

Education entitlements for former refugees, asylum seekers and their families

We know how important education is for former refugees, asylum seekers and their families. Over the last few months, we've been working to get clarity around the education support available in Aotearoa so that our communities can be clear about the supports available to them.

Over the last two years, the Government has done good work in addressing some of the gaps in support, enabling better access to education our communities. Here's what we now know about eligibility for former refugees, asylum seekers and their families:

	Domestic student for Primary and Secondary Education	Domestic student for Tertiary Education	Eligible for Student Loans and Allowances
Refugee (convention or quota)	✓	✓	✓
Partner and children of an adult refugee	✓	✓	✓
Parents and siblings of a refugee who is a dependent child	✓	✓	✓
Other family members of a refugee (not covered above) who came into New Zealand on a Refugee Family Reunification residence visa	✓	✓	Only after holding a residence visa for three years
Asylum seeker	✓	✓	✗
Immediate family of an asylum seeker	✓	✗	✗

It's important to note that:

- All former refugees and asylum seekers, and their children, are entitled to receive primary and secondary education under the same terms as New Zealand citizens and be treated as domestic students.
- Former refugees and their immediate families are treated as domestic students for the purposes of accessing tertiary study. A permanent residency visa is no longer required for these groups. For study started after 1 May 2022, former refugees and their families are entitled to receive both student allowances (if eligible) and student loans.
- Asylum seekers qualify to be treated as domestic students for the purposes of tertiary education. However, their family members do not (unless and until the asylum seeker is recognised as a refugee). Neither asylum seekers nor their immediate families qualify for student allowances or student loans (unless the family member happens to have citizenship or permanent residence).
- Holders of the refugee family support residence visa are entitled to be treated as domestic tertiary students, but they must have held a residence class visa for at least three years before they are eligible for student loans and student allowances.

If you want to read more about allowance and loan eligibility, visit

<https://www.studylink.govt.nz/about-studylink/glossary/residency-requirements.html>.