

Welcome to our new factsheet. The content of this factsheet is based on questions and comments we've received through engagement with our Educational Advisors over the past few weeks. It includes commentary on current topics in the Australian international education industry as well as updates on Navitas English processes and changes. We hope you find it useful.

## **NEW Questions and thoughts**

### **What is the “check-twice and lodge once” campaign?**

The Department of Home Affairs have created a campaign to ensure that prior to submitting a student visa application, it is complete and detailed with supporting information such as financials

### **Are there any tips to share when applying for a Student Visa?**

Yes, the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) have created a step by step guide when looking to apply for a student visa; this can be found here.

### **What are the key factors when making a student visa application?**

Firstly, the applicant is genuine and intends to use their time in Australia as outlined when being granted a student visa. On March 23, 2024, the Genuine Statement Requirement (GS) replaced GTE, replacing the 300 SOP with short, targeted questions. It is critical to know that supporting evidence must be attached to support the information provided in the GS. Tips can be found here.

Evidence required is applicable to all applicants regardless of their evidence level.

For students lodging their visa application onshore, additional information will be requested, such as course progression and have all requirements of their course been met and is there any history of starting but not completing a course.

### **What are some of the reasons why an applicant may be refused a Student Visa?**

There are numerous reasons as to why a visa may not be granted.

1. quality of the application being lodged, missing information
2. forgetting to attach translated documents
3. not undergoing biometric/health checks
4. not replying to requests by DHA for additional information quickly
5. not able to show genuine access to funds, needing to be supported by independent verifiable official evidence bank statements and/or tax statements
6. conflicting information will raise a concern

### **What measures are being taken to support and manage a sustainable international education sector in Australia?**

Multiple actions and policy changes have been made over the past few months such as the increase in the student visa fee to \$1600.00. The latest announcement relates to reducing the numbers of students studying in Australia to levels pre-pandemic.

### **What type of educational institutes does the restriction of student enrolments affect?**

Effectively, universities and vocational providers are affected and have/will be provided with the quantity of international students they are able to enrol in 2025.

## Are there any restrictions on ELICOS providers when enrolling students in 2025?

No, ELICOS only providers with students studying ELICOS only are not restricted.

## How will any student restrictions affect a pathway student?

It is too early to know the answer to this question – further updates will follow.

## When a student packages with Navitas English with further studies do we require the Genuine Statement and evidence of funds?

For all applications to Navitas English off and onshore whereby the student will package ELICOS with VET or Higher Ed, we will not require evidence of finances nor the Genuine Statement to be provided but we will require a copy of the eCOE issued by the packaged partner.

However, there may be a need to provide evidence of the applicant's English language skills at the time they submit the packaged visa application.

For more information, go to <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/student-500#HowTo> – Step 2: Gather your documents and expand the “Student visa English language requirements” section.

## Existing Questions and Commentary

### What changes have come into effect from July 1, 2024, regarding student visa applications?

There have been a few updates which we have already provided to you, but these are the increase to the student visa application from \$710 to \$1600 which was an increase of 125%. The ending of Visitor & Temporary Graduate Visa holders onshore applying for a student visa. This route was perceived as an easier way of obtaining a student visa.

### Have we seen any further trends regarding visa refusals?

No, but the educational outcomes for each student and how they will use their enhanced language to access their pathway or chosen career at home is important to show. Truthfulness and evidence remain key to each application, ensuring that this is independent and not just a statement of intent made by the student. Having full financial disclosure regardless of where the student is from is important and articulating the student's journey in a planned honest way will support each application.

### Have we seen any non-student visa trends?

Yes, we continue to see an increase in tourist and working holiday visa holders wishing to access studies whilst in Australia. Whilst each visa has a study limitation i.e. 13 or 17-weeks, they can immerse themselves into studies albeit for a limited period which underlines the need for these students to access a [quality provider supporting their growth and progression from day 1](#).

### Are there any updates about onshore Visitor Visa holder applying for a Student Visa whilst onshore?

The Australian Government will close two pathway options currently available on 1 July 2024 where Visitor Visa and Temporary Graduate Visa holders will no longer be able to apply for Student Visas onshore.

