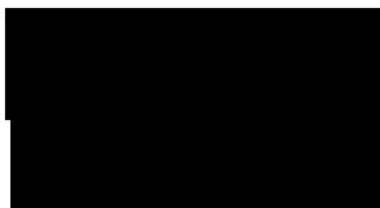




11 March 2021



Thank you for your email of 21 January 2021 to the Ministry of Education requesting the following information:

1. *Please provide information about any research or other work currently underway or completed since 2018 relating to distance education, and online learning for school age children. Specifically, since the repealing of CoOL legislation in 2018, has any work been done to develop a framework for regulating and supporting online learning. If not, is there any intention to look into this?*
2. *Please provide any ministerial advice produced since 2018 relating to online learning or distance education.*
3. *Please provide information about any approaches from external parties relating to registering schools that use online instruction in lieu of physical attendance.*
4. *Please provide information about the legality of schools instructing fully online on a permanent basis, and not requiring any physical attendance.*
5. *Crimson Global Academy (MoE Institution No: 921) - Please provide any emails or other communications between Crimson Global Academy, any other parties, and MoE relating to Crimson Global Academy from 2018 onwards....*

Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

In response to part one of your request I trust you find the following information helpful. Since the repeal of the CoOL legislation we progressed technical changes through the Education and Training Act 2020 to update the language from “correspondence” school to “distance” school and to make it clearer that a school board can agree to provide tuition for students enrolled at another school, and that this tuition can be delivered online.

As part of *Supporting all schools to succeed: Reform of the Tomorrow's Schools system* announced in November 2019, the Government committed to consider opportunities to promote a more cohesive national approach to support flexible learning over the longer term [2 – 4 years].

Digitally enabled learning, including blended and distance education create significant opportunities to make learning more flexible. While there is some existing flexibility in the schooling system to provide blended and distance learning, policy work is underway to ensure that the framework is fit for purpose.

A range of initiatives were put in place during 2020 to support distance education as a result of the disruptions caused by COVID-19.

The Learning from Home and Ki Te Ao Mārama websites provide advice and resources for whānau, teachers and leaders to support learning for children and young people in early learning services and schooling (English and Māori medium education).

Home Learning TV | Papa Kāinga and Mauri Reo Mauri Ora programmes, broadcast during the lockdown in 2020, are available on TV on Demand. New programmes will be made available should all or some parts of New Zealand enter a further period of extended lockdown.

ClassroomNZ2020 is available supplement schools' online learning programmes. At this stage, the platform has a range of online courses that will be available until the end of June 2021. This platform is specifically to support learning due to disruption by Covid-19 for years 1-13 in both English and Māori mediums. It allows schools/kura and students/ākonga to access a large range of "ready to go" materials for blended learning during class time and learning from home. There are specific resources to assist years 11-13 NCEA students to compliment what is provided by their schools. All these are provided in partnership with the Te Murumāra Trust, and Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu.

In addition, the Ministry of Education has been working closely with the Virtual Learning Networks (VLN) groups to enable more streamlined and equitable access through the establishment of a single structure for the VLN. It's important that all students, no matter where they are located in Aotearoa New Zealand, will be able to access VLN services in similar ways. During 2021, we aim to increase participation, increase curriculum breadth for learners, contribute to addressing the impact of teacher shortages and improve system capabilities for remote and distance teaching and learning. We have also asked the VLN community to provide a paper that describes effective pedagogy and practice for distance learning. We expect to work on this further with them during 2021.

For point two of your request, we have identified 13 documents in scope and attached these as **Appendix A** with our decision to their release outlined in the attached **Appendix A Document Table**. We are withholding one document in full under section 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Act as to protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials. We are refusing four of these documents under section 18(d) of the Act as they are publicly available as per the links provided in the **Appendix A Document Table**.

For part three of your request, the Ministry are working with an iwi that is considering offering education provision in Te Reo online. This is so that they can reach their whānau who live outside their iwi area or in fact now live outside of New Zealand. The Ministry has received a few phone enquiries about the process for setting up an online school, but no formal applications have been received yet.

Part four of your request is answered through the Education and Training Act 2020 which restricts schools that can instruct full time, without requiring attendance, to those designated as distance schools.

The Education and Training Act requires every domestic student between the age of 5-15 to be enrolled at a registered school and to attend that school whenever it is open.

For state schools this will usually mean physical attendance. A notable exception is Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu o Aotearoa - the correspondence school which is specifically set up for distance learning.



Private schools may instruct online if they continue to meet their registration criteria, including suitable tuition standards which includes the mode of curriculum delivery and the regularity of instruction.

The information about Crimson Global Academy we are refusing under section 18(d) of the Act as it is soon to be publicly available on the Ministry of Education website at the following link:

<https://www.education.govt.nz/our-work/information-releases/responses-to-official-information-act-requests/>

Please note, the Ministry now proactively publishes responses under the Act on our website. As such, we may publish this response on our website after five working days. Your name and contact details will be removed.

Thank you again for your email. You have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review this decision. You can do this by writing to [info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz) or Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Nāku noa, nā



Ellen MacGregor-Reid  
**Deputy Secretary**  
**Early Learning and Student Achievement**