



# Hiring an international graduate

If you are having difficulty filling job vacancies in your business, engaging a locally trained international graduate may be an ideal solution.

## How long can international graduates remain in Australia?

- After completing an eligible qualification, international students can apply for a **Temporary Graduate (TG) visa**, which has full-time work rights.
- The duration of their TG visa depends on the level of their qualification, and the location in which they studied.
- If the qualification has been undertaken in a **designated regional area**, they are able to apply for a second TG visa, extending their total length of stay in Australia.
- The table below gives a general overview of the total length of post study work rights available via TG visas.

### Benefits of considering international graduates when recruiting

- Many international graduates have skills needed to help Queensland employers meet their workforce needs.
- By considering international graduates, you can access a much bigger pool of potential job applicants, increasing your chances of finding the right employee.
- By hiring international graduates, businesses can benefit from diverse perspectives and new ideas.

Qualification	General location where qualification was obtained <sup>1</sup>		
	Greater Brisbane (Most areas)	Gold Coast & Sunshine Coast (Most areas)	All other areas (E.g. Townsville, Cairns, Toowoomba)
VET <sup>2</sup>	18 months	18 months	18 months
Bachelor	2 years	3 years	4 years
Masters by coursework	2 years	3 years	4 years
Masters by research	3 years	4 years	5 years
PhD	3 years	4 years	5 years

1. For full area definitions, see [Home Affairs: designated regional area](#).  
 2. Must have a qualification closely related to an occupation on the [Medium and Long-Term Strategic Skills List](#).

## Is hiring an international graduate different to hiring a local worker?

- No additional costs or obligations to employers apply when hiring an international graduate. They are entitled to the minimum pay and entitlements under [Australia's Fair Work system](#).
- [Visa Entitlement Verification Online](#) allows employers to check the work rights of visa holders who are either prospective and/or current employees.

## What will happen when an international graduate's visa expires?

- All visa holders must ensure they hold a valid visa while in Australia. For more information, see the Department of Home Affairs information on when [a visa is expiring or has expired](#).
- If you are considering hiring, or already employing a TG visa holder, you can also consider sponsoring them for an employer sponsored skilled visa. This will give the employee a pathway to permanent residence.

## What is involved in sponsoring an international graduate?

A general summary of key requirements of sponsorship is provided below.

For full information, see [learn about sponsoring](#) and [how to sponsor an overseas worker](#).

### 1. Become an approved sponsor

This involves demonstrating that your business:

- Is legally established and currently operating
- Has no adverse information regarding it
- Should have a strong record of, or a demonstrated commitment to, employing local labour
- Will not engage in discriminatory recruitment practices

### 2. Demonstrate the position is genuine

- Employment conditions must be equivalent to Australian workers
- The position fits clearly within the scope of the activities of your business and the scale of your business
- Skills and duties of the position are consistent with the skill level and the tasks of the nominated occupation
- The position must be full-time

### 3. Be unable to find an Australian worker

- You must undertake Labour Market Testing (LMT) to show you can't find an Australian to do the work
- Generally, you must have advertised the position for at least 4 weeks in the 4 months prior to nominating a skilled worker
- For more information, see [labour market testing](#)

### 4. Nominate a skilled worker

- You must nominate the skilled worker before they can submit their visa application
- Your nomination generally lasts for 12 months from the approval date

### 5. Pay the minimum salary

- The position must pay the higher amount of either the:
  - Core Skills Income Threshold: Currently set at \$76,515 and indexed annually
  - Annual Market Salary Rate (AMSR) for the position
- For more information on salary requirements, see [salary requirements](#)

### 6. Pay the costs of sponsoring

- This includes fees for becoming an approved sponsor, nominating a visa applicant and paying the Skilling Australian Fund Levy
- You cannot transfer these costs to the visa holder or their family members
- For more information, see [cost of sponsoring](#)

## What visas can employers use to sponsor an international graduate?



### Skills In Demand Visa (Subclass 482)

- A temporary, uncapped visa for skilled workers to live and work in Australia for 4 years.
- Visa holders must:
  - ☑ Be nominated to work in an occupation on the new Core Skills Occupation List (CSOL)
  - ☑ Have at least 1-year relevant work experience
  - ☑ Have a relevant skills assessment if required for the occupation
  - ☑ Be under 45 years of age, unless exempt
  - ☑ Meet minimum standards of English language proficiency unless are exempt
- Visa holders can become permanent residents after two years of sponsored employment.



