

OCCUPATIONAL TRAINING VISA (Class 442)

Background

An Occupational Trainee is a student enrolled at an overseas university who arranges to come to UQ to complete his or her final year thesis / project work. The thesis / project work they complete during their stay will count towards the degree they are undertaking at their home institution.

Many overseas universities, especially those in Europe, require PhD and Masters students to undertake a compulsory period of study and research experience in a foreign country, as part of the requirements for completion of a higher degree. If a UQ academic staff member receives such a request from an overseas student, and is agreeable to supervising the student on a particular project, arrangements are made for the student to visit for a mutually agreed period of time.

To gain entry into Australia, an Occupational Trainee has to firstly be nominated (sponsored) by The University of Queensland. Once this nomination is approved, the Occupational Trainee will then need to apply for a Class 442 Occupational Training visa.

Occupational Trainees can receive an "Educational Allowance". This payment is usually a small amount paid to the student per fortnight or month to assist them with expenses that they incur during their stay.

Information to be provided

The academic staff member who will be supervising the Occupational Trainee during the period of their stay should provide details of the proposed visit in a memo to be approved by the Head of School. The memo should include the following information:

- Student's full name and origin
- Commencement and expiry date of proposed period of stay
- Objective of proposed training or details about the research project that the student will be involved in
- Details pertaining to the amount of Educational Allowance, if any, to be provided.

English Proficiency

From November, 2005 DIMIA require the sponsor to provide the following information.

1. That the Occupational Trainee's English language skills are sufficient to:
 - a. Undertake all of the occupational trainee program
 - b. Comply with OH&S requirements
2. Has the English language proficiency been assessed by:
 - a. The trainee being from an English speaking country or having completed at least 5 consecutive years at a school in which classes were primarily in English?
 - b. The trainee having recent IELTS, TOEFL, OETS or equivalent results (please indicate which)?

- c. Other (please specify)?
3. Is your nominee undertaking an ELICOS course or other English language course as part of their Occupational Training program?

The Occupational Trainee should provide:

- a **CV**, which should include:

Full name
Address
Telephone number
Fax number (essential)
Email address
Date of birth
Country of citizenship
Advice as to whether family member/s will be accompanying the student
Qualifications
Name of institution where studying

- a **Letter of Support** from his/her university which needs to state that the activities they will be involved in at UQ are relevant to their degree studies and will count towards the completion of their degree.

- a **Statement of Financial Ability** as DIMIA requires evidence that these Trainees have the ability to financially support themselves during their stay. We need to obtain one of the following from the student, according to what is appropriate:

1. A letter or email from their parents to say that they will financially support their son/daughter during their stay, or
2. A copy of their bank statement which should show that they have at least the equivalent of AUD\$1,000 per month for each month of their stay, or
3. A letter from their university to say that they are supported by a scholarship, which should also state how much the scholarship will be paying.

Procedure

1. Faculty HR staff will generate a Letter of Invitation and fax or post this to the Occupational Trainee.
2. Please note that China and Canada require the letter to be on Human Resources letterhead and to be signed by the Director, Human Resources. The details of the project on which the Trainee will be working must also be included in the Offer.
2. Faculty HR staff will then complete and lodge a **Form 913 'Nomination for Occupational Training'** with DIMIA in Brisbane. There is no fee to sponsor an overseas student as an Occupational Trainee so the documentation can be faxed directly to DIMIA once it is prepared. *Please note that if you fax the documentation to DIMIA, do not send the originals*

by mail as they find it confusing to receive two sets of documentation. All Occupational Trainees have to be nominated for entry into Australia, regardless of the length of their stay.

Documentation to be provided to DIMIA:

- Covering letter
- Completed Form 913 'Nomination for Occupational Training'
- Copy of letter of invitation
- Letter of Support
- Statement of Financial Ability
- Student's CV

3. When the nomination is approved by DIMIA (DIMIA will usually email you the approval letter) Faculty HR staff will email the nomination approval letter to the Occupational Trainee, who should then attach it to their visa application and lodge it with the appropriate overseas Australian Embassy. The overseas embassy will not be able to issue an Occupational Trainee with a visa unless the nomination has firstly been approved in Brisbane. The Occupational Trainee should apply for their visa on a Form 147.

To note

DIMIA states that we should allow 2-4 weeks for the nomination to be approved. Approval times can be even longer towards Christmas when DIMIA is very busy.

Occupational Trainee placements are usually for one year or less. Placements for more than one year are unusual but may still be approved, however the student would be required to undertake a medical examination as part of the visa requirements.

Occupational Trainees have work rights, but only with the institution which has nominated them. There is no limitation on hours. An accompanying spouse or family member can now work up to 20 hours per week.

In extreme circumstances where nomination approval is delayed, or if the processing time for a visa overseas may cause considerable delays, DIMIA have advised that students may apply to enter Australia on an Electronic Travel Authority (ETA) [tourist] visa, provided that they convert to the Occupational Training visa in Brisbane before they commence their placement at UQ. Commencing a placement while still holding an ETA visa would be in breach of visa regulations.

The Occupational Training Class 442 visa is a Temporary Residence (non-business) visa and as at November 2005 costs AUD\$180 whether the application is lodged outside or within Australia.

Minimum age

The minimum age is 18 years unless exceptional circumstances exist. If a trainee is under 18 years suitable welfare arrangements must be in place.

Mandatory health insurance

To be granted a visa the applicant and any accompanying family members must show that they have adequate health insurance for the first 12 months of the training program in Australia.

Extensions

If the Trainee's stay is to be extended, a new invitation letter to cover the extra period should be processed, and another Form 913 Nomination for Occupational Training must be lodged with DIMIA (unless the expiry date of the original visa issued covers the proposed period of extension). A covering letter explaining the reasons for the extension should be attached. DIMIA does not require a further Letter of Support or Statement of Financial Ability to cover an extension. The Occupational Trainee must lodge his/her Form 147 with DIMIA before the expiry date of their visa, regardless of whether the nomination has been approved.