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Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations



OFFSHORE SKILLS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

APPLICANT GUIDELINES

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SECTION 1: OVERVIEW OF THE OFFSHORE SKILLS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE OFFSHORE SKILLS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM APPLICANT GUIDELINES

These guidelines describe the Offshore Skills Assessment Program and define the requirements for applicants seeking to apply for a skills assessment under this program.

The primary audience for these guidelines is applicants applying for a skills assessment under the Offshore Skills Assessment Program. Terms explained in the [Glossary](#) are **bolded** when they first appear in this document.

The **Offshore Skills Assessment Program** is managed by Trades Recognition Australia (TRA). TRA, a business unit of the Australian Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), is the relevant assessing authority for nominated occupations under the Migration Regulations 1994.

If you are considering applying under the Offshore Skills Assessment Program, it is essential that you understand the eligibility requirements for the Offshore Skills Assessment Program before starting an application (see [Section 2.2](#)).

These guidelines do not provide specific information on visa or points requirements for migration. All enquiries regarding migration requirements must be directed to **Department of Immigration and Citizenship** (DIAC) (www.immi.gov.au).

The Australian Government reserves the right to amend these guidelines as needed. Information about changes to the guidelines will be documented in the document change history table on page 2.

1.2 OFFSHORE SKILLS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM SUMMARY

The Offshore Skills Assessment Program is a **skills assessment** pathway for applicants applying for permanent migration to Australia who work in a **nominated occupation** and who hold a passport from a **nominated country**.

Currently, the Nominated Countries assessed by TRA under the Offshore Skills Assessment Program are:

- China
- Fiji
- India
- Iran
- Ireland
- Korea (Sth)
- Pakistan
- Philippines
- South Africa
- Sri Lanka
- United Arab Emirates
- United Kingdom

Currently, the Nominated Occupations [[ANZSCO Code](#)] assessed by TRA under the Offshore Skills Assessment Program are:

- Airconditioning and Refrigeration Mechanic [342111]
- Aircraft Maintenance Engineer (Avionics) [323111]
- Aircraft Maintenance Engineer (Mechanical) [323112]
- Bricklayer [331111]
- Carpenter [331212]
- Carpenter and Joiner [331211]
- Diesel Motor Mechanic [321212]
- Electrical Linesworker [342211]
- Electrician (General) [341111]
- Electrician (Special Class) [341112]
- Electronic Equipment Trades Worker [342313]
- Joiner [331213]
- Metal Fabricator [322311]
- Motor Mechanic (General) [321211]
- Plumber (General) [334111]
- Sheetmetal Trades Worker [322211]
- Technical Cable Joiner [342212]
- Vehicle Painter [324311]
- Welder (First Class) [322313]

If you are applying for a skills assessment under this program, you must be assessed by a **TRA approved Registered Training Organisation (RTO)**. There are currently two TRA approved RTOs, VETASSESS and Victoria University. You may choose which RTO you use for your assessment, noting the list of nominated countries and nominated occupations for each RTO is different.

VETASSESS		VICTORIA UNIVERSITY	
Nominated Countries		Nominated Countries	
China	South Africa	China	Pakistan
India	Sri Lanka	Fiji	Philippines
Ireland	United Arab Emirates	India	South Africa
Korea (Sth)	United Kingdom	Iran	Sri Lanka
Philippines		Ireland	United Kingdom
		Korea (Sth)	United Arab Emirates
Nominated Occupations		Nominated Occupations	
Airconditioning and Refrigeration Mechanic		Airconditioning and Refrigeration Mechanic	
Bricklayer		Aircraft Maintenance Engineer (Avionics)	
Carpenter		Aircraft Maintenance Engineer (Mechanical)	
Carpenter and Joiner		Bricklayer	
Electrician (General)		Carpenter	
Electronic Equipment Trades Worker		Carpenter and Joiner	
Diesel Motor Mechanic		Diesel Motor Mechanic	
Electrical Linesworker		Electrician (General)	
Joiner		Electrician (Special Class)	
Metal Fabricator		Electronic Equipment Trades Worker	
Motor Mechanic (General)		Joiner	
Plumber (General)		Metal Fabricator	
Sheetmetal Trades Worker		Motor Mechanic (General)	
Technical Cable Joiner		Plumber (General)	
Vehicle Painter		Sheetmetal Trades Worker	
Welder (First Class)		Vehicle Painter	
		Welder (First Class)	

1.3 PROGRAM OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Offshore Skills Assessment Program is to determine whether you are able to work in Australia at the required skill level for your nominated occupation. This aims to ensure successful applicants can contribute immediately to Australia's skilled workforce.

