



MIGRATION INFORM

Migration Agent Registration

January 2012

Number 0214353

'helping to achieve a more rewarding lifestyle'

NEW VISA PRICING ARRANGEMENTS

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship is introducing new visa pricing arrangements due to a recent review of the current visa pricing system. The review found inconsistencies and as a result, intended to close the gap between visa access charges and the estimated costs of administering visas, and improve the integrity of the visa system.

The new visa pricing arrangements are a move to a per person visa application charge structure which is in line with comparable countries. In addition, the user-pays approach realizes the value of visa access while safeguarding Australia's international competitiveness and provides greater fairness and flexibility to changing circumstances.

Some changes will take effect from *1 January 2012*. Other charges will be progressively introduced over the next 18 months, subject to normal legislative processes.

The Visa Application Charge (VAC) will decrease by five percent for a small number of visa classes, other visa classes, the VAC will be increased between five and fifteen percent (**Table 1**).

Some anticipated changes include charges for:

- Additional family members
- Longer duration visas
- Paper applications
- Optional services which are not required

The following visitors will see no change:

- Electronic Travel Authority (ETA)
- European Economic Community
- Refugee and humanitarian visa applicants
- Citizenship applicants
- Postgraduate research students
- Australian sponsoring businesses

Table 1: Key visa classes affected by the new visa pricing arrangements:

Visa Subclass	Current Fee	New Fee
Employer Nomination (Offshore)	\$1,995	\$2,095
Business (Long Stay)	\$305	\$350
All Students	\$565	\$535
Employer Nomination (Onshore)	\$2,960	\$3,105

UPDATE OF SKILLED OCCUPATION LIST

The Skilled Occupation List (SOL) for General Skilled Migration changed on *1 July 2011*, with thirteen occupations added to the list and four occupations removed from the list.

The updated SOL is based on expert advice from the independent body, Skills Australia. The SOL identifies specialised occupations of high value and reflects the Australian Government's commitment to a skilled migration program that delivers skills in need in Australia.

The updated SOL applies to all new independent or unsponsored skilled migration applications lodged on or after *1 July 2011* unless they are from applicants eligible for transitional arrangements. Applicants with a nominated occupation that is no longer on the SOL in effect from *1 July 2011* will continue to be processed. Priority processing arrangements may however change for certain applicants according to the Ministerial Direction on priority processing.

PRIORITY PROCESSING OF GROUP 5

Based on the number of applications on hand and anticipated rates for Group 1 and Group 3, the department expects to commence allocating some Group 5 applications before end June 2012. There are approximately 27,347 applications lodged from in Australia and 15,284 applications lodged from outside Australia which are Group 5 cases awaiting allocation.

Processing of Group 5 applications lodged in Australia will begin with the remaining applications in the visa subclasses in effect prior to September 2007, the oldest of which was lodged on 28 July 2005. Processing of Group 5 applications lodged outside Australia will begin with applications in visa subclasses 485 and 496, which were lodged prior to 1 September 2007, the oldest of which was lodged on 10 July 2006.

The number of Group 5 applications processed this program year will ultimately depend on the number of higher priority applications received (**Table 2**), and other factors including any change in the size of the Migration Program or variation of the Processing Direction. Many Group 5 applicants still face a considerable wait until their application is allocated to a case officer for processing and may want to consider other options available.

The table below describes the processing times for the new priority processing arrangements for certain skilled migration visas.

Table 2: Processing times for the new priority processing arrangements.

Priority Processing	Processing Time
Group 1 Regional Sponsored	5 – 8 months
Group 2 Employer Sponsored	5 – 8 months
Group 3 State Sponsorship	12 – 24 months
Group 4 General Skilled	18 months
Group 5 Other	After finalisation of cases in groups 1-4

DOCUMENT FRAUD

It is a serious offence to misrepresent yourself, or one of your family members when making an application for an Australian visa. This includes making false or misleading statements, or submitting false information or false documents with your application. Even if someone else completes your application for you, you are responsible for it.

On 2 April 2011, the department introduced a Public Interest Criterion (PIC) which allows certain visa applications to be refused where false or misleading information is provided to the department.

STUDENT VISAS

On 5 November 2011, recommendations arising from a review were implemented which impact student visas in the following way:

- Introduction of an upfront 'genuine temporary entrant' criterion
- Removal of the English language test requirement for Independent ELICOS visa application subject to Assessment Level 4 or 5
- Providing a visa extension for up to six months after thesis submission for Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students
- Inclusion of pre-paid home stay fees in financial assessments
- Cessation of Pre-Visa Assessment (PVA)
- Reductions in financial requirements for Assessment Level 3 and 4 student visa applicants

In addition, decision-makers will be able to refuse the grant of a visa on the basis of the applicant having provided false, misleading and/or bogus documentation and/or information to the department. Student visa applicants, who have previously been refused on the basis of failing to satisfy the fraud Public Interest Criterion (PIC), will not be able to be granted a student visa unless it has been at least three years since the decision to refuse was made, or the waiver has been exercised.

Lastly, the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), Pearson Test of English Academic, and Cambridge English Advanced (CAE) will be accepted as alternatives to IELTS for student visa purposes.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

ETS Australia has the following positions for deployment in Australia:

Aluminium Fabricator/Installer
Auto Electrician
Auto Technician
Carpenter
Chef – Chinese
Chef – Western
Customer Service Manager
Diesel Mechanic/Fitter
Dry Wall Plasterer (Plasterboard)
Glazier – Curtain Wall
Hairdresser
Head/Executive Chef
Horticulturist
Metal Fabricator/Welder
Motorcycle Mechanic
Outboard Marine Mechanic
Painter – House/Industrial
Restaurant Manager
Roofer
Sheetmetal Worker
Upholsterer
Vehicle Denter
Vehicle Painter

In order to be considered, applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. Minimum five (5) years relevant and recent experience
2. Functional or better English
3. Vocational qualifications or higher
4. Available for immediate interview
5. Detailed work history
6. Under 45 years of age

Please submit a detailed resume to:
ETSA_administration@bigpond.com.

TEN YEAR ANNIVERSARY

ETS Australia as a registered migration agent has provided migration consultancy since 2001. Ten years later, we have helped many hundreds of people from various parts of the world; migrate to Australia to achieve a more rewarding lifestyle.

On 26 November 2011, we celebrated ten years of making a difference. We would like to thank everyone who attended.

HOLIDAY CLOSURE

ETS Australia will be closed from 24 December 2011 till 8 January 2012. We hope you have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

DARWIN OFFICE HOURS

ETS Australia's Darwin office hours are:

Monday till Thursday 10AM till 6PM

Friday 10AM till 5PM

Saturday and Sunday CLOSED

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