

## Designated Languages List

This part of the bonus points system is often the least understood. Many students believe that as long as they grew up and went to school in a country which is covered in the Designated Languages List then they can gain the 5 bonus points. Unfortunately there are only two options available to prove to DIMIA that you may be eligible for these bonus points, using an overseas Bachelor Degree qualification or passing the NAATI exam. In this newsletter we will discuss the degree option first.

## What are the current Languages?

The current list of languages is reproduced below. Unfortunately if your language is not here then there is nothing you can do to gain these 5 points.

Afrikaans	Hindi
Albanian	Hungarian
Arabic (including Lebanese)	Indonesian
Armenia	Malaysian
Bengali	Italian
Bosnia	Japanese
Bulgaria	Khmer
Burmese	Korean
Chinese – Cantonese	Lao
Chinese – Mandarin	Latvian
Croatian	Lithuanian
Czech	Macedonia
Danish	Maltese
Estonian	Netherlandic (Dutch)
Fijian	Norwegian
Finnish	Persian
French	Polish
German	Portuguese
Greek	Punjabi

Hebrew	Romanian
Russian	Tamil
Serbian	Thai
Sinhalese	Turkish
Slovak	Ukrainian
Slovene	Urdu
Spanish	Vietnamese
Swedish	Yiddish
Tagalog (Filipino)	

## Bachelor Degree

The first way to gain these points is if you have completed a Bachelor Degree where all of the instruction was in one of the languages on the designated list. However there is an important catch to this. Your Bachelor Degree must be assessed as being equivalent to an Australian Bachelor Degree. The DIMIA guidelines state the applicant must be; **“the holder of a qualification (that is of an equivalent standard to a degree awarded by an Australian tertiary educational institution) the tuition for which was conducted in a designated language”**.

The first question that students often ask is, “how do I know if my degree is the same as an Australian Bachelor Degree?” To know this you must refer to books published by the Australian government called the Country Education Profiles. These are published by the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) through the Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs.

These books contain a list of most of the universities around the world and cover the countries where the languages on the designated list are spoken. Unfortunately most of these books have been published many years ago and many new universities are not in them. Other Universities may have changed their names when merging with larger ones so if you cannot find your university listed then it does not mean that you cannot use your qualification.

If you fail to find your university listed you may be able to pay a fee (usually around \$300) to clarify if your degree from your university is rated as equivalent to an Australian Bachelor degree. This will be important to know if you are relying on these 5 bonus points to reach the pass mark.

In the past many students have failed in their permanent residency applications because they believed by just having a Bachelor Degree from their home country was sufficient to gain the 5 points. This issue of having a degree being equivalent to an Australian Bachelor degree is still widely misunderstood by overseas students. You will notice that the law uses the term “degree”. This of course can also be a Masters Degree or a Phd.

## Tuition in the Designated Language?

The law does not clearly state that **all** of the tuition has to be conducted in the designated language. Many of our clients have done degrees overseas where they have completed a number of language courses such as English, German, and French etc.

It is often clear on your Academic Transcript that there may be a few subjects in other languages. If this is the case for you then can expect that DIMIA will request a letter from your university asking them to state what percentage of your subjects were taught in your designated language.

There is no golden rule about the percentage of subjects DIMIA is looking for. In fact in our experience many universities will not answer such a specific question and just state that all of the instruction at their institution was conducted in Japanese, Korean, etc, etc. In these cases DIMIA must accept what the university has stated.

**In the next Immigration News issue we will cover the NAATI option for bonus points.**