1.4 RELEVANT LEGISLATION

TRA is the designated relevant assessing authority for a range of trade and associate professional occupations under the *Migration Regulations 1994*.

Regulation 2.26B(2) of the *Migration Regulations 1994* provides that TRA may determine the standards required to be demonstrated in a skills assessment for a particular occupation.

TRA plays no role in issuing visas or allocating points for migration purposes.

1.5 PROGRAM DELIVERY

Skills assessments for the Offshore Skills Assessment Program are undertaken through RTOs for TRA. Currently, the approved RTOs are VETASSESS and Victoria University.

1.6 OFFSHORE SKILLS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM FEES

You are required to pay a skills assessment fee directly to the RTO you select to conduct your skills assessment.

RTOs approved by TRA set their own fees, and they are required to list the fees they charge on their website.

For detailed fee information, visit the individual RTO websites. Links to these websites are available under Contact Details in these Guidelines (see [Section 3.1](#)).

1.7 TRA ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The roles and responsibilities of TRA in relation to the Offshore Skills Assessment Program include (but are not limited to):

- managing the objectives of the program
- providing up-to-date information about program processes and procedures
- contract management and monitoring of TRA approved RTOs
- responding to enquiries about the program
- policy management
- developing and maintaining an appropriate IT system to support the program
- liaising with DIAC and other stakeholders about the program
- responding to complaints that cannot otherwise be dealt with by the TRA-approved RTOs, as required

- monitoring program integrity
- managing evaluations of the program
- undertaking compliance and investigative measures as required.

1.8 TRA APPROVED RTO ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The roles and responsibilities of TRA approved RTOs to deliver the services include (but are not limited to):

- meeting their obligations under the VET Quality Framework
- conducting an assessment of the evidence you provide in accordance with their documented processes and procedures
- notifying you of the assessment outcome, including issuing the appropriate documentation
- liaising directly with you in response to enquiries, acknowledging your application/fees paid, managing the review process and compliant handling.

1.9 APPLICANT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

You must:

- accurately and honestly complete the required skills assessment application and declaration forms issued to you by the RTO conducting your skills assessment
- provide valid, authentic, current evidence to the RTO in a timely manner to enable them to conduct your assessment
- participate in the assessment as advised by the RTO
- pay all program fees to the RTO
- have lodged, or intend to lodge, an application with DIAC for permanent residency.

1.10 USE OF MIGRATION AGENTS FOR OFFSHORE SKILLS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM APPLICANTS

You are not required to nominate a migration agent or representative for the Offshore Skills Assessment Program.

However, if you choose to nominate an agent to act on your behalf during the skills assessment process, you must notify your chosen RTO. The RTO you choose to conduct your assessment cannot write or speak to another person on your behalf regarding your skills assessment without your written approval.

You are required to provide your chosen RTO with a signed form nominating an agent. This form will be available on their website. It must be completed and submitted to your chosen RTO each time you appoint/change a migration agent. Information provided on these forms will replace any previous migration agent details held by the RTO.

DIAC provides advice about the use of migration agents in Australia. Visit www.immi.gov.au/visas/migration-agents/ for more information.

1.11 PRIVACY

All personal information collected by TRA and RTOs approved by TRA is protected by the *Privacy Act 1988*. Section 14 of the Privacy Act contains the Information Privacy Principles (IPPs), which prescribe the rules for handling personal information.

The Privacy Act defines ‘personal information’ as ‘information or an opinion (including information or an opinion forming part of a database), whether true or not, and whether recorded in a material form or not, about an individual whose identity is apparent, or can reasonably be ascertained, from the information or opinion’.

More information about the Privacy Act, including a copy of the full text of the IPPs, can be obtained from the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner’s website at www.oaic.gov.au/.

TRA and RTOs approved by TRA collect personal information from you for:

- processing applications, verifying evidence provided with applications and assessing whether you have suitable skills in a nominated occupation
- conducting investigations and ensuring compliance with relevant laws, awards or standards
- ensuring compliance with the Commonwealth Fraud Control Guidelines (2002).

TRA may give some or all of the information it collects to DIAC, state registering and regulating bodies and other agencies or individuals for the above purposes.

TRA approved RTOs are required to prepare and maintain a privacy notice on their website to advise you that TRA may share personal details about you with other government agencies. RTOs approved by TRA are required to provide this notice to you at the time of collecting your personal information if they collect your personal information in any manner other than via their website.

