



13 December 2024

Salient Magazine

By email: fyi-request-29209-93550c58@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Salient Magazine

Official information request regarding international student issues

I refer to your request for information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) dated 15 November 2024:

1. *Pass and Success Rates of International vs Domestic Students For each of the last five academic years, please provide the pass rates and overall completion rates of international and domestic students, broken down by:*
 - *Undergraduate programmes*
 - *Honours programmes*
 - *Master's programmes*
 - *PhD programmes*

Are there any significant differences in academic performance trends between international and domestic students? If so, please provide analysis or data on the factors that may contribute to these disparities.

2. *International Student Enrolment Policies and Academic Readiness What specific admission requirements or assessments are required for international students applying to undergraduate, honours, master's, and PhD programmes? This includes any mandatory language proficiency tests, academic readiness assessments, or prior qualifications verification.*

Has the university implemented any testing or pre-admission evaluations aimed at determining an international student's likelihood of success in a New Zealand tertiary environment? If so, what are these evaluations, and how are they factored into the admission process?

Does the university have policies or guidelines that outline differences (if any) in the enrolment criteria between domestic and international students?

3. *Support for Transition from International to Western Academic Systems What resources or support services does the university provide to assist international students transitioning from non-Western education systems? This includes any orientation programmes, language support, academic*

workshops, or mentorship initiatives specifically designed for international students.

Are there specific policies, plans, or documents outlining the university's strategies for supporting international students' transition academically and socially? If so, could you provide copies of these documents?

Has the university conducted any evaluations or studies on the effectiveness of its support systems for international students? If such evaluations exist, I request a summary or copy of any findings from these assessments.

4. *Scholarships for International Students For each of the last five academic years, how many international students were offered scholarships, and how does this compare to the number of domestic students offered scholarships?*

Of the international students who were awarded scholarships, how many completed their degrees under those scholarships, and how many were removed from their scholarship programme before completion? Please provide comparative data for domestic students as well.

What are the criteria and processes for awarding scholarships to international students, and are there any differences compared to the processes for domestic students?

5. *Complaints by International Students In the last five academic years, how many complaints have been lodged by international students regarding lack of support, particularly in academic, language, social, or mental health services?*

If possible, please provide a general summary of the nature of these complaints, ensuring that all responses comply with privacy standards and do not disclose individual information. Specifically, I would like to understand any recurring issues or systemic concerns raised by international students regarding the university's support services.

6. *Long-term Tracking of International Student Success and Retention Does the university track the retention rates of international students as compared to domestic students? If so, could you provide these rates for the last five years?*

Are there any reports or analyses related to the long-term academic or employment outcomes of international students post-graduation? If available, please share insights or summaries.

On 3 December you agreed to refine question 1 to the GPA of domestic and international students in their first year of a qualification from the 2019 – 2024 academic year and which new domestic and international students enrolling in the last 5 years have been placed on academic hold

I have renumbered your questions for clarity in answering:

1. GPA of domestic and international students 2019 – 2024 and academic holds.

	Average GPA (Calculated)
2019	
Domestic	4.69
International	5.34
2020	
Domestic	5.20
International	5.55
2021	
Domestic	4.93
International	5.13
2022	
Domestic	4.78
International	4.99
2023	
Domestic	5.00
International	5.73
2024	
Domestic	5.16
International	5.96

	# Students with Academic Hold	% of Students with Academic Hold
2019		
Domestic	285	5.69%
International	28	1.66%
2020		
Domestic	461	8.86%
International	25	2.16%
2021		
Domestic	707	12.41%
International	49	7.73%
2022		
Domestic	803	15.88%
International	33	5.38%
2023		
Domestic	620	13.68%
International	41	3.14%
2024		
Domestic	327	6.87%
International	10	0.65%

2. ***Are there any significant differences in academic performance trends between international and domestic students? If so, please provide analysis or data on the factors that may contribute to these disparities.***

The University does not hold analysis or data on the factors that may contribute to significant differences in academic performance trends between international and domestic students. Therefore, this aspect of your request is refused in accordance with s18(e) of the Act as the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist.

