



Republic of the Philippines
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

TO : All CHED Regional Directors

SUBJECT : *Inter-Agency Committee on Foreign Students' Clarificatory Statements on Certain Provisions of IACFS Memorandum Order No. 1, s. 2000 RE: IRR of EO 285 (Entry and Stay of Foreign Students in the Philippines)*

DATE : September 5, 2001

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Attached is IACFS Memorandum Order No. 1, s. 2001, entitled "Inter-Agency Committee on Foreign Students' Clarificatory Statements on Certain Provisions of IACFS Memorandum Order No. 1, s. 2000 Re: IRR of EO 285 (Entry and Stay of Foreign Students in the Philippines)" for the information and guidance of all HEIs with foreign student enrollees, both public and private.

Immediate dissemination of this Memorandum to all concerned is desired.


ESTER A. GARCIA

Republic of the Philippines
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN STUDENTS
(IACFS)

IACFS MEMORANDUM ORDER NO. 1, s. 2001

FOR : All Concerned

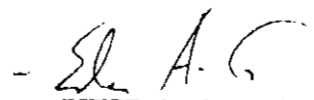
SUBJECT : **INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN STUDENTS' CLARIFICATORY STATEMENTS ON CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF IACFS MEMORANDUM ORDER NO. 1, S. 2000 RE: IRR OF EO 285 (Entry and Stay of Foreign Students in the Philippines)**

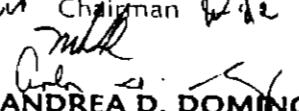
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For the uniform interpretation of the Implementing Guidelines of Executive Order 285 re. Entry and Stay of Foreign Students in the Philippines provided in IACFS Memorandum Order No. 1, s. 2000, the Inter-Agency Committee on Foreign Students hereby issues the following clarificatory statements on certain provisions thereof, for the information of all concerned.

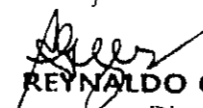
1. HEIs authorized to accept foreign students before the issuance of EO 285 but do not meet the accreditation requirements, will have to show that initial steps towards accreditation is being done, through a Certification issued by CHED.
2. Foreign students currently enrolled in these HEIs, shall be allowed to finish the programs they are enrolled in.
3. The same HEIs should comply with the requirements within a specified time prescribed by the accrediting body. Monitoring shall be done by CHED to find out if indeed compliance is being undertaken.
4. Authority to accept foreign students shall be withdrawn in the event of failure of the HEIs concerned to comply with the requirements.
5. Foreign student holders of visas other than 9(f) can study in an HEI without the FAAP accrediting body or CHED equivalent accreditation, provided said institution has authority to accept foreign students granted by BI, and provided further that said students comply with BI requirements.

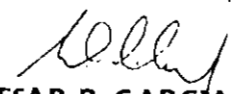
- 6 Spot inspection visits shall be jointly conducted by CHED and BI.
- 7 Visits shall be done only once in an HEI to verify authenticity of documentary and other requirements. No inspection of facilities shall be undertaken. Only in the event of problems like visa requirement/violations and upon invitation as resource person/speaker in seminars/workshops, shall extra visits be done.
- 8 Without the accreditation of agencies under FAAP or CHED equivalence, applications for inclusion in the BI listings shall be held pending. However, HEIs with applications for accreditation with FAAP upon recommendation of CHED, shall be issued provisional authority to accept foreign students by BI.
- 9 An official listings of HEIs with FAAP-Agency or CHED-equivalent accreditation shall be submitted by CHED to BI. An updated list of the same shall similarly be submitted, as the need arises.
10. This Order shall be effective beginning AY 2001-2002.


ESTER A. GARCIA
Chairperson
Commission on Higher Education
Chairman


ANDREA D. DOMINGO
Commissioner
Bureau of Immigration
Member


FRANKLIN M. EBDALIN
Undersecretary for Administration
Department of Foreign Affairs
Co-Chair


REYNALDO G. WYCOCO
Director
National Bureau of Investigation
Member


CESAR P. GARCIA, JR.
Director General
National Intelligence and Coordinating Agency
Member

ATTN: ATTY. FONSECA

MALACAÑANG
Manila

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BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 285

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MFN 9444

**AMENDING THE GUIDELINES GOVERNING THE ENTRY AND STAY OF
FOREIGN STUDENTS IN THE PHILIPPINES AND THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN STUDENTS FOR THE PURPOSE**

WHEREAS, it is the policy of the government to continuously promote the Philippines as a center for education in the Asia Pacific Region by (i) encouraging foreign students to study in the country, (ii) developing awareness of the Philippine educational system among neighboring countries, and (iii) allowing duly accepted foreign students to avail of the facilities of the Philippine educational system;

