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Perth and Gold Coast to be regional

Perth in Western Australia and the Gold Coast in Queensland are set to be classified as 'regional' for immigration purposes once changes are introduced in November this year.

Longer 485 Graduate Visas

The Western Australia and Queensland State Governments requested for Perth and the Gold Coast - respectively - to be classified as 'regional' in order to attract more international students. This is because from November, students who study in regional areas will be able to access a longer Subclass 485 Graduate post-study work visa.

From 16 November, students in regional cities and major regional areas, including Adelaide, Sunshine Coast, Canberra, Newcastle/Lake Macquarie, Wollongong/Illawarra, Geelong, Hobart, and now Perth and the Gold Coast will be able to obtain an additional year on their Graduate visa.

Students from all other regional areas could obtain an additional **2 years** on their Graduate visa.

Who else does this impact?

With the November introduction of one definition of 'regional' across all visa categories, the reclassification of Perth and the Gold Coast as regional areas mean businesses in these areas will be able to attract skilled workers through the new Subclass 494 Skilled Regional Employer Sponsored (Provisional) visa, and migrants can also consider the new Subclass 491 Skilled Work Regional (Provisional) visa. Further information on these visas is available on our blog [here](#).

The WA Government has advised at this stage that the current Western Australian Skilled Migration Occupation List (WASMOL) for the Subclass 190 Skilled State Nominated visas will remain the same.

The Queensland Government has not provided an update on their state migration program as this is currently closed to skilled visa applicants. Watch this space.

Visa Processing

The Department of Immigration has also announced an additional 2000 places in the regional visa quota, increasing to 25,000 out of the 160,000 total places available. Applicants for the regional visas will also have priority processing of their visa applications

What can applicants do now?

Even though the changes will not be implemented until mid-November, it is a great idea to start reviewing your visa options. Migrants with relatives in Perth and the Gold Coast may now have new opportunities for visa sponsorship, and those who currently reside in these areas could now have greater options to obtain permanent residency. We encourage anyone in these areas to contact us for an assessment or re-assessment based on these changes.