



Newsletter 121

VETASSESS Update

Carpenters, joiners, and carpenters and joiners who successfully completed skills exams under Pathway 1 will now acquire the most recent certification, as per VETASSESS.

The [VETASSESS website](#) has additional details.

Review of Australia's Migration System

Applicants would have received an email link to the migration survey. The applicants are encouraged to express their ideas and viewpoints for consideration in the report to the Department of Home Affairs, particularly with regard to methods to enhance the system's functionality.

A [Discussion Paper](#) from the Department has been made public to go along with the evaluation, and more details are accessible on the [Department's website](#).

Australia - India Trade Agreement to commence

COMMENCEMENT DATE: DECEMBER 29, 2022

After both nations have finished making the necessary domestic procedures, the Australia-India Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (AIECTA) will go into effect on December 29, 2022.

What the AIECTA will offer is

- 1000 Subclass 462 (first) Work and Holiday Program visas for Indian citizens between the ages of 18 and 31 per year
- Students from India who complete STEM bachelor's degrees with First Class Honors (including ICT) after graduation will be eligible for an additional year of post-study visas (three years total).

Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry Summit


VISA PROCESSING

Since the beginning of May, the Department has hired more than 300 staff for responsibilities related to processing visas; additional hires are expected in the following weeks. Almost a million visa applications were awaiting processing six months ago.

It is currently at 737,000, and by the end of the year, we expect it to be very close to 600,000.

PERMANENT MIGRATION

The government boosted the number of places available for skilled immigrants under the 2022-23 permanent migration programme from 160,000 to 195,000 as part of the budget.

This includes 34,000 places designated for Regional visas, which will help fill positions and stimulate the economy in regional Australia, and 31,000 places designated for State/Territory nominated visas, which will aid those jurisdictions in meeting their immigration needs. (TBC) 

The Australian Government will keep looking into methods to increase the pathways to permanent residency for sponsored temporary skilled workers in order to retain talents within Australia and give businesses and immigrants security.

CITIZENSHIP

The Department is currently processing about 1,000 more applications each week than it receives, and the number of complex cases on hand has significantly decreased.

Less than 105,000 applications were in-hand as of 4 November 2022, a 28% decline from the 2021 peak of more than 145,000 applications in-hand (at 30 November last year).

93% of approved applicants had been attending ceremonies in less than six months as of November 4, 2022, saving them the stress that comes with lengthy citizenship wait times.

PRIORITY PROCESSING ON HOLD FROM VETASSESS

VETASSESS has stopped accepting priority processing from 02nd December 2022 and will resume accepting the priority processing from 05th January 2023.

This will help finish all Priority Processing applications submitted in December that have been determined to be qualified for the service within the final 10 business days before the holiday break.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION BY CLIENTS/APPLICANTS

- **Is it possible for me to change course while on a student visa?**

Yes, you can change the course while being on a student visa, but while changing the course, you must maintain the AQF level at an equivalent or higher to your current study course. Otherwise, you may breach your visa conditions that can have serious consequences!

- **Can the working holiday visa be extended?**

A working holiday visa cannot be extended or renewed. Working holiday visa holders, on the other hand, can apply for a second or even third WHV to extend their stay in Australia. The visa holder is required to work in rural areas for a specified period of time. Visa holders receive a second WHV valid for one year after performing this type of work for three months. The holder can renew their WHV for a third year if they complete another six months of regional work.

- **Can I move to new employer if I'm sponsored by a new employer?**

A worker can change employers only if the new employer makes a legal nomination and the worker meets the new submission's skill and qualification requirements.

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