



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 <http://www.workplace.gov.au>.

Unless otherwise stated, data are from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Labour Force Survey, August 2008.

OVERVIEW

In the 12 months to August 2008, the Australian labour market continued to experience solid growth. In trend terms, total employment increased by an estimated 220 900 persons (2.0%). Advertised vacancies decreased for Professionals and for Trade Occupations. Migrants with the best employment prospects are those who are highly skilled with recognised post-secondary qualifications and strong proficiency in the English language.

EMPLOYMENT

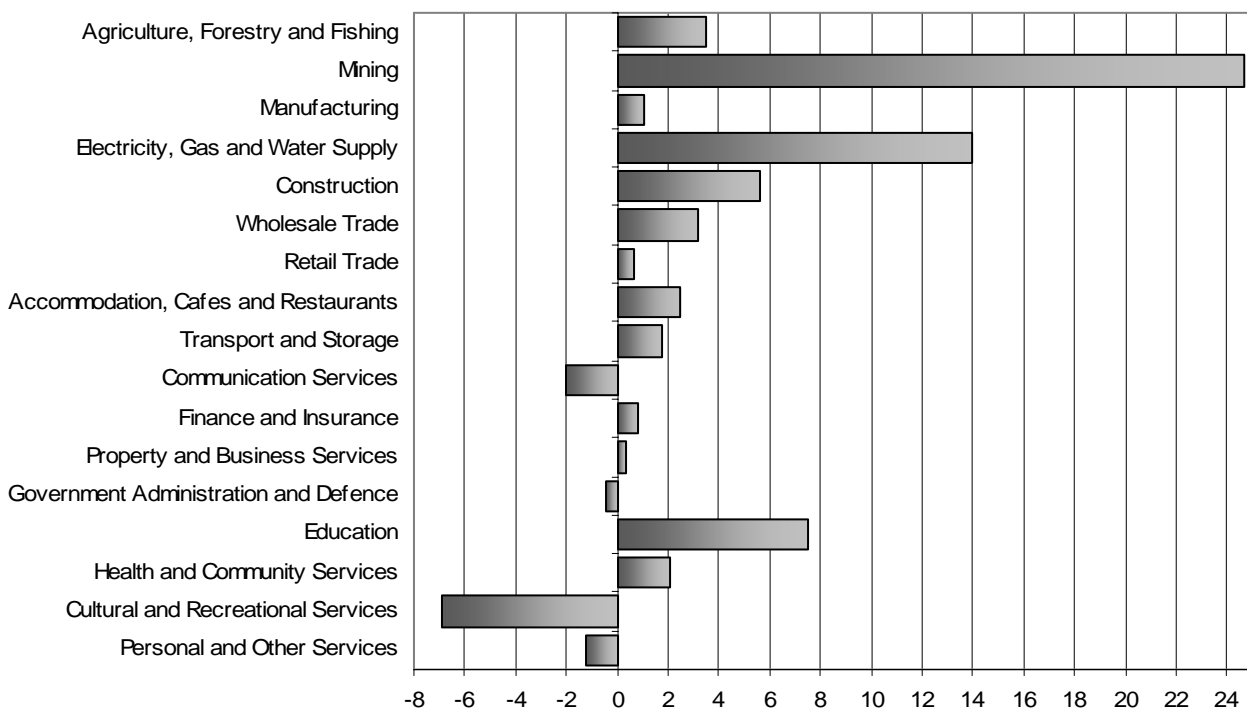
Over the 12 months to August 2008, trend employment in Australia grew by 2.2% after growth of 2.6% in the previous year.

Employment (in trend terms) increased in all States and Territories. In percentage terms, employment growth was strongest in Tasmania (5.2%), Western Australia (3.8%) and the Northern Territory (3.8%).

Employment opportunities and growth varied across industries. Over the 12 months to August 2008, the largest increases in trend employment occurred in Education (up by 56 100), Construction (up by 53 100), Mining (up by 33 800) and Health and Community Services (up by 22 500). The strongest rates of employment growth were in Mining (24.7%), Electricity, Gas and Water Supply (14.0%) and Education (7.5%). Employment growth rates by industry are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Percentage Change in Trend Employment by Industry – August 2007 to August 2008

← Decrease Increase →



Source: ABS *Australian Labour Market Statistics*, October 2008, ABS Cat. No. 6105.0.