WHEREAS, an increasing number of foreign students has expressed the desire to enter and study in the Philippines, and graduate from Philippine schools, colleges and universities;

WHEREAS, the Philippine government recognizes the importance of openness and vigilance in determining *bona-fide* foreign students who wish to avail themselves of education and training in the Philippine educational institutions and benefit from an enriched exchange of culture, ideas and goodwill among nations in the region;

WHEREAS, studying in the Philippines will afford foreign students of Filipino descent excellent means and opportunity to appreciate and understand their roots and rich cultural heritage;

WHEREAS, the government policy of attraction for foreign students to come to the country will help boost the nation's prospects to improve its economic environment;

WHEREAS, there is a need to liberalize the procedures and requirements in the entry of foreign students without compromising national security by providing a systematic method in the processing and approval of their documents.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, do hereby order the following:

SECTION 1. Basic Policies and Procedures. The following policies and procedures shall be observed by all entities concerned:



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A. Coverage

Only aliens who seek temporary stay in the Philippines solely for the purpose of taking up a course higher than high school at a university, seminary, college, academy, or school duly authorized to admit foreign students who are at least 18 years of age at the time of enrollment and have the means sufficient for their education and support of study are covered under this order.

B. Acceptance

Only schools with programs accredited by the Federation of Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines (FAAP) or with the equivalent accreditation by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Bureau of Immigration (BI) shall be authorized by the Commission to admit foreign students. The CHED shall prepare, at regular intervals, an updated list of such schools, in consultation with the BI, taking into account their respective mandates under existing laws and regulations. Copies of the list shall be furnished the BI, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA) and the schools authorized to admit foreign students. All schools so authorized shall establish a foreign student unit within their organization. To maintain their authority, the schools, through their foreign students unit, shall submit the following reports to the BI, copy furnished the CHED and NICA:

- a) an enrollment report on foreign students 45 days after commencement of classes every semester. The names of those who have been accepted but failed to enroll, either for the first time or subsequent terms, should be included in the said report.
- b) a monthly status report, as may be deemed necessary, with emphasis on whoever is missing, has transferred, dropped from the rolls or with derogatory records.
- c) a report on promotions with inclusions of those who failed to take the final examinations and those with deficiencies.

Failure to comply with the above-required reports shall be a ground for cancellation by the CHED of the authority to admit foreign students.

The Certificate of Eligibility for Admission (CEA) addressed to the accepting school shall be cleared by the CHED only in cases where restrictions exist on enrollment of foreign students due to shortage of facilities, such as enrollment in medicine and dentistry.

The CHED and the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) shall provide assistance to schools in regard to issues on comparative equivalences between foreign educational systems and those of the Philippines.



Accreditation of advanced credits earned in college or earned credits in Science, English and Mathematics in the 11th and 12th year levels of secondary education in foreign countries shall be limited only to the authorized number fixed by the CHED. Grant of credits in excess of the authorized number of advanced credits for degree course shall be subjected to validating examinations to be administered by the accepting educational institutions subject to information of the CHED.

Enrollment in any level shall require completion of the lower particular level, e.g., an applicant for the tertiary or collegiate level must be a graduate of high school or its equivalent.

The individual school may launch information campaigns to solicit and receive applications directly from prospective foreign students. The schools, for these purposes, may seek the assistance of the DFA and the Department of Tourism.

The processing of documents shall be between the school and the government agency concerned.

The foreign students shall communicate directly with the school and comply with the school's institutional requirements, which shall include the submission of the following documents;

- a) Five (5) copies of the Student's Personal History Statement (PHS) duly signed by him, both in English and in his national alphabet accompanied by his personal seal, if any, and containing, among others, his left and right thumbprints and a 2 x 2 inch photograph on plain white background taken not more than six months prior to submission.
- b) A notarized affidavit of support including bank statements or notarized notice of grant for institutional scholars to cover expenses for the students accommodation and subsistence, as well as school dues and other incidental expenses.
- c) Scholastic records duly authenticated by the Philippine Foreign Service Post located in the student applicant's country of origin or legal residence.
- d) Photocopy of data page of the student's passport showing date and place of birth, and birth certificate or its equivalent duly authenticated by the Philippine Foreign Service Post.

The school, satisfied with the student's compliance with its requirements, shall issue a Notice of Acceptance (NOA) to the student and submit a duplicate copy thereof of the DFA, together with a certified true copy of the CHED's CEA, when necessary, and the above-cited document-requirements of Section 1-B-7 a to d. These documents shall be handcarried to the DFA by the school's designated liaison officer under a cover letter



on the school's official stationery signed by the school registrar and stamped with the school's dry seal requesting that a student visa be issued to the person named therein.

