

ELICOS NATIONAL STANDARDS

National standards for
ELICOS providers and courses

These standards operate as an adjunct to the National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007 (National Code) and must be read in conjunction with the National Code.

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National Standards for ELICOS Providers and Courses

Introduction

English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) form a significant part of Australia's international education industry. Students come from overseas to study English for a variety of reasons. Some need to improve their English for work or career purposes, some have a personal interest in becoming fluent in English, and some intend to travel. Others may want to continue their education in English, either in Australia or elsewhere, and need to develop the language skills to undertake further study.

Regulatory Framework for ELICOS

In order to teach overseas students on student visas, ELICOS providers and their courses must be registered on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS).

To gain registration on CRICOS, an ELICOS provider must be approved by the designated authority as meeting the following requirements:

- the requirements of the *Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000* as well as its Regulations and the National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007 (National Code). The ESOS Act sets out requirements for consumer protection, student welfare and support services and also some requirements relating to student visas. The National Code provides nationally consistent standards for the conduct of registered providers and the registration of their courses
- relevant state and territory legislation impacting the approval and regulation of providers delivering courses to students from overseas
- National Standards for ELICOS Providers and Courses (the ELICOS National Standards).

Once an ELICOS provider has demonstrated that it meets all the above requirements, the designated authority can recommend the provider to the Australian Government for CRICOS registration under the ESOS Act.

Relationship between the National Code and the ELICOS National Standards

The National Code sets out standards for all registered providers of education and training across all education sectors in Australia. The National Code includes a requirement for the provider to meet the quality assurance framework of the particular education sector(s) they are operating within. The ELICOS National Standards outline sector specific requirements to be met by those delivering ELICOS courses. These are in addition to National Code requirements.

The ELICOS National Standards

The ELICOS National Standards are the standards that set nationally consistent requirements for ELICOS within Australia. The standards support the Australian Government and state and territory government objectives for the ELICOS sector in the areas of:

- consumer protection and student wellbeing
- delivery of quality English language teaching

- protection of Australia's reputation as a provider of quality English language teaching to international students.

The ELICOS standards were developed by the Australian Government and state and territory governments in consultation with the ELICOS sector. The standards have been approved by the Joint Committee on International Education.

These standards are a mandatory requirement for courses and providers registered as ELICOS on CRICOS.

For the purpose of these standards, 'ELICOS' is defined as English language intensive courses for overseas students studying in Australia on student visas. 'Intensive' denotes full-time study comprising a minimum of 20 scheduled course contact hours per week of face-to-face classes of English language instruction.

Therefore these standards do not apply to:

- intensive English language programs provided to non student visa holders
- non-intensive English language programs (fewer than 20 contact hours per week of English language teaching)
- English as a Second Language programs or support services provided within school, vocational education and training or higher education settings
- English language programs for domestic students
- Foundation Programs.

Provider registration

The ELICOS National Standards specify minimum standards for the delivery of ELICOS courses.

It is important to note that in order to become registered on CRICOS to deliver ELICOS courses to overseas students, a provider must meet both these ELICOS National Standards and the requirements of the ESOS Act, in particular those of the National Code.

The designated authority will not recommend that a provider becomes registered on CRICOS until it is satisfied that the provider complies with the ELICOS National Standards, the ESOS Act and its National Code and any legislation relevant to that state or territory.

ELICOS Course Standards

These course standards set out the minimum information and evidence requirements to be met in submitting an application for approval of a course.

Standard C1 – Mandatory requirements for course applications

Outcome of Standard C1

Providers address the information requirements of the designated authority to demonstrate that their proposed courses meet the required standards.

- C1.1 Course applications are provided in the format required by the designated authority and include:
- a) course name that reflects course purpose
 - b) details of course proponent
 - c) details of copyright owner of the course
 - d) total course duration expressed in weeks
 - e) rationale for the course
 - f) relationship with other course(s)
 - g) articulation arrangements
 - h) profile of target learner group
 - i) course outcomes expressed in learner oriented terms
 - j) course entry requirements
 - k) strategy for monitoring learner progress
 - l) strategy for assessing achievement of learner outcomes
 - m) samples of certification of completion and partial completion
 - n) modes and methods of delivery
 - o) overall structure of the course showing hours of face-to-face classes and other study plus any scheduled breaks
 - p) detailed course syllabus
 - q) strategy for ongoing course evaluation and review
 - r) teaching staff experience and qualifications
 - s) key and supplementary print-based and electronic teaching resources
 - t) maximum course fee.

ELICOS Provider Standards

Course contact hours

Standard P1 – Scheduled course contact hours

Outcome of Standard P1

Written agreements between registered ELICOS providers and students provide accurate information to students regarding scheduled course contact hours for the ELICOS course.

- P1.1 Written agreements between registered ELICOS providers and students specify the scheduled course contact hours for the ELICOS course in which the student is to be enrolled, ensuring that they indicate the student's scheduled course contact hours, and include:
- a) a minimum of 20 scheduled course contact hours per week of face-to-face classes of English language instruction for the course
 - b) any other scheduled course contact hours required by the course.

