

VISA PAK ISSUE 343 — 02 FEBRUARY 2018

NEW OFFSHORE STUDENT VISA APPROVAL RATES FOR 2017 (RULE 18)

Rule 18 background

In October 2015, the New Zealand Qualifications Authority introduced changes to the English language requirements for international students that are set out in Rule 18 of the *Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules*.

As a result of the changes, education providers cannot use internal testing or evidence of prior study in English to assess English proficiency for first time international students from countries with a student visa decline rate of more than 20 per-cent (i.e. an approval rate below 80 per cent), as measured by Immigration New Zealand (INZ).

New INZ approval rates for student visas now available

INZ has updated the list of approval rates for student visas for the 2017 calendar year. The list is now publicly available on the INZ website.

Where a country's approval rate has changed to above or below 80 per cent, education providers have until **24 February 2018** to adjust their enrolment policies.

The new approval rates have seen 22 countries drop below 80 per cent approval (from 80 per cent or higher in 2015), meaning that Rule 18.5 applies to first time international students from these countries. These 22 countries are as follows:

- Algeria
- Angola
- Bosnia & Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Burundi
- Costa Rica
- Cuba
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- El Salvador
- Ethiopia
- Georgia
- Honduras
- Kenya
- Kiribati
- Malawi
- Mongolia



NEW ZEALAND
IMMIGRATION

- Nauru
- Rwanda
- Sierra Leone
- Venezuela
- Zambia

Eleven countries have improved to over 80 per-cent approval, meaning that Rule 18.5 no longer applies. These 11 countries are as follows:

- Barbados
- Belarus
- Bhutan
- Kazakhstan
- Kuwait
- Macedonia
- Maldives
- Moldova
- Palau
- Tanzania
- Tunisia