



# Student Allowance Independent Circumstances Allowance application form

Complete this form if you are applying for Independent Circumstances as part of your Student Allowance and you are under 24 years old without children, and are separated and independent from both of your parents. You will also need to complete a Student Allowance application. The best way to do this is online at [www.studylink.govt.nz](http://www.studylink.govt.nz)

A parent includes a natural or adoptive parent, step-parent<sup>1</sup>, partner<sup>2</sup> of a parent, some caregivers, and any other person acting in place of a parent<sup>3</sup> who is financially responsible for the student.

A person (including their spouse or partner) who is, or has been, a caregiver of a student is not considered a parent if they:

- are receiving or have received a Foster Care Allowance, Orphan's Benefit or Unsupported Child's Benefit for the student, or
- are providing or have provided a Transition Support Living Arrangement through Oranga Tamariki for the student.

If neither of your parents support you, you need to have one of the following exceptional circumstances to be eligible for the Independent Circumstances Allowance:

- You can't live with or be supported by your parents because of a family breakdown.
- You are (or have been) living with a caregiver or an appointed legal guardian.<sup>4</sup>
- You are an orphan, and you haven't lived with someone acting as a parent.
- One of your parents is in prison or a psychiatric hospital and the other parent can't be responsible for you.
- You have other exceptional circumstances<sup>5</sup> that mean it would be unreasonable for you to live with and receive financial assistance from any parent.<sup>1</sup>

We may need to speak to someone who can confirm your situation. If you've already spoken to a professional (such as a doctor, counsellor, lawyer or someone else of standing in the community) who is familiar with your situation, you can ask them to complete the supporting statement included with this application. Otherwise we may:

- need to speak to your parent(s)<sup>1</sup> or someone else who can confirm your situation, or
- ask you to meet with someone to discuss your application.

<sup>1</sup> A step parent is a person who is married, or in a civil union or de facto relationship with, the parent of the student.

<sup>2</sup> A partner is a person who is married, or in a civil union or de facto relationship with, the parent of the student.

<sup>3</sup> A person acting in place of a parent can include grandparents, other relatives (including whāngai), and some current and former caregivers and guardians of the student.

<sup>4</sup> People who have been appointed as a guardian by the Family Court.

<sup>5</sup> Exceptional circumstances means circumstances that are highly unusual, or far beyond what is ordinary. The circumstances would need to be beyond your control. Choosing to live or study in a different city/town from your parents is not considered exceptional circumstances.

**You must give us all the information we need.**

**If you do not have all the information we need, talk with us and we may be able to help.**

**If we find out later that any information you give us is not true, or that you knew information you should have told us and did not tell us, we may stop your payments. You might need to pay money back, we may impose a penalty, and you could be prosecuted.**

# Before you start – Read this page

Here are some important things you need to know before you complete your application.

## Use blue or black ink only

When completing your application you must only use blue or black ink. If your application has been completed in any other colour we might get you to complete another one.

## Answer all the questions

It's important to answer every question in your application. If a question doesn't apply to you, use 'N/A' or 'nil'. Don't leave the space blank, unless indicated on the form, as this could delay the process and you may not get paid on time.

## You may need to provide documents

When you apply for Student Allowance, you may need to provide certain documents as part of your application – these are listed on page 6.

All documents sent to StudyLink must be a verified copy. A verified copy is a copy of the original document which has been signed and dated by someone like a Solicitor/Lawyer, Notary Public, Court Registrar, an approved person at an education provider, school principal, StudyLink or Work and Income staff member or Justice of the Peace (listed in the Yellow Pages) who can confirm that the copy is the same as the original. They must print their name and title on each page and write that it is a true copy and sign it.

The best way to send your documents to us is online using [www.connect.co.nz](http://www.connect.co.nz). Please remember to include your name and client number with any documents you send to us. For more information visit [www.connect.co.nz](http://www.connect.co.nz)

 Remember to sign and date this application on pages 6 and 7 – and make sure anyone else who needs to sign it has done so.

## How to return this form

The easiest and fastest way to return your completed form to us is online using [www.connect.co.nz](http://www.connect.co.nz) Please remember to include your name and client number.

