



Special Supplementary Grant (SSG) funding report 2020 and 2021

Purpose of the Special Supplementary Grant (SSG)

The purpose of the SSG for Special Education Funding is to provide additional tutorial support, over and above existing staff members, to work with resource-intensive learners with special needs, across Te Pūkenga's network (specifically eight institutes of technology and polytechnics).

The objective of the fund is to support providers to equip learners with the knowledge and skills needed to take part in the social and economic life of New Zealand.

This report covers data collected for funding provided in 2020 and 2021¹. It describes the qualifications the funding was used to support, the supports provided, and the outcomes and benefits learners experienced because of these supports.

Qualifications

SSG funding was used to support the delivery of the following qualifications or training scheme across the reporting subsidiaries:

- NZ 2853 – NZ Certificate in Skills for Living for Supported Learners (Level 1)
- NZ 2863 – New Zealand Certificate in Study and Employment Pathways (Level 3)
- NZ 2861 - NZ Certificate in Foundation Skills (Level 1)
- NZ 2862 – NZ Certificate in Foundation Skills (Level 2)
- CHL020A Preparation for Study for Supported Learners (one organisation)
- Community Living Training Schemes (one organisation)
- Only offered in 2021: NCEP T1 and T2 - Vocational Pathways - Construction and Infrastructure & Manufacturing Technology (one organisation)

The majority of subsidiaries were delivering NZ Certificates.

