



13 JUL 2016



Dear

On 31 May 2016 you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- 1. Over the last five years, how many applicants have been refused a student allowance due to failing to meet residency requirements (ie. had not lived in New Zealand legally for a minimum of 3 years.)*
- 2. Of these people, how many had entered New Zealand as quota refugees or as part of the refugee family reunification programme.*

On 1 January 2014, there were changes to the residency requirements for students to qualify for a Student Allowance. Students who are not New Zealand citizens, refugees or protected persons (or have not been sponsored into New Zealand by a family member who was recognised as a refugee or a protected person) need to:

- be entitled to reside indefinitely in New Zealand; and
- have been living in New Zealand for three years.

Prior to this, the residence requirement was two years.

The enclosed table shows the number of Student Allowance applications declined for residency reasons, for the 2011 to 2016 calendar years, to 31 May 2016.

A refugee or protected person who is entitled to reside indefinitely in New Zealand under the Immigration Act 2009 is not required to meet a stand down period to qualify for a Student Allowance. Therefore, none of the declined applications in the last five years have been for people who are recorded as having entered New Zealand as quota refugees or as part of the refugee family reunification programme.

To receive the Student Allowance, all applicants must also meet other eligibility criteria, which relate to their course of study, income and family circumstances.

Further information on residency requirements, refugee status and eligibility criteria relating to Student Allowances and Loans can be found on the Ministry's StudyLink website at:

- <http://www.studylink.govt.nz/about-studylink/media-releases/2013/changes-to-student-loans-and-allowances-budget-2013-detail.html>
- <http://www.studylink.govt.nz/about-studylink/glossary/residency-status-or-type.html>

I hope you find this information helpful. You have the right to seek an investigation and review of my response by the Ombudsman, whose address for contact purposes is:

The Ombudsman
Office of the Ombudsman
PO Box 10-152
WELLINGTON 6143

Yours sincerely



Ruth Bound
**Deputy Chief Executive
Service Delivery**

The number of Student Allowance applications declined for residency reasons, for the 2011 to 2016 calendar years

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Declined	1,561	1,134	860	132	209	129
Declined but residency requirements will be met during study	0	0	0	311	3	150
Total	1,561	1,134	860	443	214	279

Notes

- Applicants who met residency requirements during their study would have become eligible for Student Allowance from that date, provided they met the other criteria for Student Allowances.
- Reasons for declines include that the applicant is not a New Zealand citizen or residence class visa holder, or that they have not exceeded the stand-down period for residency
- Students may be declined for more than one reason; for example, students declined for not meeting residency requirements may also be declined because their income exceeded the income threshold, or because they were not studying a recognised programme.
- The 2016 total includes data from 1 January 2016 to 31 May 2016.