

Special Supplementary Grant (SSG) funding report 2022

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.

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 2022. 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 schemes across eight Te Pūkenga business divisions:

- 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)
- Level 2 NCEA Automotive and construction programmes (one organisation)
- Community Living Training Schemes (one organisation)

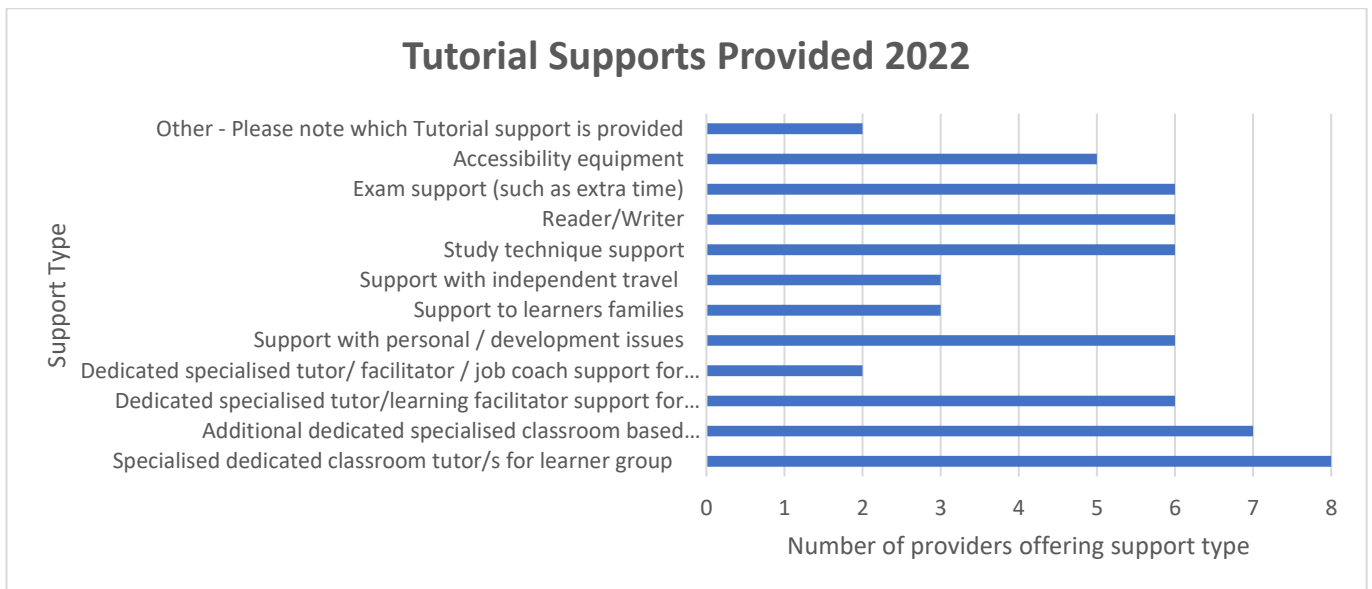
The majority of business divisions were delivering NZ Certificates.

Tutorial Supports

Tutorial supports provided covered a range of actions / activities, from direct learning support, to facilitated support for activities and educational engagement. Business divisions 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

Tutorial Supports Provided 2022



Caveats for the above tutorial supports:

- Answers left as <Please select> were counted as “No”
- One business division recorded “No” against four of the supports offered because the programme did not employ a specialised person to do the activities but commented that the programme and staff provided support in these areas. We have adjusted the responses to “Yes” to reflect these comments.

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

- 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.

Financial Support

We allocated \$662,502 in 2022 for SSG Funding. While information was requested on contributions made by the business divisions in addition to SSG funding, not all business divisions were able to provide information due to the nature of their accounting systems. It is noted that business divisions 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 business division contribution reporting, nor access to accurate expenditure reporting for all reporting business divisions, this information has been omitted from the report.

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 (in business divisions words):

- **Socialisation:** Ākonga are in a group of up to 30 other young adults who all have similar educational experiences. Learners feel they have found their people in that they can share world views and perspectives and support each other in decision making and making sense of the world. The programme offers many off-campus events and activities which provides contexts for the ākonga to interact and build strong relationships. The capstone for this work in 2022 was the overnight trip to Tiriti O Waitangi Marae for a noho experience. Some ākonga had never been away from their family overnight and were able to draw upon the lessons and activities to support each other and self-regulate to socialise appropriately.

