



The ELICOS Sector (Recommendations 3.4, 10, 12 and 13)

The following information provides further detail on Knight Review changes to the student visa program.

Frequently asked questions

What changes will assist the English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) Sector?

A number of the Knight Review changes introduced on 24 March 2012 will assist the ELICOS sector including:

- streamlined visa processing for students who package their ELICOS course with an eligible university course
- allowing Schools Sector (subclass 571) visa holders subject to Assessment Level 3 or above to study English for up to 50 weeks
- giving Student Guardian (subclass 580) visa holders unlimited part-time study rights for ELICOS study.

In addition, the following changes were implemented on 5 November 2011:

- reductions in financial requirements for Assessment Level 3 and Assessment Level 4 student visa applicants
- removing the English language test requirement for Assessment Level 4 and Assessment Level 5 Independent ELICOS (subclass 570) visa applicants.

Financial requirements reduction

How have the financial requirements for Assessment Level 3 and Assessment Level 4 student visa applicants changed?

From 5 November 2011, the financial requirements for Assessment Level 3 and Assessment Level 4 student visa applicants were reduced in the following way:

- evidence of funds for Assessment Level 4 applicants reduced from 36 to 24 months and, if evidence is being presented as a cash deposit, their savings history reduced from six to three months
- evidence of funds for Assessment Level 3 applicants reduced from 24 to 18 months.

This has reduced the financial requirements by up to approximately AUD36 000 for an Assessment Level 4 applicant and up to approximately AUD18 000 for an Assessment Level 3 applicant.

These changes apply to applications lodged on or after 5 November 2011 for visa subclasses 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575 and 580.

Where can I get more information on the financial requirements reduction?

More information can be found in Vocational Education and Training (VET), Schools and other Sectors—Frequently Asked Questions document.

See: www.immi.gov.au/students/_pdf/2011-vet-schools-non-award.pdf

Removal of the English language test requirements for higher risk Independent ELICOS visa applicants

How have the application requirements for an Independent ELICOS (subclass 570) visa changed?

From 5 November 2011, applicants for an Independent ELICOS (subclass 570) visa who are subject to Assessment Level 4 or Assessment Level 5 are no longer required to provide the department with evidence of an English language proficiency test to support their claims for the grant of a student visa.

This is consistent with the treatment of Assessment Level 1, Assessment Level 2 and Assessment Level 3 applicants for ELICOS visas, who must provide evidence of their English language proficiency to their proposed education provider rather than the department.

Streamlined processing

What is streamlined processing for Independent ELICOS (subclass 570)?

From 24 March 2012, students who undertake an ELICOS course as a prerequisite to an eligible university course at a participating university will be eligible for streamlined processing provided that both:

- confirmation of enrolment for all courses in the package (ELICOS and the eligible university course) are provided when the student visa application is lodged
- the ELICOS course is provided by an educational business partner nominated by the student's university providing the eligible course.

This means that the department will assess these applicants as though they are lower migration risk (similar to the current Assessment Level 1), regardless of their country of origin.

Where can I get more information on streamlined processing?

Information on streamlined processing can be found in The University Sector—Streamlined Visa Processing Frequently Asked Questions document.

See: www.immi.gov.au/students/_pdf/2011-university-sector-streamlined-processing.pdf

Fifty weeks' English study for Schools Sector visa holders

How have the English language study restrictions for Schools Sector (subclass 571) visa holders changed?

On 24 March 2012, the the maximum period of time a Schools Sector visa holder subject to Assessment Level 3 or above can study English was increased to 50 weeks. This compares to the previous arrangements where Assessment Level 3 students were restricted to 40 weeks and Assessment Level 4 students to 30 weeks.

Does this change affect applications lodged before 24 March 2012?

No, this change only applies to new applications made on or after 24 March 2012.

Unlimited part-time ELICOS study for student guardians

How have the study entitlements for student guardians changed?

Student Guardian (subclass 580) visa holders who lodged their application on or after 24 March 2012 can undertake unlimited part-time ELICOS study.

This is in addition to the existing condition that allows Student Guardian (subclass 580) visa holders to undertake up to three months of full-time study in any field.

What does 'unlimited part-time ELICOS study' mean?

It means that Student Guardian (subclass 580) visa holders can study any ELICOS courses less than 20 hours per week for the duration of their visa.

Why is the unlimited ELICOS study change restricted to part-time study?

Only part-time study is permitted so that a student guardian's studies do not interfere with their guardianship responsibilities.

Have the restrictions on full-time ELICOS study for student guardians changed?

No. The restriction of a maximum of three months of full-time study on student guardian visa holders has not changed.

Where do I go for more information?

More information will be provided on the department's website as it becomes available.

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