The DFA shall indorse the documents to the Philippine Foreign Service Post located in the student's country of origin or legal residence for the issuance of the student visa after ascertaining the student's identity and admissibility under existing DFA regulations.

C. Issuance of Visas

Foreign students whose applications for student visa are approved are required to secure their visa from the Philippine Foreign Service Post in their country of origin or legal residence, regardless of where they are at the time of application.

The Philippine Foreign Service Post shall notify in writing the student of the receipt of the documents and require him to appear in person before a Consular Officer for interview and compliance with consular requirements. In addition to the documents transmitted to the post of the DFA, the following requirements shall be submitted by the student to the Consular Office:

- a) Original copy of the school's NOA containing a clear impression of the school's dry seal;
- b) Police clearance issued by the national police authorities in the student's country of origin or legal residence, authenticated by the Philippine Foreign Service Post having consular jurisdiction over the place; and
- c) Medical health certificate issued by an authorized physician including but not limited to standard-size chest x-ray, HIV, Hepatitis B clearance. The consular office shall not assume the task of determining the student's scholastic fitness for the program applied for and shall issue the student visa as soon as all the requirements are accomplished. A notice of visa issuance shall be furnished by the DFA to the school, the CHEC, BI and NBI and the NICA as soon as it receives a report to this effect from the issuing post.

D. Arrival and Stay in the Philippines

Upon arrival in the Philippines, the student, as part of the requirements for processing his entry, shall report immediately to the BI Students Desk for registration and to the accepting school and shall enroll in the school which issued this NOA. The school shall reassess the student's competency level and establish his scholastic comparative equivalence, when necessary.

The school, through its foreign student unit, shall assist the student in obtaining the necessary Alien Certificate of Registration (ACR) and Certificate of Residence for Temporary Students (CRTS) from the BI. The student's authorized period of stay shall



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E. Monitoring

Within a month and a half after the start of classes, the school, through its foreign students unit, shall submit to the BI, copy furnished CHED, NICA and NBI, an enrollment report on all foreign students with inclusion of names of foreign students who have been accepted but failed to enroll, either for the first time or for subsequent terms. Further, it shall submit a monthly status report to the BI, as may be deemed necessary, on whoever are missing, have transferred, dropped from the rolls and with derogatory record. Finally, at the end of each term, the school shall also report to the BI those foreign students who failed to take the final examinations for the term and those who have completed their courses. The report on promotions shall be submitted to the BI for appropriate action on requests for student visa extension. Non-compliance by schools to submit the reports shall be a ground for the cancellation by the CHED of their authority to accept foreign students.

The NICA and the NBI shall check, whenever necessary, the activities of foreign students brought to their attention which appear to be inimical to the security of the State. Criminal complaints filed against foreign students shall be referred to the NBI for investigation and appropriate action. These agencies shall undertake steps necessary to safeguard the due process of valid application, visa issuance and entry authorization of foreign students in the country.

The BI shall investigate, apprehend and prosecute, if necessary, foreign students who are not complying with Philippine immigration laws and regulations. Violation of immigration laws and regulations shall be a ground for the cancellation of a student visa and deportation of the student concerned.

F. Exemption

The following shall be exempt from the coverage of this Executive Order:

1) Tertiary enrollment in Philippine schools of the spouses and unmarried dependent children below 21 years old of the following categories of aliens shall not be required to secure a student visa and the BI special study permit;

- a) A permanent foreign resident;
- b) Aliens with valid working permits under Section 9(d), 9(g) and 47(a)(2) of the Philippine Immigration Act of 1940, as amended;
- c) Personnel of foreign diplomatic and consular missions residing in the Philippines;
- d) Personnel of duly accredited international organizations residing in the Philippines;



- e) Holders of Special Investor's Resident Visa (SIRV) and Special Retirees Resident Visa (SRRV); and
- f) Foreign students coming in the Philippines with 47(a) (2) visas issued pursuant to existing laws, e.g. P.D. 2021.

This privilege is also extended to the principals who may wish to take advantage of the educational facilities on the country.

2) Children of the above-mentioned admission categories who are already enrolled before their marriage and/or before reaching the age of 21 years shall be allowed to finish their studies and convert their admission category to that of student visa under Section 9(f) of the Philippine Immigration Act of 1940, as amended, for as long as their principals remain in the country.