For more ways to contact us, visit our website [www.studylink.govt.nz](http://www.studylink.govt.nz)

**IMPORTANT:** Remember you also need to apply for a Student Allowance at [www.studylink.govt.nz](http://www.studylink.govt.nz)

We need to receive your Student Allowance application by the end of the first week of your course (or the date you qualify if that's later) or you may miss out on some payments. If you apply late it is unlikely your payments will be backdated.

**1. What is your client number?**

If you have received assistance from StudyLink or Work and Income before, write your client number here if you know it. This number can be found on your Community Services Card if you have one.

**Client number**    |    |

**2. What is your full name?**

First name	Middle name(s)	Surname or family name
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

**3. What is your legal name as it appears on your birth certificate? (If different from above)**

First name	Middle name(s)	Surname or family name
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

**4. What date were you born?**

Day   Month     Year

**5. Where will you live while studying?**

If you live overseas, please provide a contact address in New Zealand.

Flat/House number	Street address		
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>		
Suburb	City	Post code	Country
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	NEW ZEALAND

**5a. What is your postal address?**

If you are not currently living at the above address, please give us your postal address.

If you live overseas, please provide a contact address in New Zealand. Please do not give the address of your education provider.

Flat/House number	Street address		
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>		
Suburb	City	Post code	Country
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	NEW ZEALAND

You can view your Student Allowance and Student Loan mail online at MyStudyLink and we'll send you an email or text when you have new mail to view.

**5b. How can we contact you?**

We will contact you between 8am and 4pm, Monday to Friday to discuss your situation.

Phone	Mobile <sup>1</sup>	Fax	Email <sup>1</sup>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

<sup>1</sup> If you give us your mobile number or email address we may use these to send you text messages or emails to let you know about important changes, appointment reminders or that it's time to reapply if you're continuing with your studies. This must be your own mobile number or email address. Do not give the contact details of your education provider.

**6. Will you be living with your parent(s) or any person acting as a parent while studying?**

Yes  No

If yes, it is unlikely your application will be approved – call us on **0800 88 99 00** to discuss this.

**6a. Are your parent(s) financially supporting you in any way?**

Yes  No

If yes, it is unlikely your application will be approved – call us on **0800 88 99 00** to discuss this.

**7. Have you had a Youth Payment or Young Parent Payment in the last year?**

Yes (Go to Q9)  No

**8. Have you had an Independent Circumstances Allowance in the last year?**

Yes  No (Go to Q9)

**8a. If yes, have your circumstances changed in any way?**

For example, you have moved back home, or you have started living with someone who's acting as a parent to you.

Yes  No (Go to 'Student's declaration' on page 6)

**8b. If yes, please tell us what's changed:**


**9. Why are you applying for the Independent Circumstances Allowance?**

- My parent(s) and I had a breakdown in our relationship, now I can't live at home and my parent(s) do not financially support me (Go to Q9a).
- I am (or have been) living with a caregiver or appointed legal guardian (Go to Q10).
- I am an orphan and haven't lived with anyone acting as a parent (Go to Q11).
- One of my parents is in prison or a psychiatric hospital and my other parent also can't be responsible for me (Go to Q9a).
- I have other exceptional circumstances that mean it would be unreasonable for me to live with and receive financial assistance from any parent (Go to Q9a).



**We may need to see some evidence of your situation – see the checklist on page 6.**

**9a. Please explain your circumstances. For example, who you have had a breakdown with and why. You can continue on a separate page if required.**


<sup>1</sup> People who have been appointed as a guardian by the Family Court.

**9b. When did you stop living with your parent(s)?**

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Day	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Month	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Year
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**9c. When did your parent(s) stop supporting you?**

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Day	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Month	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Year
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**10. How can we contact your parent(s), caregivers or appointed legal guardian? We need to talk to them to confirm the information you give us.**

**Parent, caregiver or appointed legal guardian One**

First name	Middle name(s)	Surname or family name	Relationship to you
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Flat/House number	Street address		
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>		
Suburb	City	Post code	Country
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Phone	Mobile	Fax	Email
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

**Parent, caregiver or appointed legal guardian Two**

First name	Middle name(s)	Surname or family name	Relationship to you
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Flat/House number	Street address		
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>		
Suburb	City	Post code	Country
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Phone	Mobile	Fax	Email
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

**10a. Who else can we contact to discuss your situation? This could be your doctor, counsellor or someone else of standing in the community such as your School Principal, Minister or Kaumātua. It should be someone you've already spoken to about your situation, or someone who knows about your situation and has known you for at least a year.**