Younger students

Standard P2 – Needs of younger ELICOS students

Outcome of Standard P2

Where a registered ELICOS provider enrolls students under the age of 18 years, the operations of the provider are appropriate for the age, maturity and English language proficiency of the students.

- P2.1 Arrangements for students aged under 18 years comply with Australian, state and territory government legislation.
- P2.2 Facilities and operations for any mixed-age student cohorts are appropriate to the enrolment of younger students.

ELICOS Delivery and Assessment

Standard P3 – Teaching ELICOS

Outcome of Standard P3

Policies and procedures for the teaching of ELICOS provide students with optimal opportunities for achieving successful outcomes from their courses.

- P3.1 The provider has policies and procedures in place to ensure that:
- a) students are placed in a class appropriate to their current language proficiency level, learning goals and learning needs and consistent with their written agreement
 - b) students' special learning needs are identified as early as possible and arrangements are put in place to address these needs
 - c) class sizes are appropriate
 - d) teacher-to-student ratios do not exceed 1:18 per class
 - e) students are informed of the outcomes to be achieved from the course and, for each learning block, the learning outcomes for that block.
- P3.2 Planning policies and procedures enable teachers to:
- a) customise teaching to student needs
 - b) access resources required for delivery of the course
 - c) research any special purpose course content and developments in English language teaching to meet student needs.
- P3.3 Records of teaching delivery ensure:
- a) efficient administration
 - b) learning outcomes to be achieved are documented
 - c) effective review, revision and delivery of courses.
- P3.4 Delivery of courses is continuously improved by:
- a) making adjustments based on collection and analysis of feedback from students and other stakeholders as appropriate
 - b) monitoring appropriateness of delivery for student groups
 - c) regularly evaluating learning outcomes achieved.

Standard P4 – Assessment of ELICOS students

Outcome of Standard P4

Policies and procedures for the assessment of students provide them with optimal opportunities for achieving successful outcomes from their courses.

- P4.1 Assessment policies and procedures provide for:
- a) formative and summative assessment
 - b) clear identification of assessment outcomes as they relate to progress through the course
 - c) assessment that is valid, reliable, fair, flexible and clearly referenced to criteria
 - d) clear, regular reporting to the student and their parent or guardian, where the student is under 18, of their assessment outcomes and progress through the course.
- P4.2 Records of assessment ensure:
- a) efficient administration
 - b) documented learning outcomes
 - c) effective review and revision of assessment as necessary.
- P4.3 The registered ELICOS provider issues a document to each student, on completion (or partial completion) of study, that:
- a) indicates the CRICOS course name, registered ELICOS provider and contact details, dates of study, course duration, levels of achievement or proficiency, authorised signature and name of signatory
 - b) includes, or is accompanied by, an explanation in plain English of the terms used in awarding grades at all levels.
- P4.4 Assessment of courses is continuously improved by:
- a) making adjustments based on collection and analysis of feedback from students and other stakeholders as appropriate
 - b) monitoring appropriateness of assessment for student groups
 - c) regularly evaluating course outcomes achieved.

Staff, Educational Resources and Premises

Standard P5 – ELICOS educational resources

Outcome of Standard P5

Registered ELICOS providers maintain a supply of sufficient educational resources that are aimed at achieving course objectives, encourage diversity in learning activities and teaching methodologies, and are appropriately organised and regularly reviewed.

- P5.1 The registered ELICOS provider demonstrates access to educational resources that:
- a) are sufficient to provide for each student at every stage of their course, as appropriate
 - b) are appropriate for the type and level of courses offered
 - c) include access to a range of multimedia, as appropriate
 - d) enable varied learning activities and teaching methodologies
 - e) are developed for classroom and individual student use and address specific student needs and course outcomes
 - f) reflect new developments in TESOL theory and practice and changes in course offerings and student profiles.
- P5.2 The registered ELICOS provider has educational facilities with sufficient equipment and support resources for the number of enrolled students, including:
- a) educational and computer technology that supports classroom teaching/learning activities; independent student practice, study and research; and teacher study, research and preparation
 - b) where the registered ELICOS provider makes material available for self-access or self-study, that material is catalogued and presented for easy access
 - c) self-study areas and equipment organised to facilitate access and independent use by students.
- P5.3 The registered ELICOS provider provides its teachers with easy access to reference resources that reflect contemporary knowledge of the theory and practice of TESOL in its own facilities or through easily accessible jointly managed facilities.

Standard P6 – ELICOS specialist staff

Outcome of Standard P6

Registered ELICOS providers employ suitably qualified specialist staff and provide them with ongoing opportunities for professional development.

