



This information form is about the skilled visa categories that are offered under Australia's Migration Programme.

The skilled visa categories include:

**General Skilled Migration (GSM)**

Permanent:

Skilled – Independent

Skilled – Sponsored

Skilled – Regional

Provisional:

Skilled – Regional Sponsored

Temporary:

Skilled – Graduate

Skilled – Recognised Graduate

**Employer Sponsored Migration**

Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS)

Employer Nomination Scheme (ENS)

Labour Agreement

**Business Skills Migration**

Business Skills

Distinguished Talent

**Who is eligible?**

Skilled visas are for people with good English and professional, trade, technical or business skills that will contribute to Australia's economic growth.

**Permanent GSM**

**Independent**

To be granted a visa, you must meet the following basic requirements:

- be under 45 years of age when the application is lodged;
- nominate an occupation from the Skilled Occupations List (SOL);
- have your skills assessed as suitable for working in your nominated occupation;
- have been employed in an occupation on the SOL for at least 12 of the last 24 months OR have met the 2 year study requirement in the last 6 months; and
- have 'competent' English OR 'vocational' English if you nominated a trade occupation.

See form 966i *Migrating to Australia English language assessment* for detailed information on the English language requirement.

Visas in this category are points tested. You will need to meet the passmark to be granted a visa.

**Sponsored**

To apply, you must meet the same basic requirements as the Independent visa AND be sponsored by an eligible Australian relative or nominated by a participating State/Territory government agency.

For information on who is an eligible Australian relative see the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (the department) website [www.immi.gov.au/skilled/](http://www.immi.gov.au/skilled/)

Visas in this category are points tested. You will need to meet the passmark to be granted a visa.

**Regional**

To apply, you must have held a skilled provisional visa for at least 2 years:

- 475 Regional Sponsored; or
- 487 Regional Sponsored; or
- 495 Skilled – Independent Regional (SIR) visa; or
- 496 Skilled – Designated Area-sponsored (SDAS) visa.

You will need to have lived for at least 2 years and worked for at least one year in a specified regional area and complied with the terms of your provisional visa.

For information on what is a specified regional area see the department's website [www.immi.gov.au/skilled/](http://www.immi.gov.au/skilled/)

**Provisional GSM**

**Regional Sponsored**

This visa is valid for 3 years and provides a pathway to permanent residence for visa holders.

To apply you must meet the following basic requirements:

- be under 45 years of age when the application is lodged;
- nominate an occupation from the Skilled Occupations List (SOL);
- have your skills assessed as suitable for working in your nominated occupation;
- have:
  - 'competent' English OR 'vocational' English if you nominated a trade occupation; or
  - 'concessional competent' English if you have paid a fee to attend English language tuition in a participating State or Territory;
- have skilled work experience in 12 out of the last 24 months OR have completed an Australian degree, diploma or trade qualification in the last 6 months; AND
- be sponsored by an eligible Australian relative living in a 'designated area' or a participating State or Territory government.

**Note:** If you are sponsored by a relative you will need to live, study and/or work in a designated area. If you are sponsored by a State/Territory government you will need to live, study and/or work in regional Australia.

See the department's website for the list of areas (defined by postcode) included in the definition 'regional' and 'designated area' [www.immi.gov.au/skilled/](http://www.immi.gov.au/skilled/)

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You can apply for this visa in Australia if you:

- have recently completed an Australian degree, diploma or trade qualification as a result of at least 2 years full-time study; or
- are the holder of a Graduate or Recognised Graduate visa; or
- have held a Working Holiday visa for at least 6 months; or
- are the holder of an Occupational Trainee visa who has completed the traineeship or course for which the visa was granted; or
- are the holder of a Trades Skills Training visa who has completed the apprenticeship for which the visa was granted.

This visa is points tested but has a lower passmark than the GSM permanent visas.

### Temporary GSM

#### Graduate

This visa is valid for 18 months and is for overseas students who have recently completed an Australian qualification but are unable to meet the requirements for a permanent or provisional GSM visa. The visa provides a pathway to permanent residence.

To apply you must:

- hold an eligible student visa or have held an eligible student visa in the last 6 months;
- be under 45 years of age when your application is lodged;
- nominate an occupation on the SOL that is relevant to your skills and qualifications;
- have applied to have your skills assessed for your nominated occupation;
- have 'competent' English OR 'vocational' English if you are nominating a skilled trade occupation OR have evidence that you have booked to sit an English test; and
- have recently completed an Australian degree, diploma or trade qualification as a result of at least 2 years full-time study.

This visa is not points tested.

#### Recognised Graduate

This visa is valid for 18 months and is for students from recognised overseas universities with skills in demand in Australia. The visa provides a pathway to permanent residence.

To apply you must:

- be 30 years of age or under when your application is lodged; and
- have completed a specified qualification at a listed university.

This visa is not points tested.