First name	Surname or family name
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Relationship to you	
<input type="text"/>	

Flat/House number	Street address		
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>		
Suburb	City	Post code	Country
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Phone	Mobile	Fax	Email
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>



# How we protect your privacy

## Collecting your information

**We collect your personal information, so we can provide income support, NZ Super or Veteran's Pension, Student Allowance, or Loans and connect you with employment, education and housing services. We do this under various Acts, which are all listed on our website at [workandincome.govt.nz/privacy](https://workandincome.govt.nz/privacy)**

- To help us do this, we collect information about your identity, your relevant history, and your eligibility for our services.
- We get this information directly from you, and we sometimes collect information about you from others, including other government agencies.
- You can choose not to give us your personal information, but we might not be able to help you if you don't.

## Using your information

**We use the information you give us to make decisions about the best way to help you.**

- These decisions may be about:
  - whether you're eligible for our services
  - running our operations and ensuring our services are effective
  - the services we'll provide in the future.

## Sharing your information

**Sometimes, we need to share your information outside our Ministry to reach our goal of helping New Zealanders to be safe, strong, and independent.**

- To do this, we may share your information with:
  - prospective employers to help you find work
  - contracted service providers that help us to help you
  - health providers if we need your medical information to assess your eligibility
  - other government agencies when we have an agreement with them
  - some other governments if you may be eligible to get or are getting an overseas pension.
- We also share personal information when the law says we have to.

## Respecting you and your information

**We make sure we follow the Privacy Act to do what's right when we use your information.**

- We treat you and your information with respect, by acting responsibly and being ethical.
- We make sure any technology we use meets strict security standards so it keeps your information safe.

## Get in touch if you have a question

**You have a right to ask to see your personal information, and to ask for it to be corrected if it's wrong.**

- If you have a question or a complaint, please get in touch.
- You can find full details about what we do with personal information in our privacy notice at: [workandincome.govt.nz/privacy](https://workandincome.govt.nz/privacy)

# Student's declaration

The information I have provided is true and I have not left anything out. I have read and understood the Privacy Statement and my obligations for Student Allowance. I understand that if I have made a false statement or don't tell StudyLink of a change in my circumstances or fail to meet my obligations that my Student Allowance payments may stop. If this happens I understand that I will have to pay back any overpayments and I could be prosecuted.



## Student's signature

Day

Month

Year



## Documents to provide

### Only for people who are applying for the first time

All documents sent to StudyLink must be a verified copy. A verified copy is a copy of the original document which has been signed and dated by someone like a Solicitor/Lawyer, Notary Public, Court Registrar, an approved person at an education provider, school principal, StudyLink or Work and Income staff member or Justice of the Peace (listed in the Yellow Pages) who can confirm that the copy is the same as the original. They must print their name and title on each page and write that it is a true copy and sign it. You need to provide any information we need before the end of your course or your Student Allowance application may be declined.

The best way to send your documents to us is online using [www.connect.co.nz](http://www.connect.co.nz). Please remember to include your name and client number with any documents you send to us. For more information visit [www.connect.co.nz](http://www.connect.co.nz)

### If you have been involved in a family breakdown or have other exceptional circumstances we need either:

- A supporting statement from your doctor, counsellor or someone else of standing in the community such as your School Principal, Minister or Kaumātua. This can be a letter or the supporting statement included with this application (pages 7–8), or
- If you haven't already spoken to a professional who can provide this information we will:
  - need to confirm your situation with your parent(s) or someone else who can do this. This can be a letter or the supporting statement included with this application (pages 7–8). We will also need to talk to them, or
  - ask you to meet with a StudyLink staff member to discuss your application.
- If you are (or have been) living with an appointed legal guardian, the legal document that proves this.
- If you are an orphan your parents' death certificates.



# Student Allowance Independent Circumstances Allowance supporting statement – student details

Use this form to support your application for an Independent Circumstances Allowance under the family breakdown criteria. If you've already spoken to a professional, like a doctor or counsellor, you can ask them to complete this form. Or you can ask someone of standing in the community (an independent, trustworthy person), who is familiar with and can confirm your situation. This could be someone like your School Principal, Lawyer, Police Officer or Kaumatua. If you don't know someone of standing in the community, this could be completed by someone else who is familiar with your situation, for example a sibling or family friend. If you already have evidence that supports your application you can send this to us instead.

