



Student Visa Programme Processing Update May 2017

This is the third Student Visa Programme Processing Update issued for education providers. These updates are issued on an ad hoc basis so information is provided when it matters the most to you. Please contact me at student.visa.programme@border.gov.au if you have any feedback or would like to suggest a topic.

The Department is currently preparing for the mid-year peak. We expect to see record numbers of applications lodged in June and July 2017.

Key statistics

Between 1 January and 31 March 2017, over 111,240 student visa applications were lodged. This is an increase of about 19.7 per cent when compared to the same period in 2016. The increase in lodgements from students in Australia in March were very high. It is important that students are encouraged to lodge a further application or depart Australia before their current visa expires. Students should not be in Australia without a valid visa.

The number of student visas finalised from 1 January 2017 to 31 March 2017 also increased when compared to the same period in 2016. Over 111,025 student visas were finalised in this period – this is an increase of almost 18.9 per cent compared to 2016.

Course commencement and late arrival letters

The Department can lawfully grant a visa based on a valid CoE even if the course has commenced. The Department has no obligation to request a late arrival letter. The Department will not request late arrival letters except in very exceptional and sensitive circumstances. Providers must cancel the CoE in PRISMS if they are no longer willing to admit the student after course commencement has passed. Providers may also amend or issue a new CoE if the course dates change before a visa is finalised.

Finishing a course early

Students must remain enrolled or they are in breach of student visa condition 8202. The three common scenarios are:

1. The student has changed course to a shorter course. In this case, the student is required to leave Australia or make a valid application for a new visa within 28 days of the end of their enrolment.
2. The student completes study of the course, for which their visa was granted, early. The Department will not take any action against the student for being unenrolled for three months. Students should be aware that if they breach other conditions, their visa may be cancelled.
3. The student finishes one of the courses in their package early. Long gaps between courses are not acceptable, see our [website](#) for more information.

Regards,
Alice Maclean
Director Student and Graduate Visas