



## Changes to General Skilled Migration (GSM) Frequently asked questions

### Two year study rule

#### How is the two year study requirement changing?

The two year study requirement was introduced in July 2003 in recognition of the value of Australian study in equipping visa holders to find skilled employment and settle easily in Australia. The intention of the two year study has always been to ensure that applicants for GSM have a strong foundation of at least two academic years study in Australia. The value arises not only from having an Australian qualification but from having substantial exposure to Australian society and culture.

The Government has amended the Regulations to clarify the two year study requirement in response to some confusion surrounding its interpretation.

From 1 September 2007, to meet the two year study requirement, applicants will have to complete one or more degrees, diplomas or trade qualifications for award by an Australian educational institute as a result of a course or courses:

- registered on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS);
- completed as a result of at least two academic years' study;
- completed in a total of no less than 16 calendar months; and
- that the applicant studied in Australia, while holding a visa that allowed study and for which all instruction was conducted in English.

In addition:

- students will not be penalised for changing education providers provided they obtain credit for their previous study and this study was in a CRICOS registered course undertaken in an Australian institute while physically present in Australia and in accordance with any visa conditions.
- in line with the National Code 2007, students will also be able to count study undertaken online towards meeting the two year study requirement (up to 25%), if they were in Australia for the duration of that period of study.

These changes benefit students because they allow more flexibility.

## What is two academic years?

To demonstrate that you have studied for at least two academic years, you must show that you have completed the equivalent of two years study at 100% of a full-time load. If you are given credit from prior learning it will reduce the amount of study you have completed.

The department will use CRICOS to determine whether a course meets the two year requirement. From **22 October 2007** a course that has a registered duration of **92 weeks** will be accepted as a course equating to two academic years of study.

Examples:

- If a student completes a full qualification in a course that is registered as 92 weeks, they will have met the two year study requirement.
- Where a student completes two eligible qualifications, each related to their nominated occupation, that together total at least 92 weeks registration on CRICOS, they will have met the two year study requirement.
- Where a student enrolls in a three year full time course, they can be granted recognition of prior learning or credit for up to one year of full-time study and still meet the two year study requirement (as defined above) when they complete the qualification.
- Where a course is CRICOS registered for 92 weeks a student enrolled in this course who is given any credit for prior learning will not have completed two academic years of study. In this situation, the applicant would need to have (or complete) an additional eligible qualification related to their nominated occupation in order to have completed, in total, the required two years of academic study.
- If a course is CRICOS registered for 92 weeks but a student elects to complete the course through accelerated learning, for example through a summer semester of study, the student is considered to have met the two year study requirement if they complete the course in no less than 16 calendar months.
- If a student enrolls in a course that would only require 1.5 years to complete full-time but has taken two years to complete, this will not have met the requirement for two years of academic study.