You are responsible for ensuring the accuracy and validity of all information provided to TRA and TRA approved RTOs.

Complaints about breaches of privacy should be referred to:

Privacy Contact Officer
Legal and Investigations Group
DEEWR
Location Code: C148CW2
GPO Box 9880
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Privacy complaints can also be made directly to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner.

1.12 FALSE OR MISLEADING INFORMATION

TRA approved RTOs will take reasonable steps to verify the validity of information you supply throughout the skills assessment process.

You are responsible for ensuring the accuracy and validity of all information provided to the RTO you choose to conduct your assessment.

If a TRA approved RTO determines that information previously supplied is false, misleading, non-factual or incorrect and that, by relying on that information, you have been incorrectly assessed as successful, TRA may write to you to advise that the assessment is no longer successful.

If your successful outcome is overturned, TRA will notify DIAC of this change.

TRA may refer matters to the appropriate authorities for investigation where information that has been provided to support an application is known or believed to be false.

NOTE: Penalties apply under the *Crimes Act 1914* and the *Criminal Code Act 1995* may apply for making false or misleading statements and providing false or misleading information or documents.

1.13 CERTIFICATION OF DOCUMENTATION

TRA approved RTOs must be able to verify the content of all documents that you provide.

Original documents must not be sent to a TRA approved RTO. All documentation in support of your application must be certified copies of the original documents.

A certified copy is a true copy of an original document that has been sighted and certified by an acceptable person and annotated as follows:

I certify that I have sighted the original document and this is a true copy.

This certification must be made on a copy of the original documentation and include the certifier's name, title, registration number (where applicable) and their original signature and date. Copies of signatures are not acceptable.

If a document has multiple pages, the first page must include the signature of the certifier, the date and the total number of pages of the document. The certifier must initial and date every page in the document.

Documents must be certified by people who are listed in Schedule 2 of the Statutory Declarations Regulations 1993, available through the Australian Government's [Attorney-General's Department website \(www.ag.gov.au\)](http://www.ag.gov.au) or by a registered migration agent.

1.14 EMPLOYMENT STATEMENTS

All statements provided to a TRA approved RTO that relate to your employment or work experience must be signed by your employer or an employee of the employer who is authorised and capable of making the statements, such as a direct supervisor.

Every employment statement provided to a TRA approved RTO must include:

- start and end dates of employment
- the address at which you worked
- normal hours of work
- the nature of employment (full time, part time)
- your job title (occupation)
- a detailed description of the tasks you undertook, along with the machines, tools or equipment used
- the name of the person authorised to make the statement and their contact details.

All employer statements must be on letterhead used by the employer's business.

The person signing the statement must clearly indicate their name, position, contact details and length of time they have been your supervisor.

TRA approved RTOs may contact an employer to verify information provided in an employer statement. They require a contact telephone number for every person who supplies an employment statement for you. A mobile telephone number will not be sufficient as a primary contact number unless the TRA approved RTO can independently verify that the mobile telephone number is linked to the organisation where you were employed.

All employment statements must be certified copies in accordance with [Section 1.13](#) above.

SECTION 2: OFFSHORE SKILLS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND PROCESSES

2.1 PURPOSE OF THE OFFSHORE SKILLS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

An offshore skills assessment is undertaken for the purpose of applying for a permanent residency visa.

You are advised to check with DIAC before submitting an application to ensure that you have identified the appropriate visa pathway for your circumstances and that TRA is the correct assessing authority for your nominated occupation. See www.immi.gov.au/asri.

If you are also seeking Migration Points Test Advice, your TRA approved RTO will be able to assist. More information can be found on their websites. See [Section 3](#) for website and other contact details.

2.2 ELIGIBILITY FOR THE OFFSHORE SKILLS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

To apply for an Offshore Program skills assessment, at the application stage you must provide documentation to show:

- you hold a passport from one of the nominated countries (see [Section 1.2](#))
and
- you are applying for a nominated occupation (see [Section 1.2](#))

2.3 OFFSHORE SKILLS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM PROCESS

You must adhere to the following process to meet the standards set by TRA under the Offshore Skills Assessment Program.

A. Pathway 1: Applicants who do not have a relevant Australian qualification

Step 1: Self-evaluate

You must complete a self-evaluation of your skills, knowledge and experience in your nominated occupation using the self-evaluation tool TradeSET to determine if you have the required skills for work in Australia.

TradeSET can be accessed via www.tradeset.com.au.