Please print clearly using black or blue pen only. Once you've had the form completed send your form and any other documents to us online using [www.connect.co.nz](http://www.connect.co.nz). Please remember to include your name and client number with any documents you send. For more information visit [www.connect.co.nz](http://www.connect.co.nz)

**This section is to be completed by the student.**

## Student's client number

This is a number issued to you by StudyLink or Work and Income. If you don't have one or don't know it, leave this question blank.

Client number

 |  | 

## Student's legal name

This is your legal name as it appears on your Passport or Birth Certificate.

First name	Middle name(s)	Surname or family name
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

## Student's date of birth

 Day  Month  Year

# Student's declaration

I have read and understood the Privacy Act information on page 5.



## Student's signature

 Day  Month  Year

# Student Allowance Independent Circumstances Allowance supporting statement

This section could be completed by the student's doctor, counsellor or someone else of standing in the community who is familiar with their situation. If you don't know someone of standing within the community this could be completed by someone else who is familiar with their situation, for example a sibling or family friend.

1. What is your legal name as it appears on your birth certificate?

First name	Middle name(s)	Surname or family name

2. What is your relationship to the student (such as a doctor or counsellor)?

3. What is your postal address? Please note, this must be a New Zealand address.

Flat/House number	Street address		
Suburb	City	Post code	Country
			NEW ZEALAND

4. How can we contact you?

We may contact you about this supporting statement.

Phone	Mobile	Fax	Email

5. Please name the parent(s) that the breakdown has occurred with.

6. In your opinion, would it be unreasonable for the student to live with and receive financial assistance from any parent?

Please explain in detail:

Yes  No

7. Have the student's parent(s) or any other person been providing any ongoing financial support?

Yes (please explain below who has been providing support, and what this includes)  No

8. Please provide any other information that you feel would assist us in making a decision for this student.

You can continue on a separate piece of paper if required.

 Signature

Day  Month    Year

Please provide your professional stamp or alternatively attach your business card

# Seven steps to student finances

Exams finish



Course starts

## STEP 1 – Apply at [www.studylink.govt.nz](http://www.studylink.govt.nz) for financial assistance

## STEP 2 – We will start processing the application

We'll check the information that's given to us and get things underway. Nothing needs to be done at this point unless we make contact.

## STEP 3 – We will make contact

We'll send a letter advising what we need next. The letter needs to be signed and returned (if required) and any documents we've asked for need to be sent to us.

## STEP 4 – Use MyStudyLink to track the application:

- check to see if documents have been received
- check the Student Allowance and Student Loan status
- view and accept the Student Loan Contract
- view and update personal details
- apply for course-related costs
- view mail.

Please note: MyStudyLink only displays payments and information relating to Student Loan, Student Allowance and scholarships.

## STEP 5 – We check study details with the education provider

Enrolment needs to be fully completed before this can happen.

## STEP 6 – We will finish processing the application

We'll send a letter advising what we have assessed entitlement for and when the payments will start.

## STEP 7 – Payments can start

The earliest that payments can start is in the second week of the course. This is because we make payments in arrears.

If an application for Student Allowance has been made, we'll send a letter advising what happens next. Enough time needs to be allowed for all seven steps to be completed, so the application needs to be made as soon as possible. If the application is not made on time or we don't receive all the information we need, we can't make payments on time.

Save time – Get it done online [www.studylink.govt.nz](http://www.studylink.govt.nz)



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT**  
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA



**STUDYLINK**  
Hoto Akoranga  
A service of the Ministry of Social Development

# MyStudyLink

## get it all done online

- check out what financial assistance you may be able to get
- apply for your student finances
- check your Student Allowance and Student Loan application status
- view and update your personal details
- change the amount of your living cost payments and apply for your course-related costs
- view details of your next payment and previous transactions
- view your mail
- view and accept your Student Loan Contract.

## How to contact us

Website: [www.studylink.govt.nz](http://www.studylink.govt.nz)

Phone: **0800 88 99 00**

## Using Connect

A quick and easy way to send us your documents

1. Create an account at [www.connect.co.nz](http://www.connect.co.nz) with your RealMe login
2. Upload your verified documents
3. Submit to StudyLink