

Filipino Migrants Forum

Are you eligible for the *new* skilled graduate temporary visa?

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The Skilled – Graduate (subclass 485) visa took effect from 1 September 2007. It provides an opportunity for *overseas students* who have completed at least two years' study in Australia and who do not meet the requirements for a permanent General Skilled Migration visa, the opportunity to remain in Australia for 18 months to gain the additional points which could enable them to meet the passmark in the points test.

This visa is not subject to any conditions restricting work or study. Options for visa holders include, but are not limited to working, completing a professional year, studying to improve their English skills and/or traveling.

Applicants who can demonstrate at least 12 months' Australian work experience in their nominated skilled occupation or a closely related skilled occupation will be awarded 10 points under the GSM points test. Alternatively those who have completed a professional year instead will be awarded 10 points.

Skilled – Graduate visa holders will not be required to be under 45 years of age to lodge a valid application for a permanent or provisional GSM visa in Australia. However, applicants who are aged 45 or over will not be eligible for any age points under the points test.

To be eligible for a Skilled – Graduate (subclass 485) visa, applicants must:

- hold an eligible student visa or have held an eligible student visa in the past six months
- have met the two-year study requirement in the past six months
- nominate a 50 or 60 point occupation from the Skilled Occupation List
- have applied to have their skills assessed for their nominated skilled occupation and
- have competent English, or vocational English in the case of an applicant who has applied to have their skills assessed in a trade qualification.

The Skilled – Graduate visa holder at any time while their visa is still valid, may apply for any of the following visas as soon as eligible:

- provisional Skilled – Regional Sponsored visa
- permanent Skilled – Independent visa
- permanent Skilled – Sponsored visa or
- employer sponsored visa

This information is of a general nature and should not be taken as authoritative legal advice for specific cases. Australia has a scheme that requires persons who give immigration assistance to be registered as migration agent. The writer, Atty. Imelda Argel is a practising Filipino lawyer and a registered migration agent in Sydney, Australia. She is a Solicitor of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, the High Court of

Australia, an Attorney at law in the Philippines and in the State of New York, USA. Her Registered Migration Agent no. is 9682957. She is also the recipient of the inaugural NSW FAWAA (Filipino-Australian Women's Achievement Award) for her outstanding achievements in corporate practice. . More information is available at www.iargel.com.au

Readers of the Philippine Community Herald Newspaper are invited to send their comments to "The President, Filipino Migrants Forum" c/o Imelda Argel & Associates, Solicitors & Attorneys, by email at info@iargel.com.au or by fax at (+612) 9699 3210 or by post to Suite 41, Ground Floor, 61-89 Buckingham St. SURRY HILLS NSW 2010.