3. ***What specific admission requirements or assessments are required for international students applying to undergraduate, honours, master's, and PhD programmes? This includes any mandatory language proficiency tests, academic readiness assessments, or prior qualifications verification.***

International admissions criteria is country specific. Information regarding language and academic entry requirements for international students is publicly available on the University website at <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/international/applying/entry-requirements>.

Domestic admissions requirements can be found at: <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/admissions>

The University's Admission and Enrolment Regulations can be found at: www.wgtn.ac.nz/documents/policy/academic/admission-and-enrolment-regulations.pdf

Information regarding entry criteria for a particular course or programmes is available on the publicly available on the relevant course or programme page on the [University website](#).

As such, this aspect of your request is refused in accordance with s18(d) of the Act as the information is already publicly available.

4. ***Has the university implemented any testing or pre-admission evaluations aimed at determining an international student's likelihood of success in a New Zealand tertiary environment? If so, what are these evaluations, and how are they factored into the admission process?***

The University does not implement testing or pre-admission evaluations aimed at determining an international student's likelihood of success in a New Zealand tertiary environment. Therefore, this aspect of your request is refused in accordance with s18(e) of the Act as the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist.

5. ***Does the university have policies or guidelines that outline differences (if any) in the enrolment criteria between domestic and international students?***

Information regarding language and academic entry requirements for international students is publicly available on the University website at <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/international/applying/entry-requirements>.

The University does not hold policies or guidelines that outline differences in the enrolment criteria between domestic and international students. Therefore, this aspect of your request is refused in accordance with s18(e) of the Act as the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist.

6. *Support for Transition from International to Western Academic Systems* What resources or support services does the university provide to assist international students transitioning from non-Western education systems? This includes any orientation programmes, language support, academic workshops, or mentorship initiatives specifically designed for international students.

The International Student Support Team (ISST) offers several tailored resources to assist international students in adapting both academically and socially, including:

- **Orientation Programmes:** Dedicated international orientation sessions covering cultural adjustment, academic expectations, and university resources.
- **Mentorship Initiatives:** While we do not have a formal mentorship programme, we provide an International Buddy Programme that allows new students to connect with domestic students or senior international students. More details can be found here: [International Buddy Programme](#)

For Academic Workshops:

- Sessions on essay writing, referencing, critical thinking, and study techniques led by the Learning Support Team.
- The ISST works closely with Titoko and SLSS to provide academic support to international students through the Academic Monitoring Program

For Language Support:

- English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses are available to enhance language proficiency and academic communication skills. More information can be found here: [EAP Course Details](#).

All information held by the University related to supporting international students to western academic systems cannot be made available without substantial collation or research. Therefore this aspect of your request is refused in accordance with s18(f) of the Act. However we can provide the following information which will provide an overview of our activities:

- Orientation Deskfile,
- Trimester 3 2024 Orientation Programme
- Trimester 3 2024 Orientation presentation
- Academic Monitoring Deskfile.

Please, note some information contained in these documents has been withheld in accordance with s9(2)(a) of the Act in order to protect the privacy of natural persons.

Further information relating to support for international students is available at <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/students/support/international>.

7. Are there specific policies, plans, or documents outlining the university's strategies for supporting international students' transition academically and socially? If so, could you provide copies of these documents?

The University has documented strategies to support students in several policies and plans, including:

- The Student Engagement Framework: [Engagement Framework PDF](#)
- Student Wellbeing Outcomes Framework: [Wellbeing Framework PDF](#)
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan set by the Disability Service: [Disability Inclusion Plan](#)

However, there are no policies, plans or documents specifically regarding outlining the strategies for supporting international students' transition. Therefore, this aspect of your request is refused in accordance with s18(e) of the Act as the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist.

Further information can be found on the University's website at: <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/about/governance/policy/policies>

8. Has the university conducted any evaluations or studies on the effectiveness of its support systems for international students? If such evaluations exist, I request a summary or copy of any findings from these assessments.

