

IMMIGRATION NEWS

(Volume 127)

- *NSW Revises Requirements for Sponsorship*
- *Students applying for Tourist visas*
- *ACS Recent Assessment Changes*
- *Engineers Australia Professional Year Programs*



17th April 2009

Dear Students

Welcome to the new subscribers of IMMIGRATION NEWS which is published by Australian Immigration Law Services.

Please feel free to e-mail this newsletter to any of your friends.

NSW Revises Requirements for Sponsorship

IELTS

NSW government today changed the IELTS requirements for state sponsorship for the 176/886 visa's. From today applicants will need to meet 7.0 or 8.0 on all four components of the test. Previously applicants could have 7.0 on three of the components on an IELTS result.

Skills in Demand List

NSW no longer sponsors General Medical Practitioners under the 176/886 visa program. The still will sponsor them for the Skilled Regional Sponsored 475/487 visa in all regions.

NSW regions no longer sponsor Accountants for the onshore Skilled Regional Sponsored 487 visa.

The NSW Migration website will be updated shortly. See www.business.nsw.gov.au/migration

Students applying for Tourist visas

DIAC has released the following information on their web site for students who are considering applying for a tourist visa so they can remain in Australia and undertake the IELTS exam.

"During the recent student peak, policy was relaxed to allow students to apply for a Tourist (Subclass 676) visa with a view to remaining in Australia to sit an English Language examination before applying for a further student visa or GSM. This accommodation was largely made to ensure students were not disadvantaged by changes to the Subclass 485 visa requirements made in October 2008.

Now that the upfront English Language requirement has been in place for some time, and international students have had the opportunity to adjust their plans accordingly, this relaxed approach to onshore Tourist visa applications will be discontinued."

Students should be mindful that they will not have permission to work whilst the tourist visa is valid. Many applicants believe that once they lodge the 485/885 visas after they obtain their IELTS result that they can work full time on their bridging visas even though the tourist visa is still valid. This is definitely not the case.

In order to be able to work you will need the tourist visa to expire first. Recently I had one student come to me who took out a longer tourist visa than he needed for his IELTS result without realising he could not work until it expired.

ACS Recent Australian Graduate Assessments Changes

The Australian Computer Society (ACS) has modified its guidelines recently to allow applicants to apply for their skill assessments within 18 months after course completion instead of the old 6 month rule.

This change obviously came into effect due to the delay in granting the 485 applications by DIAC. The ACS is still the only assessment body who places a 2 year use by date on their assessment for migrations purposes. This means applicants cannot use them after this 2 year period expires.

Extension of Old Assessments

The ACS allows applicants who obtained their initial migration assessment to apply for an extension of their initial assessment if their letter is dated between the 1st January 2007 and 31st June 2007.

There is a \$100 fee for this service but is crucial to many applicants hoping to apply for PR before their 485 visa expires.

Engineers Australia (EA) joins the Professional Year Programs

EA has now developed a professional year program where recent Australian graduates can obtain the extra 10 points they may need for their PR applications.

These courses are starting in May and demand will be expected to be high so if you need the extra points, don't miss out.

A reminder to all students that if you are planning to obtain the 10 points for completing a professional year program then you must complete the course **before** you lodge your PR application. There is no provision to complete these programs after you have lodged your application and then try and gain the extra 10 points.

Readers comments to our last edition

This letter was edited for length;

Hi All,

I have a genuine concern over the use of IELTS assessment for various purposes. I certainly appreciate Australian Govt's policy to have minimum level of bands to be eligible for admission into certain courses at higher education institutes and training colleges. The implementation of this policy, however, is not appropriate.

Following are some issues:-----

1. The genuine process should be the assessment of English language skills at the ENTRY POINT----- i.e before the students actually enter Australia for further studies. After the students have come here, having spent thousands of dollars of their hard earned money on their education(e.g. Community Welfare courses, students come to know about their poor eligibility to work in their study fields and to apply for permanent residency because Govt departments/ Workplace policies do not approve their English language standards. The result----- Students hanging like a PENDULUM with no future at hands and on top of that becoming the exploitation material for the colleges, immigration lawyers and DIMIA.

2. The assessments of IELTS are challenge able !!!!! Recently I have heard many students having 8 bands overall and getting 4 or 5 bands in one of the module. To me and to many language experts- it doesn't make any sense to see such a high contrast/ imbalance in the language skills of a person. Also it is seen that many students do not deserve to achieve even 5 bands in writing or speaking skills, show 8 bands as their results. (-----Please remember here that these two modules can't be passed on doubt like the two other which are based on answering objective type questions which may involve guess work----- the writing and speaking are performances based exams-----)

Please have a check on the assessment policies of IELTS department and make it genuine. The department should be honest whatever the case is---- FAIL THE

STUDENTS IF THEY ARE NOT DESERVING---- BUT DO NOT EXPLOIT THEM----

I apologise for being too explanatory here but the unresolved issues of international students will prove as a termite spoiling Australian Education system/ Workplace standards and Economy as a whole.

Concerned Australian Citizen. Supin

Our Reply;

Our main issue with the IELTS is it was never meant to be used for the purpose DIAC is using it now. However there is a general concern about the English level of many recent graduates from Australian educational institutions which cannot be denied. The IELTS test now is leaving many students with the feeling that they are being exploited and this is certainly not right. I think all students really want is a fair test.

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Kind regards

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