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On 18 March 2020 the Ministry of Social Development transferred your request to the Ministry of Education to respond. You requested the following information:

- *Information as to why most part time students are unable to get the course related costs other students get despite having the same costs (such as technology upgrades, textbooks and going to and from course etc).*
- *Information as to if this is an internal StudyLink policy or if it is based in legislation.*
- *If it is based in legislation, where? What Act and clause?*
- *If this is an internal StudyLink policy I would like documentation as to how this decision was created and is now implemented.*
- *if this is an internal StudyLink decision I would like details as to how other put out part time students and myself might go about having this revised*

Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

Student loan eligibility rules are set out in the decisions of Cabinet recorded in Cabinet Minutes. Access to a student loan is provided through a contract between the Crown and the student. In this case, the decision to remove access to course related costs for part-time full-year students was made on 4 April 2011 by Cabinet. The minutes can be found here: treasury.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2018-02/b11-2045413.pdf.

The Government has recently announced that full-time students can temporarily borrow up to \$2,000 (in 2020 only) to help cover study expenses related to Covid-19. In normal circumstances, this entitlement is \$1,000 which can be used to help with study costs such as equipment, textbooks and field trips. Students studying part-time are not able to access this component of the loan scheme. The justification for this is to ensure that financial assistance is provided to those who need it the most, in this case full-time students who have less opportunity to work and contribute to their study costs.

Further rationale for the April 2011 decision was set out in this budget policy paper: treasury.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2018-02/b11-2045413.pdf and this regulatory impact statement: treasury.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2012-01/ris-minedu-ssp-sep11.pdf.

Thank you again for your email. You have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review this decision. You can do this by emailing info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or writing to the Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143

Yours sincerely



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