### Skilled Employer Sponsored Regional Visa (Subclass 494)

- A provisional visa for skilled workers to live and work in regional Australia for 5 years.
- Visa holders must:
  - ☑ Be nominated to work in an occupation on the relevant skilled occupation list
  - ☑ Have at least 3 years relevant work experience
  - ☑ Have a relevant skills assessment, unless an exempt
  - ☑ Be under 45 years of age, unless exempt
  - ☑ Meet minimum standards of English language proficiency
- Visa holders can qualify for permanent residency after living and working in regional Australia for at least 3 years



### Employer Nominated Scheme (Subclass 186)

- A permanent visa for skilled workers to live and work in Australia permanently.
- Visa holders must:
  - ☑ Be nominated to work in an occupation on the relevant skilled occupation list
  - ☑ Have at least 3 years relevant work experience
  - ☑ Have a relevant skills assessment, unless an exempt
  - ☑ Be under 45 years of age, unless exempt
  - ☑ Meet minimum standards of English language proficiency
- Visa holders can be nominated by an employer for this visa directly, or apply for this visa after holding a Skills-in-Demand visa and meeting requirement

## Key changes under the new Skills in Demand visa in December 2024

- Minimum work experience required reduced from 2 years to 1 year, increasing international graduates' capacity to qualify for sponsorship.
- A new single, modernized occupation list includes over 450 occupations. New occupations available in agribusiness, cyber security, healthcare and medical and naval ship building.
- Over 90% of occupations in shortage in Queensland are eligible.

## Are there any additional obligations to hiring a local worker?

- Yes. If you sponsor an overseas worker, you must be aware of the [employer responsibilities and obligations](#).

## Designated Area Migration Agreements in Far North Queensland and Townsville

- DAMAs in the Far North Queensland and Townsville regions provide local employers access to more flexibility for regions to respond to their unique economic and labour market conditions.



### Far North Queensland DAMA

For more information see:

- [About the FNQ DAMA](#)
- [Occupation and concession list](#)



### Townsville DAMA

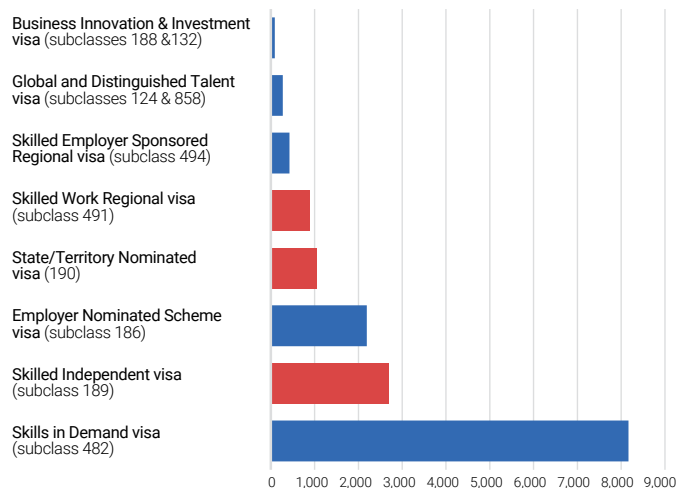
For more information see:

- [About the Townsville DAMA](#)
- [Occupation and concession list](#)

## Can international graduates qualify for other skilled visas?

- The Australian Government, and State/Territory governments invite skilled migrants, including international graduates for 'points-tested' visas. This is designed to help fill skills shortages in priority sectors while we are building the domestic pipeline of highly skilled workers.
- Points-tested visas (shown in red in the table below) are highly competitive with a large and dynamic pool of candidates competing for limited places under Australia's permanent Migration Program. This means that international graduates who may currently be living and working in Australia have a limited and uncertain likelihood of being invited to apply.

## Temporary, provisional and permanent skilled visas granted to migrants<sup>1</sup> intending to reside in Queensland in 2023–24.



1. Primary applicants only, does not include visas granted to dependents.

## DISCLAIMER NOTICE TO APPLICANTS

The details presented in this FAQ sheet are time-sensitive and reflect information as of February 2025. It is intended for awareness purposes only and should not be considered as advice. For official or professional migration information and advice, you should refer to:

- [www.homeaffairs.gov.au](http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au), or;
- [www.mara.gov.au](http://www.mara.gov.au)

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