Step 2: Choose a TRA approved RTO

You are required to locate and select an RTO to conduct your skills assessment. A list of TRA approved RTOs can be found at [Section 1.2](#).

For a skills assessment to meet DIAC requirements you may use only a TRA approved RTO.

Step 3: Submit your documentary evidence

You must submit documentary evidence of your identity, skills and experience to a TRA approved RTO for assessment. The RTO you choose will tell you what documentation they will require you to send.

Documentation may include:

- recent photographs—passport-sized, certified and dated
- relevant passport pages—certified copy (must show name, photo and date of birth)
- evidence of skills and experience, including but not limited to training documents, evidence of employment and employment statements
- certified English translation of any documents you send, if originally issued in a language other than English, compiled by a registered translation service
- your assessment fee.

If the evidence you provide indicates that you have the necessary skills and experience relevant to your nominated occupation, you will be invited to participate in a technical assessment with an RTO assessor.

If your documentary evidence does not sufficiently demonstrate your skills and experience relevant to the nominated occupation, the RTO will advise you of gaps identified.

Step 4: Technical assessment

You will be required to participate in an assessment of your skills and knowledge. The assessor conducting the assessment will be a qualified Australian tradesperson from your trade and a qualified assessor.

The assessor will focus on collecting evidence to determine if you meet the requirements of the relevant Australian **Training Package** qualification. This may involve a technical interview, a practical demonstration of your skills and/or gathering evidence from third parties (e.g. your employers or other referees you nominate).

The RTO you select will discuss the assessment requirements with you prior to conducting the assessment.

All technical assessments must be conducted in English. Interpreters are not permitted.

Step 5: Receive TRA approved RTO assessment outcome

The TRA approved RTO will issue documentation to you notifying you of the outcome of your assessment.

- If successful, you will receive a letter to satisfy the skills assessment requirement for a permanent residency visa application with DIAC. You will also be awarded the relevant Australian trade qualification, except in certain licensed trades such as Airconditioning and Refrigeration Mechanic, Electrician (General), Electrician (Special Class) and Plumber (General). In these trades, further gap training will be required once you arrive in Australia, so you can obtain Australian specific knowledge such as occupational health and safety regulations, codes of practice and other Australian standards. Your TRA approved RTO will provide you with more detail on these requirements.
- If unsuccessful, the RTO will advise you of gaps identified in your skills and experience.

B. Pathway 2: Applicants who hold a relevant Australian qualification

Step 1: Choose a TRA approved RTO

You are required to locate and select an RTO to conduct your skills assessment. A list of TRA approved RTOs can be found at [Section 1.2](#).

For a skills assessment to meet DIAC requirements you may use only a TRA approved RTO. The TRA approved RTO that you choose must not be the RTO that issued your qualification.

Step 2: Submit documentary evidence for assessment

You must submit documentary evidence of your skills, employment experience and Australian qualification to a TRA approved RTO for assessment. The RTO you choose will tell you what documentation they will require you to send.

You will need to demonstrate at least three years full-time paid employment in a relevant and directly related trade, including 12 months full-time paid employment in the nominated trade in the two years prior to lodging your application.

If the evidence you provide indicates that you have the necessary skills and experience relevant to your nominated occupation you will be invited to participate in an assessment with an RTO assessor.

If your documentary evidence does not sufficiently demonstrate your skills and experience relevant to the nominated occupation, the RTO will advise you of gaps identified.

Step 3: Technical Assessment

The assessment will involve you meeting with a qualified assessor from the RTO. The assessor will be a qualified Australian tradesperson from your trade and a qualified assessor. They will focus on collected evidence, in particular your employment history and skills and knowledge, to determine whether you meet the requirements of a skilled tradesperson in Australia.

The assessment may involve a technical interview and gathering evidence from third parties (e.g. your employers or other referees you nominate).

The RTO you select will discuss the assessment requirements with you.

All technical interviews will be conducted in English. Interpreters are not permitted.

Step 4: Receive TRA approved RTO assessment outcome

The TRA approved RTO will issue documentation to you notifying you of the outcome of your assessment.

- If successful, this documentation will satisfy the skills assessment requirement for a permanent residency visa application with DIAC.
- If unsuccessful, the RTO will advise you of gaps identified in your skills and experience.

2.4 OFFSHORE SKILLS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM OUTCOME

You will be found to have met the standards set by TRA under the Offshore Skills Assessment Program if:

- you have followed the process outlined in [Section 2.3](#) above for either Pathway 1 or Pathway 2
- you successfully meet all requirements of the TRA Approved RTO that form part of any technical process
- all evidence you have provided can be verified to the satisfaction of the TRA approved RTO and meets the requirements of the TRA approved RTO for a successful skills assessment.