Tutorial Supports

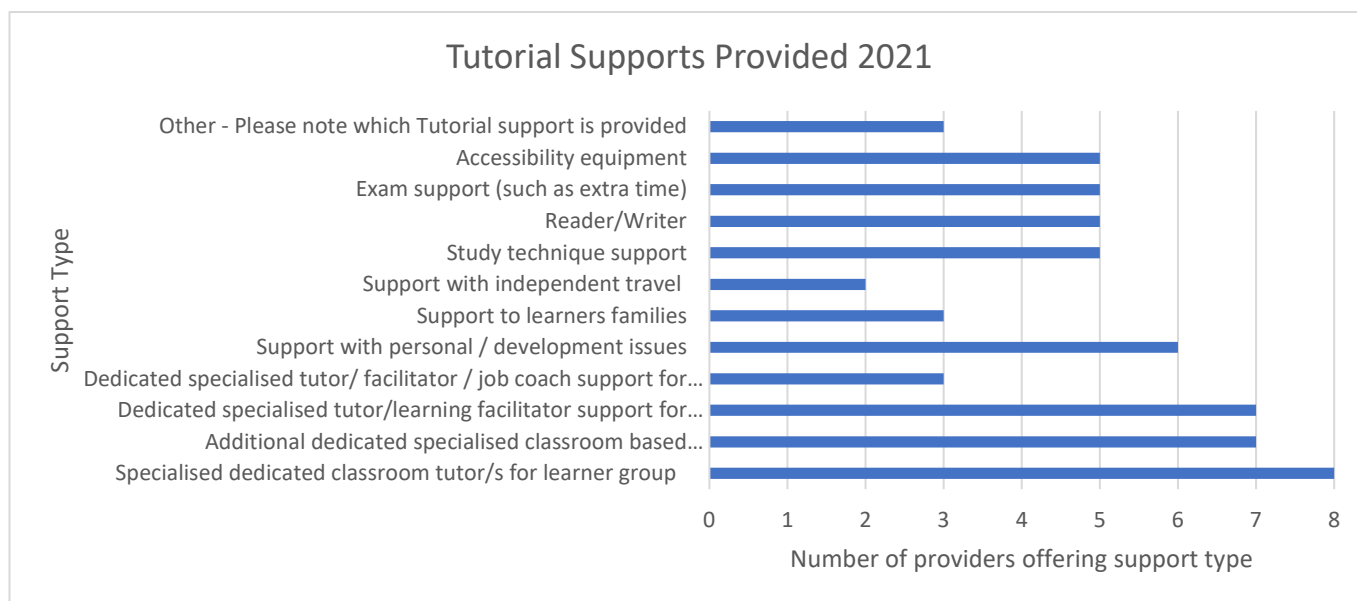
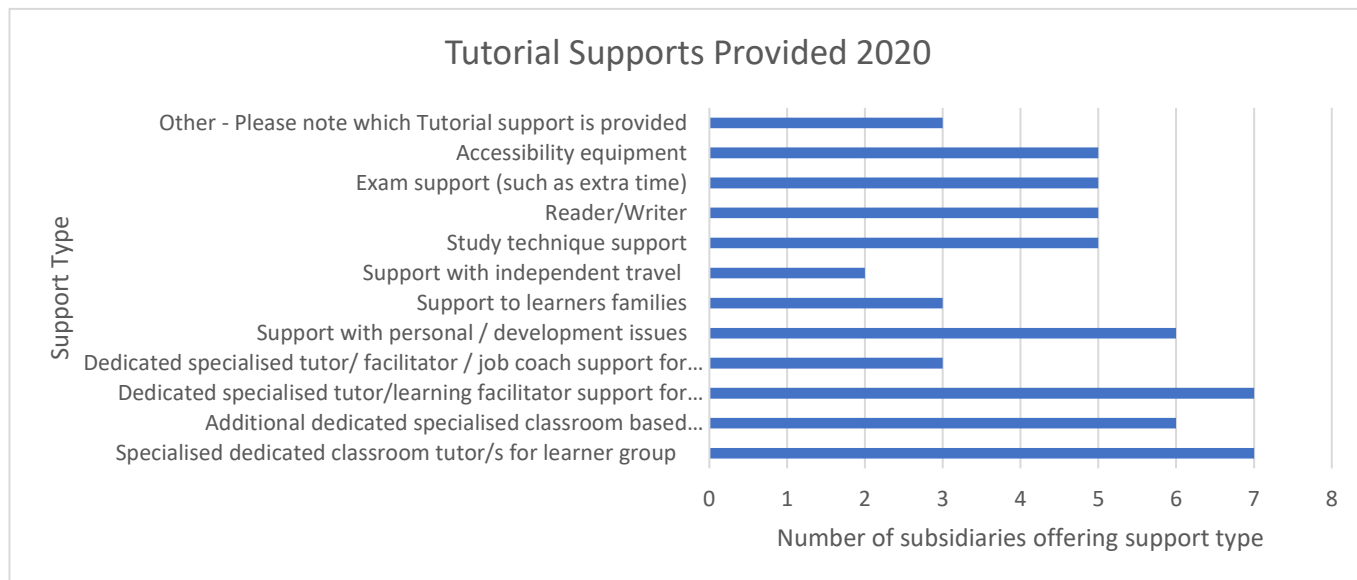
Tutorial supports provided covered a range of actions / activities, from direct learning support, to facilitated support for activities and educational engagement. Reporting subsidiaries noted they provided the following specific supports from the suggested list provided in the reporting template:

- Specialised dedicated classroom tutor/s for learner group
- Additional dedicated specialised classroom-based tutor/learning facilitator support for learner group (beyond dedicated tutors)
- Dedicated specialised tutor/learning facilitator support for activities which occur out of the classroom (such as field trips, organisational activities, wider student body activities)
- Dedicated specialised tutor/ facilitator / job coach support for work-based placements or experiences outside the classroom
- Support with personal / development issues
- Support to learners' families
- Support with independent travel
- Study technique support
- Reader/Writer
- Exam support (such as extra time)
- Accessibility equipment

¹ One subsidiary did not provide data for 2020
SSG 2020/21 Report

Other supports that were provided (not in the reporting template) included:

- Integration and support in non-contact classroom time on campus
- Learners were linked with Learner Services teams when needed, to assist with Equity support, Māori Support, Pasifika support and Wellbeing support needs
- Literacy and Numeracy support
 - 2021 Only: Teacher aid in Foundation L2 and T1 & T2. Second tutor provided in Foundation L2 to help with ratios.



