



### Are you looking for a job in Australia?

The *Australian Labour Market Update* provides information on the Australian labour market on a quarterly basis. It is intended to help people who may be interested in working in Australia on a temporary or permanent basis.

Further information on job prospects, earnings and related information is available online at Australian Jobs 2008, available through [www.workplace.gov.au](http://www.workplace.gov.au).

*Unless otherwise stated, data are from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Labour Force Survey, May 2009.*

## EMPLOYMENT

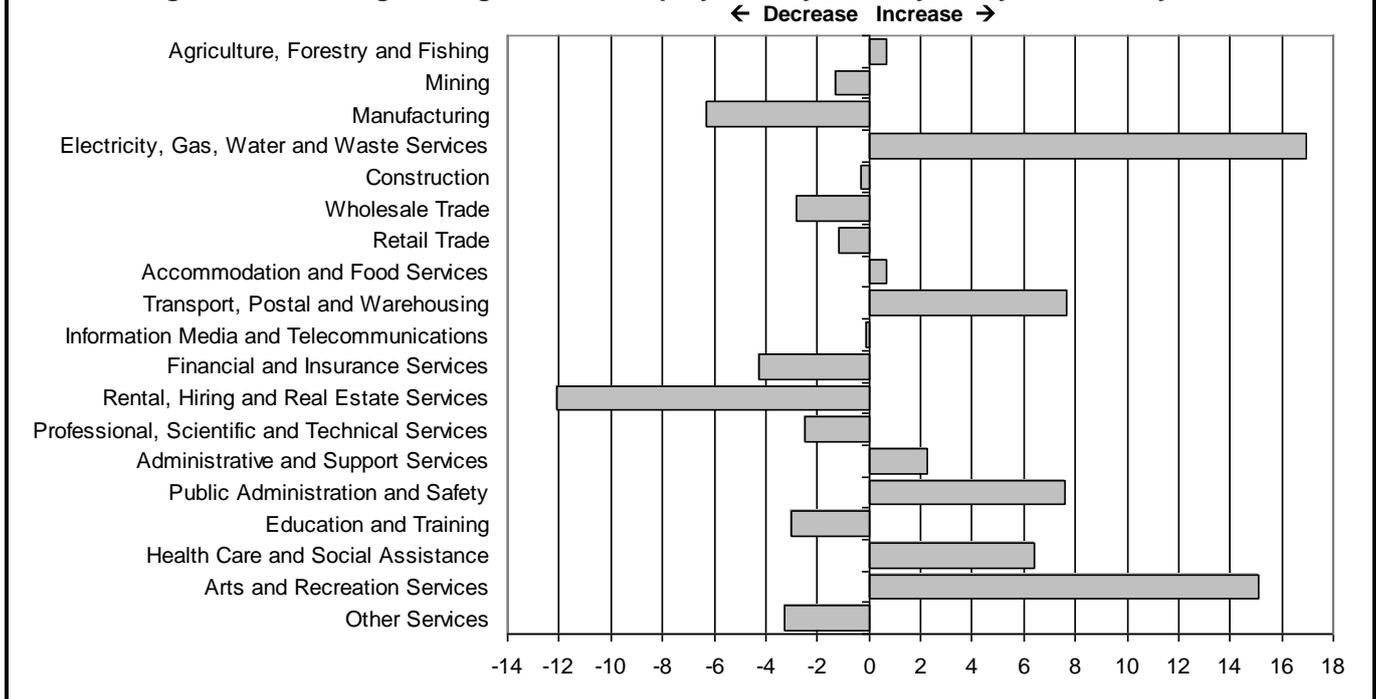
Trend employment growth in Australia was essentially flat over the 12 months to May 2009 (compared with robust growth of 2.5 per cent in the previous year) and has fallen from its peak of 28 900 jobs per month in December 2007. The recent decline in the rate of economic growth, together with deterioration in a number of forward indicators of labour market activity, suggests that the pace of employment growth will continue to slow over 2009, putting upward pressure on the unemployment rate over the period ahead.

