

CENTACARE Cairns

PO Box 201
Cairns Qld 4870



MIGRANT SETTLEMENT SERVICES

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Ph: (07) 4041 7699 Fax: (07) 4041 7655
Email: migrantservices@centacarecairns.org

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BY: MK

Comments regarding Skills recognition, Upgrading and Licensing

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COUNSELLING

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Cairns Youth Mentoring Scheme

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Mental Health Resource Service

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Centacare Cairns Migrant Settlement Services Migrant Employment Services, (a program funded by the Queensland Department of Employment and Training) assists migrants in the Far North Queensland Region with information regarding skills recognition, upgrading and licensing, including overseas qualifications assessment information, information regarding registration with relevant peak industry bodies, information regarding bridging courses or similar, legislative information, general orientation regarding identifying employment opportunities, general employment information and general settlement services.

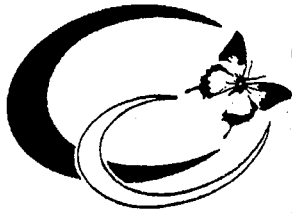
Many migrants, particularly skilled visa holders, in Cairns area are often unable to gain employment in their field in the local area, mainly due to a lack of industry supporting their qualifications, and often relocate or work in fields unrelated to their qualifications or skills. In many cases, the cost of overseas qualification assessment is prohibitive or the process is time consuming and results in people working in other fields, which are usually less skilled (for example, we have recently dealt with a client who was going through the OQA process for dentistry and working as a room attendant – she eventually left Australia as the process was too expensive and time consuming and the work opportunities in the short term were very limited). There have been slightly more cases serviced with academic qualifications than trade qualifications – probably because it is, overall, slightly easier for trade qualified people to gain employment without recognition and there is a comparatively high demand for most tradespeople in the local area.

Some key issues that we have observed include:

- The misunderstanding of migrants that qualifications assessed for migration purposes do not require further assessment after arrival in Australia.
- Confusion as to who is responsible for assessment (VET Assess, TRA, DET (for Qld), NOOSR, industry peak bodies etc), the levels of assessment required and by whom.
- Confusion as to what qualifications should be recognized and for what purpose (legislative requirements, industry requirements?).

Helping Migrants Make Australia Home

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC TRUST CORPORATION FOR THE DIOCESE OF CAIRNS



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Cairns Youth

Mentoring Scheme

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- It is estimated that Over 70% of migrants seeking information regarding recognition of overseas qualifications from our service have not migrated as "skilled migrants" but have migrated under various family sponsorship or refugee visa categories. This group is particularly disadvantaged as language and financial constraints often prohibit access to appropriate skills recognition.

A centralized processing service (or at least information service, including web site) for all skills/qualification assessment would be useful not only to "skilled" migrants but also other migrants, service providers, employers and industry peak bodies.

Yours sincerely,

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