

11 June 2026

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request made under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), received on 13 May 2026. You requested the following along with the screenshot in **Appendix A**:

This request relates to Inland Revenue advertising and promotion concerning the Fees Free scheme from 9 May 2026 to the date of this request.

I have attached a screenshot of a Fees Free advertisement to help identify the relevant campaign, but this request is not necessarily limited to that specific advertisement.

Please provide:

- 1. The total amount spent, committed, or budgeted by Inland Revenue on Fees Free advertising or promotion during this period, broken down by platform or channel where available.*
- 2. The start and end dates of any Fees Free advertising campaigns or paid promotions during this period.*
- 3. Any briefings, memos, emails, meeting notes, or other communications discussing the purpose, objective, timing, or rationale for Fees Free advertising during this period.*

Please provide the information in electronic format where possible, and GST inclusive.

Fees free advertising activity

The Tertiary Education Commission transfers learner eligibility information, such as learner completion dates, three times a year to Inland Revenue which is used to confirm a learner's eligibility for Final Year Fees Free. Advertising activity is planned to run in-line with the date of these transfers to remind learners to check their eligibility and to apply for their Final Year Fees Free entitlement.

The latest learner eligibility information transfer date, for learners completing their study between 1 January to 11 April 2026, was 29 April 2026. Accordingly, one advertising campaign was pre-planned to align with this transfer, starting on 4 May and running through to 29 June 2026 inclusive. The plans and objectives for this advertising campaign were not impacted by the reported changes to future fees free eligibility, as this campaign targeted learners who were already eligible to receive entitlements.

No communications or other forms of correspondence were identified that are related to this advertisement campaign in the period of 9 May to 12 May 2026 (inclusive). Therefore, this part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the OIA as the documents alleged to contain the information requested does not exist.

A creative media services order (CMSO) with a total value of \$50,000 (excluding GST) was signed to cover advertising through Google ads, Meta, Go Media (outdoor digital billboards), and TVNZ for the 4 May – 29 June advertising campaign. Invoices for this CMSO are received on a monthly basis in-arrears for the whole month, and as such part of your request concerning the amount spent over the period specified is refused under section 18(g) of the OIA as the information requested is not held at the requested level.

Figures on the specific amount(s) budgeted and spent, broken down by each platform or channel, is withheld under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the OIA to protect the commercial position of the person who supplied the information.

As required by section 9(1) of the OIA I have considered whether the grounds for withholding the information requested is outweighed by the public interest. In this instance, I do not consider that to be the case.

Right of review

If you disagree with my decision on your OIA request, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the OIA. You can contact the office of the Ombudsman by email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Publishing of OIA response

We intend to publish our response to your request on Inland Revenue's website (ird.govt.nz) as this information may be of interest to other members of the public. This letter, with your personal details removed, may be published in its entirety. Publishing responses increases the availability of information to the public and is consistent with the OIA's purpose of enabling more effective participation in the making and administration of laws and policies and promoting the accountability of officials.

Thank you again for your request.

Yours sincerely



Kieran Burlace

Domain Lead - Marketing

APPENDIX A

