



Student Allowance

January to December 2023

The [Student Allowance Scheme](#) provides financial assistance for eligible full-time students who are enrolled in a recognised course of study or programme, at an approved education provider. It is paid weekly to help students with their living expenses.

For this report, a student is defined as a person who received at least one payment from [StudyLink](#) in the calendar year, up to the end of the specified reporting month. The data in this report is cumulative calendar year-to-date figures. Amounts are rounded to the nearest dollar and all percentages are computed using actual data and rounded to one decimal point. Total percentages may not add up to exactly 100 percent because of rounding effects. In line with the Ministry of Social Development’s confidentiality policy, all information in this document has been randomly rounded to base three. The last three years of data and annual comparisons are presented in summary tables. Earlier figures are included in the Student Allowance data file.

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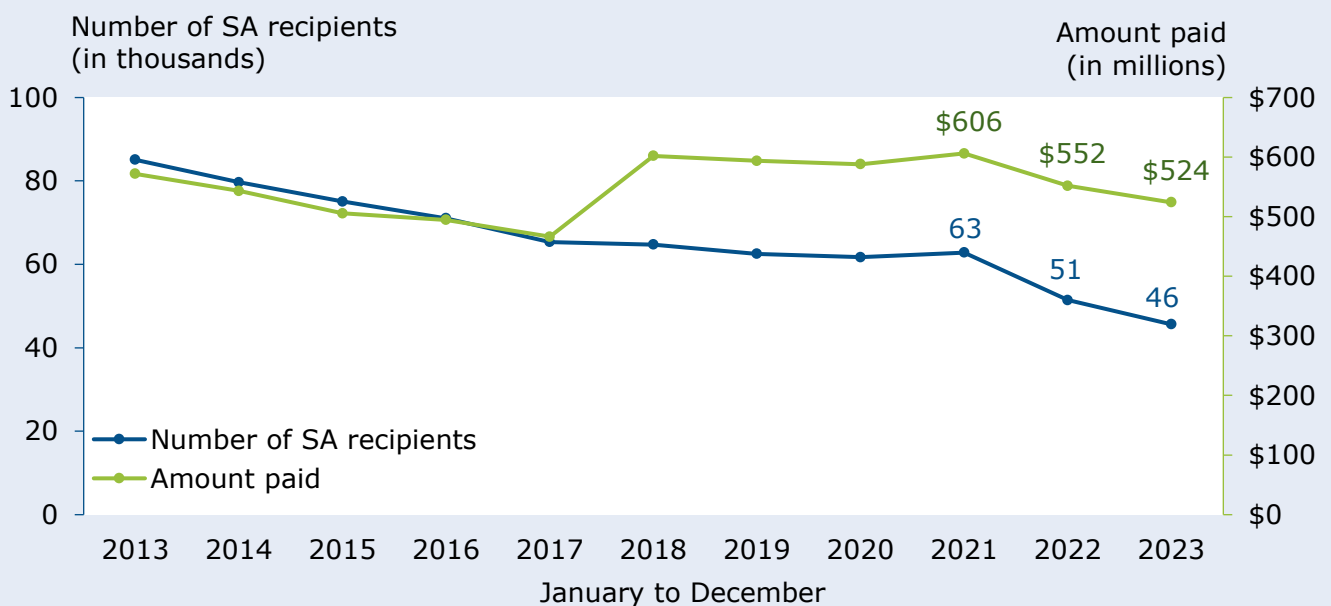
Number of recipients and amount paid

There were fewer Student Allowance recipients in 2023 than in 2022.

In 2023, 45,621 students received financial assistance under the Student Allowances (SA) Scheme. This was 5,805 fewer students (down 11.3 percent) when compared with 2022.

A total of \$524.0 million was paid for SA and Accommodation Benefit (AB) in 2023, a decrease of 5.0 percent when compared with 2022.

Figure 1.1: Number of recipients and amount paid for SA and AB, January to December 2013–2023





On average, students received \$10,109 in SA payments in 2023. This was 8.2 percent more than students received, on average, in January to December 2022.

In 2023, students who were also entitled to AB received \$1,994 on average, up 0.6 percent from the same period last year.

