



## VISA ALERT

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### CHANGES TO THE GENERAL SKILLED MIGRATION PROGRAM

**:: TIP**

If approached by staff affected by the GSM changes, consider having their eligibility for prioritised permanent residence assessed under the employer nomination scheme or sponsorship by a State/Territory government

The Minister for Immigration and Citizenship has announced changes to the General Skilled Migration (GSM) program to ensure it is more responsive to the needs of Australian industry and employers.

Changes announced on 8 February 2010 include:

- immediate revocation of the existing Migration Occupations in Demand List (MODL) and replacement with a Transitional MODL for *onshore* GSM applicants only
- capping and ceasing the number of *offshore* GSM visas lodged before 1 September 2007 - application fees will be refunded
- introduction of a new and more targeted Skilled Occupations List (SOL) in mid-2010
- a review of the points test used to assess GSM applicants - this will result in further changes to the GSM program later in 2010.

Implications of the changes:

- persons now not eligible for GSM, including students in Australia undertaking tertiary education and Vocational Education Training, will need to focus on gaining skills as well as work experience and then consider obtaining permanent residence under either the Employer Nomination Scheme or State/Territory Nominated pathways
- Skilled Graduate subclass 485 visas applicants and 485 visa holders as at 8 February 2010 must apply for GSM *before* 31 December 2012.

Please contact us to enquire whether any of the recent changes affect the eligibility of your current or prospective employees for GSM.

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