- **Communication:** Ākonga are able to practice effective and appropriate communication (speech, text, email, body language, assistive technology and sign language) in real time in a variety of contexts by physically attending the programme. Classes teach and require ākonga to actively listen, ask questions, lead and follow in a group and learn to record information while (not less importantly) between classes and while on breaks ākonga are interacting casually and making friends and socialising inclusively.
- **Independence:** Ākonga are supported individually to be independent on campus and on the programme. This looks different to meet the needs of each learner. For example, while one learner is confidently using cash to pay for their lunch at Subway (on campus) and needs support to independently organise their bank accounts, another learner is learning to count money, collect change and recognise how much a product is. Ākonga enjoy the increased independence the programme challenges them to meet.
- **Responsibility:** While the programme explicitly teaches skills for living and working, ākonga are challenged to develop their personal attributes through events and activities. Attributes such as courage, open-mindedness, learnability, and confidence all contribute to the learner's growth of their responsibility.
- **Empowerment:** Course content such as Models of Disability taught in Health and Well-being is an example of how the programme provides scaffolded information that is personalised to empower ākonga. Ākonga learn about who they are and draw upon varying models of disability to write a disclosure script which enables them to control the narrative of who they are and what they need to succeed in work or further study.
- **Regulation:** Ākonga are instructed on various techniques to regulate their nervous system and emotional being. Being on campus four days a week gives multiple opportunities for ākonga to practice these techniques (e.g. box breathing) in a real context. Ākonga are supported to manage challenging situations and given the time to reflect.
- **Outcomes gained in direct relation to tutorial support** range from students' classroom behaviour being appropriately modelled, students learning needs being supported to access curriculum and complete assessment tasks and access to campus facilities. The students are experiencing these benefits from Tutor Support interaction due to having another adult to model appropriate behaviour and to act as a support person that operates in "real" time. This enables students to answer questions, write answers and stay focused on the class content through 'shadowing', modelling and verbally prompting students.
- **After participating in this programme** ākonga have demonstrated individual growth in ways that have allowed them to participate more independently in their own lives. For example, the family of a learner with Down's Syndrome reported they were now confident to cook a meal for their family, having learnt the skills in class, and were now comfortable enough with public buses to take themselves on outings without a parent. Other students who have completed the Skills for Living programme have gone on to study Computing User Fundamentals at Level 2 and have used the skills and confidence gained in SFL to help succeed in L2.
- **Additional teaching resources** allow us to provide a 1:5 learner to staff ratio within the Skills for Living programme, creating a safe environment. Having access to staff at this ratio means that learners are confident in the classroom because they know they are supported. Funding allows us to take ākonga out of the classroom into experiential learning such as museums and local community projects such as gardens and charity endeavours. Additional funding also allows us to ensure that ākonga are given the opportunity to participate in safety training such as water safety programmes and workshops in the Fit 4 Fun challenge. Ākonga in the programme experienced significant personal growth and confidence in their capacity to engage with the wider community.
- **Tutor Support staff** are integral to enabling the positive outcomes in this cohort. For example, neurodiverse students learning styles support is needed in the following areas: time - students require more repetition and multiple attempts at achieving Learning Outcomes to consolidate their learning; modelling - students require modelling by staff in areas such as behaviour, tasks (cooking, travelling, cleaning etc.); "shadowing" (the

methodology of prompting students using physical, gestural or verbal action and reducing presence according to needs) - students require careful support to speak, write, read, move and act.

- Work experience and voluntary work continue to be an important facet of the programme with some ākongas obtaining a paid work position, or regular voluntary position, and thereby gain a sense of purpose and fulfilment. During 2022 we had four ākongas who got paid employment with a cleaning firm and one other at a local school in the kitchen.
- (The programme) is a holistic programme which fosters independence and confidence on many levels. This is evident in the close bonds the ākongas build, both with classmates and tutors, throughout the year. This translates into the ability to tackle many diverse situations, whether it be going to work, learning a new skill or forming positive reciprocal interactions with people they have never met before.
- 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.
- 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 ākongas to develop life skills and gain confidence. Some of the learners transitioned to further study or gained skills like promoting themselves, professional behaviour and employability skills.

Covid-19 Impacts are ongoing.

The Covid-19 pandemic caused many disruptions, which have been widely recognised as having a greater impact on marginalised learner cohorts and were ongoing through the 2022 academic year. Some examples of these shared with us are detailed below:

- As the Foundation Skills course is a 12-month course, the learners affected by Covid 19 isolation requirements (due to illness) in 2022 were a new cohort of students. Experience from the 2020 lockdown meant that the importance of regular and frequent contact with the Foundation Skills students was a known requirement for success to occur.
- Tutor aides 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 in times of physical absence. This was facilitated via regular contact, check-ins and resources to support mental, physical and whānau health was a priority.

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 ākongas with a holistic tertiary education experience enabling better outcomes in their learning journey.

The major supports enabled by the fund (offered across all business divisions) 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.

Continuation of SSG funding contributes to the stable environment providers need to ensure well-supported delivery of these courses. The consistency in support funding in 2022 was particularly valuable considering the levels of learner uncertainty during isolation periods, and the challenges for some learners in re-engaging in campus-based learning. The funding has also allowed business divisions to be more flexible in their delivery of their courses, helping minimise the impact to learning caused by the tail of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) will provide reporting on the use and benefits of 2023 SSG funding in the second half of 2024.