3) Spouses and children of personnel of foreign diplomatic and consular missions and duly accredited international organizations located in the Philippines who desire to remain in the Philippines to enroll for the first time or finish their studies higher than high school and qualify under prescribed regulations, shall be allowed to convert their admission category to that of a student visa under Section 9(f) of the Philippine Immigration Act of 1940, as amended, in accordance with the applicable procedure, in the event their principals lose their admission category as Foreign Government Official under Section 9(e) of the Philippine Immigration Act of 1940, as amended. The privilege is also extended to the principals who may wish to take advantage of the educational facilities of the country.

SEC. 2. Establishment and Composition of the Committee on Foreign Students. There is hereby created an Inter-Agency Committee of Foreign Students herein referred to as the Committee, which shall have the following membership:

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| a) Commission on Higher Education | Chairman |
| b) Department of Foreign Affairs | Co-Chairman |
| c) Department of Education Culture and Sports | Member |
| d) Bureau of Immigration | Member |
| e) National Bureau of Investigation | Member |
| f) National Intelligence Coordinating Agency | Member |

SEC. 3. Duties and Responsibilities of the Committee. The Committee shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

- a) Promulgate simplified procedures and implementing guidelines governing the entry and stay of foreign students in the Philippines, as well as rules and regulations limiting school transfer and course shifting of foreign students in accordance with the provisions of the Executive Order within sixty (60) days from the effectivity hereof;



be consistent with the length of the course of study to which he has been accepted by a Philippine school. The initial period is one year, then, is renewed by the BI Student Desk every semester and for cause, maybe approved for one year.

A foreign student who wishes to pursue another degree program higher than the original course completed shall submit all appropriate clearances/indorsements to include Personal History Statement form duly accomplished, notarized affidavit of support, official transcript of record, NBI clearance and NOA from his admitting school and other concerned agencies to the BI for approval and subsequent processing of student visa extensions.

Shifting of course or change of school shall require prior CHED/DECS clearances.

Authorization for conversion from tourist's visa category to that of a student visa or issuance of Special Study Permit is hereby restored.

The concerned school and the Inter-Agency members shall provide assistance to the foreigners who are already in the country under any valid visa arrangement and who apply/petition for the conversion of their status to 9f student visa or for the issuance of a Special Study Permit provided all relevant prerequisites are complied with, and provided further, that safeguards to national security concerns/interests are adequately and appropriately undertaken by all concerned agencies.

The BI shall establish a Foreign Student Desk which shall have the following functions:

- a) To handle and screen all applications/petitions of foreigners for conversion from any valid category admission to student visa or for the issuance of Special Study Permit and recommend appropriate course of action to the BI Commissioner.
- b) To process and act on 9f student visa extension application and to approve the same per semester or for cause, per year;
- c) To accredit Higher Educational Institution (HEIs) to accept foreign students in coordination with CHED;
- d) To implement approved 9f conversion and downgrading from 9f to 9a;
- e) To issue BI clearance to student visa applicants;
- f) To monitor the activities of foreign students.



- b) Monitor and coordinate the implementation of this Executive Order with the department and agencies concerned;
- c) Meet regularly to assess the progress of the whole program to ensure that the promotion of the Philippines as a center for education in the region is effectively encouraged and undertaken;
- d) Request representatives from other agencies and/or the private sector to attend its meetings, when it deems necessary and proper; and
- e) Submit a semi-annual report to the Office of the President, through the Office of the Executive Secretary, on the status of the foreign students in the country. The report shall be submitted before the end of September and February of the first and second semester, respectively, of each school year.

The CHED shall provide the secretariat to support the Committee.

SEC. 4. Penalty Clause. Any school found, after due investigation, by the CHED and/or the BI to have violated any provision on compliance shall suffer cancellation of the authority to admit foreign students.

SEC. 5. Repealing Provision. All executive issuances, regulations, or any part thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Executive Order are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 6. Separability Clause. If, for any reason, any part or provision of the Executive Order shall be held unconstitutional or declared contrary to law, other parts or provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 7. Effectivity. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately.

DONE in the City of Manila this 4th day of September, in the year of our Lord, two thousand.

