

MONTHLY IMMIGRATION BULLETIN

The latest immigration news, views and announcements

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**WISHING YOU A
JOYOUS CHRISTMAS
AND A PROSPEROUS
NEW YEAR 2022**

NIL VAC FOR VISITOR VISA APPLICANTS

Applicants who were unable to travel due to the COVID-19 pandemic and lodged an application for a SC600 Visitor visa between 27th February 2021 to 31st December 2022 and had previously been granted a SC600 visa offshore before 21st March 2020 that will expire before 30th June 2022, will be eligible to make a new SC-600 visa for nil VAC application fee.

This policy commenced from 15th December 2021 and apply retrospectively and will enable the refund of the VAC paid for applications made after 26th February 2021.



NSW OPENS UP FOR OFFSHORE APPLICANTS.

Updates for Skilled Nominated visa (Permanent - subclass 190)

Offshore candidates skilled in occupations within some ANZSCO unit groups are now eligible for NSW nomination.

In some ANZSCO unit groups, you must have a minimum of three years' work experience in the occupation you have nominated. These unit groups are identified with a tick under the 'Experience' column on [NSW skilled occupation lists](#) page

Requirements:

If you are residing offshore, you must:

1. Have continuously resided offshore for the past three months, and
2. Have a valid skills assessment for an occupation within an ANZSCO unit group

Updates for Skilled Work Regional visa - subclass 491

Offshore applicants for the Skilled Work Regional (Provisional) visa (subclass 491) are allowed to live, study, and work in a designated regional area for up to five years.

All candidates applying for NSW 491 nominations need to have a valid Expression Of Interest in Skill Select, then additionally submit a Registration Of Interest (ROI) through the NSW website.

Offshore candidates are now eligible to submit an ROI under Stream 3. Submissions will be accepted from 12 am 1 January 2022 through 11:59 pm 31 January 2022.

See all the NSW region's occupation list available here: www.nsw.gov.au/topics visas-and-migration/skilled-visas/nsw-skilled-occupation-lists

TWO NEW DAMA'S HAVE BEEN ANNOUNCED FOR SOUTH WEST WA AND THE GOULBURN VALLEY, VICTORIA.

South West WA DAMA

The Shire of Dardanup will administer the process for accessing the South West DAMA which will be open to businesses operating in any of the 12 local governments areas covered by the agreement – City of Busselton, City of Bunbury, Shire of Capel, Shire of Collie, Shire of Augusta/Margaret River, Shire of Boyup Brook, Shire of Bridgetown/Greenbushes, Shire of Dardanup, Shire of Donnybrook/Balingup, Shire of Harvey, Shire of Manjimup and the Shire of Nannup.

This DAMA will assist in filling a large number of vacancies in Dardanup and South West Western Australia. Local businesses can apply individually to access the DAMA from 2022.



Goulburn Valley Victoria DAMA

The Goulburn Valley region, bordered on the south by the Great Dividing Range and to the north by the Murray River is a significant agricultural region but also includes important retail, manufacturing and tourism industries.

The Greater Shepparton City Council will administer the process for accessing the Goulburn Valley DAMA, which will be open to businesses operating in any of the Greater Shepparton, Moira and Campaspe local government areas. Local businesses can apply individually to access the DAMA from 2022.



NSW AND VICTORIA SCRAP 72 HOUR ISOLATION PERIOD FOR INTERNATIONAL ARRIVALS

Fully-vaccinated international arrivals no longer have to isolate for 72 hours in Victoria and New South Wales. Arrivals will still need to get a PCR test within 24 hours after arrival and isolate until they receive a negative result.



SECTION 48 BARRED APPLICANTS ARE NOW ELIGIBLE FOR WA STATE NOMINATION

Section 48 barred means if you have had a visa cancelled or refused since last arriving in Australia and you are either unlawful (that is – you do not hold a visa) or you hold a bridging visa. If Section 48 applies to you, then you may find you have limited options in applying for a visa from within Australia. But now, the Migration WA has announced that Section 48 barred applicants are now eligible for WA State nomination. Updated criteria for State nomination is available on the [Migration WA website](#).

THE AUSTRALIA UK FREE TRADE AGREEMENT (A-UKFTA) SIGNED

The Australia UK Free Trade Agreement (A-UKFTA) was signed on 17th December 2021.