According to the Australian Government's May 2009 Budget forecasts, employment is expected to contract by 1½ per cent in 2009-10, before increasing by just ½ per cent in 2010-11. Against this background, the unemployment rate is forecast to increase to 8¼ per cent by the June quarter 2010, before rising to 8½ per cent by the June quarter 2011. Global conditions, however, have stabilised somewhat since the release of the May 2009 Budget, while the domestic economy and labour market, though still tepid, have held up better than expected. Accordingly, there remains some downside risk to the unemployment forecasts.

Over the 12 months to May 2009, employment (in trend terms) decreased in a few States and Territories with employment growth only occurring in the Northern Territory (6.7%), Western Australia (1.9%), Queensland (1.5%) and South Australia (0.9%).

Employment opportunities and growth varied across industries. Over the 12 months to May 2009 the largest increases in trend employment occurred in Health Care and Social Assistance (up 70 400), Public Administration and Safety (up 48 300), Transport, Postal and Warehousing (up 42 800) and Arts and Recreation Services (up 27 800). The strongest rates of employment growth were in Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services (16.9%), Arts and Recreation Services (15.1%), Public Administration and Safety (7.6%) and Transport, Postal and Warehousing (7.6%). Employment growth rates by industry are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Percentage change in trend employment by industry – May 2008 to May 2009



Source: ABS, *Australian Labour Market Statistics, May 2009*, ABS Cat. No. 6105.0  
ISSN 1833-413X.

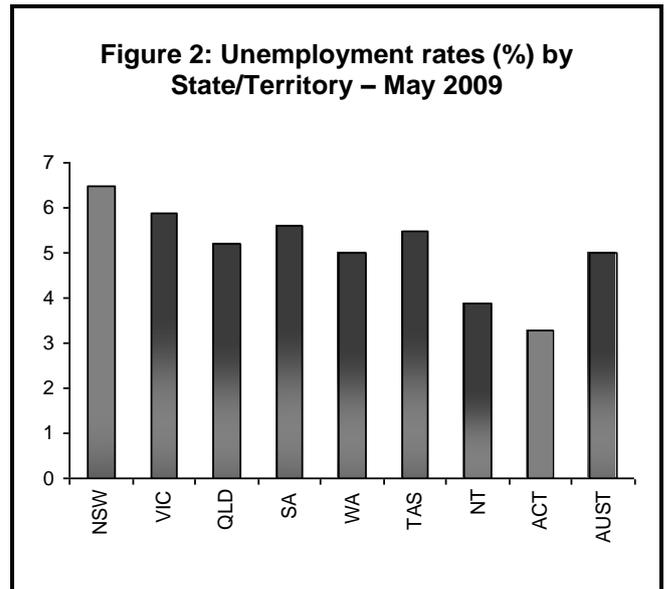
## UNEMPLOYMENT

The trend rate of unemployment was 5.7% in May 2009 compared with 4.2% in May 2008.

In the past year, trend unemployment rates have increased in all States and Territories with New South Wales (NSW) showing the most significant increase (1.9%) and the Northern Territory the smallest (0.5%).

In May 2009 the trend unemployment rate was highest in NSW (6.5%) and Victoria (5.9%) and lowest in the Australian Capital Territory (3.3%). See Figure 2.

