



Te Pūkenga

Level 2, Wintec House
Cnr Anglesea and Nisbet St.
Hamilton 3204

0800 86 22 84
info@tepūkenga.ac.nz
tepūkenga.ac.nz

30 April 2025

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
By email: [Redacted]

Tēnā koe [Redacted]

Request under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 27 March 2025, requesting the following information from Te Pūkenga – New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology (Te Pūkenga):

I would like to request the following under the LGOIMA (but feel free to just send it through if that's easier):

- *How much money was requested on any student hardship grants, broken down monthly for each year from 2017 to 2024*
- *How much money was spent on any student hardship grants, broken down monthly for each year from 2017 to 2024*
- *How many requests were received for foodbank parcels or any non-monetary aid, broken down monthly for each year from 2017 to 2024*
- *How many requests were granted for foodbank parcels or any non-monetary aid, broken down monthly for each year from 2017 to 2024*
- *How many students requested a fees management plan or deferral or some other means to reduce or allay their fees, broken down monthly for each year from 2017 to 2024*
- *How many students received a fees management plan or deferral or some other means to reduce or allay their fees, broken down monthly for each year from 2017 to 2024*

This letter provides a formal decision on your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

Background

Covid-19 Hardship Fund for Learners

The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) managed the Covid-19 Hardship Fund for Learners (HAFL), which provided temporary financial assistance for ākonga (learners) who faced barriers to continuing their study or training as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Hardship included any suffering, deprivation or financial challenge that was affecting ākonga ability to access and continue with their study. Te Pūkenga business divisions received applications and managed payments to ākonga under this funding system.

We also note here the Technology Access Fund for Learners (TAFL). The purpose of this fund, also available during the Covid-19 pandemic, was to support ākonga and prevent them from experiencing technology-related financial challenges. It provided funding for certain technology-related costs that occurred when Covid-19 restrictions removed the option for face-to-face study. TAFL was focused on devices purchased as loan equipment for ākonga, internet access, headphones etc. We have not included separate TAFL details as we do not consider it in scope of your request. However, for your interest and information we note that we have usage data for August 2020 - June 2021, and that it was incorporated into the general HAFL fund for the 2021 - 2022 period.

Te Pūkenga Manaaki Fund

Te Pūkenga modelling undertaken in 2020 and 2021 showed that up to 12 percent of ākonga were at high risk of dropping out or moving to part-time study due to financial stress experienced during study. Nationwide, one in four ākonga have unmet financial needs during their study; a very real barrier to ākonga retention and programme completion. This modelling also shows that 72,000 ākonga will have a financial shortfall of around \$2,500 a year while studying and that this increases to \$8,600 without a student loan or fees-free support.

During the Covid-19 pandemic we saw the benefits of the HAFL. The Manaaki Fund was based on what we knew worked with the HAFL. The Manaaki Fund provided one-off financial relief payments to ākonga facing hardship. Business divisions received applications and managed payments to ākonga. Support could include food security, transport, housing, and utilities amongst other requirements.

We have also included the Emergency Manaaki Fund 2023 (Cyclone Gabrielle Relief Fund). This Te Pūkenga initiative was specific to our ākonga affected by Cyclone Gabrielle; payments were managed centrally to ākonga.

The decision

Please find the number of requests received and spend per month, for the Manaaki Fund, in tables one (2024), two (2023) and three (Emergency 2023 (Cyclone Gabrielle Relief Fund)) at **Appendix One**. All amounts are GST exclusive.

In the January column of table two where the request per month was less than four we have withheld the exact number with reliance on section 9(2)(a) to protect the privacy of natural persons. We do not believe the need to withhold this information is outweighed by the public interest in its release.

Please find the number of requests received and spend per month, for the HAFL, in tables four (July 2021-June 2022) and five (March 2020-June 2021) at **Appendix One**. All amounts are GST exclusive.

All tables supplied as part of this response record individual applications. This includes instances where:

- payments were made directly to ākonga
- payments and/or direct purchases were made on behalf of ākonga
- vouchers were supplied to ākonga.

We are releasing the details above to you, which were centrally recorded for all business divisions. We did not capture nor require reporting on the amount requested so are not able to provide this

nor draw any comparison as to whether the amount distributed was less or higher than that requested.

As of 2025, hardship funding activities have been transitioned back to the business divisions to manage as part of Te Pūkenga disestablishment. Business divisions are accountable for how they manage and approach this going forward.

Fee management plans and deferral plans are managed by individual business divisions. We are not able to collate the details you have requested regarding fees management plans or deferrals without going to each and every business division, and in some cases each and every ākonga file. Therefore, with reference to section 18(f) of the OIA we have decided to refuse this part of your request. However, we can advise that the majority of business divisions do have this option available.