Below is a summary table with year-on-year comparisons over the last three years.

Table 1.1: Number of recipients, amounts paid, and average amount paid

Student Allowances	January to December			Annual change	
	2021	2022	2023	2021-22	2022-23
Student Allowance	62,814	51,426	45,621	-18.1%	-11.3%
Accommodation Benefit	43,419	35,838	31,479	-17.5%	-12.2%
Total number of recipients	62,814	51,426	45,627	-18.1%	-11.3%
Amount paid for Student Allowance	\$519,286,742	\$480,699,151	\$461,196,364	-7.4%	-4.1%
Amount paid for Accommodation Benefit	\$86,608,678	\$71,040,494	\$62,772,638	-18.0%	-11.6%
Total amount paid	\$605,895,420	\$551,739,645	\$523,969,002	-8.9%	-5.0%
Average Student Allowance	\$8,267	\$9,347	\$10,109	13.1%	8.2%
Average Accommodation Benefit	\$1,995	\$1,982	\$1,994	-0.7%	0.6%

Note 1: Not every SA recipient is eligible for AB.

Note 2: From 1 April 2022, student allowances rates increased by \$25 per week (in addition to the annual inflation adjustment) which will have had an impact on student allowances payments made in the January to December 2023 period. Where the allowance rate reflects the living expenses of two adults, the increase is \$50 a week.

2

Education providers

Across all types of providers, there were fewer SA recipients enrolled in 2023 than there were in 2022.

There were fewer SA recipients enrolled across all types of education providers in 2023 than there were in 2022. This was mainly driven by fewer Student Allowance (SA) recipients enrolled in University and Te Pūkenga (New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology, formerly Polytechnics and Institutes of Technology).

In 2023, 26,835 students received SA for study at University only. This was 2,436 fewer students (down 8.3 percent) when compared with 2022 (29,271).

There were 11,337 students who received SA for study at only Te Pūkenga. This was 2,136 fewer students (down 15.9 percent) when compared to 2022 (13,473).

Table 2.1 provides a summary of the number of SA recipients by the type of provider that they were enrolled in over the last three years. The SA data file includes breakdowns for the small number of students who received SA for more than one provider type during the year.

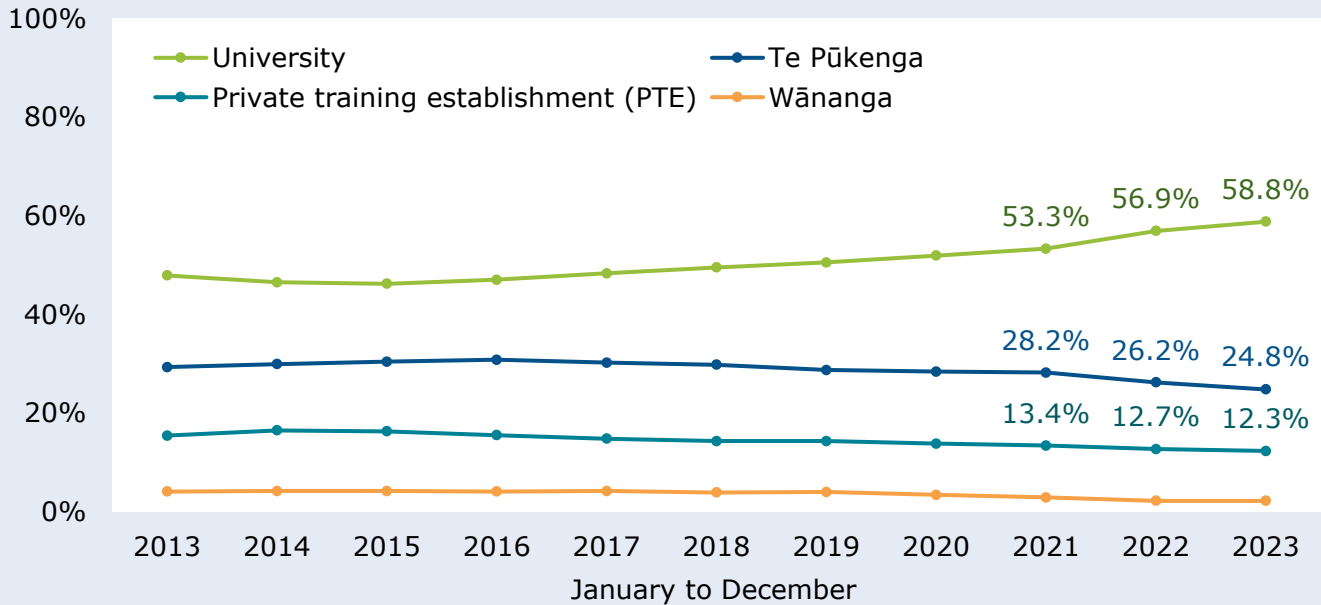
Table 2.1: Number of SA recipients by type of education provider

