



Changes to General Skilled Migration (GSM)

Frequently asked questions

Points test

What are the pass and pool marks for the new visas subclasses?

| I will be applying for... | Pass mark | Pool mark |
|---|------------|------------|
| Skilled – Independent (subclass 175) | 120 points | 100 points |
| Skilled – Sponsored (subclass 176) | 100 points | 80 points |
| Skilled – Regional Sponsored (subclass 475) | 100 points | None |
| Skilled – Regional Sponsored (subclass 487) | 100 points | None |
| Skilled – Independent (subclass 885) | 120 points | None |
| Skilled – Sponsored (subclass 886) | 100 points | None |

Applicants for the:

- Skilled – Recognised Graduate visa (subclass 476)
- Skilled – Graduate visa (subclass 485)
- Skilled – Regional visa (subclass 887)

will not be points tested.

Applicants who hold a:

- Skilled – Independent Regional visa (subclass 495)
- Skilled – Designated Area-sponsored visa (subclass 496)
- Skilled – Regional Sponsored visa (subclass 475 or 487)

who are applying for a Regional – Skilled visa (subclass 887) or for a 12 month extension of their provisional visa will also not be points tested.

What does the new points test look like?

Summary of the new points test:

| Condition Met | With... | Points |
|-----------------------------|--|--------|
| Occupation | Specialised professional or trade occupation | 60 |
| | General professional occupation | 50 |
| | Other general skilled occupations | 40 |
| Age | 18 to 29 years | 30 |
| | 30 to 34 years | 25 |
| | 35 to 39 years | 20 |
| | 40 to 44 years | 15 |
| English Language | Proficient English | 25 |
| | Meet English language threshold | 15 |
| Specific Work Experience | Employed in nominated 60 point occupation or closely related skilled occupation for three of the last four years | 10 |
| | Employed in a skilled occupation for three of the last four years | 5 |
| Australian employment | Employed in nominated skilled occupation or closely related skilled occupation for one of the last four years | 10 |
| | Completed specified Professional Year in nominated skilled occupation or closely related skilled occupation in the last four years | 10 |
| Australian Qualifications | Doctorate (min. two years) | 25 |
| | Masters/Honours with undergraduate degree (min. three years) | 15 |
| | Degree/diploma/trade qualification (min. two years) | 5 |
| Occupation in Demand | Employed in nominated skilled occupation on the MODL or closely related skilled occupation for one of the last four years and an offer of relevant full-time employment in the MODL occupation | 20 |
| | Employed in nominated skilled occupation on the MODL or closely related skilled occupation for one of the last four years | 15 |
| Regional Study | Met 2 years study requirement while living and studying in regional or low-growth metropolitan Australia | 5 |
| Partner Skills | Partner meets threshold GSM requirements | 5 |
| Nomination | Nominated by state or territory government | 10 |
| Designated Area Sponsorship | Sponsored by Australian relative living in a designated area (only available to provisional visa applicants) | 25 |
| Designated Language | Professional level language skills in a designated language | 5 |

How are the English language points changing?

In recognition of the importance of English language skills, the points test will be adjusted to award more points to applicants with very strong English language skills.

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| English language | Applicant has proficient English | 25 points |
| | Applicant meets the English language threshold with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ competent English; or ▪ vocational English, if applicant has trade occupation; or ▪ concessional competent English if the applicant has applied for a Skilled – Regional Sponsored (subclass 475 or 487) visa and has paid a fee to attend English language training in a participating state/territory | 15 points |

What is proficient English?

Proficient English is having an operational command of English with the ability to use and comprehend complex language well and understand detailed reasoning.

To demonstrate you have proficient English you must show that you:

- have scored a minimum of 7.0 in each of the four IELTS test components; or
- have scored a B level or greater in an Occupational English Test (OET) exam.

What is competent English?

Competent English is having a generally effective command of the English language and the ability to use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations.

To demonstrate you have competent English you must show that you:

- have scored a minimum of 6.0 in each of the four IELTS test components; or
- have scored a B level or greater in an Occupational English Test (OET) exam; or
- hold a passport from the United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand, the United States of America or the Republic of Ireland.

