

Tuesday, 21 February 2023

Media release

Addressing skills shortages in key industries and rebuilding the international education sector

Joint media release with the Hon Jason Clare MP

The Albanese Government is addressing skills shortages by extending post-study work rights for international students that have graduated from an Australian higher education provider.

This will support businesses across the country and help rebuild the international education sector following the pandemic.

This is a practical change that will increase the availability of a well-trained and highly capable workforce to help ease current pressures.

The Government has today released the [list of occupations and the eligible qualifications](#) that will enable graduates to access greater work rights.

We are targeting the skills Australia needs most, including health, teaching, engineering and agricultural fields.

Targeted skills will be considered on an annual basis and updated as needed in response to the labour market.

This was a commitment made following the Jobs and Skills Summit and developed further after advice from a working group made up of the Council of International Education, the National Tertiary Education Union, Universities Australia, and the Departments of Home Affairs and Education.

These extended work rights come into effect from 1 July 2023. Current settings will be increased by two years. This will extend post study work rights from

- two years to four years for select Bachelor degrees
- three years to five years for select Masters degrees
- four years to six years for all Doctoral degrees.

Existing settings for regional and remote Australia will also be maintained, and where relevant, will be eligible for the additional two years.

Eligible graduates with a valid Temporary Graduate Visa on 1 July 2023 or who apply for a Temporary Graduate Visa after 1 July 2023, will be considered for the two year extension.

Graduates whose visa expires before 1 July 2023 can apply for an extension of their work rights by visiting [Temporary Activity visa \(subclass 408\) Australian Government endorsed events \(COVID-19 Pandemic event\)](#).

More information about these measures is available at [Temporary Graduate visa - Subclass 485](#).

In addition, the Government will increase the allowable work hours cap from 40 hours per fortnight to 48 hours per fortnight.

This modest increase will help students to support themselves financially, gain valuable work experience and contribute to Australia's workforce needs while they study.

The cap will take effect from 1 July 2023. More information on student visa work hours is available at the [Department of Home Affairs website](#).

The Government's response to the recommendations of the Post-Study Work Rights Working Group is available at <https://www.education.gov.au/extended-poststudy-work-rights-international-graduates>.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education Jason Clare:

“Businesses are screaming out for skilled workers, particularly in the regions.

“We have got the second highest skills shortage in the developed world, according to the OECD. Skills shortages are everywhere.

“We teach and train these skilled workers. This will mean they can stay on longer and use the skills they've gained in Australia to help fill some of the chronic skills shortages we have right now.

“As well as delivering the skills and qualifications Australia needs, the measure will make Australia more attractive as a study destination, helping the recovery of the international education sector and boosting earnings from Australia's education exports.”

Quotes attributable to Minister for Home Affairs Clare O'Neil:

“Enabling students that gain an education in Australia to stay longer and contribute to our economy benefits us all.

“After a lost decade on immigration and skills we are looking for ways to utilise skilled migrants via enhanced training and better targeted, less exploitative programs for temporary visa workers and students.

“This work is being undertaken as we work towards the conclusion of the migration review and continue to reform our broken migration and skills system.”

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