



Suspension of new applications to ASQA under the ESOS Act

The Assistant Minister for International Education has temporarily suspended the making of new Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) applications to the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), under the *Education Services for Overseas Act 2000* (ESOS Act).

This fact sheet is intended to be a plain English guide to assist those affected by the suspension to understand how it operates and should not be relied upon as legal advice. Where there is doubt please refer to the [ESOS Act](#) and the [Education Services for Overseas Students \(Suspension of Applications for Registration to the National VET Regulator\) Determination 2026](#) (the Suspension).

What is changing?

On 18 May 2026, the Assistant Minister for International Education made a legislative instrument (the Suspension) under the ESOS Act to temporarily pause the making of new applications to the National Vocational Education and Training (VET) Regulator for CRICOS provider registrations and courses.

The Suspension applies to applications made to ASQA for registration as an international education provider and to applications to add new courses to an existing provider's CRICOS registration. The Suspension lasts for 12 months, starting the day after the Instrument is registered on the Federal Register of Legislation.

From 19 May 2026 until 19 May 2027 (inclusive), individuals and/or entities cannot make a new application with ASQA for initial provider registration on CRICOS (under section 9 of the ESOS Act), or to add a new course to an existing CRICOS registration (under section 10H of the ESOS Act).

Unless specified below, the Suspension will apply to all applications for CRICOS registration made to ASQA, including applications to register an ELICOS provider and to add an ELICOS course.

The Suspension will not apply to applications made to ASQA by public providers, or to applications made by any existing provider that relate to adding:

- a location for a course the provider is already registered on CRICOS to deliver
- a course identified as superseded (non-equivalent) on the National Register (www.training.gov.au), where the provider is already registered to deliver the superseded (non-equivalent) course.

These exemptions will ensure that courses already listed on an existing provider's registration remain up to date, fit for purpose, and accessible to students.

All valid applications made to ASQA before 19 May 2026 will continue to be processed in line with ASQA's existing processes.

"Public providers" are defined as government schools, registered VET providers owned or controlled (directly or indirectly) by a State or Territory (including TAFEs), and providers listed in Table A of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*.

Why the change?

In 2025, the Australian Government progressed legislative reforms to strengthen the integrity and quality of Australia's international education sector, including through the passage of the *Education Legislation Amendment (Integrity and Other Measures) Act 2025* (the ELA Act).

The ELA Act amended the ESOS Act to provide the Minister with responsibility for administering the ESOS Act, the authority to suspend the making of applications.

The Suspension responds to emerging integrity concerns in the VET sector, particularly relating to poor quality and non-genuine new market entrants and concentrated growth in certain course areas.

There are already over 900 VET providers registered on CRICOS and the number of providers registered to deliver VET courses to international students has increased by more than 35 per cent since 2021.

Temporarily pausing new provider registrations and course additions will allow ASQA to focus on the rigorous assessment of existing applications already on hand, undertake deeper integrity checks, and monitor market behaviour to ensure providers entering or expanding within the sector meet appropriate standards.

For more information

Should you have any further enquiries regarding the operation of the Suspension, please visit the [contact us](#) page on ASQA's website.

