

MONTHLY IMMIGRATION BULLETIN

The latest immigration news, views and announcements

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MAJOR CHANGES TO SUBCLASS 485 VISA

The Australian Government proposed major changes to the Temporary Graduate visa programs with effect from 1 July 2024 for following streams. This aims to raise standards for international students and ensure their contributions address skill shortages in the country.

- Graduate Work stream
- Post-Study Work stream
- Second Post-Study Work stream
- Replacement stream

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MAJOR CHANGES TO SUBCLASS 485 VISA



Graduate Work stream

- The Graduate Work stream will be renamed to the Post-Vocational Education Work stream.
- The maximum eligible age for Post-Vocational Education Work stream applicants will reduce to 35 years of age or under.
- Hong Kong and British National Overseas passport holders will continue to be eligible provided they are under 50 years of age.
- Applicants no longer eligible for the Post-Vocational Education Work stream due to the age reduction may be eligible for a number of other visas.
- Applicants must hold an associate degree, diploma or trade qualification, closely related to their nominated occupation on the [Medium and Long-term Strategic Skills List \(MLTSSL\)](#).
- Applicants with a degree level qualification or higher will no longer be eligible for this stream. If an applicant holds one of these qualifications, they must apply through the Post-Higher Education Work stream.
- Applicants may continue to stay for up to 18 months.
- Hong Kong or British National Overseas passport holders may be able to stay for up to 5 years.

Post-Study Work stream

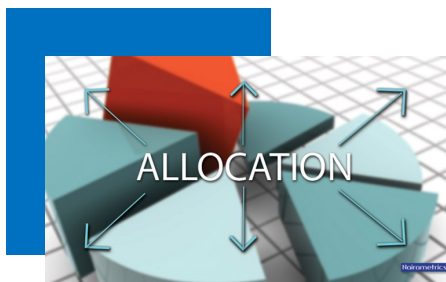
- The Post-Study Work stream will be renamed to the Post-Higher Education Work stream.
- The maximum eligible age for Post-Higher Education Work stream applicants will reduce to 35 years of age or under.
- Hong Kong and British National Overseas passport holders will continue to be eligible provided they are under 50 years of age.
- Applicants no longer eligible for the Post-Higher Education Work stream due to the age reduction may be eligible for a number of other visas.
- The 'select degree' 2 year extension will cease.
- Stay periods will change to the following:
 - * Bachelor degree (including honours) – up to 2 years
 - * Masters (coursework and extended) – up to 2 years
 - * Masters (research) and doctoral degree (PhD) – up to 3 years.
- Hong Kong and British National Overseas passport holders may be able to stay for up to 5 years.
- Stay periods for Indian nationals, as agreed in the Australian Indian – Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (AI-ECTA), remain as:
 - * Bachelor degree (including honours) – up to 2 years
 - * Bachelor degree (with first class honours in STEM, including ICT) – up to 3 years
 - * Masters (coursework, extended and research) – up to 3 years
 - * Doctoral degrees (PhD) – up to 4 years.

Second Post-Study Work stream

The Second Post-Study Work stream will be renamed the Second Post-Higher Education Work stream. There are no other changes to this stream.

Replacement stream

The Replacement stream will cease.



STATE AND TERRITORY NOMINATIONS FOR MARCH 2024

The Department's website has been updated with the number of nominations made by State and Territory governments for Subclass 190 and Subclass 491 for the month of March. Between 29 February 2024 and 31 March 2024 the number of nominations made by each State and Territory government are the following:

Visa subclass	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA
Subclass 190	2	662	4	54	0	50	299	92
Subclass 491	1	95	4	47	117	52	75	57

PREPARING FOR THE END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR FOR MIGRATION IN AUSTRALIA



As the end of the 2023/24 financial year approaches on June 30, individuals considering migration to Australia or those already in the country must take this time to assess and prepare for upcoming changes in allocations and policies.

Why It's Important:

- **New Allocations and Policy Changes:**
The Australian government often announces new allocations and policy changes at the start of the new financial year. These could impact visa categories, application processing times, or eligibility criteria.
- **Quota Adjustments:**
Quotas for visa categories may change, affecting the number of spots available.
- **Processing Times:**
The time it takes to process visa applications can vary due to new policies and workload adjustments.

Steps to Prepare:

Stay Informed:

- Keep up with government announcements regarding migration allocations and policy changes.
- Monitor immigration websites and consult with migration experts for the latest updates.