These restrictions are considering the volume of applications made via these two pathway options since 1 July 2023 to the end of May 2024 which were 36,000.

Considering these changes, Navitas English have elected to review all current applications and **from Friday 14 June 2024, we will not accept any applications from current holders of tourist visa, Temporary Graduate Visa and 408 COVID visa who is applying for their student visa onshore.**

While we endeavour to provide sufficient notice of any changes, we are mindful that with the increase in number of applications being made via the Visitor to Student route and the deadline proposed we are likely to see a spike of applications which are a focus of the visa authority.

## Will Navitas English still accept Non-Student Visa holders studying at their campuses?

Yes, definitely, provided the study duration adheres with the visa conditions. For example, a tourist visa holder can study 3-months (13 weeks) per visa grant. A 408 COVID visa holder has no study restriction so they can study as long as they wish during the validity of their visa. If in doubt, reach out to NE admissions team and provide a copy of the visa grant letter so we can provide you with the right information.

## Has the financial capacity requirements for a student visa application changed?

Yes, from May 10, 2024, there has been an increase in the requirements to be submitted with each visa application. For a primary applicant the amount required has increased from AUD\$24,505 to AUD\$29,710. Applications lodged before 10 May 2024 will be assessed under the financial capacity requirements as at time of application. More information can be found [here](#).

## Should financial disclosure always be made regardless of where the student is coming from?

Effectively yes. Whilst there is a requirement to supply documents such as, but not limited to, bank statements and income statements for selected nationalities, it is to the discretion of the reviewing authority to review all financial documents for all student visa applications regardless of the nationality.

## What does source of funds mean?

We know that some students may access funds by selling some of their assets for example, a motor vehicle and this may lead to a lump sum payment being deposited into the student's bank account. For such lump sum amounts, the source of these must be evidenced which is a bill of sale for the car (following the example given). This would clearly identify where the funds came from.

## What evidence is required?

Evidence must be provided to support each statement and not hearsay. If the applicant needs a specific level of English language as part of their further studies, provide that requirement from their college or university as this will support their application.

Some examples of evidence of ties to home country would be evidence of assets owned or a letter from an employer whether existing – that the applicant's role is held during their studies in Australia or future – that the applicant has a role ready after completing their studies in Australia.

In relation to financials, we were alerted in 2023 that a balance letter from the bank was no longer sufficient but bank statements showing the required balance are required. We recommend providing at least 3 months' worth of bank statements.

Being truthful and accurate is key. Providing fraudulent documents and/or misleading information is a serious offense with potential long-term repercussions.

## Can a student who holds a current eCOE with another provider transfer to study at Navitas English?

If the applicant is transferring within the first six months of their principal course studies, a release from their principal provider is required before they can transfer to Navitas English. It is also important for the applicant to clearly read their principal provider's terms and conditions on transferring to another provider and cancelling their course. The applicant should also check with DHA to ensure that their student visa is not affected by the transfer to another provider.

In addition to submitting a completed application form and the relevant supporting documents, we also require the applicant to provide us with a reason on why they would like to transfer to us and the certificate from the current education provider for our records.

Allow at least 2 weeks between the last day of their studies with the principal provider and commencing studies with us for the cancellation and release to be completed. It can be a stressful time for applicants who are 'in limbo' as each education provider has their own set of policies and procedures. The 2-week leeway will allow the applicant to fully engage with Navitas English from orientation until the end of their studies with us, without the added stress.

It is important to understand that even if the applicant has paid their fees to Navitas English, we will only allow them to commence class when we are able to issue an e-COE. If the principal provider does not confirm the release, we will not be able to proceed further with their enrolment and will initiate a refund of their fees.

## What type of profile of student may/will require additional documentation and/or Genuine Student Requirements (GSR) screening?

Navitas English conduct GSR screening on all offshore applicants from assessment level 3 countries. We reserve the right to undertake GSR screening on applicants whose profiles pose weaknesses in meeting the GSR. Some of the examples of those weak GSR profiles are lengthy gaps in studies or employment or both, prior visa refusal or entry refusal history, mature aged applicant that require financial sponsorship for their studies in Australia, or applicants who are citizens of a country but residing in another.