By the President:



RONALDO B. ZAMORA
Executive Secretary

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Date



Republic of the Philippines
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN STUDENTS
(IACFS)

IACFS MEMORANDUM ORDER

No. 01
Series of 2000

TO : All Concerned

SUBJECT : Implementing Guidelines of Executive Order 285 re Entry And Stay of Foreign Students in the Philippines

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In accordance with Executive Order No. 285 dated September 04, 2000, amending the Rules and Regulations governing the admission and stay of foreign students in the country and promote the Philippines as a Center for Education in the Asia-Pacific Region, the Committee hereby promulgates the following changes in the implementing guidelines on said students' entry and stay in the country, for the purpose of pursuing higher education studies at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) authorized to admit them. For purposes of these guidelines, foreign students are those who are at least 18 years of age at the time of enrollment at any HEI to take up courses higher than high school and have the means sufficient for their education and support of study. All concerned are informed, enjoined and directed, thus:

1. Only schools with programs accredited by the Federation of Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines (FAAP) or with equivalent accreditation by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Bureau of Immigration (BI) shall be authorized to admit foreign students. HEIs with no FAAP accredited programs are given one (1) year grace period upon effectivity of this Order to earn initial accreditation otherwise, transfer of affected foreign students to that which have earned authority to admit foreign students shall be done. Procedures for accrediting HEIs to admit foreign students is attached. (Enclosure 1)
2. At regular intervals an updated list of such schools, in consultation with the CHED, shall be prepared by BI. Copies of the list shall be furnished the CHED, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA) and the aforementioned schools.
3. Schools authorized to admit foreign students shall establish a Foreign Student Unit within their organization which shall be tasked to submit reports to the CHED Regional Offices and the BI Student Desk. A consolidation of said reports shall be prepared by CHED-OSS, a copy each to be furnished the BI, DFA, NBI and NICA which shall include the following:

Inter-Agency Committee on Foreign Students (IACFS) Secretariat
Office of Student Services, CHED
Rm. 315, 3rd Floor, U.P. Diliman, Q.C.

- a) An enrollment report on foreign students 45 days after commencement of classes every semester, including the names of those who have been accepted but failed to enroll, either for the first time or subsequent terms; and
- b) A yearly status report by semester, with emphasis on foreign students missing, have transferred, failed to take the final examinations, dropped from the rolls or with derogatory records.

Failure to comply with the above required reports shall be a ground for cancellation of the authority to admit foreign students granted by BI.

- 4 The information drawn from the aforementioned reports submitted by the concerned schools, shall form a vital part of the monitoring system on the activities of foreign students. Activities which appear to be inimical to the security of the State should be brought to the attention of the NICA and NBI. Criminal complaints however, filed against said students shall be referred to the NBI for investigation and appropriate action.

The BI shall investigate, apprehend and prosecute if necessary, foreign students who do not comply with Philippine immigration laws and regulations. Such violation shall be a ground for the cancellation of visa and deportation of students concerned.

- 5 Issuance of Student Visa under Section 9 F of the PIA of 1940, as amended:

5.1 For foreign students still abroad:

Foreign students with approved applications for student visas have to secure these from the Philippine Foreign Service Post in their country of origin or legal residence, regardless of where they are at the time of application, procedures of which are enclosed. (Enclosure 2)

5.2 Foreign student already in the Philippines:

Authorization for conversion from tourist's visa category to that of a student visa or issuance of Special Study Permit is hereby restored.

The procedural guidelines and documentary requirements in the issuance of a student visa to a foreign student who is already in the Philippines and for Special Study Permit are attached. (Enclosure 3)

6. The categories of aliens as follows are not covered by the student visa and BI special study permit requirement as provided for in Section 1 F of EO 285:

6. 1. Tertiary enrollment in Philippine schools or the spouses and unmarried dependent children below 21 years old of:

- a) a permanent foreign resident;
- b) aliens with valid working permits under Section 9 (d), 9 (g) and 47 (a) (2) of the Philippine Immigration Act of 1940, as amended;
- c) Personnel of foreign diplomatic and consular missions residing in the Philippines;
- d) Personnel of duly accredited international organizations residing in the Philippines;
- e) Holders of Special Investor's Resident Visa (SIRV) and Special Retirees Resident Visa (SRRV); and
- f) Foreign students in the Philippines with 47 (a) (2) visa issued pursuant to existing laws, e.g. P.D. 2021.

This privilege is also extended to the principals who may wish to take advantage of the educational facilities in the country.

6.2. Children of the above-mentioned admission category holders who are already enrolled before their marriage and/or before reaching the age of 21 years, shall be allowed to convert their admission category to that of student visa under Section 9 (f) of the Philippine Immigration Act of 1940 as amended, to enable them to finish their studies.


6.3 Spouses and children of personnel of foreign diplomatic and consular missions and duly accredited international organizations located in the Philippines, who desire to remain in the country to enrol for the first time or finish their studies higher than high school and qualify under prescribed regulations, shall be allowed to convert their admission category to that of a student visa under Section 9 (f) of the Philippine Immigration Act of 1940, as amended, in accordance with the applicable procedure, in the event their principals lose their admission category as Foreign Government Official under Section 9 (e) of the Philippine Immigration Act of 1940 as amended. The privilege is also extended to the principals who may wish to take advantage of the educational facilities of the country.


