

Hey

Welcome to September's short visa newsletter on all the changes we have seen over the last month.

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On to this month's news



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1) Recent Media articles

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/amnesties-could-help-solve-australias-covid-related-migration-shortfall>

<https://www.abc.net.au/radio-australia/programs/pacificbeat/agriculture-visa-seen-as-a-threat-to-the-pacific/13511044>

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/aug/30/home-affairs-accused-of-discriminating-against-non-english-speakers-with-lengthy-wait-for-partner-visas>

<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/senate-committee-calls-for-major-overhaul-of-australia-s-temporary-migration-system>

<https://www.businessinsider.com.au/infrastructure-australia-report-regional-remote-work>

<https://devpolicy.org/flaws-in-the-australian-agricultural-visa-20210910/>

<https://www.themandarin.com.au/168586-union-frustrated-by-federal-decision-to-outsource-visa-gateway-project/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/sep/20/denied-a-voice-how-australia-fails-migrant-victims-of-domestic-violence>

<https://minister.homeaffairs.gov.au/KarenAndrews/Pages/new-digital-platform-to-support-reopening-of-the-international-border.aspx>

2) Prospective marriage (300 visa) changes

Prospective Marriage visas (Visa 300) now eligible for travel exemptions - <https://covid19.homeaffairs.gov.au/travel-restrictions>

a Prospective Marriage (subclass 300) visa holder in the following circumstances:
where the subclass 300 visa has been granted; and
the subclass 300 visa application was lodged at least 12 months before submitting a travel exemption request.

This means if you applied for a subclass 300 visa on or before 18 August 2020, and you have now been granted your subclass 300 visa; you are eligible for an inwards travel exemption on 18 August 2021.

Changes have been introduced in late 2020 - early 2021 to support Prospective Marriage (Subclass 300) visa holders, former visa holders and visa applicants unable to enter Australia due to COVID-19 travel restrictions.

The Department is aware of the ongoing impact of travel restrictions on Prospective Marriage visa holders outside Australia.

We continue to review visa settings to respond to challenges posed by COVID-19 and address impacts on visa holders. This includes Prospective Marriage visa holders outside Australia whose visas are due to expire in 2021.

We will provide more information to affected visa holders in the coming weeks.

(Source: DHA)

3) Engineers Australia can nominate for Global talent visa

Engineers Australia can now nominate for the Global Talent Visa -
<https://engineersaustralia.org.au/for-migrants/gti-nomination-assessment>

4) Vetassess news

<https://www.vetassess.com.au/home/updates/post/professional-occupations-an-easier-way-to-list-project-work>

<https://www.vetassess.com.au/home/updates/post/how-does-the-vetassess-skills-assessment-support-service-work>

5) Trades Recognition Australia (TRA) news

<https://www.tradesrecognitionaustralia.gov.au/news-media/news/covid-19-lockdowns-effects-assessments>

<https://www.tradesrecognitionaustralia.gov.au/news-media/news/changes-trades-recognition-australia-assessment-services-fees-effective-1-september>

6) Afghanistan Update

The Department has ceased its evacuation operations at Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul. Australians who remain in Afghanistan should be aware of the potential for violence and security threats with large crowds, including an ongoing and very high threat of terrorist attack.

The Government is working to ensure that visa options continue to be available to Afghan nationals, both within Afghanistan and those displaced from their home country, through Australia's long-standing Humanitarian and Migration Programs. If you are in Afghanistan, or you are an Afghan national, and need to enquire about a visa or citizenship application contact +61 2 6196 0196. (Source: DHA)

7) Tasmania State update

Multiple Nominations

Applicants nominated for a Subclass 491 Skilled Work Regional (Provisional) visa will not be able to reapply for a Subclass 190 in the future. The Subclass 491 visa provides a pathway to permanent residency by way of a Subclass 191 visa. Previous state nominees supported for a Subclass 489 visa will need to follow the pathway to permanent residency by way of the Subclass 887 visa.

(Source: Tasmanian State Government)

8) Northern Territory update

Dear colleague,

You are receiving this email as a Registered Migration Agent who has represented clients in applications for endorsement under the NT Designated Area Migration Agreement (NT DAMA). I'm writing to provide an update on some important policy changes announced by the Department of Home Affairs, with respect to the NT DAMA.