Along with the Manaaki and HAFL funds and the other means of assistance you list within your request, each of our 25 business divisions have their own individual assistance available for their ākonga. For our work-based divisions this can often include loaning devices or technology assistance to ākonga for them to complete their studies.

Additional financial or non-monetary assistance is very specific to individual ākonga needs. Any detailed record of such extra assistance requested or provided, could only be ascertained through a search of individual ākonga files across the motu (country), if it is held in such specificity.

To assist in satisfying the public interest in this information, please find at **Appendix Two** a list of examples of the type of extra support, both financial and non-financial, available for our ākonga across the network. This list is by no means exhaustive but provides an overview of the type of support options Te Pūkenga has in place for ākonga. We note that some of this information can be found through individual business division websites.

Te Pūkenga encourages ākonga to seek any support and assistance required to help learning journeys and enhance opportunities for success. The approach of all our business divisions is to remove as many roadblocks as possible that ākonga might face throughout their learning journey, so that they can successfully complete their chosen programmes of study.

You have the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the OIA if you are not happy with this response. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by calling 0800 802 602.

We may publish our OIA responses and the information contained in our reply to you on our website. Before publishing we will remove any personal or identifiable information.

Ngā mihi



Gus Gilmore
Tumuaki | Chief Executive

Appendix One

Table one - Manaaki Fund 2024

2024	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Spend per month	\$ 10,204.00	\$ 56,100.97	\$ 344,535.52	\$ 321,811.39	\$ 291,756.35	\$ 398,453.67	\$ 488,130.65	\$ 519,676.00	\$ 641,946.96	\$ 599,608.05	\$ 467,462.90	\$ 454,626.91
Requests per month	47	247	1632	1162	1169	1004	1311	2567	2148	2082	1665	1162

Table two - Manaaki Fund 2023

2023	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Spend per month	\$ 100.00	\$ 1,409.00		\$ 1,320.00		\$ 3,534.00	\$ 27,145.00	\$ 951,662.00	\$ 729,646.21	\$ 508,984.24	\$ 458,382.41	\$ 631,336.00
Requests per month	<4	6		5		16	111	3271	2583	1882	1681	1642

Table three - Emergency Manaaki Fund 2023 (Cyclone Gabrielle Relief Fund)

2023	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Spend per month			\$ 215,355.00	\$ 291,473.00	\$ 94,293.99	\$ 50,500.00	\$ 19,600.00	\$ 6,400.00				
Requests per month			548	764	248	128	49	16				

Table four - HAFL (July 2021-June 2022 period)

2022	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Spend per month	\$10,627.69	\$120,429.38	\$1,418,729.92	\$501,393.82	\$665,978.50	\$846,550.16						
Requests per month	129	559	2963	1381	2501	2766						
2021	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Spend per month						\$12,558.00	\$77,545.06	\$533,438.52	\$1,653,318.02	\$717,963.06	\$535,963.41	\$87,208.47
Requests per month						6	273	2063	4073	1381	1941	245

Table five - HAFL (March 2020-June 2021 period)

2021	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Spend per month	\$5,767.50	\$13,865.00	\$152,448.71	\$99,197.11	\$48,256.71	\$75,714.74	\$2,939.32					
Requests per month	26	78	281	152	183	454	32					
2020	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Spend per month			\$19,297.30	\$45,656.00	\$114,695.00	\$427,261.57	\$499,691.57	\$700,045.11	\$736,017.29	\$601,949.13	\$222,532.72	\$188,399.11
Requests per month			65	162	389	1253	1135	1234	1223	627	528	212

Appendix Two

Examples of assistance available for ākonga across Te Pūkenga network*

Breakfast Clubs
Clothing (professional or everyday attire)
Counselling Services
Food Parcels/Vouchers
Free Hearing Clinics
Free Local Bus Service
Free Nurse Practitioner Service
Free Vaccination (during specific campaigns)
Frozen Meals
General Nurse Clinics
General Practitioner Vouchers
Holistic Health Services
Hygiene and Health Supplies
Immunisations
IT Technology (including loan devices)
Literacy and Numeracy Support
Loan Laptops
Lunch Packs
Mental Health Clinics
Mentor Support
Pātaka Kai (Community Pantries)
Petrol Vouchers
Rotary Student Success Grants
Scholarships
STI Clinics
Study Nights
Tools and/or Technology (including computer programmes and/or devices)
Weekly Food Initiatives
Welfare Support
Winter Warmer Packs (eg. blankets, sleeping bags, warm clothing)

* includes but is not limited to those listed. In addition, we have a number of other support and assistance options expected of a tertiary institution available for ākonga.