



4 March 2025

[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Dear [Redacted]

Thank you for your request made under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), received on 7 February 2025. You requested the following:

1. *What was the average amount of time it took for student to pay off their loan in 2005, 2010, 2015, 2020 and 2024?*
2. *How many borrowers paid back their loans in the above years compared to the active number of borrowers at the time?*
3. *Please provide the average time it took in the above years to pay back loans for each tertiary institution type e.g. university, polytechnic, private, two different types.*
4. *If possible, please provide the average time taken by qualification level e.g. certificate, diploma, Bachelor's, etc.*
5. *What is the average time for students to pay off their loan when they have not borrowed any student living costs compared to any student living costs borrowed?*
6. *What is the average student living cost borrowed by students in the above years?*
7. *What was the average tuition cost in the above years?*
8. *What was the average amount collected from wages in the above years? Please note where any policy changes were made that would affect these numbers e.g. Interest free loans, threshold changes.*

On 18 February 2025, Inland Revenue attempted to clarify the scope of your request and has not received a response to date. I have therefore interpreted the request for the average time taken for a student to pay off their loan to only include loans that were closed in the years requested.

On 20 February 2025, we partially transferred your request concerning questions 4, 6 and 7 to the Ministry of Education for response.

Item 1: *What was the average amount of time it took for student to pay off their loan in 2005, 2010, 2015, 2020 and 2024?*

The customer numbers and averages will differ from Inland Revenue's student loan annual reports (www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/tertiary_education/annual/2555) as loans closed are based on the calendar year it was closed, not the financial year as per the annual report.

The increase in 2020 compared to previous years was due to Inland Revenue undertaking account maintenance in preparation for its transition into a new software system. The new

system now enables overnight closure of most accounts, meaning these cases can be reported sooner.

The data in the tables below represent loans that have been paid in full, and excludes loans closed due to write-offs for bankruptcy, death and fraud.

Table 1: Average amount of time taken for a student to pay off their student loan (as at 25 February 2025)

Calendar year closed	Customer count	Average months	Average years
2005	11,896	85.4	7.1
2010	16,404	102.7	8.6
2015	24,919	119.7	10.0
2020	40,971	142.4	11.9
2024	34,751	147.9	12.3
Grand total	128,941	129.2	10.8

Inland Revenue's student loan annual report uses the median calculation to display the loan closure data. I have provided this to you below for comparison.

Table 2: Median amount of time taken for a student to pay off their student loan (as at 25 February 2025)

Calendar year closed	Customer count	Median months	Median years
2005	11,896	84.0	7.0
2010	16,404	96.0	8.0
2015	24,919	109.0	9.1
2020	40,971	126.0	10.5
2024	34,751	133.0	11.1
Grand total	128,941	115.0	9.6

Item 3: The average time it took in the above years to pay back loans for each tertiary institution type

Your request for information relating to item 3 is refused under section 18(g) of the OIA, as the information is not held by Inland Revenue, and we do not believe it is held by another agency.

Item 5: What is the average time for students to pay off their loan when they have not borrowed any student living costs compared to any student living costs borrowed?

The data is partially released to you in table 3 on the following page. Living cost breakdown is only available from April 2012, therefore your request for the average time for students to pay

off their loan depending on if they have borrowed for living costs vs no living costs from before April 2012 is refused under section 18(g) of the OIA, as the information is not held by Inland Revenue, and we do not believe it is held by another agency.

Customers who had less than \$20.00 living costs have been excluded and customers who received living costs, which were later reversed or credited, have been excluded.

Table 3: Average amount of time taken for a student to pay off their student loan (as at 25 February 2025)

	Customer count	Average months	Average years
Living costs	71,948	75.6	6.3
No living costs	85,346	46.0	3.8
Grand total	156,994	59.5	5.0

Inland Revenue's student loan annual report uses the median calculation to display the loan closure data. I have provided this to you below for comparison.

Table 4: Median amount of time taken for a student to pay off their student loan (as at 25 February 2025)

	Customer count	Median months	Median years
Living costs	71,648	76.0	6.3
No living costs	85,346	39.0	3.3
Grand total	156,994	56.0	4.7

Information publicly available

Your requests for items 2 and 8 are refused under section 18(d) of the OIA, as the information is publicly available on the Education Counts website:

www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/tertiary_education/annual/2555

Right of review

If you disagree with my decision on your OIA request, you can ask an Inland Revenue review officer to review my decision. To ask for an internal review, please email the Commissioner of Inland Revenue at: commissionerscorrespondence@ird.govt.nz.

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

If you choose to have an internal review, you can still ask the Ombudsman for a review.

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



Kelly Paterson

Segment Management Lead, Customer and Compliance Services - Individuals