



Provider Update – Student Visa Program

VET sector update – Nepal Student visa cohort

From 1 May 2019, all Student visa applicants from Nepal (both in and outside Australia) applying to study in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector will be required to provide evidence of their English language skills and financial capacity with their visa application. This documentation will be required regardless of the education provider and country evidence levels. This means a 'Streamlined' student visa applicant will be required to provide this documentation with their Student visa application.

As previously noted, the growth in the Nepal Student visa market continues to surge with significant growth in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector. This requirement is implemented to ensure growth in the sector is sustainable and to protect the welfare of vulnerable students.

The requirement to provide documentation may not be reflected in the Department's online [Document Checklist Tool](#). However, VET sector applicants are advised to submit the required documentation to lodge a complete application in addition to meeting all other visa requirements. Where this documentation is not provided with the visa application, the Department will request it. However, this may delay the processing of visa applications.

This requirement will be applicable for the foreseeable future. Please refer to the attached Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for further information.

Temporary Graduate (Subclass 485) – Graduate Work Stream (GWS)

The Department is currently experiencing a significant increase in Temporary Graduate visa applications and is focussing on managing the biggest peak processing time for this program. We thought it would be timely to remind education providers of the necessary documentation to upload to ImmiAccount when lodging a Graduate Work Stream (GWS) application.

The Department can make a decision on a Temporary Graduate visa application with the information provided without requesting further documentation. It is important to remember there are stringent time of application documentation that must be provided when lodging a GWS application. Temporary Graduate visa applicants must provide evidence of:

- ✚ Meeting the Australian Study Requirement (<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/temporary-graduate-485/australian-study-requirement>);
- ✚ Undertaking an eligible English language test in the three (3) years prior to lodgement or hold an eligible passport;
- ✚ Applying for an Australian Federal Police (AFP) check during the twelve (12) months immediately before the day the application is made. This requirement also applies to any dependant applicant included in the application who are over the age of sixteen (16);
- ✚ Adequate health insurance for all applicants; and
- ✚ Applying for a skills assessment for their nominated occupation with the relevant assessing authority.

Your agents can access LEGEND.com by subscription. This resource includes migration legislation as well as the procedural guidelines applied by Departmental officers when they assess cases. The Departmental website also provides information about the program, including statistics, visa requirements, and average global processing times.

Trades Recognition Australia Update

The ongoing high demand for Provisional Skills Assessments (PSA) has caused an increase in the time it takes to complete PSA application assessments, which is around 90 days currently.

Your agents can assist to reduce processing times by ensuring that all applications are submitted 'decision ready' which means all necessary documentation is included. The evidence required in the application should clearly support:

- ✚ The applicant's qualification or work experience claim,
- ✚ Ensure qualifications include the formal transcript and,
- ✚ Employment information includes supervisor or employer contact details that can be clearly associated with the business.

Incomplete or unclear information is a primary reason for delays and may result in an application being made unsuccessful. Supplementary information will be requested if needed for clarification but reducing the need for multiple exchanges will assist to speed up the process.

Processing timeframes are also affected by a large number of general enquiries, particularly those simply seeking a status update. Applications are processed in order of receipt and TRA will not consider any requests to expedite the processing of an application. The high volume of general enquiries has a net effect of slowing assessments down. Agents in particular are asked to assist by reducing email traffic and understanding the processes in place.

Submission timeframes:

There has recently been a change in the time allowed by TRA for application documents to be submitted once the applicant has registered and paid online. From 1 April, 2019, the period has been **reduced to 14 days** to align TRA timelines better with the Department of Home Affairs requirements.

Late lodgements

The Department has noted a high volume of visa applications that have been lodged within days of the course commence date. This includes some cases where the CoE was issued two days prior to course commencement. While we aim to process visa applications in time for course commencement, this is possible only if an application is lodged **at least six weeks** prior to course commencement and the application is 'complete' minimising processing delays.

Complete means:

- ✚ All the questions in the form are answered correctly including questions relating to previous travel, visa refusals and cancellations (for other countries) for both the applicant and their family members.
- ✚ The required health and character checks have been completed before the application is lodged, and
- ✚ All relevant documentation, including supporting documentation is uploaded at the time the application is lodged.

Evidence Level update - March 2019

The Evidence Levels were updated on 28 March 2019. Education providers should check the [Document Checklist Tool](#) for any updates to the document requirements for Student visa applications.

Please note that the only exception is the document requirements for Nepalese citizens applying for VET sector visas as noted above.