Review Your Current Status:

- Check the status and validity of your current visa and note any upcoming expiration dates.
- Check for any changes in eligibility criteria that could affect your situation.

Plan Your Next Steps:

- Create a list of your migration goals and objectives for the next year.
- Consider any changes in your personal or professional circumstances that may impact your migration journey.

Prepare Documentation:

- Organize and update important documents, such as identification, financial records, and employment verification.
- Double-check application requirements to avoid delays or rejections.

Seek Professional Advice:

- Consult with an immigration lawyer or registered migration agent to ensure you are aware of the latest changes and how they may affect you.
- Professional advice can help you strategize your next moves and minimize potential issues.

By following these steps and staying proactive in your migration planning, you can navigate the end of the financial year with confidence and set yourself up for success in the new year.



VICTORIA'S OVERSEAS QUALIFICATION UNIT (OQU) REOPENED

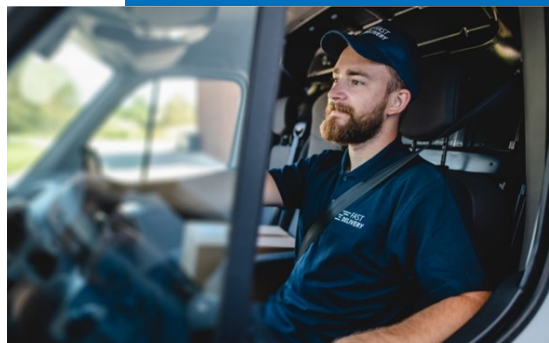
The Victorian Government's Overseas Qualification Unit which provides free and confidential qualification assessment services to Victorians has reopened for applications.

The service was previously shut temporarily to allow the Victorian Government to process the high volume of applications they had received.

DRIVERS ADDED TO THE SKILLS PRIORITY LIST

Jobs and Skills Australia's Skills Priority List (SPL) provides a detailed view of occupations that are likely in shortage and the future demand for occupations in Australia. The list has been updated with the addition of Skill Shortage Drivers (SSD). The SSD classifies skills shortages into four main drivers based on the likeliest cause of shortage, noting that other drivers may also play a smaller role. The four categories are:

- Long Training Gap
- Short Training Gap
- Suitability Gap
- Retention Gap



CORE SKILLS OCCUPATION LIST – JSA DRAFT AND CONSULTATION



Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) has opened consultation on the new Core Skills Occupation List (CSOL).

There are to be three visa pathways under the Migration Strategy:

1. Specialist Skills pathway (salary over \$135,000)
2. Core Skills pathway.
3. Skills in Demand pathway (salary under \$70,000).

This JSA consultation refers to the Core Skills pathway for occupations being paid a median salary above \$70,000 and below \$135,000. The draft list is based on labour market analysis of ANZSCO Skill Level 1-3 occupations, so some occupations in the

other salary bands may be included in this list. However, it is not yet clear how this will be addressed in the visa regulations.

The JSA notes that this is a draft list, and further surveys, submissions, bilateral meetings and qualitative analysis will be undertaken on the list with closing date for submissions of **10 May 2024**.

PARENT AND OTHER FAMILY VISA CAPS FOR 2023-24 FINANCIAL YEAR

The Migration determines the maximum number of family visas that may be granted for the 2023-2024 financial year. (Granting of Contributory Parent Visas, Parent Visas and Other Family Visas During Financial Year 2023-2024)

Contributory Parent visas

6,800 visas may be granted for the following subclasses:

- Contributory Parent (Migrant) Subclass 143
- Contributory Aged Parent (Residence) Subclass 864
- Contributory Parent (Temporary) Subclass 173
- Contributory Aged Parent (Temporary) Subclass 884.

Parent visas

1,700 visas may be granted for the following subclasses:

- Parent (Migrant) Subclass 103
- Aged Parent (Residence) Subclass 804

Other Family visas

500 visas for the following subclasses:

- Other Family (Migrant) Subclass 114 (Aged Dependent relative); Subclass 115 (Remaining relative); and Subclass 116 (Carer)
- Other Family (Residence) Subclass 835 (Remaining relative); Subclass 836 (Carer); and Subclass 838 (Aged Dependent relative)



CHANGES TO VETASSESS TRADE SKILLS ASSESSMENT

VETASSESS have announced several changes to the trade skills assessment process commenced on 23 April and are outlined below:



Changes in application lodgement

- Applicants will only have to pay for a skills assessment once VETASSESS have confirmed that the application is 'assessment ready'.
- When applying for a skills assessment, VETASSESS will review the information and documents that were provided to ensure they have enough evidence for the assessment.
- Once VETASSESS have confirmed the application is 'assessment ready', they will accept the application and advise how to pay the assessment fee.