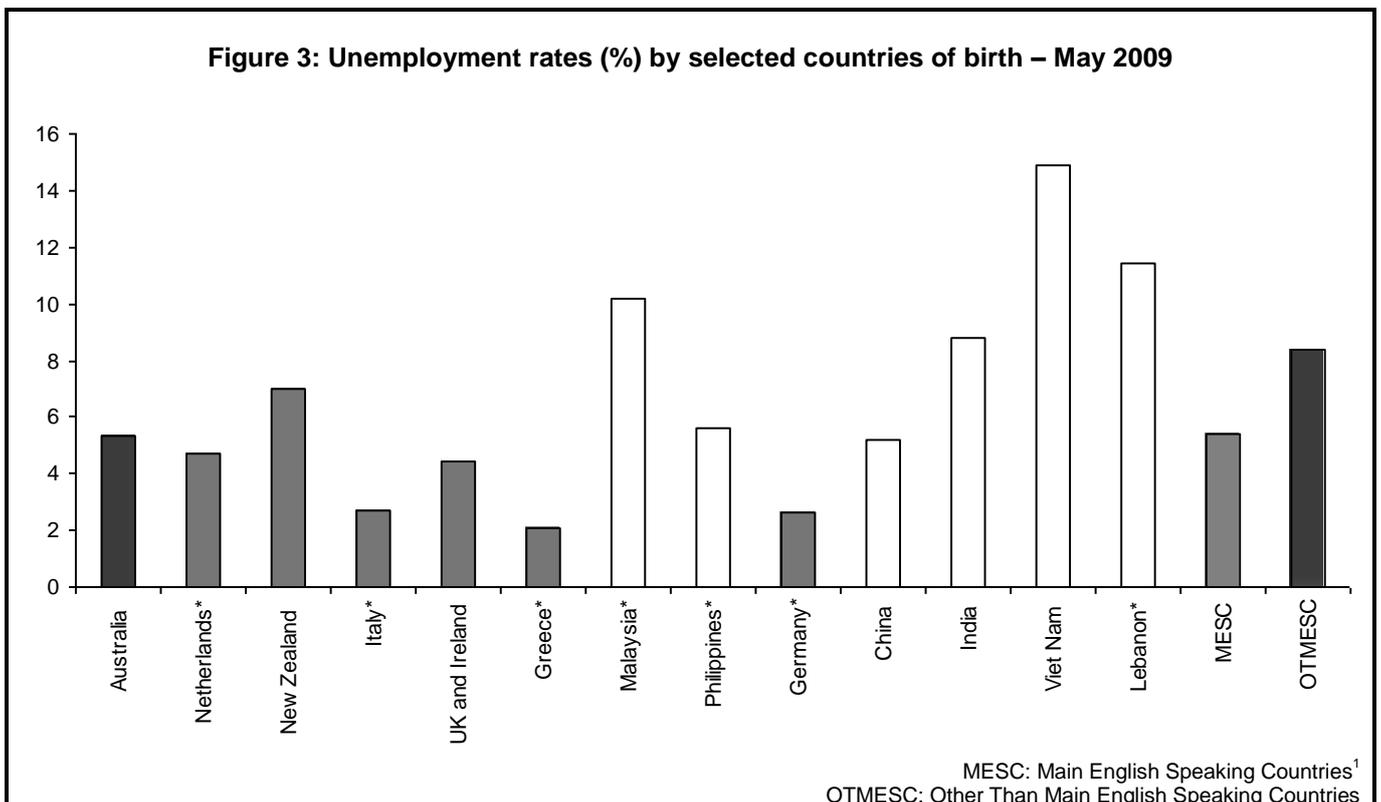
Generally, people in the more highly-skilled occupational groups are less likely to experience unemployment. For example, in May 2009 the unemployment rate for those who were formerly employed as Labourers was nearly four times that of former Professionals.



## MIGRANT UNEMPLOYMENT

The unemployment rates for people who migrate to Australia vary appreciably. Several factors influence migrant unemployment rates including the period since arrival in Australia (data consistently show recently-arrived migrants have a higher unemployment rate than those who have lived in Australia for some years), skill level, age, English proficiency and recent and relevant work experience.

Figure 3 below shows unemployment rates (original data) for people now resident in Australia who were born in selected overseas countries. For example, people born in Greece and Germany have low unemployment rates (2.1% and 2.6% respectively), whereas unemployment rates for people born in Vietnam and Lebanon are relatively high (14.9% and 11.4% respectively).



\* Estimate is subject to high sampling variability.

<sup>1</sup> MESC are the United Kingdom, Ireland, South Africa, Canada, the United States of America and New Zealand.

## EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION

While employment growth is not the only factor influencing job prospects, it is often easier to obtain a job in an occupation which is experiencing strong employment growth than one growing slowly or declining. Over the 12 months to May 2009, the largest increases in employment (original data) occurred for Community and Personal Service Workers (up 52 800), Clerical and Administrative Workers (up 47 500) and Managers (up 19 800). Employment growth rates, in declining skill order, are shown below.

