



Fact sheet

Independent ELICOS Student visas in China

This fact sheet provides information for applicants from China seeking a subclass 570 – ELICOS visa. This visa is designed for students with a genuine intention to study only English in Australia. The Department will be monitoring applications and compliance for this visa type very closely.

The Department regularly reviews the immigration compliance of all international students. These Assessment Level reviews use objective data to determine the relative immigration risk of student cohorts by nationality and education sector. Where justified, changes are made to the Assessment Levels that apply to the different student cohorts. Assessment Levels determine the requirements for a student visa. The higher the Assessment Level on a scale of 1 to 5, the greater the immigration risk and therefore the greater the requirements for the grant of a visa.

As a result of the 2008 Assessment Level review, applicants for a subclass 570 – ELICOS visa from the PRC were moved from Assessment Level 4 to Assessment Level 3. This is the result of objective data which demonstrated that the visa compliance of Chinese students had improved. Any future movements in the Assessment Level are similarly dependent on the visa compliance performance.

The compliance rates of both students and agents will be tracked closely.

The Department expects that prospective students who genuinely wish to undertake only a stand-alone English course in Australia will apply for this visa. Careful assessment will be undertaken in regards to the claims of all applicants. Applicants are reminded to provide full and complete information, as detailed in the additional documentary requirements checklist which is available for eVisa agents on the DIAC website. **See:** http://www.immi.gov.au/students/checklists/pilot/offshore/student_offshore_CHN.pdf.

Agents who lodge eVisa applications from non-genuine students may be the subject of sanctions as specified in the Facility Access Agreement. Sanctions include suspension from the eVisa trial or removal of an agency from the eVisa trial.

Frequently Asked Questions

These questions relate to Chinese applicants for subclass 570 – ELICOS visas.

Q: Should I lodge an eVisa or Paper application?

A: Applicants may lodge an online eVisa application through a participating agent (http://www.immi.gov.au/business-services/education-providers/pdf/ed_agent_list.pdf) or can choose to lodge by paper. The Department's preferred lodgement channel is eVisa which streamlines the application processes, offering clients a faster and more convenient lodgement method.

All applications from PRC nationals lodged in Mainland China or New Zealand are processed at the Adelaide Offshore Student Processing Centre, although only applicants resident in Mainland China can lodge their applications by eVisa.



Q: How is this different from the normal visa process?

A: DIAC will be carefully assessing all of these applications. Every applicant's background and personal circumstances will be considered when determining if the applicant's intention to study in Australia is genuine. Applicants are encouraged to provide full and complete information about their personal circumstances.

Q: How is this different to normal eVisa process?

A: Participating agents should note that additional documents **must** be attached to the browser in support of any subclass 570 -ELICOS visa applications. The China specific checklist has been updated to reflect these changes. The following documents must be scanned and attached to the eVisa browser at the time of application. Failure to do so may result in visa refusal or increased processing times for these applications.

- The applicant's bank statements showing a consistent savings history (i.e. evidence of personal savings or income)
- The applicant's property ownership certificates (all pages) or other evidence of funds or assets.
- For each person in the application who is in employment, a letter from their work unit authorising leave, indicating the length of employment, position held, salary and full contact details of the person who authorised the leave.

Q: What sort of information regarding personal circumstances should be included as part of the application?

A: Evidence of personal circumstances should include employment details which include salary level, evidence of approval of leave to study in Australia, as well as length of employment; evidence of funds and assets, including property ownership, holdings of shares; if an applicant is being supported by their parents evidence of the parents employment and assets should be included; evidence of any schooling or training which has been completed since school; any evidence of international travel.

Q: How far before a course should an application be lodged?

A: All applications for this subclass should be lodged at least 12 weeks prior to the course start date, but not more than 16 weeks.

Q: Will a "No Further Stay" (Condition 8534) be imposed on a granted 570 - ELICOS visa?

A: Condition 8534 prevents the visa holder from applying for another visa while in Australia.

Condition 8534 is a mandatory condition on all courses which are 10 months or less in length for Assessment Level 3 and 4.

Condition 8534 is also a discretionary condition for courses which are longer than 10 months for Assessment Level 3 and 4. Where the courses are longer than 10 months, the individual circumstances of the applicant will determine whether this condition is imposed.



Q: Can school age students apply for a subclass 570 - ELICOS visa?

A: Students of school age are required by Australian law to be attending school. Any applicant for this subclass is also required to provide the additional evidence described above. If an applicant is under 18 years of age and applies for an ELICOS course (visa subclass 570) they are likely to be refused. Short term study of up to three months for school groups can be undertaken on a visitor visa.

Q: Can an applicant apply for a 570 – ELICOS visa and change subclasses in Australia?

A: In most cases, subclass 570 – ELICOS visas are subject to a ‘no further stay’ condition which prevents visa holders from changing subclasses in Australia.

Students who wish to study ELICOS and then go on to further courses in other education sectors, such as a Schools, VET or university course, should apply for a student visa to cover both courses at the time of their initial visa application.

The 570 ELICOS visa is designed for applicants who wish to undertake standalone ELICOS courses only.

Q: What is the maximum length of ELICOS which can be undertaken on a 570 – ELICOS visa?

A: 50 weeks.

Q: Who can provide financial support? Are loans or money deposits acceptable?

A: Any individual can provide financial support for an assessment level 3 applicant. A loan from an acceptable financial institution can be used. Money deposits must have been held for 3 months prior to the lodgement of the application, in an acceptable financial institution.

The additional requirements mentioned above must also be supplied in addition to the Schedule 5A financial documentation.

Q: Can dependants go to Australia with a subclass 570 - ELICOS visa holder?

A: Subclass 570 - ELICOS visa holders are not eligible to bring dependants to Australia.