



25 November 2025

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 29 September 2025, requesting information the criteria for assessing income support through Studylink, and a breakdown of students from 2020 to 2025.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision on each part of your request set out below.

We have interpreted income support as referring to weekly financial support, primarily the Student Allowance. This excludes other supplementary support provided outside of this weekly financial support scheme.

Question 1. A copy of all criteria for accessing income support through studylink

- (i) as of 1 September 2025
- (ii) as of 1 September 2024
- (iii) as of 1 September 2023
- (iv) as of 1 September 2022
- (v) as of 1 September 2021
- (vi) as of 1 September 2020

Please see the following resources that are publicly available on the Education Counts website:

- *Changes to the student support system:*
www.educationcounts.govt.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/249287/Student-Support-Changes.pdf
- *Financial support for tertiary students:*
www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/financial_support_for_students

Information about the current criteria for accessing income support is available on the StudyLink website and the Work and Income Map website, we are providing the relevant links here:

- StudyLink homepage: www.studylink.govt.nz
- Map page *Students*:
www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/students/index.html.

Question 2. For each of the above years, how many students applied for income support

Question 3. For each of the above years, how many students received income support

For these parts of your request, please refer to the attached **Appendix** which provides the following tables:

- **Table One:** The number of students applying for Student Allowance between 1 January 2020 and 30 September 2025
- **Table Two:** The number of students paid a Student Allowance between 1 January 2020 and 30 September 2025.

StudyLink statistics are also available on the Ministry of Social Development's (the Ministry's) website, at the following link: www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/studylink/index.html.

Question 4. For each of the above years, how many students who received income support were enrolled in conjoint degrees

I am unable to provide you with this information as, if it is held, it would be held in notes on individual case files. To provide you with this information, Ministry staff would have to manually review a substantial number of files. As such, I refuse your request under section 18(f) of the Act. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

I have considered whether the Ministry would be able to respond to your request given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested. I have concluded that, in either case, the Ministry's ability to undertake its work would still be prejudiced.

I will be publishing this decision letter, with your personal details deleted, on the Ministry's website in due course.

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 my decision on your request, 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

pp.



Anna Graham
General Manager
Ministerial and Executive Services