The unemployment rate for occupational groups generally reflects skill levels. Highly skilled occupational groups experience lower rates of unemployment, while higher unemployment rates are generally associated with less-skilled occupations. The unemployment rates (for those who had worked for two weeks or more in the past two years) by occupational group are presented in descending skill order below.

Percentage Growth Rates in Employment in the 12 months to May 2009		Unemployment Rate at May 2009	
Managers	1.4%	Managers	2.0%
Professionals	-0.7%	Professionals	2.2%
Technicians and Trades Workers	0.4%	Technicians and Trades Workers	4.0%
Community and Personal Service Workers	5.6%	Community and Personal Service Workers	4.2%
Clerical and Administrative Workers	2.9%	Clerical and Administrative Workers	3.6%
Sales Workers	-1.6%	Sales Workers	5.3%
Machinery Operators and Drivers	-4.4%	Machinery Operators and Drivers	5.9%
Labourers	-2.2%	Labourers	8.3%

Additional information on Professional and Trade occupations is provided in the following section on skilled and internet vacancies. Time series of vacancy data are not readily available for less-skilled occupations.

## SKILLED AND INTERNET VACANCIES<sup>2</sup>

DEEWR produces the newspaper-based *Skilled Vacancies Index* (SVI) for 18 skilled occupational groups for each State and the Northern Territory. These are aggregated into Professional, Associate Professional and Trade groups (see Figure 4 overleaf). The SVI shows where the best employment opportunities may be in the Australian labour market.

In May 2009 skilled vacancies were 62.6% lower than in May 2008. Over the 12 months, SVI decreases were recorded in all States and Territories with the most significant decreases recorded in Western Australia (down 70.2%) and New South Wales (down 67.1%).

In the 12 months to May 2009, advertised vacancies decreased for Professional occupations (down 55.1%) and for Trade Occupations down 67.1%). The most notable decreases were for Metal Trades (down 79.4%), Wood Trades (down 76.1%), and Electrical and Electronics Trades (down 75.3%).

DEEWR also produces the *Internet Vacancies Index* (IVI) based on vacancies lodged on four recruitment websites for 48 occupational clusters across all skill levels and for the eight major occupational groups for each State and Territory. IVI vacancies are based on the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations<sup>3</sup>.

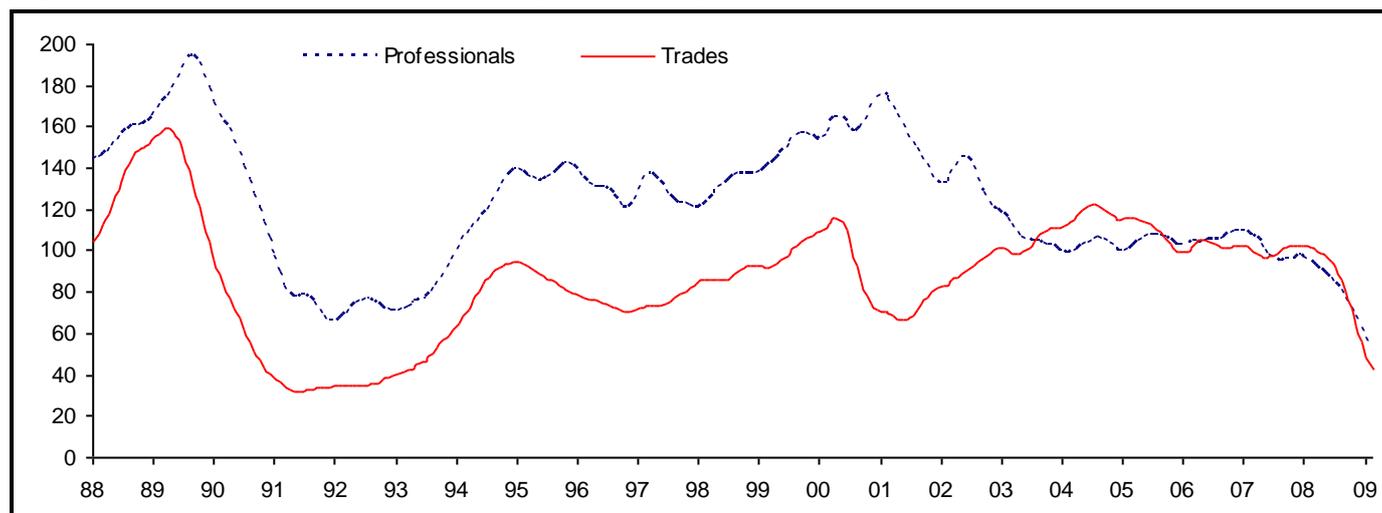
In May 2009, internet vacancies were 50.1% lower than in May 2008. Over the 12 months, IVI decreases were recorded in all States and Territories. The most significant IVI decreases were in New South Wales (down 53.1%), Queensland (down 52.5%) and Western Australia (down 51.9%).