For onshore applicants who are extending their student visa onshore – provide Navitas English with the GS statement and evidence all the GS factors, we also ask for applicants to supply us with the certificate of completion from their last provider. It is crucial to ensure that the student visa extension is genuinely showing progression with a clear educational and career pathway.

## When I look at the Educational Agreement, I see recruitment territory listed, what does this mean?

In the agreement, territories are listed for the areas you can recruit from. For example, if you have a territory of Australia, you can recruit any student onshore regardless of their citizenship. If you have a region of Spain and no other territory, you are only able to recruit students from Spain.

## What is the purpose for the new Genuine Student Requirements (GSR)?

The purpose of GSR is to clarify the assessment of a student's intention to genuinely study in Australia and to remove the confusion about whether the student can express a desire to migrate to Australia.

The [GSR](#) focuses on the assessment of the student's genuine intention to study in Australia, having regard to a number of factors, including the applicant's circumstances, evidence of course progression, immigration history, compliance with visa conditions and other relevant matters. To be granted a student visa, all applicants must demonstrate they satisfy the genuine student criterion or the genuine student dependent criterion.

## What's the impact of GSR?

It is too early to say what the impact may be but needless to say, these changes in addition to policy changes recently announced may result in a very cautious approach from a student application perspective.

## What's needed when making a student visa application?

Clear and transparent information must be provided that is truthful. Vague statements may/will detract from the application. Supporting [documentation](#) is vital and providing these ensures a robust overview of the students current and future scenario.

**ALWAYS** provide [financials](#) to support the capacity of the students living and study costs **even if not required**. Clearly, these are expected due to commentary I have reviewed in multiple Australian visa refusal letters. Each application needs to be the best application submitted the first time. Too frequently, I have noticed **additional information being provided post a student visa refusal which may have been available to support the initial application**.

## Why it's critical to ensure the students application with Navitas English is correct and complete first time?

By completing to application form correctly and in full the first time, and every time, the Letter of Offer is only hours from being issued. Attention to course and intake dates with supporting documentation is key. If you've supplied incorrect detail at the application stage, the application will need to be resubmitted. Review the [video](#) for additional information or the [factsheet](#).

## How will Navitas English adapt to changes and visa refusal increases?

All student applications from an assessment level three countries will undergo GSR assessment with immediate effect.

Whilst concerns have been raised about some assessment level two countries and the spike in visa rejections, no further changes will be applied at this stage, but we reserve the right to ask targeted questions for specific applications, including supporting materials.

In many respects, this a business-as-usual approach so send the completed application for and documents to Navitas English admissions team and should they deem that the applicant needs to undergo GSR assessment, a Conditional Offer Letter will be issued, along with Navitas English GSR Form and agent declaration form. The GSR form would amalgamate the GS statement required by DHA for all student visa applications and other assessment factors that Navitas English review on. The agent declaration form confirms that you have done the relevant vetting process on your side.

Our GSR assessment will take 3-5 business days upon receipt of all documents. When we are satisfied that the applicant's profile is of low risk, our team will issue a full Offer Letter so the applicant can take necessary steps to accept the offer.

We will continue to monitor [all visa refusals and work with each agent](#) to understand the reasons and what learnings can be made. This review process is critical, especially where a student wishes to reapply, as we must have the confidence that the secondary application has solid merits.

### **What are the future changes Navitas English may adopt in these uncertain times?**

It is too early to say what additional measures we may elect to introduce. We all need to ensure that potential and current students are supported during this process, which is challenging and stressful. Occasionally [hard decisions will be made](#) but our focus is to ensure that each student is supported with clearly defined facts and outcomes - which is not always the case.

### **How can we access Navitas English marketing material?**

Access to [our materials 24/7](#) and the [agent pack](#) is available from the website, reducing time delays in obtaining information when counselling a student. This self-serve model is working well where you can obtain an application form or know more about instalment plans, for example, without any delay.

**For more information contact us today!**

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