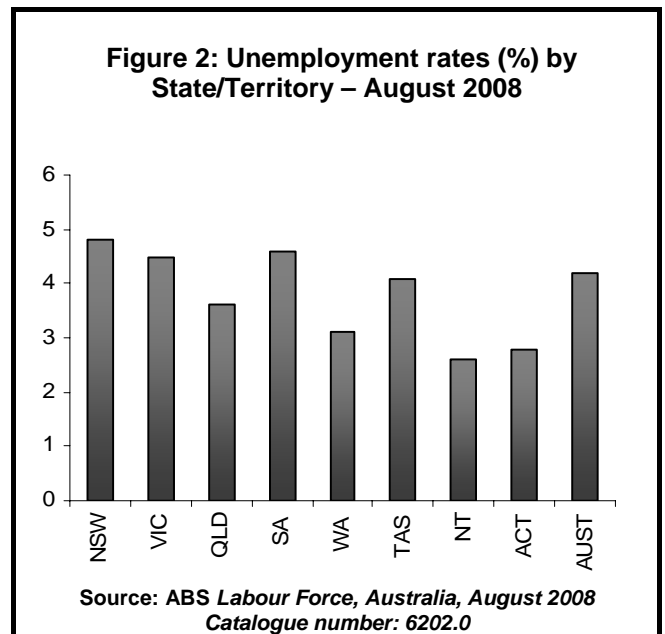
UNEMPLOYMENT

The trend rate of unemployment was 4.2% in August 2008, compared with 4.3% in August 2007.

In the past year, trend unemployment rates have decreased in all States and Territories except for the Australian Capital Territory (0.1%), New South Wales (0.1%) and Victoria (0.0%) which remained unchanged.

In August 2008, the trend unemployment rate was highest in New South Wales (4.8%), South Australia (4.6%) and Victoria (4.5%) and lowest in the Northern Territory (2.6%). See Figure 2.

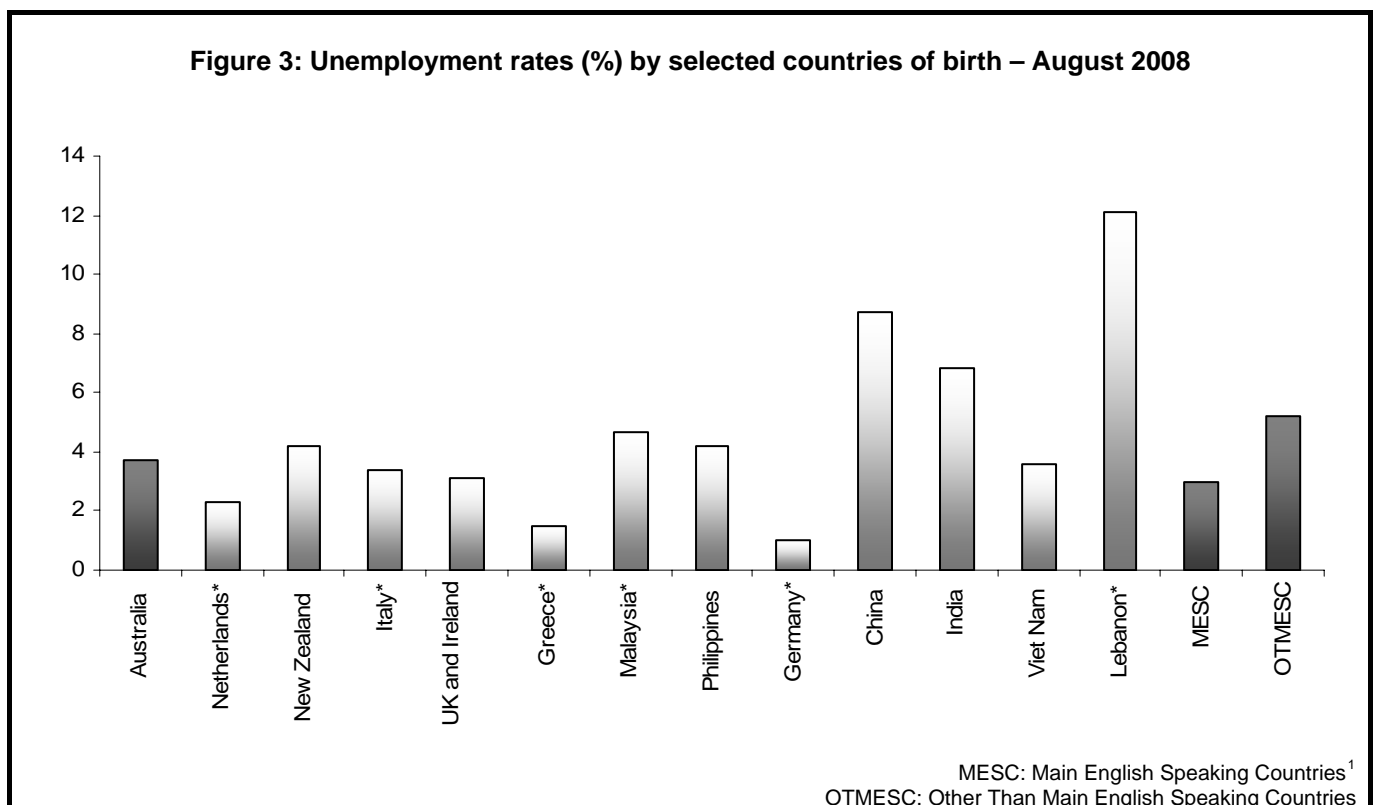
Generally, people in more highly-skilled occupational groups are less likely to experience unemployment. For example, in May 2008 the unemployment rate for those formerly employed as Labourers and Related Workers was 5.2 times that of former Professionals.



