



Provider Update – Student Visa Program

COVID-19

The Department has a dedicated website to keep you updated on all developments:

<https://covid19.homeaffairs.gov.au/>

Visas for those students offshore

Students overseas should reconsider their need to apply for a visa at this time, unless they are exempt from the travel restrictions.

Information on travel restrictions can be found at the following link: <https://covid19.homeaffairs.gov.au/travel-restrictions>

If students commence an Australian course of study overseas, and proceed to study online, they do not need a visa for Australia. They only require a visa when they intend to enter Australia,

Students should also only lodge visa applications when they are confident that they can satisfy requirements for a student visa application that may be required for assessment (Health check, English language testing and evidence of financial capacity).

Some services relating to the visa application assessment may be impacted and a range of services are increasingly unavailable. This includes overseas panel doctors who undertake medical checks, English language testing facilities, biometric collection and paper application lodgement centres. While these services are unavailable, many applicants cannot meet visa requirements.

Visas for those students onshore

Student visas cannot be extended.

There are a number of visa pathways open for student visa holders to remain in Australia (including applying for another new student visa or a visitor visa), provided they meet all necessary visa requirements.

More information can be found at: <https://covid19.homeaffairs.gov.au/student-visa/australia>

Online study

Students do not need a visa if they are offshore and studying online with an Australian education provider.

ASQA and TEQSA have recently made statements that they will be flexible in order to support students to study online either in Australia or offshore. If providers have questions about their specific circumstances they should contact their relevant regulator.

The Department will not take compliance action against students affected by COVID-19 where study has been deferred, suspended or is being delivered online.

Working on a student visa

The Australian Government has relaxed the 40 hour per fortnight work limitation for student visa holders working in aged care and for some supermarkets.

Please see the following link for more information: <https://covid19.homeaffairs.gov.au/employers-and-education-providers>

Notifying the Department

Students do not need to notify the Department if they return home, or they defer their study. Visa status will remain unchanged. The visa can remain valid until another visa application is lodged or the visa expires.