

Australia places Bangladesh among highest-risk countries for student visas

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Dhaka: Australia has moved Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Bhutan into the highest risk category for student visas, tightening scrutiny of applicants under its Simplified Student Visa Framework (SSVF).

Under the new classification — Evidence Level 3 — student visa applications from these countries will face stricter checks, including enhanced verification of financial records, academic credentials and English-language proficiency. Processing times are also expected to increase. The change took effect on January 8, 2026, according to Australian media reports.

Australian authorities said the decision was taken outside the regular review cycle to address what they described as growing concerns over visa integrity. Officials stressed that the move aims to protect the credibility of the student visa system while continuing to support

genuine international students.

Education experts linked the decision to a rise in fraudulent documentation and shifting global student flows, as stricter policies in the US, UK, and Canada have redirected applicants toward Australia. India remains Australia's largest source of international students, while the four affected countries together account for nearly one-third of total enrolments.

Despite the tougher measures, the Australian government said the revised risk rating is intended to ensure quality education outcomes rather than discourage legitimate students from applying.

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