



Department of Immigration and Citizenship

Information for international students graduating from nursing courses in Melbourne, July 2010

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship runs a skilled General Skilled Migration (GSM) program for a range of occupations, including nurses. To be eligible to apply for a GSM visa, you must have your skills assessed as being suitable for your occupation by the relevant assessing authority. The process for skills assessments for nurses is:

1. Obtain your nursing registration from the Australian Health Practitioner Registration Agency (AHPRA). Further information on the requirements for registration is available on the AHPRA web site at: <http://www.ahpra.gov.au/Registration/Registration-Process.aspx>
2. Once registered with AHPRA, to apply for GSM (including a temporary subclass 485 visa) you must:
 - i. Apply to the Australian Nursing & Midwifery Council (ANMC) to have your skills assessed. Before applying for a skills assessment, you must be registered with the AHPRA. Further information on how to apply for a skills assessment is available on the ANMC website at: http://www.anmc.org.au/migration_skills_assessment
 - ii. Provided you meet all the other requirements for applying for the temporary Subclass 485 Skilled Graduate visa, once ANMC has issued a file number, you can apply for a Subclass 485 visa.
 - iii. Once you receive a positive skills assessment from the ANMC, you will be able to apply for a permanent GSM visa, provided that you meet all the other requirements of the visa you are applying for.

What if I am unable to meet the requirements for registration with AHPRA before my student visa expires?

Please note that DIAC does not register nurses or assess their skills. Each registration authority and assessing authority body is autonomous and responsible for setting its own standards. DIAC accepts the standards set by AHPRA and ANMC as those required for a person working as a nurse in Australia. If you cannot meet these standards, DIAC cannot recognise you as skilled for visa purposes.

DIAC recognises that some international students graduating from nursing courses are concerned that due to changes in the processing arrangements for the registration of nurses, there will not be time for their nursing registration to be processed before their student visa expires. Given this concern, the Department has in this instance decided to put in place arrangements as a last resort for this group.

- International students graduating as nurses can apply for a visitor visa to allow them to remain in Australia to complete registration formalities. This visa allows up to three months stay.

Students must bear in mind that to meet the requirements to apply for an onshore permanent GSM visa or the temporary Skilled Graduate visa international students **must** lodge their application **within 6 months** of completing their studies. This is a legislative requirement that DIAC has no capacity to extend.

If you cannot meet the requirements for registration, you may also choose to depart Australia when your student visa expires and apply for an offshore GSM once you receive registration with AHPRA. Please note that to meet the requirements for an offshore GSM visa, you must either:

- lodge their application within 6 months of completing their studies or
- work as a nurse for at least 12 months in a 2 year period immediately before lodging their application.

If you return to your home country, you may be eligible to be sponsored for migration to Australia by an employer once you receive your registration.

Please note that these arrangements **do not** change the requirements for registration with the AHPRA or for obtaining a skills assessment from ANMC. Rather, they allow nursing graduates to remain in Australia on a visitor visa for a short period of time to give them the opportunity for their registration to be processed.