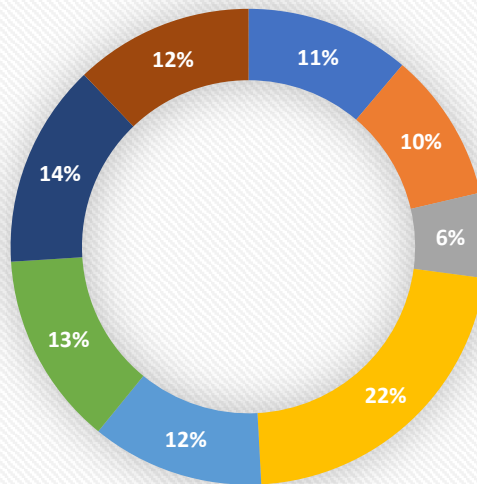
Financial Support

We allocated \$662,505 each year for 2020 and 2021. While information was requested on contributions made by the subsidiaries in addition to SSG funding, not all subsidiaries were able to provide information due to the nature of their accounting systems. It is noted that subsidiaries who could provide this information did, however the scope of this ‘contribution funding’ varied widely, again due to accounting systems.

As we were not able to collect standardised subsidiary contribution reporting, nor access to accurate expenditure reporting for all reporting subsidiaries, this information has been omitted from the report.

The following chart shows the general distribution of SSG funding across the receiving subsidiaries.

Percentage of SSG Funding received by TEI per annum for 2020/21



6004	6006	6007	6008	6011	6014	6017	6025
Unitech	Ara	EIT	WelTech	NMIT	Whitireia	WITT	Toi Ohomai

Outcomes and Benefits

The SSG enables Te Pūkenga to deliver a mana-enhancing tertiary experience to disabled learners by ensuring the appropriate level of support is offered for this cohort.

Appropriate supports ensure these disabled learners have the opportunity to gain a qualification, attend graduation, create long-term friendships and build confidence in their own abilities. Some examples of the outcomes and benefits of the SSG shared with us are detailed below:

- Learners are supported to access curriculum, complete assessment tasks and have access to campus facilities.
- The learners benefit from Tutor Support interaction through having another adult to model appropriate behaviour and act as a support person that operates in "real" time. This enables learners to answer questions, write answers and stay focused on the class content through 'shadowing', modelling and verbally prompting learners.
 - An example of this (amongst countless others) is a learner that arrived back on campus very nervous and vulnerable due to COVID concerns. The Tutor Support modelled Covid precautions such as wearing a face mask, social distancing and washing hands as well as wiping desks down in class. The learner was also settled by the tutor during breaktimes by sitting with them and guiding them through what is appropriate behaviour during the Orange alert settings at the institute. The tutor support also supplied written and visual reminders for the learner about COVID requirements at Orange level. The learner felt supported and understood they had someone to talk to as well as have their concerns relieved in 'real time' while on campus.
- Additional support from four Learning Facilitators in addition to the core tutor supporting learners to achieve outstanding unit standards.
 - Learners have responded very favourably to having a consistent approach to extra support within the programme.

- Staff also appreciate being able to plan more reliably knowing that Learning Facilitators are available for more challenging activities which “stretch” the support needed for these learners.
- Additional tutor support ensures Disabled Learners have the pastoral care support, the academic support and classroom and campus modelling that they require to learn skills around independence, responsibility, socialisation, and self-regulation.
 - Learners that graduated from Foundation Skills in 2021 went on to enrol on L 3 and other tertiary education courses at a high rate.
 - Learners developed confidence in their own ability to study and achieve despite the challenges they faced due to COVID-19.
 - The online and in class tutor support and the ability to reduce the support staff-to-learner ratio with tutorial support was key to achieving successful outcomes in graduation and transition for our learners.
 - Additional support allows for the opportunity to engage in off-site activities, adventure-based learning, and excursions which have encouraged ākongā to develop life skills and gain confidence. Some of the learners have transitioned to further study or gain skills like promoting themselves, professional behaviour and employability skills.
 - Several ākongā were able to move into paid roles and a few others transitioned into L2/3 courses.