What is vocational English?

Vocational English is having a reasonable command of the English language, coping with overall meaning in most situations and the ability to communicate effectively in your nominated field of employment.

To demonstrate you have vocational English you must show that you:

- have scored a minimum of 5.0 in each of the four IELTS test components; or
- hold a passport from the United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand, the United States of America or the Republic of Ireland.

What is concessional competent English?

Concessional competent English is having basic competence in the English language, but your skills may not be consistent across the four areas of reading, writing, listening and speaking.

To demonstrate you have concessional competent English you must show that you have an average band score of 5.5 across the four IELTS test components.

You will only meet the English language requirements for GSM with concessional competent English if you have:

- applied for a Skilled – Regional Sponsored (Provisional) visa; and
- paid a fee to attend an English language course in a participating state/territory.

How will points be awarded for Australian work experience?

Currently applicants can claim five bonus points where they have completed six months' **skilled** employment in Australia in the past 48 months.

Under the new points test, applicants can claim 10 points where they have been employed in Australia for at least 12 of the last 48 months. To be eligible for these points you must have been working at least 20 hours a week in a paid position and at a skilled level in your nominated occupation or in a closely related occupation on the Skilled Occupation List (SOL).

If you have completed your qualification in Australia and then worked in an occupation that is closely related to that qualification, that employment will be considered to be at the skilled level.

Alternatively, you can claim 10 points where you have completed a professional year specified by the minister.

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| Australian work experience | Employed in nominated skilled occupation or closely related skilled occupation for one of the last four years | 10 points |
| | Completed specified Professional Year in nominated skilled occupation or closely related skilled occupation in the last four years | |

How will points be awarded for specific work experience?

Currently, applicants can claim:

- five bonus points where they have been employed for a total of at least three of the past four years in any occupation on the SOL; or
- 10 bonus points where they have nominated a 60-point occupation and have been employed for a total of at least three of the past four years in a relevant 60-point occupation.

Under the new points test, the requirements to be awarded five points for specific work experience will not change.

Applicants will be able to claim 10 bonus points, however, if:

- they have nominated a 60 point occupation; and
- have been employed for at least three of the past four years in that occupation or a closely related occupation on the SOL.

Example: An applicant who nominates the 60-point occupation, accountant, but has been employed for the past three years as an internal auditor, which is a 50 point occupation, would only be able to claim five points under the **current** points test. As the occupations of accountant and internal auditor are closely related, this same applicant could claim 10 points for specific work experience under the **new** points test.

How are points for sponsorship or nomination changing?

Permanent visa applicants sponsored by a relative

Under the current points test, all permanent visa applicants who are sponsored by an Australian relative are automatically awarded 15 points.

Points for sponsorship will no longer be awarded to visa applicants sponsored by an Australian relative, except those who apply for the Skilled – Regional Sponsored (subclass 475 or 487) visa.

Provisional visa applicants sponsored by a relative

Applicants for a Skilled – Designated Area-sponsored visa, who are sponsored by an Australian relative, are not currently points tested.

The evaluation revealed that these applicants have poor labour market outcomes compared with other GSM migrants. In an effort to select applicants with the best chance of finding skilled work and settling quickly into the Australian community, this cohort of applicants will be points tested from 1 September 2007.

However, to acknowledge the value of these visa holders settling in designated areas of Australia with the assistance of their sponsoring relative, applicants for a Skilled – Regional Sponsored (subclass 475 or 487) visa, who are sponsored by an Australian relative, will be awarded 25 points.

Applicants nominated by a state/territory

In recognition of the value of state and territory nomination in selecting applicants with specific skills beneficial to that state or territory, 10 points will be awarded to applicants who are nominated by a state or territory.

Can I get points for my spouse or interdependent partner's skills?

You may be able to claim five additional points if your spouse or interdependent partner is included in your visa application and is able to satisfy the basic GSM requirements - age, English language ability, qualifications, nominated occupation, suitable skills assessment and recent work experience/two years' study requirement.

