February 2010 Changes to General Skilled Migration

Information for current and former student visa holders

On 8 February 2010, the Australian Government announced a number of changes to its skilled migration program. These changes included the withdrawal of the Migration Occupation in Demand List (MODL) and the introduction of a new Skilled Occupation List (SOL).

The changes included generous transitional arrangements which have been extended to current and former students. These transitional arrangements are in place until 31 December 2012.

Note: If you applied for a general skilled migration visa before 8 February 2010, you will be assessed according to the requirements at that time and the information below does not apply to you.

Transitional arrangements

If you held or had applied for a Temporary Skilled Graduate visa (subclass 485) on 8 February 2010, you can apply for permanent general skilled migration on the basis of the old SOL.

If you held a qualifying student visa (subclass 572, 573 or 574) on 8 February 2010, you can apply for a Temporary Skilled Graduate visa (subclass 485) on the basis of the old SOL.

The Temporary Skilled Graduate visa (subclass 485) provides a stay period of 18 months and allows the holder to work or study in Australia. These arrangements provide current and former students with time to explore their options before making a decision on their future.

Important information

A student visa is a temporary visa that allows people to come to Australia for a specified period to undertake study at an Australian educational institution. While many international students choose to apply for permanent residence at the end of their studies, there is no guarantee of a further visa. The grant of a visa depends on whether an individual applicant meets the requirements for that visa at the time they apply.

If you want to extend your stay in Australia to study, graduate, holiday or work, you need to make sure you have enough time to apply for another visa before your student visa expires. It is unlawful to remain in Australia without a valid visa and there are significant consequences for overstaying your visa.

More information for people who held a student visa on 8 February 2010 is available on the Department of Immigration and Citizenship's website.


If you are in Australia and you need interpreting assistance to discuss these changes with the department, phone the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on 131 450 (local call cost).