Academic leadership of ELICOS

- P6.1 The registered ELICOS provider has an academic management system that ensures:
- a) clear organisation-wide academic leadership of ELICOS
 - b) a coordinated and effective approach to developing, implementing and reviewing curriculum
 - c) management of educational resources
 - d) provision of guidance to teaching staff.
- P6.2 Senior academic leadership staff have a degree, suitable postgraduate TESOL qualification/s, and appropriate educational management and TESOL teaching experience or equivalent.
- P6.3 Senior academic leadership staff maintain an up-to-date knowledge of significant developments in TESOL theory and practice.

Teaching staff

- P6.4 ELICOS teachers have the following:
- a) a degree or diploma of at least three years full-time or equivalent (teaching or other)
 - b) a suitable TESOL qualification or qualification that contains TESOL as a method
 - c) appropriate TESOL teaching experience or are formally mentored by a senior staff member with this experience.
- P6.5 Where the registered ELICOS provider offers courses of preparation for entry to Australian state or territory secondary schools, an appropriate percentage of the TESOL teachers are registered to teach in the Australian state or territory primary/secondary system as determined by state/territory legislation or policy.
- P6.6 Where students are 12 years old or less, their teachers hold a TESOL qualification and a recognised primary teaching qualification.
- P6.7 The registered ELICOS provider verifies the qualifications of all teachers employed by the provider.
- P6.8 The registered ELICOS provider:
- a) has and implements policies and procedures for the induction and ongoing professional development of its teaching staff
 - b) develops and implements a program of professional development each year.

Counselling staff

P6.9 The registered ELICOS provider:

- a) employs or contracts a person or persons with formal qualifications in counselling and/or relevant experience who is able to advise and provide counselling to students in an intercultural context about:
 - i. academic and future progress advice
 - ii. welfare matters.
- b) ensures that the person(s) described in 6.9a:
 - i. are available at suitable times for access by students
 - ii. are readily accessible to students.

Standard P7 – ELICOS premises

Outcome of Standard P7

The premises of registered ELICOS providers provide teaching and learning environments that are appropriately designed and equipped to support the range of English language courses and student support services offered.

- P7.1 The registered ELICOS provider's premises comply with all relevant legislation and regulations.
- P7.2 The registered ELICOS provider ensures that students are safe and have access to facilities that support their education, including circumstances:
- a) where the provider accesses or uses areas that may also be used for other purposes
 - b) where facilities are accessed by people not associated with the provider's operations.
- P7.3 The registered ELICOS provider designates areas of its premises sufficient in size to support quality delivery of its ELICOS courses, including:
- a) rooms of a size appropriate to size of class
 - b) teacher studies/staffrooms
 - c) student recreation areas
 - d) private study areas or areas for related activities, such as library, resource centre and language laboratory
 - e) storage areas
 - f) offices for the management of the ELICOS provider and for the confidential counselling of students.

Business Management

Standard P8 – Business management

Outcome of Standard P8

The operations of the provider are supported by effective management actions.

- P8.1 The registered ELICOS provider:
- a) complies with relevant Commonwealth, state or territory legislation and other regulatory requirements that are relevant to its operations
 - b) ensures that its staff, students and other clients are fully informed of these requirements where they affect their duties or participation in ELICOS education with the provider.
- P8.2 The registered ELICOS provider holds insurance for public liability throughout its registration period.
- P8.3 The registered ELICOS provider:
- a) has its accounts prepared to Australian Accounting and Auditing Standards, at least annually
 - b) provides the certificate of accounts to the designated authority on request
 - c) provides a full audit report of its financial accounts from a qualified and independent auditor, if the designated authority reasonably deems this necessary
 - d) provides other business management documents as requested by the designated authority, if reasonably deemed necessary.
- P8.4 The registered ELICOS provider has management systems that are responsive to the needs of students, staff and stakeholders and the environment in which the provider operates, including:
- a) a systematic and continuous improvement approach to managing its operations
 - b) management of records to ensure their accuracy and integrity.

Glossary

CRICOS	Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students
Designated authority	As defined in the Education services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act
ELICOS National Standards	National Standards for ELICOS Providers and Courses
Formative assessment	Information collected (generally via a range of formal and informal methods) during a course to determine students' progress towards course outcomes or learning goals. Its purpose is to provide feedback in order to adapt or change teaching content or approaches, or to adapt or change student learning and study strategies.
Foundation Programs	As defined in the National Standards for Foundation Programs
Learning block	A discrete period of study within a course as defined by the provider
National Code	National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007 or later version where applicable
Registered ELICOS provider	An approved provider that is registered on CRICOS as a provider of ELICOS for a state
Registered provider	As defined in the ESOS Act
Scheduled course contact hours	The hours for which students enrolled in a course are scheduled to attend classes, course-related information sessions, supervised study sessions and examinations
Summative assessment	Assessment carried out during or at the end of a course of study (as appropriate) to determine and specify students' achievement of course outcomes or learning goals.
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
Welfare matters	Matters related to the mental, physical, social and spiritual wellbeing of overseas students. These may include accommodation, disability, equity issues, financial matters, legal issues, medical issues, mental health, religious and spiritual matters, and stress management.
Written Agreement	As required in Standard 3 of the National Code