

PRESS RELEASE
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For Immediate Release

Changes in Migration Cause Employment Difficulties

The Government's much-publicised crackdown on skilled migration came into effect on July 1 with the number of eligible occupations slashed from more than 400 to 181.

Federal Immigration Minister Chris Evans predicts 20,000 overseas skilled migration applications will be cancelled and refunded at a cost of \$14 million to tax payers, but Australia's large number of international students will especially feel the brunt of these tough new immigration laws.

The new list is focused on targeting specialised occupations that require a long lead time of formal education and training.

Those studying engineering, medical, education and high end professional, associate-professional and trade occupations will benefit from the new Skilled Occupations List (SOL), while generalist arts and science students including marketing, public relations, biologists and physicists will be left in limbo.

These students can apply for a temporary graduate visa that will keep them in the country for at least 18 months, but without an employer or State or Territory Government that is willing to sponsor them, the extra timeframe will offer little in achieving permanent residency.

Australian Migration Lawyers' Director, Peter Kuek-Kong Lee, says Australia's workforce may benefit from the 'sharper' skills intake, but many students 'were sold' on studying an eligible degree in Australia so that they can apply for skilled migration upon completion.

"The real selling point for Australia was our education system, and we've brought all these people across only for them now to be locked out of the system," says Lee.

"Many students have chosen Australia ahead of other countries like the UK, Canada and USA to complete their qualifications here because they wanted to settle in Australia. This opportunity will now not be available to them under Australia's skilled migration program."

Lee, who spent nearly 25 years as an immigration officer in the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, says whether the new laws are positive for Australia 'depends on who you talk to.'

"The migration industry is concerned that the number of skilled migrants will significantly drop," he says, "and the education sector is also adversely affected. For instance, Mackintosh College in the Gold Coast has had to shut down, and this is likely to be the trend right across the education sector."

"(But) the government is arguing that the targeted list of skilled occupations, developed in conjunction with *Skills Australia*, is necessary to meet with the needs of an emerging Australian economy, as it aims for a labour market demand-driven skilled migration program."

"What they are trying to do is really sharpen the skills coming into the country and ensuring that they are relevant to the economy. The government believes that this is the right move for Australia."

In addition to his migration experience, Peter has also been lecturing in migration law at the Australian National University and Griffith University.

Peter's background makes him a key figure in **australian migration lawyers**. **aml** has successfully helped people of all ages and backgrounds to migrate to Australia and is skilled and knowledgeable in every aspect of Australian migration.

aml's longstanding relationships with reputable companies and businesses, including relocation experts, banks, foreign exchange dealers, accountants, real estate

and business brokers, make them the first choice to assist you through the entire migration process.

If you are interested in finding out more about **aml**, or wish to talk to Peter Kuek-Kong Lee, contact the team anytime and visit the website www.migrationlawyers.com.au or call us on 07 3229 6099 (Brisbane) or 07 5597 8888 (Gold Coast).

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