



Employer Nomination Scheme and Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme

To remain permanently in Australia, nurses can apply under the Employer Nomination Scheme (ENS) or the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS) visa categories. The applicant must be under 45 years of age to be eligible for this visa, unless exceptional circumstances apply. These schemes help employers to recruit and sponsor overseas nurses.

General Skilled Migration

There is a range of visa options under General Skilled Migration (GSM) for skilled workers who are under 50 years of age and want to live in Australia but do not have an employer sponsoring them. These include options for skilled people applying as an independent migrant as well as those sponsored by an eligible Australian relative or nominated by a state or territory government.

To be eligible to apply for GSM, nurses must pass a points test and meet a range of basic requirements.

The qualifications of overseas trained nurses will need to be assessed for GSM programs by ANMAC.

More information

For information visit www.immi.gov.au or phone 131 881.

For details of Australian immigration offices overseas visit www.immi.gov.au/contacts/overseas/

Visas for nurses



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Nursing skills are in high demand and career opportunities are excellent

Overseas nurses can enter and remain in Australia on a temporary or permanent basis, subject to normal immigration requirements, including good health and character.

Nurses with experience, high levels of skill and those who need to gain additional skills can choose from a range of visa options.

Most visas for nurses require applicants to satisfy certain criteria including qualifications and English language ability. All nurses wishing to work in Australia on a temporary or permanent visa need to be registered by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA).

Further information can be found on the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council Ltd (ANMAC) website: www.anmac.org.au or the NMBA website: www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au

If the NMBA or ANMAC assesses your skill level as equivalent to an enrolled nurse, you may not be able to access all of the visa options available to more highly-qualified nurses.

Temporary entry

For many nurses, temporary residence visas are a first step towards permanent residence.

All temporary resident nurses wishing to extend their stay in Australia should apply for a further visa before their current visa expires.

Business (Long Stay) visa (subclass 457)

This visa allows nurses to work temporarily in Australia for an approved business sponsor. Nurses can stay for up to four years with full work rights for accompanying family members.

Working Holiday

Overseas nurses aged 18 to 30, who are citizens of a country with which Australia has a reciprocal arrangement, may be able to come to Australia for a working holiday. This allows a 12 month stay, working for a maximum of six months with each employer, provided work remains incidental to the holiday. A further 12 months' stay is possible if applicants qualify for a second Working Holiday visa.

Further options

If you do not have the necessary qualifications to work as a nurse in Australia, you may be able to complete a bridging program to bring your skills to the required level using one of the following temporary visa options.

Business (Short Stay) visa (subclass 456)

This visa allows nurses to complete approved bridging programs that run for less than three months. Nurses who successfully complete the course and are eligible for registration may then be able to apply in Australia for a Business (Long Stay) visa (subclass 457).

Occupational Trainee visa (subclass 442)

This visa allows nurses to undertake workplace-based training required for registration to enable them to work as a nurse either in Australia or their home country. Nurses may also undertake structured workplace-based training to enhance their occupational skills. The organisation providing the training must be an approved Occupational Trainee visa sponsor and must have a structured and supervised workplace-based training program approved for each nurse. This visa may be granted for a period of up to two years.

Permanent entry

Nurses wishing to remain in Australia permanently may apply independently, or seek a sponsoring employer or relative to support their application. Generally, overseas nurses must have their skills assessed as being suitable for their occupation by the relevant assessing authority, have the relevant age requirements, English language skills, qualifications and work experience as a registered nurse to be eligible under these schemes.