The details of the various components of the A-UKFTA will take some time to be confirmed, with some taking two to five years from the '**entry into force (EIF)**' of the Agreement, including:

- Working holiday opportunities for both countries allow the age limits to be lifted to 35 years and stays of up to three years will occur **within two years of the EIF**.
- Managers and specialists will have guaranteed access to intra corporate transfer and graduate trainees – one-year transfers - no detail of the visa pathways to be utilised has been provided as yet.
- Innovators and early career development will be piloted with a streamlined program capped at 1000 in the first year, rising to 2000 the second year. It will be reviewed to assess future implementation - it is expected that this pathway will utilise the Global Talent visa.
- Agricultural workers - a joint Declaration on Agriculture and Agribusiness Workers detailing available pathways for workers in this sector will be made and UK workers have been invited to participate in the Australian Agriculture Visa, which is under development.
- UK service suppliers including **architects, scientists, researchers, lawyers and accountants** will be able to access Australian visas without being subject to the occupation skilled lists.
- Recognition of professional qualifications between Australia and the UK will be increased with improved collaboration between accreditation and regulatory bodies.

Australian and UK lawyers will have reciprocal rights to practice in each country.



AUSTRALIA IS REOPENING ITS BORDER TO VACCINATED TRAVELLERS

From 15th December 2021, fully vaccinated eligible visa holders can travel to Australia without applying for a travel exemption. Eligible visa holders are people who hold temporary visas, including prospective marriage visa holders, student visa holders, working holiday visa holders, New Zealand family relationship visa holders and more (see full list below through the following link). Twenty-eight visa types will be eligible under the scheme.

[Vaccinated travellers | COVID-19 and the border \(homeaffairs.gov.au\)](https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au)

Applicants holding Bridging Visa B for the listed visas are **not** included in this list and **must apply** for a travel exemption to return to Australia if they depart as the holder of the bridging visa. *If you have applied for the visa but have not yet been granted, you are not an eligible visa holder.*



CONCESSIONS FOR OFFSHORE TEMPORARY GRADUATE VISA HOLDERS (SUBCLASS 485)



Temporary Graduate (subclass 485) visa holders whose visas expired on or after 1st February 2020 to re-apply for a new subclass 485 visa of the same duration as their original visa. Graduates whose visas have expired will apply for a replacement visa from 1st July 2022.

There will also be other changes to Temporary Graduate visa settings to ensure Australia remains a competitive and attractive destination for international students.

- The stay period on the Temporary Graduate (subclass 485) visa for Masters by Coursework graduates will increase permanently from two to three years to match the stay period for Masters by Research graduates.
- As a concession during the COVID-19 pandemic, the stay period on the Temporary Graduate (subclass 485) visa Graduate Work stream will increase from 18 to 24 months, and application requirements will be streamlined by removing the requirement for graduates to nominate an occupation from the skills occupation list.

These changes to Temporary Graduate visa stay periods will be implemented from 1st December 2021, and skilled occupation list requirements will be removed from 1st July 2022.

These changes will be implemented progressively from 1st December 2021 through to 1st July 2022

CANADA'S NEW OMICRON TRAVEL RULES AT A GLANCE



Following the emergence of the Omicron variant, Canada imposed a raft of new travel restrictions. Increased restrictions have been imposed on travelers from ten African countries. Botswana, Egypt, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, and Zimbabwe are among those affected. Foreign nationals who have visited any of these countries within the last 14 days are not permitted to enter Canada. The new regulations also apply to Canadian citizens and permanent residents who travel from these nations. In order to return home, they must first pass a COVID-19 test in a third nation. A temporary mechanism is presently in place that allows Canadians to be tested in South Africa, one of the nations with entry limitations.

ONTARIO ISSUES 1,186 INVITATIONS IN LATEST NOMINEE DRAW

On December 7, Ontario issued a second set of invites. So far in 2021, the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP) has issued 5,331 invites across its three Employer Job Offer streams.

Ontario's Employer Job Offer: Foreign Worker stream



The Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program manages the Foreign Worker program, which is an Employer Job Offer stream (OINP). Foreign nationals with skilled work experience and a verifiable job offer from an Ontario firm are targeted for this stream.

Eligible candidates must fill out an Expression of Interest (EOI) form on the OINP's online application portal. Candidates that meet the criteria will be invited to apply for provincial nomination. Successful nominees may apply for permanent residency in Canada through the federal government.

Ontario's Employer Job Offer: In-Demand Skills stream

Foreign nationals with Ontario work experience in one of the province's in-demand occupations and a valid job offer from an Ontario company are eligible for In Demand Skills.

Eligible candidates must fill out an Expression of Interest profile on the Ontario government's website. Since the beginning of the In-Demand Skills drawing in July 2021, no minimum score has been set.

