



Skills Assessments Introduced for Subclass 457 Visas

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Skills Assessments

The Australian Government has announced a number of changes to the Subclass 457 Visa Program from 1 July 2009. Two of these changes apply to 457 visa applicants in trade occupations and chefs:

- increasing the existing minimum language requirement from 4.5 IELTS to 5 IELTS; and
- progressively introducing formal skills assessment for 457 visa applicants from a number of countries in trade occupations and chefs.

The 457 visa skills assessment is a formal skills assessment, managed by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (**DEEWR**) through Trades Recognition Australia (**TRA**). TRA has been tasked with managing the skills assessments in its role as an authorised assessing authority for skills assessment of overseas workers for migration purposes. Initially, DEEWR/TRA will support 457 visa skills assessments from a visa applicant seeking to fill a nomination in the following five occupations:

- Welder (First Class)
- Motor Mechanic
- Chef/Cook
- Fitter
- Metal Fabricator

and, where the visa applicant is also the holder of the passport from one of the following ten countries:

- Brazil
- China
- Fiji
- Papua New Guinea
- India
- Philippines
- South Africa
- Thailand
- Vietnam
- Zimbabwe

Over the coming months, DEEW/TRA will progressively add more countries and occupations to the list.

Who requires a 457 visa skills assessment?

The 457 visa skills assessment will apply to all Subclass 457 visa applications in the above listed occupations and from the above listed countries made on, or after 1 July 2009. The list of occupations and countries is expected to increase over the coming months.

Where an applicant does not provide a 457 visa skills assessment, then the Department may request the applicant to provide the outcome of a 457 visa skills assessment in order to satisfy Migration Regulations.

Under some circumstances, the Department may not request the applicant to provide the outcome of a 457 visa skills assessment. For example, a Primary applicant who currently holds a Subclass 457 visa as a Primary Sponsored person and holds the relevant Australian qualifications or Australian registration/licensing for the nominated occupation, may not be requested to provide a 457 visa skills assessment.

Process for obtaining a Subclass 457 visa assessment

Prospective overseas workers may initiate a 457 visa skills assessment through TRA at any time. The assessment is based on formal and structured Recognition of Prior Learning (**RPL**), and is carried out on a fee for service basis by TRA endorsed Registered Training Organisations (**TRO's**).

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