



Temporary measures to assist international English language students during COVID-19

31 March 2021

Dear Provider,

Further to my letter of 7th January 2021, I would like to update you on recent developments.

The Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee, T.D., has announced a further temporary extension of immigration and international protection permissions to 20 September 2021. This applies to permissions that are due to expire between 21 April 2021 and 20 September 2021 and includes permissions that have already been extended since March 2020.

This current extension of permissions includes an additional temporary measure to aid English language students who have completed the maximum 24 months permitted and are unable to return home due to COVID-19. These students are permitted to renew their permission to remain in Ireland until 20 September 2021 provided they re-enrol in another course of study and fulfil attendance requirements, whether classes are being provided online or in-person.

This extension is in accordance with the standard criteria applicable for non-EEA students. Accordingly, English language students must re-enrol in a course listed on the ILEP and of at least 25 weeks' duration to ensure they adhere to the conditions of their permission. They must 'virtually' attend in the same way as if they were physically present in the classroom. Records of attendance must be maintained and may be requested by ISD. Where online courses are being provided, all other criteria remain including the requirement to provide a minimum of 15 hours of student contact per week and have no more than 15 students in a class for English language classes.

Providers are asked to remind students that renewals are on the same basis and conditions of the current permission. Any student who enrolls in a non-ILEP-listed course is not eligible for a Stamp 2 permission and therefore is not allowed to take up employment. This includes where a provider purports to offer courses of a different duration to those listed on the ILEP. Failing to attend classes and/or, where applicable, working in excess of the permitted 20 hours may result in future registration being refused.

This extension will benefit those who cannot get an appointment to register or renew an existing permission. However, Immigration Service Delivery encourages anyone who can renew to do so and not to wait until September. Those resident in the Dublin region can renew their permission online at <http://www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Immigration-Online-Portal-Guidance%5b1%5d.pdf/Files/Immigration-Online-Portal-Guidance%5b1%5d.pdf>

Renewals outside of the Dublin area are processed by the Garda National Immigration Bureau through the Garda Station network. Information on the contact details for all the registration offices outside Dublin is available at: <https://www.garda.ie/en/about-us/our-departments/office-of-corporate-communications/news-media/reopening-of-registration-offices.html>



The Registration Office in Burgh Quay remains closed as a result of the COVID-19 restrictions announced by Government in December. Customers who were issued with appointments for first time registrations will be contacted directly by the Immigration Service and they will be prioritised for appointments once the public office can safely reopen.

As previously indicated, prospective students seeking to enter the State must wait until in-person tuition has been resumed. Students with existing bookings should postpone their travel plans until in-class tuition has resumed. Failure to do so may result in students being refused permission to land in Ireland and refused registration. It is strongly advised that everyone, regardless of their nationality or visa/preclearance status, who cannot provide proof of an essential purpose to travel to or within Ireland in line with the list of exemptions should not travel to Ireland. Please bring this notice to the attention of international students and recruiters.

The General COVID-19 Travel Advisory in Operation is available on the DFA site at:
<https://www.dfa.ie/travel/travel-advice/coronavirus/general-covid-19-travel-advisory/>

Information on COVID-19 Visa arrangements is available at: <http://www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Pages/visas-updates>

The Minister's announcement is available at: <http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PR21000065>

Our current intention is to resume in-person inspections of ILEP providers when public health advice permits.

I and my team are, as always, available to address any issues or queries which may arise.

Regards

Emer Mullins
Principal Officer
Registration Office