7. Attached herewith are the Revised Immigration and Alien Registration Fees, Fees and Other Charges. (Enclosure 4)

8. All issuances, regulations or any part thereof, inconsistent with the provisions of this Memorandum Order are hereby modified or repealed accordingly.


9. SANCTIONS - After due investigation conducted by BI and/or CHED, authority to accept foreign students by schools found to have violated or have not complied with the provisions of this Memorandum, shall be subject to cancellation/revocation and/or a fine of FIFTY THOUSAND PESOS (P50,000.00). Any foreign student found to have enrolled without appropriate visa to study or Special Study Permit (SSP) shall be charged a fine of TWENTY THOUSAND PESOS (P20,000.00) and subsequent deportation.
10. This Inter-Agency Committee Memorandum shall take effect immediately.

Manda, Philippines, October 25, 2000


ESTER A. GARCIA
Chairperson
Commission on Higher Education
Chair


FRANKLIN M. EBDALIN
Undersecretary for Administration
Department of Foreign Affairs
Co-Chair

RUFUS B. RODRIGUEZ
Commissioner
Bureau of Immigration
Member


FEDERICO M. OPINION, JR.
Director
National Bureau of Investigation
~~Member~~


CESAR F. FORTUNO
Director General
National Intelligence Coordinating Agency
Member

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14. What are the documentary requirements to be complied with for the extension of stay as a student?

- Written indorsement from the school for the extension of the student visa of the alien;
- Application form duly accomplished by the student;
- Two (2) 2 x 2 photographs;
- Photocopy of the picture, data and stamp of the latest arrival, pages of the passport of the students or Certificate of Identity;
- Transcript of Records signed by the Dean or Registrar with its seal for 1st extension only. No need for the same on 2nd or succeeding extensions;
- Grades for the previous semester both for 1st and succeeding extensions;
- Photocopy of the Alien Certificate of Registration (ACR), Certificate of Residence for Temporary Students (CRTS) and 9(f) visa stamp on the passport for 1st extension only;
- Explanation by the student and confirmed by the School Registrar or Dean in the case of one who took less than the required normal/regular full load per semester as follows:
 - a. Undergraduate at least 15 units
 - b. Graduate Student (MA) at least 12 units

However, graduating students and those enrolled in the College of Medicine may have less than the aforesaid number of units.

- Explanation by the student in case of failures, incomplete grades, dropped or withdrawals of two (2) or more subjects equivalent to six (6) or more units as confirmed by the School Registrar or Dean of the School;
- Notice of Acceptance/registration card for the incoming semester; and
- Approval of the admitting school in cases of school transfer, course shifting or enrollment in a masters or doctorate studies related to the student's bachelor degree.

15 Who are the foreigners exempted from securing Student Visa 9(f) and Special Study Permit?

For enrolment in tertiary schools, student visa and BI Special Study Permit, shall not be required of the spouses and unmarried dependent children below 21 years old of aliens under the following categories:

- Permanent foreign residents;
- Aliens with valid working permits under Section 9(d), 9(g) and 47 (a)(2) of the Philippine Immigration Act of 1940, as amended;
- Personnel of foreign diplomatic and consular missions residing in the Philippines and their dependents;
- Personnel of duly accredited international organizations residing in the Philippines and their dependents;
- Holders of Special Investor's Resident Visa (SIRV) and Special Retiree's Resident Visa (SRRV); and
- Foreign students coming to the Philippines with 47(a)(2) visas issued pursuant to existing laws, e.g. PD 2021.

16. When is the FS required to secure endorsement from CHED?

Shifting of program and/or transfer of school requires prior CHED clearance/endorsement through the OSDS.

17. Who should apply for CHED endorsement?

The authorized/designated school representative shall apply for CHED clearance, and transaction should be done between the school representative and the concerned government agency.

18. What steps should be undertaken by HEIs authorized to accept foreign students before the issuance of EO 285 but do not meet the FAAP Agency or CHED equivalent accreditation requirements?

These HEIs will have to show that initial steps towards accreditation is being done, through a certification issued by CHED.

19. Who monitors the HEI's compliance with the requirements within the time prescribed by the FAAP agencies?

CHED shall monitor these HEIs to find out if indeed compliance is being undertaken.

20. What happens if the requirements are not complied by the HEIs concerned?

The authority to accept foreign students by these HEIs shall be withdrawn.

