

Dear valued agent partners,

Thank you for your continued partnership with ICL Education Group and for the care you provide to students throughout the application and visa process.

We are aware that some agents and students are experiencing longer visa processing times and increased requests for information and interviews. We understand the concern this creates, particularly where the pattern appears different from previous experience.

We have raised these matters **directly with Immigration NZ**. In our discussions, they have advised that the increased scrutiny is **not exclusive to ICL**, and on Friday released the following statement:

“INZ is continuing to strengthen its assessment of master’s student visa applications to ensure that education providers undertake robust due diligence when recruiting international students, and that student visa applicants are bona fide (genuine). As part of the immigration assessment, INZ considers an applicant’s English language capability and educational history. INZ has been progressing targeted assurance activity, including interviews with cohorts of master’s students from some providers, and is expanding this approach more broadly across the sector to support system integrity and risk management.”

This is important context for all of us. The current environment should not be interpreted as an issue that applies only to ICL, nor as a change to the quality or value of an ICL education. It reflects a period of **increased scrutiny within the New Zealand international education sector, including for universities**.

As the largest private provider of master's programmes in New Zealand, ICL is well placed to respond to the current period of increased assessment across the sector. Our scale means we have robust systems for due diligence, admissions and compliance in place, and we have engaged constructively with Immigration NZ on these matters. We are confident in our ability to work through this environment while continuing to support genuine students, and to move through this period ahead of other providers and universities.

What this means for students and agents

Students can, and should, continue to apply to ICL. The strongest response to the current environment is to submit **well-prepared applications** that clearly demonstrate the student’s **intentions, circumstances and ability to undertake their proposed study**.

Our recommendation is for agents to carefully consider the following:

- **Student fit:** Recommend ICL to students whose study plans, prior learning and career goals are genuinely aligned with the programme.
- **Clear study purpose:** Help students explain why they have chosen their programme, why ICL is suitable for them, and how the study supports their future plans.
- **Complete evidence:** Check that financial, academic and supporting documents are accurate, consistent and complete before submission.
- **Realistic timing:** Encourage students to apply early and allow additional time for processing or requests for further information.

- **Early escalation:** Contact your ICL representative promptly where an application is unusually delayed or where further guidance is needed.

We ask that you continue to assess each student on their merits and recommend ICL where our programmes are the right fit, and students are seeking a **high-quality, graduate-focussed, and career-ready qualification**.

Relying on verified information

We are aware that speculation and rumours can emerge when visa outcomes are delayed. We encourage all agent partners to rely on information provided directly by ICL and official communications from Immigration NZ, rather than unverified commentary circulating through agent networks or social media channels.

Our Commitment

ICL remains committed to **high standards in admissions, compliance, academic delivery and student support**. We continue to monitor student visa outcomes and provide practical support to our agent partners.

We value your partnership and the confidence you place in ICL. By working together, communicating accurately and ensuring that applications are well prepared, we can continue supporting genuine students to pursue their study goals with ICL.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Bobin'.

Gordon Bobin
Chief Executive Officer
ICL Education Group

10 September 2026