



Bridging the migrant skills gap

In the electrical and plumbing occupations, regulators expect that intending migrants will be able to demonstrate the technical skill competencies but will not be able to demonstrate the appropriate Australian related knowledge, which will need to be addressed through gap training on arrival. For this reason a new form of skills documentation has been developed. The Offshore Technical Skills Record (OTSR) will be issued by VETASSESS on successful completion by the migrant of the technical component of the relevant units of competency or qualification. It will list both the technical skills demonstrated and any gap in the Australian skills or knowledge component which needs to be bridged to meet the full standard, for example the Australian Wiring Rules for electrical trades.

Regulators in these industries have agreed to provide a provisional licence against the OTSR to allow migrants to work, once they have arrived in Australia, while they complete the 'Australian knowledge' element of each unit.

RTOs will be asked to accept the OTSR as evidence of recognition of prior learning contributing to a statement of attainment or qualification. It is expected that the RTOs in Victoria and Western Australia that are VETASSESS' consortium partners will provide gap training in the first instance but that additional RTOs in other jurisdictions may also choose to provide gap training.

The NQC supports the COAG decision to improve the skilled migration process and approves, in principle, the recognition of the OTSR as evidence of recognition of prior learning. Formal incorporation of the OTSR within the AQTF 2007 will be considered during the Review of the AQTF 2007 Guidelines.

While numbers of migrants likely to arrive under this process will be small, RTOs are encouraged to be on the lookout for this new skills document and to provide every assistance to our skilled migrants as they enter the country under the new arrangements.