

Submission No. 78

Date Received 16-7-05

From: Norma Rampant
Sent: Saturday, 16 July 2005 5:27 PM
To: Committee, Migration (REPS)
Subject: Skilled Migration

"Skilled Migration" The West Australian 09 July 2005.

Further to your entry in The West Australian, I would like to offer comment regarding the Skilled Visa category.

I have been involved in the Migration Industry for approximately 6 years. During that time I have worked for several Migration Agents in the collation of Skilled Visa applications in preparation for their submission to the Department of Immigration for processing.

My personal observation is that one particular area which appears to need serious overhaul is the ability of applicants from non-English speaking countries to communicate well in English.

On many occasions overseas applicants produce documents indicating that the studies which they have undertaken in their own country have been conducted in English. (An example of some of the qualifications achieved is "Master of Education", "Bachelor of Education", or similar). In subsequent contact with these applicants, either by telephone or email, it is quite apparent that their command of the English language is questionable, as may then be their documents.

I cannot comprehend that a "Master/Bachelor of Education", or similar, can be conducted in English in an overseas country, to a standard which is comparable to Australian standards, and can be achieved by an applicant with very poor English speaking/writing skills.

Although the IELTS test is a requirement for the Visa application, I believe that it should also be a mandatory requirement by each Assessing Authority for all overseas applicants, in order that we may continue to ensure full integration of migrants into the Australian community.

I also believe that authentication of educational documents from overseas applicants should be mandatory by each Assessing Authority.

The Skilled Visa is a permanent Visa so once these applicants are approved, many of them may not find employment in Australia due to their obvious lack of English skills, and their dubious educational qualifications. This situation then forces them to stay within the confines of their own culture where there is no necessity for their English or integration to improve.

This, surely, cannot improve the skill shortage situation which Australia is apparently currently experiencing.

My comments are merely my observations, and are offered without prejudice.

N. Rampant
Western Australia