In the 12 months to May 2009, internet vacancies decreased for Professionals (down 48.4%) and for Technicians and Trades Workers (down 51.1%). The most notable decreases were for Transport and Design Professionals, and Architects (down 69.4%), Numerical Clerks (down 65.1%), Office Managers, Administrators and Secretaries (down 63.6%), Engineering, ICT & Science Technicians, Inspectors (down 63.0%), General-Inquiry Clerks, Call Centre, Receptionists (down 60.0%) and Business, Finance and Human Resource Professionals (down 55.6%). The only occupational cluster to record an increase was Medical Practitioners and Nurses (up 0.7%).

<sup>2</sup> Historical series of trend figures for SVI are revised monthly; IVI based on a three month moving average.

<sup>3</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations – First Edition (Cat. No. 1220.0).

Figure 4: Skilled Vacancies Index, January 1988 to May 2009



## FUTURE JOB PROSPECTS

Future job prospects depend on many factors, some of which are difficult to predict. Prospects differ between and within States and Territories and can change rapidly. Even in occupations with below average prospects, employment opportunities may arise. This information should therefore be used with caution.

The following future job prospect ratings are for the period to 2012-13. The ratings are based on employment trends and projected growth, unemployment rates, SVI trends (where available), and other data. While the global recession could adversely affect prospects for some occupational groups in the short term, it is unclear at this stage what effect it will have on average prospects to 2012-13.

In the following table G stands for good prospects, A for average prospects and BA for below average prospects; L (not in the table) stands for limited prospects. These are examples from the skilled classifications categories – refer to the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO), Second Edition (ABS Cat. No. 1220.0).<sup>4</sup>

Occupational Group	Prospects to 2012-13	Occupational Group	Prospects to 2012-13
<b>Managers and Administrators</b>		Social Workers	<b>G</b>
Child Care Co-ordinators*	<b>G</b>	Specialist Medical Practitioners*	<b>G</b>
<b>Professionals</b>		<b>Associate Professionals</b>	
Computing Professionals* (part)	<b>G</b>	Civil Engineering Associate Professionals	<b>A</b>
Dentists*	<b>G</b>	Dental Therapists, Technicians* and Hygienists	<b>G</b>
General Medical Practitioners*	<b>G</b>	Electrical Engineering Associate Professionals	<b>A</b>
Mechanical Engineers*	<b>A</b>	Enrolled Nurses	<b>G</b>
Medical Imaging Professionals* (part)	<b>G</b>	Mechanical Engineering Associate Professionals	<b>A</b>
Occupational Therapists*	<b>G</b>	<b>Tradespersons</b>	
Pharmacists* (part)	<b>G</b>	Bakers and Pastrycooks*	<b>G</b>
Physiotherapists*	<b>G</b>	Cabinetmakers*	<b>G</b>
Primary School Teachers	<b>G</b>	Clothing Tradespersons	<b>BA</b>
Registered Mental Health Nurses*	<b>G</b>	Lift Mechanics*	<b>G</b>
Registered Midwives*	<b>G</b>	Panel Beaters*	<b>A</b>
Registered Nurses*	<b>G</b>	Printing Machinists	<b>A</b>
Secondary School Teachers	<b>G</b>	Wood Machinists and Other Wood Tradespersons	<b>BA</b>

\* denotes occupations that are listed in part or in full on the Migration Occupations in Demand List (MODL) issued on 17 May 2008.

The Australian Labour Market Update uses the latest available detailed and consistent data at time of production. However, the labour market can change quickly and should be re-assessed prior to making a decision to lodge a visa application. Queries relating to this publication should be emailed to migration@deewr.gov.au.

<sup>4</sup> Job prospect ratings are based on the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO), First Edition (ABS Cat. No. 1220.0).



## REGISTERED NURSE – An Occupation in Demand

In the Australian labour market, registered nurses assess, plan, provide and evaluate preventative, curative and rehabilitative care. The entry requirement for employment is the completion of an Australian bachelor degree in a relevant field of study awarded under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). As such, registered nurse is a more highly skilled occupation than an enrolled nurse where the entry requirement differs between States and Territories, from an AQF Certificate IV to a Diploma in enrolled nursing.

Registration with the relevant State or Territory Nursing and Midwifery Regulatory Authority (NMRA) is mandatory for registered and enrolled nurses. Applicants with enrolled nurse qualifications should not apply for migration under Australia’s General Skilled Migration (GSM) categories, as this occupation is not on the Skilled Occupations List (SOL) or the Employer Nomination Scheme Occupations List (ENSOL) and does not meet the definition of ‘highly skilled’ for migration purposes.

### LABOUR MARKET PROFILE OF REGISTERED NURSES

Australian Bureau of Statistics data show employment of registered nurses has remained steady over the last five years, with trended growth of 4.2 per cent over the five years to February 2009. Slight employment growth is expected for the next five years with most registered nurses employed in the health care and social assistance industries. Research by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) shows registered nurses are currently in shortage in the Australian labour market. Table A presents a labour market profile for the occupation of registered nurse based on *Job Outlook Online* data (see [www.joboutlook.gov.au](http://www.joboutlook.gov.au)).

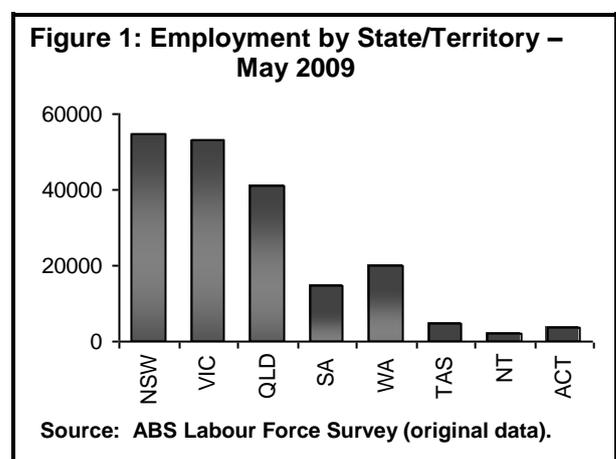
**Table A: Registered nurses – Key Labour Market Indicators<sup>5</sup>**

Key Indicator	Registered nurses	All Occupations
Occupation size	175 600	10 788 100
Females	89%	45%
Males	11%	55%
Median age	44 years	39 years
Full-time share of employment	55.1%	71.7%
Average weekly hours (full-time)	36.6	41.8
Weekly earnings (full-time & before tax)	\$1 024	\$940
Vacancy level	average	not available
Annual employment growth over 5 years	0.8% per annum	2.3% per annum
Future employment growth (to 2012-13)	Slight	not available
Job Prospects	Good	not available

### REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT

Registered nurses are employed across all States and Territories, mainly in the health, community service and aged care sectors. In May 2009, the majority of registered nurses were employed in New South Wales (54 500), Victoria (53 000) and Queensland (41 000). Western Australia also employed a large number of registered nurses (19 800). See Figure 1 (original data).

Demand is strong across all States and Territories of Australia and the industry overall reported difficulty in attracting and retaining experienced registered nurses.



<sup>5</sup> Occupation size for All Occupations is from ABS trended data (May 2009) and annual employment growth for the last 5 years is based on DEEWR labour market research (data to February 2009).

## **SKILLS ASSESSMENT FOR OVERSEAS-QUALIFIED REGISTERED NURSES**

One of the threshold criteria for permanent entry to Australia as a primary applicant in the GSM categories is the assessment of an applicant's skills (qualifications and work experience) by an Australian assessing authority gazetted for their nominated occupation. Assessing authorities have been appointed by the Australian Government to undertake assessments of whether an applicant has skills appropriate to employment in their nominated profession, associate profession or trade occupation in Australia. These assessing authorities are responsible for undertaking skills assessment for migration purposes only and are not employment agencies. The assessing authorities are not in a position to assist migrants or visa applicants to find jobs in Australia.

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council (ANMC) is the appointed Australian assessing authority for overseas-qualified registered nurses. People seeking to migrate to Australia in this occupation must have their overseas nursing qualifications, clinical experience and English language proficiency assessed as suitable by the ANMC. From 1 July 2009, all overseas-qualified registered nurses seeking to migrate to Australia (with the exception of applicants with New Zealand registration) are required to score at least 7 in all four components of the International English Language Testing System academic test or at least a B grade in all four sub-tests of the Occupational English Test for nurses. These minimum test scores must be obtained in one sitting.

Overseas-qualified registered nurses who fail to have their skills assessed as suitable for migration may be required to complete a Competency Based Assessment or International Nurse Bridging Program comprising theoretical and clinical components either all or in part in Australia. The requirement to complete such a program is based on the country where the initial training was completed. From 1 July 2009, applicants from the Republic of South Africa are also required to complete this program to become eligible for registration.

Successful completion of a bridging/competency program will result in State/Territory registration eligibility. Once this registration has been finalised the applicant can then reapply to the ANMC to have their skills assessed as suitable for migration. Only applicants who succeed in having their skills assessed as suitable for migration are eligible for registration with the NMRA in the State or Territory in which they wish to practice. Additional requirements may be prescribed by State and Territory NMRAs.

Overseas-qualified registered nurses applying for temporary visas which include a work right should apply directly to the NMRA for registration and not to the ANMC for a skills assessment. More detailed information is available on the Australian Skills Recognition Information website at [www.immi.gov.au/asri/a-z.htm](http://www.immi.gov.au/asri/a-z.htm) and the ANMC website at [www.anmc.org.au](http://www.anmc.org.au).

## **EMPLOYER-SPONSORED MIGRATION**

An alternative to migrating to Australia through the GSM categories is to enter through employer-sponsorship. The Australian Government has in place several employer-sponsored migration arrangements, including the Temporary Business Long Stay Arrangement, Employer Nomination Scheme, Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme and Labour Agreements.

Labour Agreements are designed to enable approved employers to recruit highly-skilled workers from overseas or from people temporarily in Australia, where they have not been able to fill vacancies from the Australian labour market through domestic recruitment and training. Detailed information on these migration arrangements is available on the DIAC website at [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au).

The occupation of registered nurse appears on the current Migration Occupations in Demand List and the gazetted list of eligible occupations for the Temporary Business Long Stay Arrangement.

## **SEEKING EMPLOYMENT IN AUSTRALIA**

Overseas-qualified registered nurses seeking to work in Australia who are not Australian citizens or permanent residents will need to contact the nearest Australian Embassy, Consulate or High Commission to apply for a visa with a work right. Addresses of all Australian Embassies, High Commissions and Consulates are available from the DIAC website at [www.immi.gov.au/contacts](http://www.immi.gov.au/contacts).

Overseas-qualified registered nurses should note that acceptance of overseas qualifications for migration does not guarantee employment in the profession in Australia. Employment will depend on other factors, such as the number of vacancies available, skill needs in the Australian labour market, meeting State and Territory licensing requirements and suitability for employment in a particular job in Australia.