



# Student Visa Programme Processing update – December 2016

The Department of Immigration and Border Protection supports the international education industry by facilitating the entry of genuine students and protecting it from non-genuine students through the effective administration of the student visa programme. The Simplified Student Visa Framework, implemented in July 2016, makes requirements and processes for prospective students easier to understand and improves our ability to manage immigration risk effectively.

As the Department manages the seasonal increase in applications (known as a processing peak), I wanted to take this time to share with providers, agents and other stakeholders, some information about the programme. I can also reassure you that the refinements to internal risk settings made in August 2016 have allowed us to manage the increase in applications already experienced this processing peak.

## Key statistics

Between 1 September 2016 and 30 November 2016 over 76,100 student visa applications were lodged. This is an increase of 6.5 per cent when compared to the same period in 2015, indicating strong growth in the market. Indications are that there will be more student visa lodgements in December 2016 than last year.

The number of student visas granted from 1 September 2016 to 30 November 2016 also increased when compared to the same period in 2016. Over 80,300 student visas were granted in this period – this is an increase of 19.3 per cent compared to 2015.

## Processing times

The Department aims to process 75 per cent of complete student visa applications within one month. For applications finalised between 1 September 2016 and 30 November 2016 the median processing time was 20 days. It was 14 days for students outside of Australia.

The length of time it can take to process a visa depends on the circumstances of the applicant. To ensure applications can be processed efficiently students and agents should provide all required information and evidence.

The Department is aware that delays are being experienced for some individual students, especially those intending to study in the postgraduate research sector. All students must meet the legislative requirements for grant. Sometimes this involves checks which must be completed by other agencies. As these checks consider the individual circumstances of the student, they can take some time and it is difficult for us to advise likely processing times. The Department is actively working with other agencies to improve this aspect of processing.

Regards,  
Alice Maclean  
Director Student and Graduate Visas