21. What agency/agencies conduct/s spot inspection visits?

Spot inspection visits shall be jointly conducted by CHED and BI.

22. How many times will spot visits to the HEIs be done?

Spot visits shall be done only once in an HEI to verify authenticity of documentary and other requirements. No inspection of facilities shall be undertaken. Only in the event of problems like visa requirement/violations and upon invitation as resource person/speaker in seminars/workshops, shall extra visits be done.

23. What happens to HEIs with applications for inclusion in the BI listings but are without the required accreditation or CHED equivalence?

HEIs' applications for inclusion in the BI listings shall be held pending. However, those with applications for accreditation with FAAP upon recommendation of CHED, shall be issued provisional authority to accept foreign students by BI.

24. What sanctions will be imposed on any foreign student found to have enrolled without the appropriate visa to study or Special Study Permit (SSP)?

The foreign student concerned shall be charged a fine of Twenty Thousand Pesos (P20,000.00) and subsequent deportation.

25. What sanctions will be imposed on HEIs found to have violated the provisions of EO 285 and IACFS No. 1, s. 2000?

The concerned HEI's authority to accept foreign students shall be cancelled/revoked and/or pay a fine of Fifty Thousand Pesos (P50,000.00).



Republic of the Philippines
Office of the President
COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

**OFFICE OF STUDENT
DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICES**

**Q & A
ON**

FOREIGN STUDENTS GUIDELINES



Telefax: (02) 441-1220
E-mail address: oss@ched.gov.ph
Website: www.ched.gov.ph

1. Who are considered foreign students?

Foreign students are those belonging or owing allegiance to a country other than the Philippines and studying in any educational institution authorized or owned by the government of the Philippines.

2. Who is a bonafide foreign student?

A bonafide foreign student is one who is at least eighteen years of age at the time of enrollment, has sufficient means for his/her education and support and who seeks to enter the Philippines for temporary stay with the purpose of taking up a course of study higher than high school at a university, college or school authorized to accept foreign students.

3. What is the legal basis for the entry and stay of foreign students in the Philippines?

The entry and stay of foreign students in the country is covered by Executive Order (EO) 285 dated September 4, 2000, which amended the provisions of EO 423 of 1997 Re: Guidelines Governing the Entry and Stay of Foreign Students in the Philippines and the Establishment of an Inter-Agency Committee on Foreign Students for the Purpose. The implementing guidelines of this EO are specified in IACFS Memorandum No.1, s. 2000 & IACFS Memo No. 1 s. 2001.

4. What is the composition of the Inter-Agency Committee on Foreign Students (IACFS)?

The IACFS is composed of the following:

Chairman	- Chairperson, Commission on Higher Education (CHED)
Vice-Chairman	- Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA)
Members	- Commissioner, Bureau of Immigration (BI) Director, National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) Director General, National Intelligence and Coordinating Agency (NICA)

5. What is the pre-requisite for enrollment of a foreign student at the tertiary or college level?

A prospective foreign student-applicant for the tertiary or college level should be a high school/secondary school graduate or its equivalent.

6. What Philippine Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are authorized to accept foreign students?

Only HEIs with programs accredited by agencies under the Federation of Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines (FAAP) or with equivalent accreditation by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and by the Bureau of Immigration (BI), are authorized to admit foreign students.

7. What are the salient provisions of EO 285?

7.1. Only schools with programs accredited by agencies under the Federation of Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines (FAAP) or with equivalent accreditation by the Commission on Higher Education and by the Bureau of Immigration shall be authorized to admit foreign students.

7.2 Authorization for the conversion from tourist visa category to student visa or issuance of Special Study Permit (SSP).

7.3 Establishment of a Bureau of Immigration Foreign Student Desk.

8. What are the procedural guidelines to be observed and documentary requirements to be complied with in the issuance of Student Visa for applicant still abroad?

8.1 Student-applicant communicates with any Philippine HEI authorized to accept foreign students and complies with the following required documents:

- Five (5) copies of the Student's Personal History Statement (PHS) duly signed by him, both in English and in his national alphabet accompanied by his personal seal if any, containing

among others, his left and right thumb-prints and a 2 x 2 inch photograph on plain white background taken not more than six months prior to submission;

- Transcript of Records/Scholastic Records duly authenticated by the Philippine Foreign Service Post (PFSP) located in the student-applicant's country of origin or legal residence;
- A notarized Affidavit of Support including bank statements or notarized grant for institutional scholars, to cover expenses for the student's accommodation and subsistence, as well as school dues and other incidental expenses; and
- Photocopy of the student's passport showing date and place of birth and birth certificate or its equivalent, duly authenticated by the PFSP.

