

[**EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 188, July 13, 1994**]

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

WHEREAS, an increasing number of foreigners have expressed their desire to enter and study in the Philippines, and graduate from Philippine schools, colleges and universities;

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

WHEREAS, the current procedure and guidelines governing the entry and stay of foreign students in the Philippines need to be updated and simplified, in support of this policy.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FIDEL V. RAMOS, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested upon me by law, do hereby order:

Section 1. **Basic Policies and Procedures.** The following policies and procedure shall be observed by all entities concerned:

A. Acceptance of Foreign Students.

(1) Any Philippine school whose programs are recognized by the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) is authorized to accept foreign students. The individual Philippine school may launch information campaigns to solicit and receive applications directly from prospective foreign students. For this purpose, the school may seek the assistance of the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Tourism.

(2) Once the applicant is accepted for admission, the school may forward to the applicant the appropriate Notice of Acceptance to the course of study applied for. However, the school may be required to obtain in advance an appropriate Certificate of Eligibility for Admission (CEA) from the DECS for certain courses of study, such as in medicine and in nursing, where restrictions may exist on the enrollment of foreign students due to a shortage of facilities. Once issued, the CEA shall remain valid for the duration of the course of study, provided the student attends his classes and continues to receive satisfactory grades.

(3) The DECS, in consultation with the Commission on Higher Education, shall determine what courses of study require the issuance of a CEA and shall draw up a list for this purpose not later than sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Executive Order. Said list may be updated by the DECS from time to time as may be necessary.

(4) The DECS shall provide all schools with comparative equivalences for the major foreign educational systems, and should any question concerning equivalences arise, the school concerned shall secure the comments of the DECS before accepting a foreign student for enrollment.

(5) Enrollment in any level shall require completion of the lower particular level, for example, an applicant for the tertiary or collegiate level should be a graduate of high school or its equivalent.

(6) Elementary, secondary and tertiary enrolment in Philippine schools by the spouses and children of the following categories will be treated on the same basis as Philippine nationals: (a) permanent foreign residents, (b) aliens with valid working permits, (c) foreign diplomat personnel, and (d) personnel from duly accredited international organizations residing in the Philippines, and (e) holders of Special Investor's Resident Visa (SIRV) and Special Retiree's Resident Visa (SRRV).

B. Issuance of Visas.

(7) The procedure and documentation for the issuance of visas shall be kept to a minimum. The applicants for student visa shall submit the following documents to the Philippine Foreign Service Establishments (PFSE) located in the country of their residence:

(a) A copy of the Notice of Acceptance from a Philippine school and where applicable, a copy of the CEA;

(b) Documentary proof of support to cover expenses incidental to their studies, such as board and lodging as well as return air tickets;

(c) Authenticated scholastic records;

(d) Authenticated Police Clearance Certificate from the applicant's country of origin or residence;

(e) Results of medical examinations conducted by an authorized physician; and

(f) Other documents that may be required in the individual case by the Consular Officer, provided that it shall not be the task of the PFSE to determine the applicants scholastic fitness for the program applied for. If all documentary requirements are in order, the PFSE concerned shall issue a student visa.

C. Arrival and Stay in the Philippines.

(8) The process for duly authorized foreign students to enter and stay in the Philippines, including the issuance of the Alien Certificate of Registration (ACR), shall be facilitated. The student's authorized period of stay shall be consistent with the length of the course of study to which he has been accepted by a Philippine School.