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 shows that recently-arrived migrants generally 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 Germany and Greece have low unemployment rates (1.0% and 1.5% respectively), whereas unemployment rates for people born in Lebanon and China are relatively high (12.1% and 8.7% respectively).



* Estimate is subject to high sampling variability.

¹ 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 only slowly or declining. Over the 12 months to August 2008, the largest increases in employment (original data) occurred for Professionals (up by 102 300), Managers and Administrators (up by 49 000) and Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service Workers (up by 44 000). 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 August 2008		Unemployment Rate at August 2008	
Managers and Administrators	5.5%	Managers and Administrators	1.1%
Professionals	5.0%	Professionals	1.1%
Associate Professionals	2.4%	Associate Professionals	1.5%
Tradespersons and Related Workers	2.3%	Tradespersons and Related Workers	2.2%
Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	-2.6%	Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	0.8%
Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service	2.6%	Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service	2.3%
Intermediate Production and Transport	0.2%	Intermediate Production and Transport	2.8%
Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service	-1.1%	Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service	4.0%
Labourers and Related Workers	-0.2%	Labourers and Related Workers	5.9%

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

SKILLED VACANCY TRENDS²

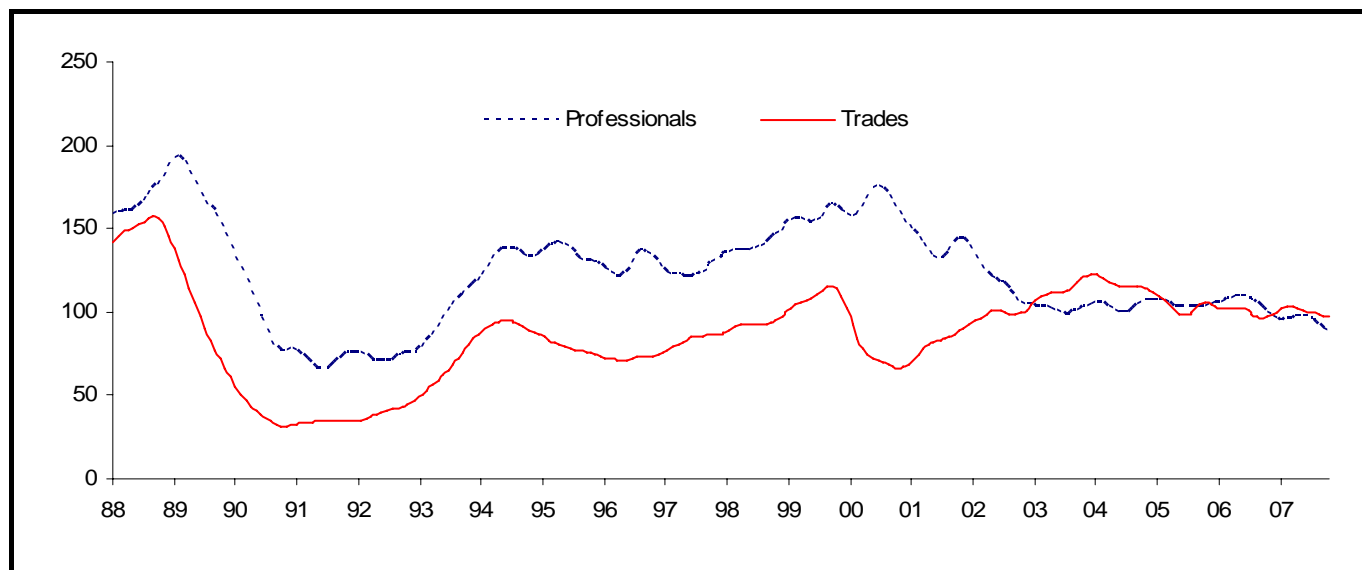
The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations produces the *Skilled Vacancies Index (SVI)* for 18 skilled occupational groups for each State and the Northern Territory. These are aggregated into the Professional, Associate Professional and Trade groups (see Figure 4 overleaf). The SVI indicates where the best employment opportunities may be in the Australian labour market.

In August 2008, skilled vacancies were 11.4% lower than in August 2007. Over the 12 months, the most significant SVI decreases were recorded in Queensland (down by 28.3%) and New South Wales (down by 21.7%). SVI increases were recorded in Victoria (up by 2.9%) and the Northern Territory (up by 1.3%)

In the 12 months to August 2008, advertised vacancies decreased for Professional occupations (down by 12.6%) and for Trade Occupations (down by 10.9%). The most significant decreases were for Printing Trades (down by 32.5%), Accountants and Auditors (down by 30.6%) and Food Trades (down by 29.5%). The most significant increases were for Medical/Science Technical Officers (up by 43.7%), Metal Tradespersons (up by 6.2%) and Wood Tradespersons (up by 3.4%).

² Historical series of trend figures are revised monthly.

Figure 4: Skilled Vacancies Index, August 1988 to August 2008



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, significant 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 and are based on employment trends and projected growth, unemployment rates, SVI trends (where available), and other data. While the global financial crisis 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, BA for below average prospects and L 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).

Occupational Group	Prospects to 2012-13	Occupational Group	Prospects to 2012-13
Managers and Administrators		Associate Professionals	
Child Care Co-ordinators*	G	Building, Architectural and Surveying Associates	G
Finance Managers	G	Dental Therapists, Technicians* and Hygienists	G
Information Technology Managers	G	Enrolled Nurses	G
Professionals		Financial Dealers and Brokers	G
Accountants*	G	Medical Technical Officers	G
Chemical Engineers*	G	Metallurgical Technicians and Mine Deputies	G
Computing Professionals* (part)	G	Trade Qualified Chefs* (part)	G
General Medical Practitioners*	G	Tradespersons	
Medical Imaging Professionals* (part)	G	Bakers and Pastrycooks*	G
Mining and Materials Engineers* (part)	G	Bricklayers*	G
Occupational Therapists*	G	Cabinetmakers*	G
Pharmacists* (part)	G	Carpenters and Joiners*	G
Physiotherapists*	G	Electricians*	G
Primary School Teachers	G	Hairdressers*	G
Registered Nurses*	G	General Mechanical Engineering Tradespersons	G
Registered Mental Health Nurses*	G	Motor Mechanics*	G
Registered Midwives*	G	Plumbers*	G
Secondary School Teachers	G	Printing Machinists	A
Social Workers	G	Refrigeration and Airconditioning Mechanics*	G
Specialist Medical Practitioners*	G	Textile and Footwear Machine Operators	BA

* denotes occupations that are listed in part or in full on the Migration Occupations in Demand List (MODL) announced 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.



Physiotherapist – An Occupation in Demand

This Hot Topic provides information on the labour market for physiotherapists in Australia. Physiotherapists assess, treat and prevent disorders in human movement caused by injury or disease.

In the Australian labour market, the entry requirement for employment as a physiotherapist is the completion of a physiotherapy degree that satisfies the Australian Standards for Physiotherapy. The degree must be equivalent to at least a bachelor level on the Australian Qualifications Framework. Registration with the relevant State or Territory physiotherapy board is mandatory for the practice of physiotherapy. Research by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) shows physiotherapists are currently in shortage in the Australian labour market.

LABOUR MARKET PROFILE OF PHYSIOTHERAPIST

Australian Bureau of Statistics data shows that employment of physiotherapists has risen in recent years, with trended growth of 48.7 per cent over the five years to August 2007. Strong employment growth is expected for the next five years and most physiotherapists are employed in the health and community services industries. Table A presents a labour market profile for the occupation of physiotherapist based on *Australian Jobs 2008* and *Job Outlook Online* data (see http://jobsearch.gov.au/Careers/jo_home.aspx).