Type of provider	January to December			Annual change	
	2021	2022	2023	2021-22	2022-23
University	33,477	29,271	26,835	-12.6%	-8.3%
Te Pūkenga	17,718	13,473	11,337	-24.0%	-15.9%
Private training establishment (PTE)	8,418	6,525	5,619	-22.5%	-13.9%
Wānanga	1,821	1,128	984	-38.1%	-12.8%
Multiple and other providers	1,383	1,026	852	-25.8%	-17.0%
Total number of Student Allowance recipients	62,814	51,426	45,627	-18.1%	-11.3%

Note: “Multiple and other providers” includes combinations of providers (e.g. University and Te Pūkenga, PTE and University) that some students attended during the specified reporting period, as well as ‘other’ types of education providers such as high schools.

Students attending only University made up 58.8 percent of SA recipients, followed by students attending only Te Pūkenga at 24.8 percent.

Figure 2.1: Distribution of SA recipients by type of education provider, January to December 2013–2023



Note: To avoid double counting, the figure above excludes a small number of students attending more than one provider type.

Table 2.2: SA paid to students by type of education provider

Type of provider	January to December			Annual change	
	2021	2022	2023	2021–22	2022–23
University	\$270,449,048	\$271,764,817	\$269,606,942	0.5%	-0.8%
Te Pūkenga	\$149,960,085	\$126,719,740	\$116,182,456	-15.5%	-8.3%
Private training establishment (PTE)	\$63,859,404	\$56,037,378	\$51,999,186	-12.2%	-7.2%
Wānanga	\$20,007,352	\$14,163,688	\$12,588,474	-29.2%	-11.1%
Multiple and other providers	\$15,010,853	\$12,013,527	\$10,819,306	-20.0%	-9.9%
Total amount paid for Student Allowance	\$519,286,742	\$480,699,151	\$461,196,364	-7.4%	-4.1%

Note 1: Data does not include payments for AB.

Note 2: “Multiple and other providers” includes combinations of providers (e.g. University and Te Pūkenga, PTE and University) that some students attended during the specified reporting period, as well as ‘other’ types of education providers such as high schools.



3

Allowances paid based on personal and family circumstances

The [weekly rates for Student Allowance](#) are based on the personal and family circumstances of students, e.g., age, income of the student (and their partner if they have one), parental income for students aged under 24 years, relationship status, and other circumstances.

In 2023, 26.2 percent of SA recipients were single students who were living away from home. This proportion was 0.6 percentage points lower than it was in 2022.

Figure 3.1: Proportion of SA recipients based on personal and family circumstances, January to December 2013–2023