ISST conducts evaluations through a number of different platforms, including:

- Orientation Surveys.
- Focus Groups: Conducted based on Faculty requests.
- Monthly Meetings: Held with student group representatives, including V-ISA, PGSA, and the Pacific Student Group.

All information held by the University related to evaluations or studies on the effectiveness of its support systems for international students cannot be made available without substantial collation or research. Therefore this aspect of your request is refused in accordance with s18(f) of the Act. However we have provided the most recent Orientation survey results from Trimester 3, 2024.

9. Scholarships for International Students For each of the last five academic years, how many international students were offered scholarships, and how does this compare to the number of domestic students offered scholarships?

Scholarship Offers		
Academic Year	Domestic	International
2020	2573	574
2021	2793	502
2022	2831	560

2023	2315	606
2024	1931	378

Please note the following in relation to this data:

- The information is grouped by the year the application was received. The year of study the scholarship was awarded for may differ from the year the application was received.
- The table only contains information where students have identified their International or Domestic status (this is not a requirement for all scholarships - it is estimated that only 50% of applicants include this information on their application forms).
- The information includes Doctoral scholarships and Prizes
- The table records offers made, including offers that may subsequently have been declined.
- 2024 data has been provided as at 10 December 2024.

Further information regarding scholarships, including all scholarships available to international students can be found on our website at <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/scholarships/find-scholarships?category=international>. If there is a particular scholarship you would like further details about please contact us.

10. *Of the international students who were awarded scholarships, how many completed their degrees under those scholarships, and how many were removed from their scholarship programme before completion? Please provide comparative data for domestic students as well.*

This information cannot be made available without substantial collation or research. Therefore this aspect of your request is refused in accordance with s18(f) of the Act.

11. *What are the criteria and processes for awarding scholarships to international students, and are there any differences compared to the processes for domestic students?*

Information regarding the criteria and processes for awarding scholarships is specific to each scholarship. This information is publicly available on the relevant scholarship page which can be found via the Scholarship Database at <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/scholarships/find-scholarships>. As such, this aspect of your request is refused in accordance with s18(d) of the Act as the information is already publicly available.

12. *In the last five academic years, how many complaints have been lodged by international students regarding lack of support, particularly in academic, language, social, or mental health services?*

The University has not received any formal complaints from international students in the last five academic years regarding lack of support. Therefore, this aspect of your request is refused in accordance with s18(e) of the Act as the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist.

- 13. If possible, please provide a general summary of the nature of these complaints, ensuring that all responses comply with privacy standards and do not disclose individual information. Specifically, I would like to understand any recurring issues or systemic concerns raised by international students regarding the university's support services.**

This aspect of your request is refused in accordance with s18(e) of the Act as the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist.

- 14. Does the university track the retention rates of international students as compared to domestic students? If so, could you provide these rates for the last five years?**

	Domestic		International	
	Next year retention %	Within year retention %	Next year retention %	Within year retention %
2019	88.3	95.6	84.8	97.4
2020	88.4	92.1	89.9	93.3
2021	85.7	94.4	92.2	95.2
2022	84.1	92.5	91.0	93.8
2023	87.3	95.5	89.5	93.1

- 15. Are there any reports or analyses related to the long-term academic or employment outcomes of international students post-graduation? If available, please share insights or summaries.**

The University does not hold reports or analyses related to the long-term academic or employment outcomes of international students post-graduation. Therefore, this aspect of your request is refused in accordance with s18(e) of the Act as the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist.

We do hold general information about the types and location of employment, salary ranges, and further study opportunities graduates may take up after completing their qualifications via the Graduate Destinations Survey. This information is available at <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/careers/resources/graduate-destinations>

Further information on this subject may also be available from the [Universities New Zealand Graduate Outcomes Tool](#) and the [Education Counts website](#).

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of the decisions made regarding this request. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact me at oiarequests@vuw.ac.nz.

Ngā mihi nui

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