Reopening new applications in some paused occupations

VETASSESS now accepting new applications for the following three trade occupations:

- Cook, ANZSCO Code 351411
- Diesel Motor Mechanic, ANZSCO Code 321212
- Motor Mechanic (General), ANZSCO Code 321211

New applications under Pathway 1 and Pathway 2 under OSAP and TSS programs remain paused for the following occupations:

- Chef, ANZSCO Code 351311
- Fitter (General), ANZSCO Code 323211
- Electrician (General), ANZSCO Code 341111
- Metal Machinist (First Class), ANZSCO Code 323214.

Changes for Pathway 1 trade applications

VETASSESS are changing the assessment process for Pathway 1 applications for all trades, except Air-Conditioning and Refrigeration Mechanic, Electrician (General), Electrician (Special Class) and Plumber (General) Stage 2 of the assessment process now has three steps:

- **Video evidence**
When submitting a Stage 2 application, the applicant will need to provide a selection of videos demonstrating their trade skills. This change means that applicants will no longer need to supply photographic evidence, unless requested by the assessor.
- **Australian Industry Standards Online Assessment**
The applicant will need to complete a short online course about Australian industry standards relevant to their trade. At the end of the course, they will have 7 days to complete an assessment of their understanding of these standards.
- **Technical Interview**
Once the online assessment is successfully completed and video evidence requirements are met, VETASSESS will be able to book the applicant's technical interview. The interview will take about two hours and be conducted either over the internet or face to face at one of VETASSESS' assessment venues.

STATE AND TERRITORY UPDATES

Victoria

Victoria’s 2023-24 state nominated skilled visa program closed to new Registrations of Interest (ROI) from 23 April 2024. In 2023-24, the Australian Government allocated Victoria 3,300 skilled visa places, including 2,700 for the subclass 190 visa and 600 for the subclass 491 visa. About 3,200 of these nominations have been used.

They will continue to assess submitted ROIs for any remaining nomination places in the 2023-24 program year.



Australian Capital Territory

The ACT Government had an invitation round on 5 April 2024. For Canberra residents there was a total of 121 Sc 190 nomination invitations issued and 142 Sc 491 nomination invitations issued. The highest number of nomination invitations were provided in the Critical Skills pathway.

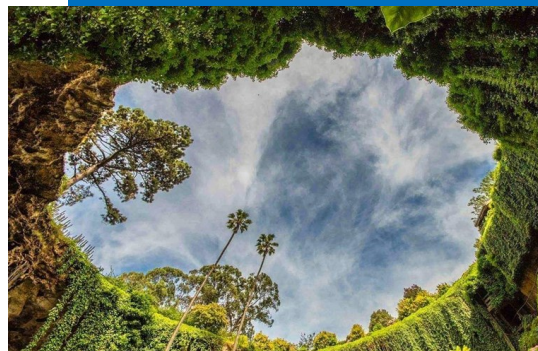
For Overseas residents there was a total of 19 Sc 190 nomination invitations issued and 103 Sc 491 nomination invitations issued. The ACT Government has not advised on the date for the next invitation round but they have noted that this will depend on operational requirements.



South Australia

South Australia Skilled and Business Migration have advised that South Australia’s two Designated Area Migration Agreements (DAMAs), the SA Regional DAMA and the Adelaide City DAMA have been extended and expanded.

- 128 new occupations have been added to the SA Regional DAMA, including construction and trades, agribusiness, ICT, health, education, and renewable energy sectors.
- Both DAMAs have been extended until 30 June 2025.
- The SA Regional DAMA has a higher annual nomination ceiling available with 2000 nomination places annually increased from 700.
- The pathway to permanent residency has been retained for all visa holders under both DAMAs.
- The age concession has been retained up to 55 years, a 10% reduction to the Temporary Skilled Migration Income Threshold (TSMIT), as well as English and work experience concessions.
- The occupations of Grape Grower (121215), Actors, Dancers and other Entertainers (211999) and Dancer or Choreographer (211112) have been removed from the DAMAs.