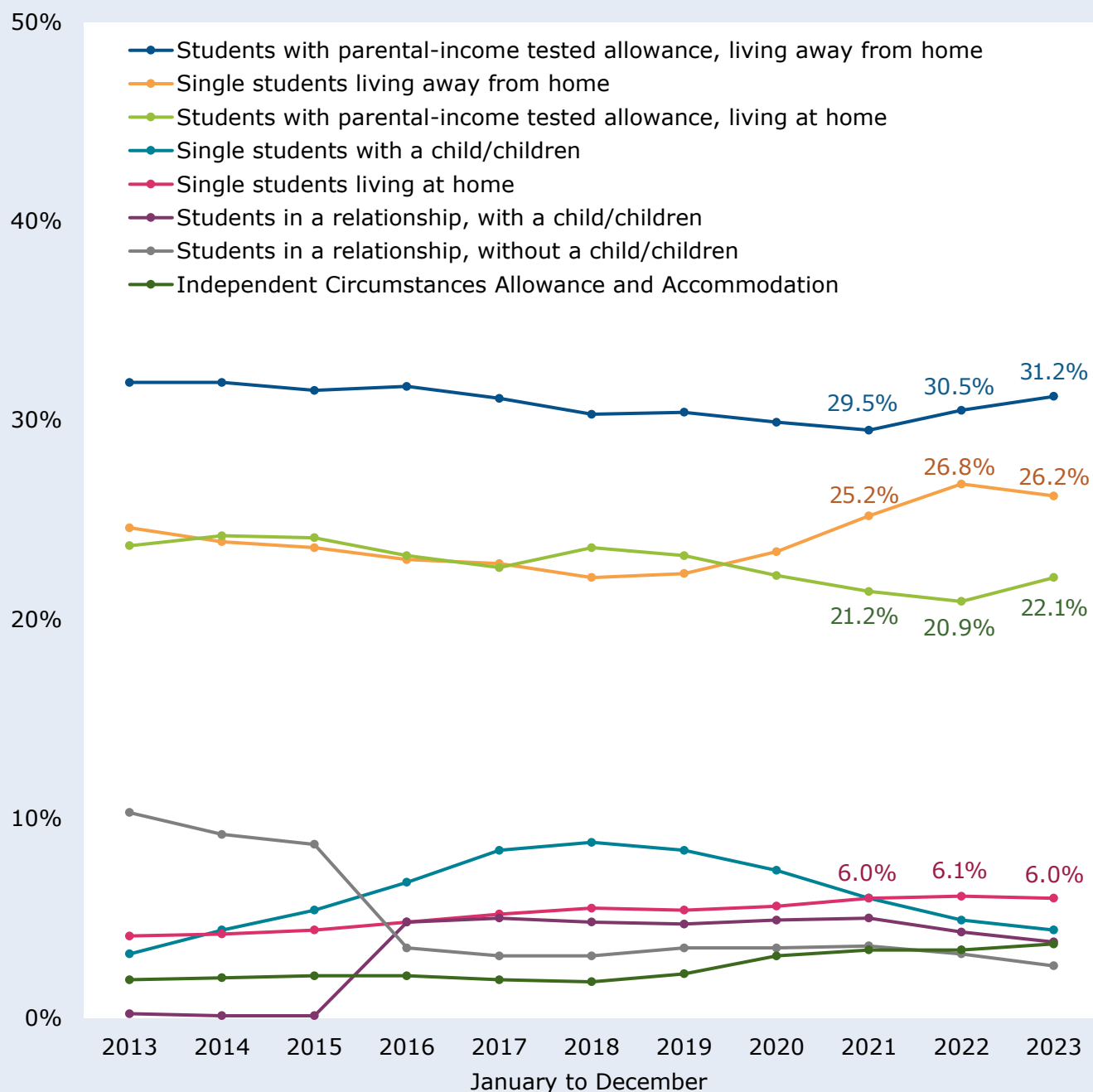




Table 3.1: Number of recipients based on personal and family circumstances

Personal and family circumstances	January to December			Annual change	
	2021	2022	2023	2021-22	2022-23
Students with parental-income tested allowance, living at home	13,422	10,737	10,074	-20.0%	-6.2%
Students with parental-income tested allowance, living away from home	18,513	15,663	14,238	-15.4%	-9.1%
Single students living at home	3,753	3,132	2,742	-16.5%	-12.5%
Single students living away from home	15,855	13,797	11,961	-13.0%	-13.3%
Single students with child/children	3,765	2,505	2,022	-33.5%	-19.3%
Students in a relationship, without a child/children	2,286	1,620	1,191	-29.1%	-26.5%
Students in a relationship, with a child/children	3,111	2,193	1,716	-29.5%	-21.8%
Independent Circumstances Allowance and Accommodation	2,106	1,773	1,680	-15.8%	-5.2%
Total number of Student Allowance recipients	62,814	51,426	45,627	-18.1%	-11.3%

Note: In this document, 'single' generally refers to students aged 24 years or older who are single. Under the SA scheme, a relationship is not recognised if either party is under 24 years old. Students who are under 24 are usually subject to a parental income test for SA. For more information, please see [here](#).