As you may be aware, MigrationNT has long been advocating for settings that better suit the labour market needs of the Territory. The need for such policy changes were clearly felt in the last year, following the onset of COVID-19. While we are still awaiting an outcome on our annual review submission, the Department of Home Affairs has recently announced two major changes in policy, which address some of the issues that have been advocated on:

1. Less onerous Labour Market Testing requirements

- For labour agreement applications lodged from 1 September 2021, NT employers will only need to advertise on 2 platforms (as opposed to 3).
- Businesses can provide evidence of advertisements placed within 12 months immediately before lodging a labour agreement request (as opposed to 4 months).
- One of the 2 advertisements must be placed on a platform with national reach (e.g. seek.com, JobActive, Indeed, Jora). Employers are strongly encouraged to continue advertising on JobActive where possible.
- The other advertisement can be a business website, local/regional media online, print or radio. Social media platforms (e.g. Facebook) are NOT acceptable.
- The advertisements must have run for at least 28 days in the 12 months before application.
- The advertisements must be in English and include the following details:
 - o the title, or a description, of the position. Multiple positions in one advertisement are acceptable
 - o the skills or experience required for the position
 - o the name of the employer or the name of the recruitment agency being used by the employer
 - o the salary for the position if the annual earnings for the position are lower than AUD96,400. It is acceptable to publish a salary range (for example AUD80,000 to AUD90,000)

*Please note, the changes above only apply to applications for labour agreements and nominations made under the NT DAMA. Existing labour market testing requirements continue to apply for standard employer sponsored programs.

2. Abolishment of the 30% rule relating to the proportion of overseas workforce

- Under the 30% rule applied from mid-2020, businesses which had over 30% of their workforce comprised of temporary visa holders could not access the NT DAMA program.
 - Following persistent advocacy, this rule has been abolished for NT employers.
 - NT employers are still encouraged to provide in their applications, details of the business' commitment to training and recruiting Australian workers.
- MigrationNT has also made an extensive submission seeking further improvements to the program settings. An outcome on this submission is expected to be received in the near future, and I hope to be back in touch soon with more news on this.

(Source: Northern Territory government)

9) NSW update

Skilled visas

The August 491 submission window has closed

If you submitted a valid ROI during the month of August, you may be invited to apply for NSW nomination up to 07 September 2021.

If you do not receive an invitation from the August submission window, you must re-register your interest in NSW nomination in each following submission window you wish to be considered in.

The next submission window is the month of October 2021, i.e. from 01 October to 31 October 2021. Later submission windows are the months of January and March 2022.

NSW cannot comment on why you were not invited to apply for nomination in the August submission window by phone or email.

(Source: NSW State Government)

10) Victorian State update

Victoria State Migration invite results

<https://liveinmelbourne.vic.gov.au/news-events/news/2021/skilled-migration-update-roi-selections>

<https://liveinmelbourne.vic.gov.au/migrate/program-review>

11) WA State update

<https://migration.wa.gov.au/services/skilled-migration-western-australia/invitation-rounds/current-invitation-round>

WA state government sponsoring Nurses

Many Nurse occupations appear on the WA schedule 1 list for state 190/491 sponsorships. For all but aged care nurses it needs to be accompanied by a 12 months job offer in WA but OUTSIDE Perth and Mandurah. So in regional areas.

We believe that WA have changed this to allow the job offer for ALL Nurses to now also be in Perth and Mandurah for recent invitees

And that this change in policy will be posted on their website shortly

12) Queensland State update

Business and Skilled Migration Queensland (BSMQ) is now known as Migration Queensland.

The Queensland state nomination program is still anticipated to open in September 2021. Migration Agents and applicants are advised to monitor the Migration Queensland Website and social media for further updates.

(Source: QLD State update)

13) Changes to PTE English test

1. PTE Academic two-hour test

From November 16 2021 the duration of PTE Academic will reduce from three hours down to two. This means an improved experience for candidates with less time spent taking the exam, whilst the accuracy of the test remains the same.

There are no changes to the overall format, question types or scoring scale – there will simply be fewer questions – allowing candidates to prepare in the same way.

Most importantly, the shorter PTE Academic test is still accepted by the same universities and professional bodies, including more than 3,000 academic institutions worldwide, and by the governments of Australia, the UK, and New Zealand for visa and immigration purposes.

2. New PTE Academic online

Pearson is also launching PTE Academic Online. Exactly the same test as PTE Academic, we are now offering it as a new online proctored option for people who prefer to sit the test remotely, from the comfort of their own home.

Also available to take from November 16, 2021 the online test takes two hours and will follow the same format and scoring system as the new shorter PTE Academic test center exam.

It's important to note that although the online test is identical to PTE Academic, it is not currently valid for visa or migration purposes. We also ask candidates to check that the universities they are applying to accept the online version before booking this test.

Freya Thomas Monk, Senior Vice President, English Language Learning, Pearson, said; "Many of our PTE Academic test takers want to move abroad to study at university or progress their careers. To help them in their journey we have rolled out a shorter PTE Academic test to be taken in test centers and a new online PTE Academic test which can be taken at home."

PTE Academic and PTE Academic Online are delivered through Pearson VUE's global network of test centers and through its online proctoring solution, OnVUE. With just a simple check-in process, utilizing highly secure ID verification tools, face-matching technology, and a live proctor, candidates can test without leaving the comfort of home. Test takers must have access to a reliable internet connection, a computer with a webcam, and a quiet location to take the test.

Find out more at <https://www.pearsonpte.com/institutions/pte-academic-online>

(Source PearsonPTE)

Ok folks, that's all for this month

See you all on Monday 18th October 2021



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