



2 November 2023

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DOIA 2324-0808

Tēnā koe Ziyun

Thank you for your email of 11 October 2023 to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following:

I am writing to kindly seek some updated information regarding PhD Student Visas as per below:

- 1. After the border reopens, total number of PhD student visa applications INZ has received, approved and declined until 31 September 2023, compared with same period pre covid19(2019-2020) ? Can we please break down these stats into universities and markets(e.g. China, Vietnam, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Japan, Thailand, The Philippines, etc)?*
- 2. Main reasons for the visa declines for each aforementioned markets.*

Our response

Question 1: Please refer to the attached Appendix for the information you have requested.

Question 2: An application can be declined for one or more reasons. To check the main reasons for declines for PhD students from different nationalities will require Ministry staff to manually review each declined application requiring substantial collation. This would remove Ministry staff from their core duties and therefore the greater public interest would not be served. Therefore, this request is refused under section 18(f) because the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation.

In accordance with section 18(A) of the Act, I have considered whether fixing a charge under section 15 or extending the time limit under section 15(a) would enable the request to be granted but it is my view it would not.

In accordance with section 18(B) of the Act, I have considered whether consulting with you would remove the reason for refusal, however, in my view it would not as to obtain the reasons for decline would inevitably involve the manual review of applications.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of the Ministry's response to your request, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request or this response, please contact INZOIAs@mbie.govt.nz

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Clifford', written in a cursive style.

Sarah Clifford
Director Visa
Chief Operating Officer Immigration Branch
Immigration New Zealand
Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment