



Your essential guide to Australian and New Zealand Visa Applications

Here at VisaAide, we have unique insights into both the New Zealand and Australian immigration systems and have built a reputation amongst our clients of combining professional advice with great service.

With a combined total of over 35 years of industry experience, whether you are wanting to live, work, study or visit, **VisaAide** has the knowledge to guide you through the process.

Firstly, here are some important things to know before lodging an application:

Be Honest - incorrect or misleading answers in an application now, can mean heartache for you in the future. We find this especially relevant to declaring relationships, convictions, and other character related issues such as having been refused previous visas, deportations, etc.

The immigration system is based on the honesty of its users and immigration authorities will clamp down hard on dishonesty in order to protect the integrity of the immigration system.

Seek Advice – even if you feel confident that your application will be successful, have a chat with an experienced immigration consultant first. Also, if you have complications in your application, or you are unsure whether you really know what you are doing, we strongly suggest that you have an immigration consultant represent your application. This may save your time, and potentially a lot of money.

Temporary means temporary – if you hold a temporary visa, do not make any permanent arrangements to live in the country. There are never any guarantees that you will be approved a residence visa, especially as immigration rules are ever changing.

Plan ahead – if you do intend on applying for a temporary visa first, then apply for residency later, take a look at your chances of gaining residency before you do anything. Are you eligible or not? What are your options? Is it reliant on an offer of employment or sponsorship? This way you can make informed choices that keep you on track.

Stay connected – listen out for changes in immigration policy. This is a must given the speed at which immigration policy can change.

Australian Visa Applications

The Australian Immigration system is one of the most complex in the world - made more difficult by the fact that it is not easy to make direct contact.

Here are some of the common Australian visa applications:

Australian Transit Visa

To allow you a maximum of 72hours to travel through Australia onto a third country normally on the next available flight.

Tip: Not to be used as a Visitor visa.

Australian Visitor Visa - Tourism

Normally allows a stay of 3, 6, or 12months for tourism purposes. Can allow multiple entries over 1 or 2 years. You can either apply online or make a paper based application.

Tip: Be wary of using a tourism visa as a way of remaining in Australia while you are awaiting the outcome of another application you have lodged outside as the Department of Home Affairs are reluctant to approve visas in this scenario. If you are in this situation, it's best to speak to one of our consultants before making any plans.

Australian Visitor Visa - Business

Similar to the Tourism visa but allows travel for business visitor activities.

Business visitor activities include:

- making general business or employment enquiries
- investigating, negotiating, signing or reviewing a business contract
- activities carried out as part of an official government-to-government visit
- participating in trade fairs, seminars or conferences, as long as you are not being paid by the organisers for your participation.

Tip: This visa does not allow you to work in Australia.

Australian Temporary Work Visa (subclass 400)

This visa is for people who need to travel to Australia to do short-term, highly specialised & non-ongoing work OR participate in an activity/work relating to Australia's interests. This is usually by special invitation or arrangement for a maximum of up to 6 months.

Tip: Normally not to be used in order to enter Australia while awaiting a decision or planning on lodging a subclass 482 work visa application.

Australian Temporary Activity visa (subclass 408)

This visa is for people who need to travel to Australia on a temporary basis to undertake activities such as an Australian research project; Youth exchange programme; work in the entertainment industry; Cultural enrichment; on invitation by an Australian organisation; full time religious work; staff exchange arrangement; superyacht crew member; high-level sports competition or training; some instances of domestic work; government endorsed events.

Tip: This visa covers a lot of situations that the 600 and 400 do not.

Australian Temporary Skill Shortage Visa (subclass 482), referred to as the TSS visa

This is Australian work visa which can allow a 2-4 year stay. In most cases, the employer would need to show that there is a genuine need to employ an overseas worker. The employer would also need to be a registered sponsor. Requires a minimum of two years relevant work experience and your occupation would need to be listed on the relevant skilled occupation list. There are three steps – sponsorship registration, nomination and the 482 application.

Tip: This can be quite a complex, costly and time-consuming visa application in most cases. We highly recommend that clients engage the services of a registered migration agent.

Australian Student Visa (subclass 500)

This visa requires you to first have a confirmation of enrolment from a CRICOS registered education provider.

You may need to provide evidence of your English ability and evidence you can support yourself financially while in Australia.

Tip: The genuine temporary entrant criteria can be tricky. There seems to be a really "pull-push" situation going on with international students. On one hand, Australia wants to attract and retain skilled graduates. On the other hand, they want students who are studying lower qualifications and who have little chance of meeting the skilled migration categories, to return to their home country after their studies. Therefore, the assessments of GTE criteria can seem inconsistent at times.

Check your ability to gain a graduate work visa and look into whether your studies would assist you in your migration goals, if applicable.

Australian Visa For New Zealand Citizens (444 Special Category Visa)

A temporary resident visa that can allow a NZ citizen to live and work in Australia indefinitely.

Tip – convictions, serious health issues, previous deportations or refusal of entry to other countries could prevent you from obtaining this visa. If you have concerns, check with us before travelling.

This visa does not automatically lead you to residency. You may also not be eligible for certain social benefits while in Australia.

Family Connection Visas For Australia

461 New Zealand Citizen Family Relationship (Temporary)

In our mind, this is probably the best visa product Australia has on offer.

It's temporary resident visa that is based on a relationship with a NZ citizen. Normally for partners and dependent children. The visa can be valid for up to 5 years, allows multiple travel and you can live and work in Australia. You can also extend this visa.

Tip: Processing times can be lengthy so plan ahead.