STATE AND TERRITORY UPDATES

Tasmania

Migration Tasmania has advised that due to the demand for Subclass 190 nomination exceeding the number of places available, they are only accepting Registration of Interest (ROIs) that have been allocated a Gold Pass for the remainder of the 2023-24 program.

Migration Tasmania will resume accepting ROIs in Subclass 190 nomination from all eligible candidates when the 2024-25 Tasmanian Skilled Migration State Nomination Program commences. This is currently expected to be in July 2024.

There are currently no restrictions on the submission of ROIs for Subclass 491 Skilled Work Regional visa nomination. If applicants would like to be considered for a Subclass 491 nomination an ROI needs to be completed and submitted for that subclass in the Application Gateway. Also, if applicants are invited to apply for and accept Subclass 491 nomination, they will not be eligible for Subclass 190 nomination in the future. Alternatively, applicant may wish to wait until the 2024-25 Tasmanian Skilled Migration State Nomination Program opens and submit an ROI for Subclass 190 nomination.



NSW

The NSW Government has provided nomination criteria for the Skilled Work Regional visa (subclass 491) under Pathway 1. Effective immediately.

Updated Nomination Criteria for Pathway 1

Previously, applicants for Pathway 1 were required to have been living and working in a designated regional area of NSW for at least 12 months with a single regional NSW-based employer, among other requirements. Now the Applicants must be currently living and working in a designated regional area of NSW and have continuously done so for the past 6 months, instead of the previous 12 months.

Remaining Criteria:

- Employment must be with a single regional NSW-based employer working from an established business premises in regional NSW.
- The role must be in the applicant's nominated (or closely related) occupation.
- The occupation must be deemed skilled by NSW.
- Applicants must be paid a minimum of the TSMIT salary level of \$70,000 (prorated if under 38 hours per week) from their qualifying employer in the nominated (or closely related) occupation in the 6 months immediately before applying.

Important Reminders:

- Skilled employment must occur after NSW deems the applicant skilled in their occupation and must appear in their SkillSelect EOI.
- Applicants must lodge their visa application onshore and must not have a current visa application being decided by Home Affairs for a permanent visa.



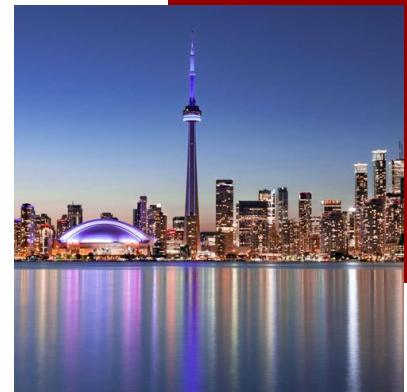
EXPRESS ENTRY DRAW FOR STEM OCCUPATIONS



IRCC conducted its second Express Entry draw of the week, targeting candidates in STEM occupations. They issued 4,500 invitations to apply (ITAs) with a minimum CRS score of 491. This draw marked the first for STEM candidates in 2024. The previous day's draw invited 1,280 candidates with a higher minimum CRS score of 549, the highest of the year. General draws have seen decreasing CRS scores over recent months. Unlike category-based selection draws, general draws prioritize candidates mainly based on their CRS score.

ONTARIO RELEASES 2024 PNP ALLOCATION

In 2024, Ontario's Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) has been allocated 21,500 nominations, marking a notable increase from the 16,500 nominations received in 2023. This rise follows discussions among immigration ministers from Canadian provinces and territories, alongside federal Immigration Minister Marc Miller, during the Federation of Ministers Responsible for Immigration (FMRI) meeting in November. Every province and territory (excluding Quebec and Nunavut) receives an annual allocation of nominations for its PNP from Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), although not all provinces disclose their allocations publicly.



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EXPLORE YOUR PATHWAY TO AUSTRALIA!

We are thrilled to invite you to the Australian Education-Migration Expo hosted by AusLanka TV on Saturday, May 4th, 2024, at Havelock City Mall! Join Sanji Caldera Associates from 10 AM onwards for expert guidance on your education and migration journey to Australia. Whether you are planning to study or relocate, our team will provide personalized advice to help you take the next steps toward your goals. Enjoy free entrance and visit our stall for a chance to claim a 15% discount from the professional fee. Don't miss out on this opportunity to plan your future—mark your calendars now and see you there!

EVENTS AND WEBINARS

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

- ⇒ [Unlocking Opportunities: Navigating Skilled migration to Australia!](#)
- ⇒ [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?](#)
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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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