Bulletin – Tertiary Providers and International

6th August, 2020

**Education and Training Act**

The Education and Training Act aims to give all learners a more high-quality, culturally responsive, seamless and inclusive education, from early learning, through schooling, and on into tertiary education, vocational training and employment. The Education and Training Act is now law, and includes a number of changes to reduce the impact of COVID-19 for the tertiary and international sector, as follows:

* **Export Education Levy (EEL):** The EEL payment obligations for enrolments in the 2020 and 2021 years are now cancelled. Any levies paid in respect of enrolments after 1 January 2020 will be repaid to providers. We will check if any payments have been made and contact the provider. Providers will still be required to provide enrolment data as it provides us with important information about the international education sector and will help us to better understand the full impact of Covid-19 on international students and providers.
* **Extending Interim Code of Practice for Pastoral Care of Domestic Tertiary Students until 1 January 2022:** The Government will allow more time to develop the on-going Code of Pastoral Care and accompanying dispute resolution scheme for domestic tertiary students. Plans for wide engagement and consultation on the development of an on-going Code of Pastoral Care and dispute resolution scheme are being drawn up now. Tertiary education organisations, students, sector peak bodies and networks, and others with a stake in this process will be advised how and when they can participate.
* **Provision of education and NCEA to enrolled students outside New Zealand**:

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Act temporarily enables the Minister of Education to approve State schools’ provision of education outside New Zealand to their students who were enrolled for the 2020 school year on or before 3 July.  NZQA will also have the temporary power to approve registered schools’ provision of NCEA outside New Zealand to these students. These changes are time-limited and will expire at the end of 31 December 2022.

Guidance for schools about the criteria and application process will be communicated through the School Bulletin and on the Ministry website in the coming weeks. For more information, please visit <https://www.education.govt.nz/our-work/legislation/education-and-training-act-2020/education-and-training-act-2020-prohibiting-the-provision-of-ncea-offshore/>.

**Re-building International Education**

The Government has released a long-term strategic recovery plan, backed by a $51.6 million investment from the COVID recovery and response fund to help reset New Zealand’s international education sector.

Private training establishments (PTEs), including English language schools, who enrol international students and are signatories to the Code of Pastoral Care, will be able to apply to the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) for funding through the $10 million immediate assistance package.

Over the past week, the Ministry of Education has gathered feedback on the draft criteria for the PTE fund from peak bodies and the wider sector through a short-targeted engagement approach and is now working through this feedback.

English language schools will also be able to access new learners through the additional $1.5 million PTE ESOL Provision Fund.  This funding extends the types of learners who can be funded for English Language course. This will give English language schools New Zealand based learners to increase the demand for their services.  English language schools that currently do not receive ACE funding will be priority providers for these new learners.

Details, including the eligibility and assessment criteria and how to apply for funding will be released mid-August on the TEC website.

**Apprenticeship Boost now available**

Employers can now apply for the Apprenticeship Boost to help them keep existing apprentices. It is available now and runs for 20 months.

Under the Apprenticeship Boost, an employer of an apprentice in their first year will be eligible for $1,000 support per month, and an employer of an apprentice in their second year is eligible for $500 per month for a maximum period of 20 months.

To be eligible to apply for this wage subsidy scheme, their apprentices must be part of a TEC-approved New Zealand Apprenticeship or Managed Apprenticeship programme and have done less than 24 months of their training. The payments will be made to the employer of eligible apprentices, who must continue to pay at least the relevant minimum or training wage to their apprentice.

For more information go to the Work and Income website [Apprenticeship Support Programme – Work and Income](https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/employers/subsidies-training-and-other-help/index.html).

**Expiring visas and visa applications**

***Expiring visas for students still in New Zealand***

If you have international students whose visa is due to expire in the next few months and they are unable to leave New Zealand on the date originally planned, then please make sure they have applied for a new visa.

If they do not apply for a new visa before their current visa expires, they will become unlawful and this will affect any future travel plans. For more information, visit [www.immigration.govt.nz](https://www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/already-have-a-visa/my-situation-has-changed/study/i-am-unable-to-leave-new-zealand-before-my-visa-expires-what-can-i-do).

***Suspension of visa applications for students outside New Zealan*d**

Due to COVID-19, international students will not be able to enter New Zealand for the remainder of the year. The Government is working with providers to explore options that would enable small cohorts of students to enter New Zealand next year and to build up numbers, when it is safe to do so, however no decisions have been made on this yet.

Currently a large number of students have applied for visas to enter New Zealand. These applications cannot be processed while the border is closed. The Government has decided that the fair thing to do is to suspend receiving visa applications for a period of three months, from students who are outside of New Zealand, so that they do not incur the costs associated with visa applications when we know the applications are not being processed.

Students with a visa application in the system can apply to withdraw their application and request an application fee refund. Refunds are considered on a case by case basis by Immigration New Zealand. Students are also able to leave their application in the system at this stage if they want to wait and see what 2021 brings in terms of the border.

Students are encouraged to consider other ways to begin their study in New Zealand while they remain offshore. Many study providers are offering online courses to offshore students. We suggest students contact their preferred providers for more information.

For more information, visit <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/covid-19/coronavirus-update-inz-response>.

**Support for International Students**

The Red Cross are providing support to foreign nationals through the Visitor Care Manaaki Manuhiri programme which runs till the end of September. You are invited to join and share this [Online Q&A session on support for international students](https://business.facebook.com/events/633699904221690/) via your networks scheduled for Thursday 13th of August on Zoom, 4.30-5pm. This is an opportunity for international students and education providers to ask questions about the support available and how to access it. Please share it with students.

Zoom meeting: <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75199978360?pwd=UFZPYTRHVkNYV0JsWjNNd1JNY2padz09>

Meeting ID: 751 9997 8360
Passcode: 8Z5DZx

**Things change quickly so stay up to date by following the links below:**

For health advice, please refer to the Ministry of Health’s website.

<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>

For Cross-agency information about COVID-19 (novel coronavirus), including health advice and travel restrictions visit the All-of-Government website <https://www.govt.nz/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/>

To keep updated on travel restrictions and visa information visit <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/media-centre/news-notifications/coronavirus-update-inz-response>

For additional advice for tertiary providers/whare wananga visit the Ministry of Education website <http://www.education.govt.nz/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-3/>

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