



6 June 2023

Tēnā koe

On 16 May 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *The number of applications for student allowance, assistance, loans through StudyLink per year for the last four years, to date - or May 16 2023.*
- *The number of applications rejected for student allowance, assistance, loans through StudyLink per year for the last four years, to date - or May 16 2023.*

The student support system enables all New Zealanders to participate in tertiary education and training. The main elements of student support are the Student Loan Scheme and the Student Allowance Scheme.

Student Loans provide funding for the tuition fees as well as a contribution towards course-related costs and living costs for full-time students. All amounts borrowed under the Student Loan Scheme have to be repaid. More information about Student Loans is available here: www.studylink.govt.nz/products/a-z-products/student-loan/index.html.

The Student Allowance is a weekly payment for eligible students to help with living expenses during their study. The payment is based on the financial and personal circumstances of the student and their family and does not need to be paid back. More information about Student Allowance is available here: www.studylink.govt.nz/products/a-z-products/student-allowance/index.html.

The Ministry has interpreted your request about 'applications for assistance' as applications for Jobseeker Support Student Hardship (JSSH), which is a weekly payment to help with living expenses during a study break of more than 3 weeks. More information about JSSH is available here: www.studylink.govt.nz/products/a-z-products/jobseeker-support-student-hardship/index.html.

Please contact the Ministry if this was not the intent of your request.

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.

In the attached **Appendix**, you will find the following tables in response to your request:

- **Table One:** The number of Student Allowance applications by approved or declined outcome, for years 2019 – 2022.
- **Table Two:** The number of Student Loan applications by approved, declined or closed outcome, for years 2019 – 2022.
- **Table Three:** The number of JSSH applications by grant or decline outcome, for years 2019 – 2022.

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 and any attached documents available to the wider public. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter and attachments on the Ministry'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, 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.

Ngā mihi nui

Bridget Saunders

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