Covid-19 Impacts

The Covid-19 pandemic caused many disruptions, which have been widely recognised as having a greater impact on marginalised learner cohorts.

Due to the nature of the SSG funded courses, in some cases online delivery of material was not viable. Despite these challenges Te Pūkenga took steps to provide the tools for support staff to maintain open communication with their learners, allowing them the best opportunity to meet their academic goals. It was positive to see Te Pūkenga was quick to adapt course material and reflect on which methods worked best for their learners. Below describes the impact the Covid-19 pandemic has had on these learners.

- The Covid lockdown in 2021 created a space for the teaching team to be creative, quickly moving to online platforms such as Facebook to engage with the learners. Whilst this wasn't useful for all learners, many were able to engage with support from their households, and each of the Learning Facilitators continued to support their individual learners throughout this time. Fortunately, the staff had planned and offered off-site workplace experiences early in the programme.
- As the Foundation Skills course is a 12-month course, learners affected by the 2021 lockdown were a new cohort of learners. Experience from the 2020 lockdown meant the importance of regular and frequent contact with the Foundation Skills learners was a known requirement for success. Tutor Support once again played a vital role in supporting tutors to maintain pastoral insight, supportive communication, and structured tutorial support to keep learners engaged and progressing.
- On-line classes continued to be available for all learners, however the need to provide regular contact, check-ins, and resources to support mental, physical and whānau health was a priority. While resources were available to assist with online access, some learners across both programmes were not able to join in the Zoom classes due to technology issues or lack of skills. In semester two, half of the learners did not return to class until Green level because of concerns about catching Covid. Tutors were unable to do one-to-one sessions during the lockdown period which is an important part of the course. Online classes were not as effective as face-to face for our learners.
- Covid 19 had a big impact on delivery. Most impactful was that face-to-face learning and teaching was halted from the beginning of lockdown until ākongā returned. During that time tutors connected with learners through individual phone calls for pastoral care and teaching (learners were sent workbooks), video calls/Zoom classrooms, email interactions. Some ākongā were not able to access the technology required for video calling due to their circumstances, some ākongā requested loaner laptops. Disability meetings and support were offered online, including dyslexia screenings. Most ākongā came back to these programmes and had a successful year, despite the lockdown, but as a result, some did withdraw, some came back but with increased anxiety which needed additional support. However, Zoom does not replace face to face teaching and practical components for this learner group.

- The Covid-19 pandemic has had a great impact on this learner cohort and their providers, but with the support of the SSG funding, a combination of resilience and a willingness to adapt quickly has enabled minimal disruption to their learning goals.

Summary

SSG funding is an important contribution to the tertiary sector, enabling specialised learner support for a cohort of learners who may have higher investment needs. Utilisation of the funding provides much needed supports for this learner cohort, providing ākongā with a holistic tertiary education experience enabling better outcomes in their learning journey.

The major supports enabled by the fund (offered across all providers) are dedicated classroom tutors in the learning environment and learning facilitator supports for activities that occur outside of the classroom. These additional points of contact for this learner cohort are vital in building their confidence as they gain qualifications and social skills. The frequent interaction with specialised supports reinforces the goals of the courses they attend, with people they can build a rapport with, in a safe environment.

Funding across 2020 and 2021 was constant, contributing to the stable environment providers needed to ensure well-supported delivery of these courses. The consistency in support funding was particularly valuable considering the levels of learner uncertainty during lockdown periods, and the challenges for some learners in re-engaging in campus-based learning. The funding has also allowed providers to be more flexible in their delivery of their courses, helping minimise the impact to learning caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) will provide reporting on the use and benefits of 2022 SSG funding in the second half of 2023.