8.2 Upon compliance of the required documents and subject to entrance requirements of the accepting school, HEI issues Notice of Acceptance (NOA).

8.3 For those desiring to enroll in Medicine and Dentistry, their documents shall be submitted to the Office of Student Development and Services (OSDS), CHED for evaluation and if found in order, a Certificate of Eligibility for Admission (CEA) is issued.

8.4 HEI then submits the documents, including the certified true copy of the CEA of those enrolling in Medicine or Dentistry if applicable to the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA).

8.5 DFA endorses the documents to the PFSP in the student's country of origin or legal residence for the issuance of the corresponding visa.

8.6 PFSP notifies the student-applicant with instruction that he appears in person before the Consular Officer for interview and submission of required documents, as follows:

- Original copy of the school's Notice of Acceptance (NOA) containing a clear impression of the school's dry seal;
- Original copy of the Certificate of Eligibility for Admission (CEA) issued by CHED if enrolling in Medicine or Dentistry;
- Police clearance issued by the national police authorities in the student's country of origin or legal residence, duly authenticated by the PFSP having consular jurisdiction over the place; and
- Medical Health Certificate issued by an authorized physician including but not limited to standard-size chest X-ray, HIV, Hepatitis-B clearance. The Consular Office shall not assume the task of determining the student's scholastic fitness for the program applied for and shall issue the student visa as soon as all the requirements are accomplished.

8.7 Foreign student reports to the BI Student Desk for registration and to the accepting HEI and shall enroll in the school which issued his NOA upon arrival in the Philippines;

8.8 Accepting HEI shall assist foreign student to obtain Alien Certificate of Registration (ACR) and Certificate of Residence for Temporary Student (CRTS) from the Bureau of Immigration (BI); and

8.9 DFA sends notice to accepting HEI on the issuance of student visa to the applicant, copy furnished CHED, BI, NICA and NBI.

9. What is a Certificate of Eligibility for Admission to a Medical/Dental program?

A Certificate of Eligibility for Admission to a Medical program (CEM)/Dental program (CED), is issued to a foreign student by the CHED-OSDS, upon compliance of the documentary requirements.

10. What are the documentary requirements for the issuance of CEM/CED?

- Scholastic records signed by the College/University Registrar and stamped with the school seal; (the diploma/certificate of graduation maybe required if the scholastic records do not indicate graduation from the course).
- Birth Certificate/passport;
- Notice of Acceptance from the admitting school;
- (For Medicine only) Diploma or Certificate of Graduation from an allied collegiate course;
- NMAT (for Medicine only); and
- Payment of P500.00 per CEM/CED

11. Can foreign students already in the Philippines be allowed to apply for student visa?

Yes. EO 285 provides the authority for conversion of tourist visa category to student visa. The concerned foreign student shall be issued a Student Visa or Special Study Permit subject to compliance with BI requirements.

12. What are the documentary requirements to be complied with for the change/conversion of admission status of an alien to that of a student?

An alien admitted into the Philippines under any visa category may apply at the Bureau of immigration (BI) Student Visa Section for the change/conversion of his admission status to that of a student, subject to the following requirements:

- Written indorsement from the school for the change/conversion of admission status of the alien to that of a student;
- Original copy of the Notice of Acceptance (NOA) containing a clear impression of the school's official dry seal;
- Certified true copy of the Certificate of Eligibility for Admission (CEA) issued by the Commission on Higher Education in the case of students in Medicine and Dentistry;
- Proof of adequate financial support to cover expenses for the student's accommodation and subsistence, as well as school dues and incidental expenses;
- Scholastic records duly authenticated by the Philippine Foreign Service Post (PFSP) located in the student's country of origin or legal residence;
- Police Clearance Certificate issued by the National Police Authorities in the student's country of origin or residence duly authenticated by the PFSP having consular jurisdiction over the place, for the student who resided in the Philippines for less than 59 days. However, those who resided in the Philippines for more than 59 days at the time he applies for the said change/conversion of admission status, shall also be required to submit a National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) Clearance.
- Quarantine Medical Examination by the National Quarantine Office;
- Copy of the student's Personal History Statement (PHS) signed by him/her with a 2 x 2 inch photograph recently taken; and
- Photocopy of the picture, data and stamp of the latest arrival pages of the student's passport. The passport itself shall be presented to the Bureau of Immigration (BI) for verification.

13. How long is the student's authorized period of stay in the Philippines?

The student's authorized period of stay shall be consistent with the length of the course to which he has been accepted by a Philippine school. The initial period is one year and then renewed/extended by the BI Student Visa Section every year.