

IMMIGRATION NEWS

(Volume 119)

*DIAC Sabotages Jobs In The Vocational Sector
& NSW Regional Sponsorship Changes*



14th March 2009

Dear Students

Welcome to the latest edition of IMMIGRATION NEWS and welcome to the new subscribers.

Feel free to e-mail this newsletter to any of your friends.

DIAC Sabotages Jobs in the Vocational Sector – Imminent Mass Exodus of Welfare Students

Just at a time when Australian residents need jobs more than ever DIAC has sabotaged the jobs of perhaps dozens of vocational teachers and administration support staff by forcing the Australian Institute of Welfare and Community Workers (AIWCW) to change its skill assessment criteria earlier than they wished to.

Last year in September the AIWCW conceded to the arguments from TAFE and other vocational providers that by quickly changing the IELTS requirements to 7.0 for a welfare workers migration assessment would cause international students to abandon their courses. It was recognised that if such a change took place too early many jobs would be at risk and it would also tarnish Australia's reputation as an education provider. The AIWCW amended its plan to start in January 2011.

DIAC has now flexed its muscles upon the AIWCW by forcing them to not only bring the higher IELTS requirement forward but it also plans to reduce the points for Welfare Workers who have Diploma qualifications down from 60 to possibly, 40 points. In future to obtain the 60 points students will need to continue for another 2 years of study to complete a Bachelor Degree or to obtain three years work experience.

In a statement on the AIWCW web site it reads;

*“Discussions have been held with the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) regarding the need for English language proficiency, and as a result of these discussions, **DIAC has requested that AIWCW apply the appropriate level of English language proficiency as soon as possible after it has been established.** Because of possible delays in implementation processes this may take several months but **the new regulations will come into effect no later than 30th September 2009.**”*

AIWCW has urged a lengthy lead time, as outlined in the background to the 1 Sept Update, but this Institute concedes that this is essentially a matter for the migration authority.

.....is very unlikely that the same Skills Points will continue to apply to those with diploma qualifications in welfare work, unless the applicant has at least three years of additional professional work experience, which will make up for the deficiency in formal professional education. Changes to the Skills Points for those with diploma qualifications are likely to apply in 2010, but the timing and the details of the additional professional employment requirements are yet to be determined.”

Although the AIWCW does not indicate what the higher IELTS requirement will be or when the lower points will begin when I spoke to them this week it seems they are expecting sooner rather than later.

Mass Exodus Is Beginning

DIAC intervention has now directly caused many of international students undertaking their welfare course to plan a mass exodus from their Community Welfare programs. It is expected up to 90% of international students will abandon their courses realising they will have difficulty reaching the higher English level and the uncertainty surrounding the point's level change.

According to the AIWCW currently there are about 4000 international students undertaking the Diploma of Community Welfare around Australia.

Are Standards in Private Colleges Welfare Diploma's Slipping?

Recently reports have come to our attention regarding the AIWCW rejecting some students due to their placement hours spent supposedly as supervised welfare workers.

One of the AIWCW assessors stated *“students who do placement work in Child Minding Centres or Aged Care facilities where they are primarily used as free cleaning labour will not be passed for their skill assessment. Education*

providers are well aware of our guidelines and any students who is in a placement where they are not happy about the quality of the work they are doing should contact the AIWCW.”

Keep reading our newsletters for any developments on this issue.

NSW Regional Sponsorship Update

Accountants are no longer sponsored by the Murray Regional Area from Friday the 13th March. This will be a blow to many accounting students who were going to use this sponsorship approval as a pathway to permanent residence, particular those planning to use their concessional English (5.5 overall IELTS) program. Applicants who have already applied will continue to be processed.

It's a reminder that state sponsorship can change at any time but at least NSW has been stable for a while and many students have benefited by their positive sponsorship nominations.

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Kind regards

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