

Australian citizenship

An Australian Passport is suitable evidence of Australian citizenship. If the applicant does not have an Australian Passport, the evidence required to demonstrate that an applicant is an Australian citizen may differ depending on whether the applicant was:

- born in Australia before 20 August 1986
- born in Australia on or after 20 August 1986
- born overseas.

Applicants born in Australia before 20 August 1986

If applicants do not have an Australian Passport, they will need to provide their full birth certificate issued by an Australian Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages (RBDM).

An exception to this is where the applicant's parents were in Australia as diplomats or consular officers at the time of the applicant's birth. In these circumstances, the applicant will need to provide a citizenship certificate as evidence that they are an Australian citizen.

If the applicant does not have a citizenship certificate they will need to lodge Form 119 Application for evidence of Australian citizenship with certified copies of the required documents and the application fee with DIBP.

Applicant was born in Australia on or after 20 August 1986 and one of their parents was an Australian citizen at the time of their birth

If applicants do not have an Australian Passport, and where one (or both) of the applicant's parents was an Australian citizen at the time of their birth, the applicant should provide their full birth certificate issued by an Australian RBDM and one of the following documents to show that one of their parents was an Australian citizen at the time of their birth:

- their parent's Australian citizenship certificate or
- if their parent was born in Australia before 20 August 1986, their parent's full birth certificate issued by an Australian RBDM or
- if their parent was born in Australia on or after 20 August 1986, their parent's full birth certificate issued by an Australian RBDM and their grandparent's Australian birth certificate issued by an Australian RBDM.

If the applicant cannot provide this they should apply for their own evidence of Australian citizenship by lodging Form 119 Application for evidence of Australian citizenship with certified copies of the required documents and the application fee with DIBP.

Applicant was born in Australia on or after 20 August 1986 and one of their parents was a permanent resident of Australia at the time of their birth

If applicants do not have an Australian passport, and where one (or both) of the applicant's parents was a permanent resident of Australia at the time of their birth, they will need to provide both of the following documents to prove their Australian citizenship:

- their full birth certificate issued by an Australian RBDM
- their Australian citizenship certificate.

They can apply for an Australian citizenship certificate by lodging Form 119 Application for evidence of Australian citizenship with certified copies of the required documents and the application fee with DIBP.

The following documents are not acceptable as proof of a parent's permanent residency for VET Student Loan applications:

- parent's foreign passport with a visa label
- Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO) printout
- visa grant notification letter
- Certificate of Evidence of Resident Status (CERS)
- Certificate of Status for New Zealand Citizens in Australia (CSNZCA)
- ImmiCard
- Freedom of Information (FOI) letter from the Department of Immigration and Border Protection.

These documents only provide proof of a person's visa status on the day they are issued / printed and are not sufficient proof of a parent's resident status at the time the applicant was born.

Applicants born overseas and acquired Australian citizenship by application

Applicants will need to provide one of the following documents as evidence of their Australian citizenship:

- an Australian passport
- an Australian citizenship certificate
- a Citizenship by Descent extract
- an Adoption in accordance with the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption or bilateral arrangement extract

If an applicant does not have one of the above citizenship documents they will need to apply for a replacement certificate by lodging Form 119 Application for evidence of Australian citizenship with certified copies of the required documents and the application fee with the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP).

Applicant or their parent was born in Papua New Guinea prior to 16 Sept 1975

Papua New Guinea became a sovereign nation on 16 Sep 1975 (PNG Independence Day). Assessing Australian citizenship status of people born in PNG prior to 16 Sep 1975 can be complex. DIBP is aware that in the past this cohort of people has been incorrectly issued with an Australian passport based on an incorrect assessment of their citizenship status. As such, the citizenship status of some applicants born in PNG prior to 16 Sep 1975 must be checked and verified with DIBP.

The applicant should be referred to DIBP to obtain evidence of Australian citizenship by lodging Form 119 Application for evidence of Australian citizenship if:

- evidence of citizenship was issued before 1 Jan 2009 and the applicant was born in PNG prior to 16 Sep 1975; or
- citizenship was acquired by descent before 1 Jan 2009 where the parent(s) was born in PNG before 16 Sep 1975.

A citizenship certificate can be accepted as evidence that the applicant is an Australian citizen if the evidence of citizenship was issued on or after 1 Jan 2009 regardless of the acquisition date or date of birth.

Applicants need to take DIBP's application processing times into account before applying for a VET Student Loan.

Becoming an Australian citizen

If a student gains Australian citizenship part way through their course, the student may be eligible for a VET student loan for those parts of a course, yet to be completed, including for parts of a course, which the student is currently enrolled in, for which the census dates have not passed.

A person gains Australian citizenship only after making the pledge of commitment and being issued with Evidence of Australian Citizenship from the Department of Immigration and Border Protection. For further information regarding Australian citizenship, contact the Department of Immigration and Border Protection. Please refer to 'Determining citizenship and visa status'.

Permanent humanitarian visa holders

To confirm if the visa class held by a person applying for a VET student loan is a permanent humanitarian visa contact, the Department of Immigration and Border Protection website at www.border.gov.au/vevo. In determining whether a permanent humanitarian visa holder will be resident in Australia for the duration of their course, the provider must disregard any periods spent outside of Australia if the holder:

- cannot be reasonably regarded as indicating an intention to reside outside of Australia for the duration of the course or
- is required to leave Australia to complete the requirements of that course.

Qualifying New Zealand citizens

A New Zealand citizen is eligible if they hold a Special Category Visa and:

- has usually been resident in Australia for at least 10 years; and
- was a dependent child aged under 18-years of age when he or she first was usually resident in Australia and
- has been in Australia for periods totalling 8 years during the previous 10 years and
- has been in Australia for periods totalling 18 months during the previous 2 years [Act s 11)].

Most New Zealand citizens who arrive in Australia are the holders of a temporary visa called a Special Category Visa (SCV). This is not a permanent visa but allows its holder to visit, live and work in Australia indefinitely.

Providers can also find information about HELP eligibility criteria for New Zealand Special Category Visa Holders at www.education.gov.au/faqs-new-zealand-special-category-visa-holders.