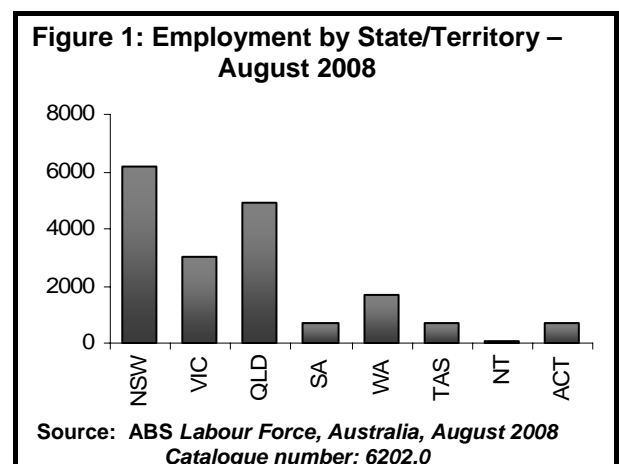
Table A: Physiotherapists – Key Labour Market Indicators³

Key Indicator	Physiotherapist	All Occupations
Occupation size	15 600	10 559 800
Females	72%	45%
Males	28%	55%
Median age	39 years	39 years
Full-time share of employment	69.0%	72.0%
Average weekly hours (full-time)	40.4	41.5
Weekly earnings (full-time & before tax)	\$1 154	\$940
Vacancy level	Moderate	na
Annual employment growth over 5 years to Nov 07	10.6% p.a.	12.7% p.a.
Future employment growth (to 2011-12)	Strong	na
Job Prospects	Good	na

REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT

Physiotherapists are employed across all States and Territories. In August 2008, the majority of physiotherapists were employed in New South Wales (6 200), Queensland (4 900) and Victoria (3 000). Western Australia also employed a large number of physiotherapist (1 700). See Figure 1 (original data).

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



³ Occupation size and annual employment growth for the last 5 years is based on DEEWR labour market research (September 2008).

SKILLS ASSESSMENT FOR OVERSEAS QUALIFIED PHYSIOTHERAPISTS

One of the threshold criteria for permanent entry to Australia as a primary applicant in the General Skilled Migration (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 Physiotherapy Council (APC) is the appointed Australian assessing authority for overseas qualified physiotherapists. The assessment process has three parts – eligibility assessment, a written examination and a clinical examination.

Applicants seeking to migrate to Australia in the occupation of physiotherapist must first apply for an Assessment of Eligibility to apply for the Professional Examinations in Physiotherapy. The eligibility criteria include qualifications, relevant clinical experience and English language ability.

Overseas qualified physiotherapists assessed as eligible by the APC are required to obtain a pass in the APC's Written Examination and a pass in the Clinical Examination. The Clinical Examination is only conducted in Australia. Only applicants who successfully complete the three parts of the assessment process are assessed as suitable to practice physiotherapy in Australia and can apply for full registration with the physiotherapy board in the State or Territory in which they wish to practice. Additional requirements for registration may apply in some States and Territories.

More information on the skills assessment process is available on the APC website at www.apc.org.au.

Figure 2: Skills recognition and registration process for overseas qualified physiotherapists

- 1) Eligibility Assessment by the APC conducted for migration purposes where qualifications, experience and English language proficiency are assessed
- 2) A pass in the APC's Written Examination covering the principal areas of physiotherapy as practiced in Australia
- 3) Clinical Examination in Australia by the APC to be completed within 12 months of passing the Written Examination
- 4) Eligibility for full registration with the relevant State or Territory physiotherapy board*

* More detailed information is available on the Australian Skills Recognition Information website at www.immi.gov.au/asri/a-z.htm.

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 employers to recruit highly-skilled workers either from overseas or from people temporarily in Australia, where an employer has not been able to fill vacancies from the Australian labour market through domestic recruitment or training. Detailed information on these migration arrangements is contained in Migration Booklet 5 *Employer Sponsored Migration* available on the DIAC website www.immi.gov.au.

The occupation of physiotherapist 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 physiotherapists 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/index.htm.

Overseas qualified physiotherapists 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 registration requirements and suitability for employment in a particular job in Australia.