You will be found not to have met the standards set by TRA under the Offshore Skills Assessment Program if:

- the documentary evidence you provide to the TRA approved RTO is not relevant to your nominated occupation
- the documentary evidence you provide contains insufficient detail for the TRA approved RTO to be satisfied that you meet the Offshore Skills Assessment Program requirements
- the documentation is found to contain false or misleading information or
- you fail to meet the requirements of the TRA approved RTO that form any part of the technical process.

2.5 OFFSHORE SKILLS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM REVIEWS

If you do not agree with an assessment outcome you can lodge an application for a **review** with the TRA approved RTO. Refer to the website of the RTO that conducted your assessment for details about how to apply and the costs involved.

The review fee will be refunded if the review overturns the original outcome based solely on the documentation provided in the original application. If new documentation was considered necessary to overturn the original assessment outcome, the review fee is not refundable.

2.6 OFFSHORE SKILLS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM TIMELINE

The RTO you choose to conduct your assessment will tell you how long the assessment process will take.

SECTION 3: CONTACT DETAILS

3.1 LOCATE A REGISTERED TRAINING ORGANISATION TO CONDUCT A SKILLS ASSESSMENT

Contact Victoria University and/or VETASSESS.

VETASSESS

Phone:

+61 3 9655 4801

Email:

tradeassess@vetassess.com.au

Web:

www.workassess.com.au

Post:

VETASSESS
GPO Box 2752
Melbourne Victoria 8001
Australia

Victoria University

Phone:

+61 3 9919 7365

Email:

GSM@vu.edu.au

Web:

www.vu.edu.au/GSM

Post:

Victoria University
PO Box 14428
Melbourne Victoria 8001
Australia

3.2 GENERAL ENQUIRIES ABOUT THE OFFSHORE SKILLS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Contact Trades Recognition Australia.

Phone:

Monday to Friday: 10.00 am–12.00 pm and 1.00 pm–4.00 pm
Australian Eastern Standard Time, excluding public holidays (GMT +10 hours)

Outside Australia: +61 2 6121 7456

Within Australia: 1300 360 992

Email

traenquiries@deewr.gov.au

Fax

+61 2 6276 9812

Web

www.deewr.gov.au/tra

Post

Trades Recognition Australia
GPO Box 9880
Canberra ACT 2601
Australia

SECTION 4: GLOSSARY

Term used in Guidelines	Definition
Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)	The Australian Government agency providing national leadership in education and workplace training, transition to work, and conditions and values in the workplace. Trades Recognition Australia is a branch within DEEWR.
Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC)	<p>DIAC's key objectives are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> manage the lawful and orderly entry and stay of people in Australia, including through effective border security promote a society which values Australian citizenship, appreciate cultural diversity and enables migrants to participate equitably. <p>DIAC has responsibility for administering the <i>Migration Act 1958</i> and associated Regulations.</p> <p>DIAC works in conjunction with DEEWR to deliver skilled trades/technical people and professionals to Australia through the skilled migration program.</p>
nominated country	One of the countries listed at Section 1.2 of these guidelines.
nominated occupation	One of the occupations listed at Section 1.2 of these guidelines.
qualification	A trade qualification awarded under the Australian Qualifications Framework.
review	A request to re-examine an application when the applicant does not agree with an assessment outcome.
skills assessment	The process of collecting evidence and making judgments on whether an individual can perform to the standard expected in an Australian workplace.
Trades Recognition Australia (TRA)	TRA manages skills assessments for people with trade skills who want to apply to DIAC for permanent and temporary skilled migration to Australia. TRA also does skills assessment for people seeking an Australian Recognised Trade Certificate.
TRA approved Registered Training Organisation (TRA approved RTO)	A registered training organisation approved by TRA to deliver skills assessments for the Offshore Skills Assessment Program. TRA approved RTOs are registered to deliver training and/or conduct assessments and issue nationally recognised qualifications in accordance with the Australian Quality Training Framework.
training package	A set of nationally endorsed standards and qualifications developed by industry to ensure quality training outcomes and to meet current and emerging vocational skill needs.

SECTION 5: ACRONYMS

ACRONYM	MEANING
ANZSCO	Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations
AQTF	Australian Quality Training Framework
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
DIAC	Department of Immigration and Citizenship
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
TRA	Trades Recognition Australia