

JUST THE JOB!

There are still a vast number of opportunities in Australia for a broad range of professions, writes **Leanne Short**



For decades, British workers have secured their passage Down Under thanks to possessing the right work skills and experience that have been lacking in the expanding Australian jobs market.

Australia has a long and successful track record of looking beyond its borders to increase the skills base of its workforce. The Australian Migration Programme for 2014–2015 has 190,000 places available, 128,550 of which are designated for skilled workers, indicating the scope of opportunities available.

Experienced, skilled workers are in demand across a variety of sectors, as detailed in the Australian government’s Skilled Occupations List (SOL), which >>



identifies the specific job roles in short supply. This list should be the first port of call for individuals wondering whether their particular skillset can secure them a residency visa and if they are an attractive proposition to Australian employers.

MEETING DEMAND

While in recent years employment sponsorship for overseas workers has been common, the demand is now far less, meaning the likelihood of obtaining a job offer beforehand is less likely. The labour market in Australia has changed, with employers having access to an increased number of skilled workers locally.

This doesn't mean there is less demand for skills or opportunities; it simply means that having to look overseas for staff is not so essential. 457 Temporary Work (skilled) visas are still well below the 2012-2013 peak of around 81,000, but 2014-2015 figures are up more than 3,000 places on last 2013-2014, increasing from 10,640 to 13,980, which is a good sign for those of you looking for sponsored employment.

But for those needing stability, particularly those with a family, the permanent residency visa is your best option as you are not restricted by your job role and tied to your employer.

Employers are still open to overseas applications, but from people with a definitive date to arrive in the country already having obtained a suitable visa.

Having started the visa process independently is a positive indication to employers of your commitment to moving to Australia, and therefore less of an investment risk at a time when they are watching their cashflow.



Having determined whether your skillset is in demand and with an appropriate visa application underway, I advise clients to extend their research into the availabilities within the jobs market.

Networking with people within their sector is a great way of gauging what opportunities are out there. The likes of LinkedIn and online jobs boards and forums are vital resources in becoming informed. Key sectors that are welcoming skilled workers with a desire to forge a

still plenty of signs of increasing confidence and investment, particularly in the construction industry.

There's generally a trend between the buoyancy of Australia's traditional resources industries, such as gas, oil and mining, and the construction sector. As they thrive, the construction industry in turn benefits from increased demand for associated infrastructure and housing.

In recent years those sectors have been affected by the global downturn, but there

plasterers and roof tilers, as well as localised shortages of floor finishers and glaziers. While confidence seems to be improving within the sector, it seems employers are being increasingly selective in evaluating candidates. Previously there was an acute need to simply address the skills gap, but we're now seeing increased competition for the jobs available, in particular for senior positions.

Take construction estimators for example. According to data from the Australian Department for Immigration and Border Protection, employers regularly receive high numbers of applications for vacant posts, but they often lack the experience required.

With that in mind, it's important to ensure your CV is as competitive as possible. It needs to list key achievements, size and scope of projects worked on, with an emphasis on the value you can bring to that role. Think of ways to demonstrate how your experience dovetails with the specific sectors a potential employer works in, or network in the same circles as influencers to increase your visibility.

HEALTHCARE

Historically, the healthcare sector has been one of the most demanding sectors for skilled workers, and is one of the busiest marketplaces still.

The need for skilled healthcare workers is to some extent down to volume. As a growing country, there's a great deal of pressure to ensure the skills and manpower needed are in place, in particular considering the increasing number of families that emigrate to fill shortages elsewhere in the job market. Looking at the 2014-2015 Migration

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new career in Australia are construction, healthcare and white collar professions.

CONSTRUCTION

The Australian economy may have slowed over the last couple of years, but there are

has been an increase in demand for construction-related posts over the last couple of months, both in traditional construction roles such as bricklaying, and opportunities for tradesmen like plumbers or carpenters.

The construction industry seems to be picking up in Queensland and New South Wales in particular, both in terms of new commercial and residential projects.

Looking at the invitation ceilings in the 2014-2015 migration programme, construction managers, structural steel and welding trades, electricians, carpenters and joiners, are among the most in-demand jobs in Australia.

As confidence increases, so too does the availability of skilled work placements. Alongside the positions already listed, the SOL has a range of vocational and white collar positions that are in demand, including project managers, builders and health and safety roles. There is also a national shortage of stonemasons, solid

Programme, more than 60,000 places have been set aside for family visas alone.

The SOL has more than 70 skilled professions from all areas of healthcare, including specialisms in nursing, surgery, psychology, dentistry and medical administration and management.

The Department of Employment states that sonographers, physiotherapists and midwives are in particular demand, with shortages in all three stretching back at least four years. With so many career paths available, it's wise to look at how your medical experience and skillset could be applied to other areas of work within the healthcare sector.

Nursing and medical professionals seem to immediately think of hospitals and government positions, but there are often overlooked opportunities out there, particularly in the aged care sector.

Think about how your skills and experience transfer and apply to those in demand

Smaller, independent employers are perhaps not in a position to source overseas workers, and often need to engage employment agencies as a method of bridging their skills gap.

By taking a proactive approach and showcasing how your relevant experience and skillset can be applied to a vacant position, you can both help address the skills gap in Australia and secure work in a role close to your favoured specialism.

Employers are looking for applicants that have a diverse skillset that could be applied to a variety of healthcare roles, not just specific, niche skills from within a specialist area of medicine.

Demonstrating evidence of team leadership and significant experience within your chosen field, perhaps at managerial or directorial level could be important in bagging you your dream job. Even those roles at entry level that meet the minimum visa requirements are still an attractive prospect to employers,

but it's about promoting your capabilities and value.

WHITE COLLAR JOBS

There is significant demand for a range of positions within the professional services sector. Research showcased in the Manpower Employment Outlook Survey, which canvassed the hiring intentions of more than 1,500 Australian employers, found the service sector reported a hiring outlook increase of nine per cent.

Always reference the SOL and/or Consolidated-SOL to check for roles that both match your specific skillset and have some relevance to your experience gathered to date.

According to the DIBP, the most in demand jobs currently seem to be for accountants, software programmers and computer network professionals.

Barristers, child care centre managers, social workers, solicitors, secondary school teachers, and actuaries, mathematicians and statisticians have so far received low application rates, showing that there are plenty of opportunities for those of you from these sectors.

The market is different but all is not gone. There are still a vast number of opportunities out there for a broad range of professions; some may not immediately fit your preference but a flexible attitude and informed approach to seeking out jobs will put you on the right path to achieving your goal.

Look for opportunities within your sector and related fields of work, and think about how your skills and experience transfer and apply to those in demand. Do your research, and speak to industry professionals with insight into the current market and the nature of opportunities available to help you on your way.



Healthcare is still one of the busiest job markets in Australia

Leanne Short is the UK Recruitment and Migration Manager for ISA Group, one of Australia's leading immigration and overseas recruitment specialists. The company offers support to help navigate the visa skills assessment process, and has expertise in a range of visa types. For further information, visit www.isagroupuk.co.uk or call 0333 577 0082.