EXPRESS ENTRY: CANADA HOLDS BIGGEST PNP DRAW EVER



On December 10, Canada staged a new Express Entry draw. A total of 1,032 people were invited to apply for permanent residency.

Invited candidates had already been nominated through a Provincial Nominee Program (PNP), which added 600 points to their baseline human capital score. As a result, the draw's minimum cut-off was 698.

Since the inception of Express Entry in 2015, Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) has only held 38 PNP-only drawings. With the exception of this draw and the June 23 draw, they usually send out fewer than a thousand invites.

PNP drawings have only been held by IRCC since September. This is the seventh time in a row that such a draw has occurred. IRCC invited 613 candidates with scores of at least 737 in the previous Express Entry draw.

ARE EXPRESS ENTRY APPLICATIONS BEING PROCESSED?

Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) halted Federal Skilled Worker (FSW) applications throughout the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic. Delays in FSW application processing have persisted beyond the pandemic's end, owing to a significant backlog.

Given that the majority of federal skilled worker (FSW) candidates were unable to travel to Canada, IRCC has paused inviting these candidates to Express Entry drawings until December 2020. Instead, Canada has only issued Invitations to Apply (ITA) to individuals who are already in the country, such as those qualifying through the Canadian Experience Class (CEC) and Provincial Nominee Program (PNP).

Canadian travel restrictions were changed in June 2021, allowing all CoPR holders to enter the country. IRCC, on the other hand, had to reconsider the admissibility of several candidates whose cases had been put on hold. As a result, many Federal Skilled Worker (FSW) applicants have seen significant delays in their applications being processed.



Since the COVID-19 era, Canada has permitted international students to credit time spent studying online toward the length of a post-graduate work visa (PGWP). Though the policy was supposed to expire on December 31, 2021, the government has extended it to August 31, 2022.

That is, between March 2020 and August 31, 2022, all time spent studying online from outside Canada will count towards the term of a post-graduate work permit.

A post-graduate work permit can be awarded for up to three years depending on the length of your study. Any study time spent prior to applying for a study permit will not be counted against the period of the work permit. After August 31, 2022, time spent studying online outside of Canada will not be considered.

Students who are taking two Canadian study programs can also complete all of their studies online if the programs are continuing or began between March 2020 and Summer 2022.

ONLINE STUDIES TO COUNT TOWARD PGWP UNTIL AUGUST 2022



VACCINE APPROVED FOR 5 – 11 YEARS OLDS IN AUSTRALIA

Aussie kids are set to roll up their sleeves from 10th January 2022, as the federal government approved [#COVID19](#) vaccinations for five to 11-year-olds. Vaccination experts have recommended children in the age group receive the Pfizer vaccine at one-third of the regular dosage. Subject to ATAGI (Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation) advice, it is expected a vaccination program for 5 to 11 year olds will commence from 10th January 2022.



DIRECT FLIGHTS FROM PERTH TO ROME



Western Australians will soon fly straight to Italy with Qantas announcing a nonstop Perth to Rome service once the border opens. Qantas has announced it will launch a seasonal three-times-weekly nonstop service to Rome from 22nd June 2022, using the Boeing 787-9 aircraft. Many Western Australians have family links with Italy and it will now be easier to reunite after so long apart safely.

EVENTS AND WEBINARS

YOU CAN NOW WATCH
OUR PREVIOUS VIDEOS
AND WEBINARS
FROM BELOW LINKS,

- ⇒ [General Skilled Migration Australia - Current Outlook](#)
- ⇒ [Business Visa to Australia \(English Session\)](#)
- ⇒ [Business Visa to Australia \(Sinhala Session\)](#)
- ⇒ [Business Migration pathways to Australia](#)
- ⇒ [Introducing the Sanji Caldera Education foundation](#)
- ⇒ [Get your PR in Australia with employer sponsored visa? How would an employer-sponsored visa help you achieve your Australian permanent residency?](#)
- ⇒ [Are you skilled and lacking in work experience? How can 407 training visa help you?](#)
- ⇒ [Discover much more about 482 subclass](#)
- ⇒ [How do you apply for permanent residency in Australia?](#)
- ⇒ [New Budget announcement 2021](#)



The information contained within this newsletter is to provide advice of a general nature only and is not to be taken as individual advice for your personal circumstances. Information provided is subject to change at any time, and before proceeding with an application you should seek professional personalized advice about your circumstances.

We cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions. Because Australian immigration law and regulations change regularly, it is best to contact us before making any decisions. Alternatively, up to date information can be checked on the website of the Department of Home Affairs (DHA).

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