Subclass 309/100 Partner (Temporary and Permanent)

A relationship-based visa where an Australian citizen, permanent resident, or eligible NZ citizen is the sponsor. The 309 is a temporary visa for two years. The application is then re-assessed for the 100 permanent resident visa.

Tip – check with us that your NZ citizen partner is in fact an eligible NZ citizen. Processing times can be lengthy. It is also a relatively expensive visa option.

Skilled Permanent Residence Australia

Subclass 189 Independent

A point based permanent residence visa based on your skills and work experience. No employer or sponsorship is required. Occupation must be on the skilled occupation list. A skills assessment and English test may be required.

Tip – a great option for those struggling to find an offer of employment or do not wish to be tied to an employer.

190 State/Territory Nominated

Same as the 189 but gives an extra 5 points for being state sponsored. Normally, you must live and work in the sponsoring state for at least 2 years.

186 Employer Sponsored

This visa is based on the sponsorship of an Australian company who is a registered sponsor.

Tip - A good option if you are short on points for the point tested visas.

Australia has many, many more visa options.

Other Australian Visa Application Tips

Criminal convictions

If you have had any criminal conviction in any country, please contact us before doing anything.

Your passport

Australian visas are electronically linked to your passport. Therefore, you should travel on the same passport as you have used for your application. Please contact us if you obtain a new passport and want your visa transferred. We recommend that your passport be valid for at least six months.

If you already hold another Australian visa

You can only hold one Australian visa at a time. If you already have an existing visa and apply for another one, if the new visa is approved it will replace your existing visa.

This is especially important to holders of Working Holiday visas who do not want to activate their visa when they travel into Australia for a holiday, or holders of Australian residency who need a visa before they re-enter Australia.

Tip: Normally not to be used in order to enter Australia while awaiting a decision or planning on lodging a subclass 482 work visa application.

Health insurance

You are responsible for all your health costs while you are in Australia on a temporary visa. You will not be covered by Australia's national health scheme (Medicare) unless your country has a reciprocal health care agreement with Australia.

Tip: The genuine temporary entrant criteria can be tricky. There seems to be a really "pull-push" situation going on with international students. On one hand, Australia wants to attract and retain skilled graduates. On the other hand, they want students who are studying lower qualifications and who have little chance of meeting the skilled migration categories, to return to their home country after their studies. Therefore, the assessments of GTE criteria can seem inconsistent at times.

Check your ability to gain a graduate work visa and look into whether your studies would assist you in your migration goals, if applicable.

New Zealand Visa Applications

New Zealand Visitor Visa

There are many situations where a visitor visa can be appropriate such as for tourism, business, short-term study, etc. Can allow a stay of up to 9 months and can allow multiple travel. You can also obtain a visitor visa if you are dependent on an eligible New Zealand visa holder in some circumstances.

Tip – You can normally only spend 9 months as a visitor in New Zealand in any 18-month period.

This visa may also allow someone to join their partner in New Zealand in order to meet the "living together" instructions for a partnership-based visa. However, please contact us before going ahead with such an application.

New Zealand Student Visa

You would first need to obtain an offer of place from a New Zealand registered education provider who are signatories to the Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016. You may need to meet English and financial instructions.

Tip - You may also be eligible for a student visa if you are dependent of an eligible New Zealand visa holder which may not require you to meet English, financial or have an offer of place.

New Zealand Partnership Based Temporary Visas – Work and Visitor

Based on a relationship with a New Zealand citizen, resident or eligible New Zealand visa holders. Requires you to show that you have been living in a genuine and stable relationship. Has a relatively efficient processing time of around 4 to 6 weeks.

Tip - There is no set time frame that you have to have been living together but we would strongly advise that it is for at least 6-12 months in most cases.

New Zealand Employer Supported Work Visa

Essential Skills is the most common New Zealand work visa. It requires an offer of employment from a NZ employer. May require the employer to prove that there is no suitable New Zealand citizen or resident available to fill the position or to be trained.

Processing time is normally around 4-6 weeks.

Tip – Ensure that you are suitably skilled to do the work being offered by referring to the relevant ANZSCO code.

New Zealand Work to Residence Visa

Most commonly used where the employer is an "Accredited Employer". You must be under 55 years of age, earn at least NZ\$55,000 per year, have permanent employment or for at least two years, and work in the company's core business activities. After holding this visa for two years, you may then be eligible to apply for a Residence from Work visa which is a fairly straight forward process compared with applying for residence under the Skilled Migrant Category.

Tip – Be wary of the Long Term Skill Shortage List (LTSSL) Work to Residence visa as it can be tricky to meet the criteria specified in the LTSSL.

New Zealand Specific Purpose Visa

This work visa allows people to come to NZ for a range of reasons – to play sports, install equipment, take up inter-company transfer positions, and many more. It is a very flexible work visa.

New Zealand Partnership Residence Visa

Based on a relationship with a NZ citizen or Resident. You must demonstrate that you have been living together in a genuine and stable relationship for at least 12 months.

The application can be made online. Processing times are around 4-6 months.

New Zealand Skilled Migrant Category Visa

The most common residence option for skilled workers. You will most likely require an offer of employment but in some cases, it is possible to meet the criteria without an offer of employment.

You will need to meet English, the points criteria, and then make an Expression of Interest. If you are invited to apply for a residence visa, you will then need to meet health and character and provide your supporting information.

Processing would normally take around 6 months.

Common issues with this visa is the assessment of whether your employment matches the ANZSCO code you have chosen.

We highly recommend that you have a licenced immigration adviser guide you through this application.

