

To Graduates of TAFE commercial cookery in the Philippines,

Re: Changes in the Australian Migration Regulations from 1 July 2011

This is an update of the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) which can be found on my website, www.iargel.com.au, in relation to the changes in the skills assessment requirements of Trades Recognition Australia (TRA) and DIAC's skilled occupations list (SOL), for the purpose of visa application under general skilled migration as at 1 July 2011.

To qualify for permanent or temporary residence under general skilled migration, your nominated occupation must be listed in the skilled occupations list (SOL). You must first obtain a suitable skills assessment as "cook", pass the new points test that took effect on 1 July 2011, pass the English test, recent work experience, and other requirements.

Skilled Occupation List (SOL)

It is within the power of DIAC to change its skilled occupations list as the required skills in Australia change. As at 1 July 2011, "Cook" is listed in Schedule 2 of the skilled occupations list. This means that you may nominate "cook" as your occupation but you will need to be nominated by a state or Territory (government) before you can apply for permanent or temporary residence under skilled migration. For example, "cook" is in the list of Northern Territory, Tasmania, Western Australia, and South Australia. See links from my website to find out additional specific requirements in their State Migration Plan (SMP).

Hence, your TAFE commercial cookery course is still a pathway to migration at present but there is no assurance that "cook" will be in the skilled occupations list forever and this applies also to those who studied and completed Diploma or Certificate in Commercial Cookery in Australia. Please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions on TAFE (FAQ) dated 5 January 2009 published on my website, in particular, the answer to question no. 22 which you were expected to read before you enrolled in the course.

Skills assessing Authority

Skills assessment criteria of TRA as the DIAC authorised skills assessing authority change from time to time and it is within their power to make the changes. Graduates of TAFE commercial cookery course inside and outside Australia do not automatically qualify for skills assessment or for migration.

To obtain a suitable skills assessment for the nominated occupation of "cook", each visa applicant must apply for assessment individually.

In 2008, the skills assessing authority only required 900 hours of work experience before, during or after Australian trade certificate III, in order to issue a suitable skills assessment. However, TRA changed its guidelines in 2010 and required 4 years, work experience for graduates of Australian certificate III overseas, like you.

From 1 July 2011, TRA has changed its policy on work experience requirements again.

At present, the work experience required for the TRA migration skills assessment based on *Australian trade certificate* obtained outside Australia is:

1. Paid and full-time employment (including self-employment)
2. For at least three years, including 12 months in the last two years.
3. Performed at the required skill level for Australian industry standards based on statements provided by your employers and the written description of your work in your own words.

Thus, the TAFE Commercial cookery course that was offered in the Philippines is useful because you meet the Australian qualification without having to prove that is comparable to an Australian qualification to TRA.

Had you obtained your trade certificate III in commercial cookery from another education institution in the Philippines, other than TAFE NSW through SDC or JIB, you would need to first prove to TRA that your qualification meets 3 requirements, even before your work experience is considered:

1. it must be at a **level** comparable to an Australian qualification required for the occupation, i.e. Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) trade certificate III or higher -
In determining whether your qualification is at a level comparable to an Australian qualification required for the occupation, information from the following sources will be considered:
 - (a) *Relevant Country Education Profile of your country of education*
 - (b) *International Standard Classification of Education*
 - (c) *National Recognition Information Centre for the United Kingdom*
 - (d) *Country of training specific databases* and official government information sources.
2. it must be at a **standard** comparable to Australian qualification -
In determining whether a qualification is of a comparable standard, the following will be considered -
 - *Provider quality*: whether there is a government-led system of provider quality assurance
 - *Course accreditation*: whether there is a government-led system for accrediting courses
 - *Industry support*: whether there is a formal system for industry input into course content
 - *Qualification recognition*: whether the qualification is widely and formally recognised in the country of origin
3. it must be **relevant** to the nominated occupation -
In determining relevance, TRA will consider the subjects, course content of each subject shown in your academic transcript and any machines, tools and equipment on which you trained, in comparison to the skills, tasks and competencies detailed in Australian industry-endorsed training packages and ANZSCO.

In other words, you have the advantage of not having to prove that your TAFE qualification in the Philippines is comparable to an Australian qualification, because it already meets the 3 requirements above.

- TRA also had major changes on skills assessment requirements for those who completed their Australian qualification in Australia. Had you obtained your TAFE qualification in Australia, you would have to satisfy the Job Ready Program over 18 months, after the completion of a 2 year course relating to commercial cookery, obtain an IELTS score of 6 per component, have an initial relevant work experience of 360 hours for the purpose of a suitable provisional skills assessment, work placement for at least 12 months and pass the final assessment before TRA can issue a suitable skills assessment.

Please pass on for your information of other graduates. We expect other changes to skilled migration on 1 July 2012.

Imelda Argel
31 August 2011