



Our final newsletter for 2011 is packed full of great news for students and graduates, with the announcement of a new post-study work visa, reduced student fees and more visa options for extending your stay in Australia. Don't forget, if you have any enquiries and interest in extending your stay in Australia after you graduate, contact our Recent Graduates team direct by emailing [student@australianmigrations.com](mailto:student@australianmigrations.com).

## KNIGHT REVIEW: POST-STUDY WORK VISA

As part of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship's (DIAC) Knight Review of the Student Visa program and acceptance of all recommendations, DIAC recently announced the proposed implementation of Recommendation 4 of the review – Post-Study Work Arrangements.

Proposed for introduction in early 2013, new post-study work visa arrangements are set to become available to graduates of Australian bachelor degrees, Masters by coursework degree, Masters by research degree or PhDs. While more detailed advice about eligibility requirements will be made available as legislation to support the visa is put in place, the below information is what has been provided so far by DIAC;

### Eligibility Requirements (of the proposed visa);

- In the last six months before applying for the visa, the applicant must have completed a Bachelor degree (or a higher level course such as a Masters or PhD) obtained in Australia.
- Graduates must meet the Australian study requirement – study a course registered on the CRICOS for a period of at least 2 academic years (92 weeks). The course itself should be conducted in English and should be completed in no less than 16 calendar months while holding a visa that permits study.
- English language, health, character and security requirements will need to be met and evidence of adequate health insurance for the duration of the visa will need to be provided.
- English language requirement: competent English (minimum score of 6 in each of the four components of the IELTS test or the equivalent score in another English language test specified by DIAC).

### Length the post-study work visa will be valid

Graduates who have **completed a Bachelor degree or Masters by coursework degree in Australia** will be eligible to apply for a two year post-study work visa. Graduates who have **completed a Masters by research degree or a PhD in Australia** will be eligible to apply for a post-study work visa for three or four years respectively.

### Who this proposal applies to

These new arrangements will be ready for students who made their **student visa applications after 5 November 2011**, the date on which the first Knight Review measures were implemented.

Students **currently studying in Australia** are entitled to apply for the existing Temporary Skilled Graduate visa (subclass 485) which allows students to remain temporarily in Australia with work rights at the completion of their studies.

For more information about the Knight Review and proposed changes, click [here](#).

## REDUCED STUDENT VISA FEES

Late last month the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Chris Bowen MP announced that the Australian Government will be introducing a new visa fee system with elements of the new system being introduced throughout 2012 and 2013.

The new "User-Pays" system will result in new fees for dependants and increased fees for skilled migration visa applicants; however **student visa application fees will be reduced by five percent, from 1 January 2012.**

The purpose of reducing the student visa fees is to increase the competitiveness of Australia's international education sector.

For further details of Mr. Bowen's announcement of the new visa fee system, click [here](#).



## REVIEW OF THE PROFESSIONAL YEAR (PY) PROGRAM

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) has announced that it is conducting a review of the Professional Year (PY) program. In place since 2008, the PY program is a structured development program available to former overseas students who have graduated as Engineers, Accountants and IT Professionals.

The PY Program is offered by providers approved by professional bodies and includes workshops, skills training and a professional placement and will;

- Familiarise participants with the norms and values in the Australian workplace as well as the Australian employment market and workplace culture
- Teach participants how to communicate effectively and professionally in the Australian workplace with colleagues, managers and clients
- Include an internship (work experience) to educate participants about all aspects of work practices in an Australian company.

**The program may help graduates find employment and on completing the PY, graduates can be awarded five points towards meeting the points test pass mark.**

As part of DIAC's evaluation, they want stakeholders, including current and former students, to tell them how useful the program is and what sort of improvements can be made. The survey will collect general demographic information, and ask questions to capture each individual's experience of the PY program. The results will contribute to a discussion paper, which is expected to be completed in early 2012.

All survey responses will remain anonymous, and will have no bearing on the outcomes of any current or future visa applications, or other dealings with the department.

Details of the survey have been emailed to all current PY students and graduates.

For more information about Australia PY program, click [here](#).



## SOMETHING TO CONSIDER: EMPLOYER SPONSORED VISAS

For sub-class 485 Visa holders (or those currently on a Bridging Visa waiting for your sub-class 485 visa to process), don't forget about Employer Sponsored Visa options. Depending on where you live and your skill level there could be more than one option. The starting point for these visas is a job offer from an employer able and willing to sponsor you. If you believe your current employer would be interested in doing this or you are aware of another business that would be prepared to do this then please contact us and we can assess your eligibility as well as the employer's.

Key requirements for the visa applicant for an employer sponsored visa are;

- Having the skills, qualifications, experience and an employment background which match those required for the position.
- Meeting the English language requirements - currently achieving a score of 5 for each band of the IELTS test.
- Meeting all necessary health and character requirements.

To make enquiries about your eligibility for an employer sponsored visa, email [migrate@australianmigrations.com](mailto:migrate@australianmigrations.com) or contact us by calling +61 (0)7 3212 2200.

## AMVL HOLIDAY CLOSURE



The AMVL offices will be closed for the holiday season from 12:00pm on Friday 23 December 2011 and will re-open at 8:30am on Tuesday 3 January 2012. Any urgent enquiries during this period can be directed to [bill@australianmigrations.com](mailto:bill@australianmigrations.com). AMVL wishes you a safe and happy holidays and look forward to working with you again in the New Year. Seasons Greetings!