**Note: Applicants for this visa cannot include dependants in their application.**

Further detailed information on each of the GSM visas including the current list of qualifications and universities for the Recognised Graduate visa is available on the department's website.

See [www.immi.gov.au/skilled/](http://www.immi.gov.au/skilled/)

Booklet 6, *General Skilled Migration* also has information current on the date of publication, on the GSM visas issued offshore.

## Employer Sponsored visas

### Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS)

The RSMS enables employers in regional or low population growth areas<sup>1</sup> of Australia to recruit skilled migrants to fill positions where they have been unable to find suitably qualified employees locally.

The employer must:

- be actively and lawfully operating in regional Australia;
- be an employer of good standing (ie. must have a history of compliance with immigration laws and with relevant workplace relations laws).

The position must:

- be full-time and available for at least 2 years;
- be located in regional Australia;
- unless it is exceptional, require the appointment of a person with qualifications equivalent at least to an Australian diploma (includes qualified trades-people);
- comply with all relevant Australian standards for wages and working conditions; and
- be certified by an appropriate Regional Certifying Body.

The visa applicant must:

- unless the position is exceptional, have a diploma or higher qualification that is relevant to the position;
- be eligible to hold any licence, registration or professional membership that is necessary to work in the position in Australia; and
- unless the position is exceptional, be under 45 years and have functional English skills.

See [www.immi.gov.au/skilled/](http://www.immi.gov.au/skilled/), booklet 5, *Employer Sponsored Migration*, and form 1054 *Employer nomination under the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme*.

### Employer Nomination Scheme (ENS)

The ENS enables Australian employers to recruit highly skilled migrants to fill highly skilled positions that they have been unable to fill through their own training efforts.

The employer must:

- be actively and lawfully operating in Australia;
- have a satisfactory record of training Australians; and
- be an employer of good standing (ie. must have a history of compliance with immigration laws and with relevant workplace relations laws).

The position must:

- be full-time and available for at least 3 years;
- correspond to a highly skilled occupation that appears on a list of occupations gazetted for the purposes of the ENS or that is an exceptional occupation;
- be paid at least a specified minimum salary, also gazetted for the purposes of ENS; and
- comply with all relevant Australian standards for wages and working conditions.

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<sup>1</sup> Please refer to the department's website at [www.immi.gov.au/employers/](http://www.immi.gov.au/employers/) for areas included in this definition.

The visa applicant must:

- have the skills, qualifications and experience to fill the position;
- be eligible to hold any licence, registration or professional membership that is necessary to work in the position in Australia; and
- unless the position is exceptional, be under 45 years and have vocational English skills.

See [www.immi.gov.au/skilled/](http://www.immi.gov.au/skilled/), booklet 5, *Employer Sponsored Migration*, and form 785 *Employer nomination under the Employer Nomination Scheme*.

### Labour Agreements

A Labour Agreement is a formal arrangement negotiated between the Australian Government (represented by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship and the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations) and an employer or an industry association. In certain circumstances the relevant State or Territory government may also be represented. Labour Agreements enable the recruitment of a specified number of overseas skilled workers in response to skill shortages.

See [www.immi.gov.au/skilled/](http://www.immi.gov.au/skilled/), booklet 5, *Employer Sponsored Migration*, and form 1192 *Employer nomination under a Labour Agreement or an Invest Australia Supported Skills Agreement*.

### Business Skills

Applicants for business skills visas must be:

- business owners who have been actively involved in owning and/or managing a successful business(es);
- senior executives who have been employed in a high level management position of a major business; or
- investors who have been directly involved in managing an eligible investment portfolio or owning and managing a successful business(es).

Applicants are required to meet other requirements relating to age, assets, English language skills, business turnover and/or investment levels. These requirements vary depending on whether the applicant applies independently, with State/Territory government sponsorship and/or plans to settle and develop a business in regional and rural Australia.

Business owners and senior executive visa holders are expected to provide valuable input to the Australian economy by becoming actively involved at a senior level in new or existing businesses in Australia. Investor visa holders must maintain a Designated Investment for a 4 year term.

High-calibre business migrants can proceed directly to permanent residence under the Business Talent visa if they have high-level business attributes and are sponsored by a State/Territory government. However, the majority of business people who migrate to Australia initially apply for a 4 year temporary Business Skills (Provisional) visa. After showing satisfactory evidence of a specified level of business or investment activity in Australia, provisional visa holders can apply for a permanent Business Skills (Residence) visa.

See [www.immi.gov.au/allforms/](http://www.immi.gov.au/allforms/), booklet 7, *Business Skills Entry*.

### Distinguished Talent

Places are available each year for people internationally distinguished in professional, sporting or creative fields, or with other special abilities, who would benefit Australia. Telephone **131 881** during business hours in Australia to speak to an operator (recorded information available outside these hours). If you are outside Australia, please contact your nearest Australian mission.

Home page **www.immi.gov.au**

General  
enquiry line

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