You cannot claim these points if your spouse or interdependent partner is an Australian permanent resident, Australian citizen or eligible New Zealand citizen.

How are Migration Occupations in Demand List (MODL) points changing?

Currently, you can claim MODL points if your nominated occupation is on the MODL at the time you apply or at the time your visa is granted.

Under the new points test, to claim MODL points you will need to have:

- a suitable skills assessment in your nominated occupation that is on the MODL; and
- been employed in that occupation or a closely related occupation for at least 12 of the last 48 months.

Additional points will still be awarded where you also have a full-time job offer in that MODL occupation.

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| Occupation in demand | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant's nominated skilled occupation is a migration occupation in demand; and • the applicant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ has been employed in that skilled occupation, or a closely related skilled occupation for a period totalling at least 12 months in the 48 months immediately before the day on which the application was made; and ○ has an offer of full-time employment in that occupation, in an organisation that had at least 10 full-time employees at all times in the 24 months immediately before the day on which the application was made. | 20 points |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant's nominated skilled occupation is a migration occupation in demand; and • The applicant has been employed in that skilled occupation, or a closely related skilled occupation, for a period totalling at least 12 months in the 48 months immediately before the day on which the application was made. | 15 points |

Can I use the same period of employment to get points for Australian employment/specific work experience/MODL?

Yes. If you have been employed in Australia in a MODL occupation or a closely related occupation on the SOL for a total of at least 12 months in the past four years you may be eligible to claim both MODL and Australian work experience points.

If you have been employed in Australia in a MODL occupation or a closely related occupation on the SOL for a total of at least three years in the past four years you may be eligible to claim MODL and Australian employment and specific work experience points.

If you have been employed in Australia in your nominated occupation or a closely related occupation on the SOL for at least three years in the past four years you may be eligible to claim Australian employment and specific work experience.

How are points for Australian educational qualifications changing?

To better reflect the value of completing advanced studies in Australia, the points for Australian education qualifications are being amended.

Applicants who have completed an Australian doctorate as a result of at least two years' study in Australia will now be eligible for 25 points.

To be eligible for 15 points, applicants must complete a total of three years' study in Australia that has resulted in the applicant completing:

- a bachelor degree and a masters degree
- a bachelor degree and honours (at least second class (division 1))
or
- a bachelor degree with honours (at least second class (division 1)).

Any applicant who has one or more Australian degrees, diplomas or trade qualifications and who meets the two year study requirement will continue to be eligible for five points.

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| Australian educational qualifications | The applicant has met the requirements for award of a doctorate by an Australian educational institution as a result of a course of study: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • of at least two years • undertaken while the applicant was present in Australia | 25 points |
| | The applicant has undertaken study for a period totalling at least three years, during which the applicant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • met the requirements for award of a masters degree by an Australian educational institution as a result of a course of study: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ of at least one year ◦ undertaken while the applicant was present in Australia AND • met the requirements for award of an undergraduate degree by an Australian educational institution as a result of a course of study: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ of at least one year ◦ undertaken while the applicant was present in Australia | 15 points |
| | The applicant has undertaken study for a period totalling at least three years, during which the applicant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • met the requirements for award of an honours degree (second class (division 1) level or above), by an Australian educational institution as a result of a course of study: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ of at least one year ◦ undertaken while the applicant was present in Australia AND • met the requirements for award of an undergraduate degree by an Australian educational institution as a result of a course of study: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ of at least one year ◦ undertaken while the applicant was present in Australia | 15 points |
| | The applicant has met the requirements for award of an undergraduate degree with honours (second class (division 1) or above) by an Australian educational institution as a result of a course of study: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • of at least three years • undertaken while the applicant was present in Australia | 15 points |
| | The applicant meets the two year study requirement. | 5 points |

Can I still get points for capital investment in Australia?

No, points for capital investment will not be available for applications lodged on or after 1 September 2007.

What isn't changing under the new GSM points test?

Points for occupation, age and designated (community) language are not changing under the new points test.