4

Demographics of Student Allowance recipients

The following tables provide a summary profile of SA recipients for each of the last three years, up to the month specified. As demographics may change during the year, the profile is as recorded at the end of the period. Detailed data series are available in the SA data file.

Table 4.1: SA recipients by age group

Age group	January to December			Annual change	
	2021	2022	2023	2021-22	2022-23
16-17 years	63	42	42	-33.3%	0.0%
18-24 years	37,440	30,867	28,395	-17.6%	-8.0%
25-34 years	17,232	14,412	12,144	-16.4%	-15.7%
35-44 years	4,524	3,525	2,934	-22.1%	-16.8%
45-54 years	2,031	1,539	1,305	-24.2%	-15.2%
55 years and older	1,518	1,038	807	-31.6%	-22.3%
Total number of Student Allowance recipients	62,814	51,426	45,627	-18.1%	-11.3%

Note 1: Age is calculated as at the end of the period.

Note 2: A breakdown of "55 and older" is available in the SA data file.



Table 4.2: SA recipients by gender

Gender	January to December			Annual change	
	2021	2022	2023	2021-22	2022-23
Female	37,482	30,522	26,922	-18.6%	-11.8%
Male	24,909	20,382	18,111	-18.2%	-11.1%
Gender Diverse	423	522	597	23.4%	14.4%
Total number of Student Allowance recipients	62,814	51,426	45,627	-18.1%	-11.3%

Table 4.3: SA recipients by residential status

Residential status	January to December			Annual change	
	2021	2022	2023	2021-22	2022-23
Citizen by birth	44,754	36,618	32,799	-18.2%	-10.4%
Citizen	9,507	7,836	6,960	-17.6%	-11.2%
Permanent resident	7,938	6,459	5,367	-18.6%	-16.9%
Other	615	513	501	-16.6%	-2.3%
Total number of Student Allowance recipients	62,814	51,426	45,627	-18.1%	-11.3%

Note: “Other” includes students who have refugee status, and those classified as protected person/s. Details of “Other” are included in the Student Allowance datafile.

Table 4.4: SA recipients by relationship status

Relationship status	January to December			Annual change	
	2021	2022	2023	2021-22	2022-23
Single	56,490	47,016	42,141	-16.8%	-10.4%
Married/Civil Union	4,029	2,880	2,283	-28.5%	-20.7%
Defacto	2,283	1,530	1,200	-33.0%	-21.6%
Unknown	15	6	0	-60.0%	-100.0%
Total number of Student Allowance recipients	62,814	51,426	45,627	-18.1%	-11.3%

Note: Students with unknown marital/relationship status refer to clients who have had a change in circumstances, and their marital/relationship status has not been confirmed at the end of the period. These students would not be receiving payments while their marital/relationship status is not confirmed.

It is not mandatory for students to disclose their ethnicity and students may report more than one ethnicity.

The numbers presented in table 4.5 are total response – students who reported more than one ethnic group were counted in each group they identified with. The total number of responses therefore does not add up to the total number of SA recipients.

Table 4.5: SA responses by ethnic group

Ethnic group (Total response)	January to December			Annual Change	
	2021	2022	2023	2021-22	2022-23
European	34,494	28,887	25,593	-16.3%	-11.4%
Māori	12,513	9,648	8,727	-22.9%	-9.5%
Pacific Peoples	7,266	5,844	5,208	-19.6%	-10.9%
Asian	14,388	12,600	11,685	-12.4%	-7.3%
Middle Eastern/Latin American/African	2,490	2,208	2,091	-11.3%	-5.3%
Other	357	291	249	-18.5%	-14.4%
Total recipients with recorded ethnicity	60,831	50,451	45,114	-17.1%	-10.6%
Not specified	1,980	972	510	-50.9%	-47.5%
Total number of Student Allowance recipients	62,814	51,426	45,627	-18.1%	-11.3%

Note: A detailed breakdown of ethnic groups is included in the Student Allowance datafile.

