



Review of the Assessment Level Framework (Recommendation 32)

Frequently asked questions

What will the review consider and what does the government want to achieve?

The review will consider how the current student visa risk management framework can be reformed to achieve enhanced integrity in the student visa program while at the same time facilitating the competitiveness of Australia's international sector. Consideration of how the student visa risk management framework can be informed by a provider-based risk approach will be a key issue for the review.

The review will also examine whether the current student visa risk framework is appropriately responsive to differences within countries and between education providers, what eligibility thresholds should apply, and how the framework will be reviewed to ensure future immigration risks are identified and managed.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the review of the assessment level framework is available on the department's website.

See: www.immi.gov.au/students/knight/

Why will the review consider a provider-based risk management approach?

The government recognises that high-quality, low-risk education providers operate across all education sectors, including those outside the university sector.

Considering a provider-based risk management approach will enable the department to identify these high-quality providers to ensure they benefit from measures to facilitate the competitiveness of Australia's international education sector, such as the streamlining of visa applications from certain students.

When will the outcomes of the assessment level framework review be known?

The review is expected to report its recommendations to government in mid 2012. Implementation of agreed recommendations is proposed by mid 2013.

Who is conducting the assessment level framework review?

The department will undertake the review of the assessment level framework, report the review's finding to government and implement the agreed recommendations.

An external reference group also provides input to the review.

Who is on the external reference group, and how were they chosen?

The external reference group includes experts in the field of international education and immigration risk. Each member was invited to participate by the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship on the basis of their understanding and experience of the international education sector. A list of the members of the external reference group is available from the department's website.

See: www.immi.gov.au/students/knight/reference-group.htm

How can I provide input to the review?

Comments on the discussion paper closed on 16 March 2012.

See: www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/discussion-papers/_pdf/discussion-paper-al-framework.pdf

How will the review of the assessment level framework be different from the periodic review of Student visa assessment level settings?

The department undertakes periodic reviews of student visa assessment level settings to ensure each assessment level assigned to a country and education sector reflects the changing risk status of each student visa caseload. This risk status is based on analysis of immigration compliance statistics and feedback from departmental staff and external stakeholders.

The review of the assessment level framework differs in that it will make recommendations on the entire student visa risk management framework to enhance the integrity of the student visa program, while at the same time supporting the competitiveness of Australia's international education sector.

What are assessment levels?

Currently, assessment levels serve to align student visa requirements to the immigration risk posed by applicants from a particular country studying in a particular education sector. Assessment Level 1 represents the lowest immigration risk and Assessment Level 5 the highest. The higher the assessment level the greater the evidence an applicant is required to demonstrate to support their claims for the grant of a student visa.

Further information about student visa assessment levels can be found on the department's website.

See: www.immi.gov.au/students/student-visa-assessment-levels.htm

Does this change affect existing student visa holders?

No. The current assessment level system will continue to be applied during the review of the assessment level framework.

Where do I go for more information?

Further information about the review of the assessment level framework will be provided on department's website as it becomes available.

See: www.immi.gov.au/students/knight/