2018 | 5,135 | 9,083 |
| October 2018 | 11,679 | 23,478 |
| November 2018 | 16,759 | 31,992 |
| December 2018 | 16,723 | 35,775 |
| Total for 2018 | 116,348 | 202,147 |

Notes:

- This is a count of applications made, multiple applications per student/client will occur.
- Student allowance applications are not necessarily in relation to the year of study, but the year in which the application was submitted.

Table Two: Number of Student Allowance applications declined between 01 January 2014 and 31 December 2018.

| | Count of Student Allowance declined for entire study period | | | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
| January | 2,502 | 6,378 | 5,549 | 5,445 | 4,723 |
| February | 4,609 | 7,295 | 7,392 | 6,198 | 6,092 |
| March | 3,826 | 4,440 | 4,113 | 4,625 | 3,638 |
| April | 2,015 | 2,009 | 2,142 | 1,669 | 1,804 |
| May | 1,965 | 2,141 | 2,179 | 2,061 | 2,117 |
| June | 3,382 | 4,073 | 4,073 | 3,588 | 3,436 |
| July | 3,778 | 4,058 | 3,818 | 3,565 | 3,422 |
| August | 1,968 | 1,946 | 1,982 | 1,838 | 1,711 |
| September | 1,474 | 1,521 | 1,563 | 1,289 | 1,210 |
| October | 4,813 | 6,297 | 6,221 | 5,599 | 5,594 |
| November | 6,558 | 7,394 | 6,626 | 6,974 | 5,332 |
| December | 3,677 | 3,677 | 3,416 | 3,355 | 817 |
| Total | 40,567 | 51,229 | 49,074 | 46,206 | 39,896 |

Notes:

- This is a count of applications made, multiple applications per student/client will occur.
- Clients may re-test their eligibility by lodging a subsequent application.
- Abandoned applications are included and are automatically declined after the study end date has past and the application is still incomplete.
- Student allowance applications declined are not necessarily in relation to the year of study, but the year in which the application was submitted.

Table Three: Number of Student Loan applications declined between 01 January 2014 and 31 December 2018

| | Count of declined Student Loans | | | | |
|------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
| January | 1,076 | 1,125 | 971 | 1,028 | 1,037 |
| February | 1,168 | 1,291 | 1,155 | 1,119 | 1,112 |
| March | 719 | 847 | 640 | 716 | 639 |
| April | 407 | 391 | 364 | 287 | 336 |
| May | 450 | 456 | 494 | 485 | 431 |
| June | 579 | 666 | 672 | 649 | 626 |
| July | 767 | 937 | 800 | 839 | 791 |
| August | 384 | 411 | 401 | 395 | 335 |
| September | 331 | 366 | 330 | 307 | 358 |
| October | 512 | 670 | 718 | 635 | 692 |
| November | 871 | 902 | 906 | 926 | 986 |
| December | 1,219 | 1,106 | 1,083 | 1,100 | 922 |
| Total | 8,483 | 9,168 | 8,534 | 8,486 | 8,265 |

Notes:

- This is a count of applications made, multiple applications per student/client will occur.
- Clients may re-test their eligibility by lodging a subsequent application.
- Student loan applications declined are not necessarily in relation to the year of study, but the year in which the application was submitted.

Table Four: Reasons Student Loan applications were declined for 2018.

| Reason for student loan decline |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| All institution(s) not approved or recognised |
| Bankrupt |
| Criteria for EFTS extension not met |
| Customer has a non-entitlement reason other |
| Customer has died |
| Fund code not eligible for any loan component |
| In prison |
| Late application |
| No verification of study response |
| Non-resident |
| Not eligible - not passing satisfactorily |
| Not residence class visa holder for three years |
| Not residence class visa holder for two years |
| Overseas study not eligible |
| Results of study = failed |
| Statement of satisfactory progress received and declined |
| Student EFTS over account (yearly) limit |
| Student loan limit for EFTS extension has been reached |
| Student loan limit of 7 EFTS has been reached |
| Student not fulltime: fulltime part year, part time part year |
| Studying a fees-free youth guarantee programme |
| The verification of study cycle has finished |
| With outstanding overdue loan |
| You are not studying a recognised programme |

Table Five: Reasons Student Allowance applications were declined for 2018.

| Reason for student allowance decline. |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 120 pay week limit will be reached in a current allowance app which is prior to this app |
| 16-17 years old and not meeting eligibility requirements. |
| 200 pay week limit will be reached in a current allowance app which is prior to this app |
| 200 week limit exceeded |
| Allowance extension period entitlement has been reached. |
| Allowance is under lowest limit |
| Application closed as duplicate of another application |
| Application closed as incomplete and course end date has passed |
| Application declined as programme is postgraduate |
| Application received after course end date |
| Application received date is after course start date |
| Below 16 years old |

| |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Closed due to application loaded on incorrect SWN |
| Combined income over the limit |
| Customer has not exceeded the 3 year stand-down period for residency |
| Customer has not exceeded the 3 year stand-down period for residency but will during study |
| Fund code not eligible for allowance |
| Fund code not eligible for allowance - warning |
| Not an approved overseas programme |
| Not an approved overseas programme - warning |
| Not approved limited full time |
| Not eligible - programme not recognized |
| Not entitled - not passing satisfactorily |
| Parental income above limit |
| Personal income above limit |
| Post-verification of study 120 week limit |
| Results of study result is failed - confirmed |
| Results of study result is failed - to be confirmed, application has not been paid yet |
| Secondary education week limit exceeded |
| Secondary under 18 |
| See other non-entitlement reasons details, or possibly the withdrawal date against study details in applications screen |
| Spouse on benefit |
| Statement of satisfactory progress received and declined |
| Student has died |
| Student has outstanding student allowances debt |
| Student is 40 years old or over, not in transition, reached 120 week pay limit |
| Student is 65 years old or over , not in transition |
| Student is in prison |
| Student is not meeting the work requirements. |
| Student on benefit |
| The application has been declined because the required information/evidence was received after the study end date. |
| Verification of study details not ok |
| Verification of study states customer has not exceeded the 3 year stand-down period for residency |
| Verification of study states customer has not exceeded the 3 year stand-down period for residency but will during study |

Table Seven: Total amount spent on Student Loans in the calendar years 2016, 2017 and 2018.

| Year | Tuition Fees | Course Related Costs | Loan Living Costs | Loan establishment fee |
|-------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2016 | \$1,060,187,209 | \$113,909,186 | \$417,357,647 | \$10,356,060 |
| 2017 | \$1,039,317,480 | \$108,884,300 | \$409,671,677 | \$9,946,800 |
| 2018 | \$845,089,395 | \$100,164,688 | \$497,611,692 | \$9,054,600 |

Table Eight: Total amount spent on Student Allowance in the calendar years 2016, 2017 and 2018.

| Year | Student Allowance | Accommodation benefit | Student Allowance + Accommodation Benefit (Total) |
|-------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 2016 | \$432,158,315 | \$62,371,973 | \$494,530,288 |
| 2017 | \$406,772,730 | \$59,467,666 | \$466,240,395 |
| 2018 | \$521,212,838 | \$80,663,078 | \$601,875,916 |