

VISA PAK ISSUE 368 — 17 AUGUST 2018

## **WD POST STUDY WORK VISA CHANGES**

Changes to the conditions and duration of WD Post Study Work Visa were announced on 8 August 2018 and will come into effect from 26 November 2018. Transitional arrangements will apply so current students and WD work visa holders are not disadvantaged by the changes.

### **Overview of the post-study work visa changes**

From 26 November 2018 the following changes will apply:

#### *Visa conditions:*

- Post-study work visas will be granted with 'open' work conditions,
- The employer-assisted post-study work visa will be removed, and
- A job offer to get a post-study work visa will not be required.

#### *Visa duration:*

- The open post-study work visa will be granted for one, two, or three years, or for the remainder of the time left on an existing employer-assisted post-study work visa.
- The duration of the visa will depend on the level of the qualification gained and the location of the study.

### **Transitional arrangements for current student visa holders**

From 26 November 2018, current student visa holders will be eligible for a three-year post-study work visa upon successful completion of their qualification(s).

A 'current student' is considered to be anyone who, on 8 August 2018:

- held a student visa; OR
- had a student visa application accepted for processing by INZ; AND
- their student visa was for a programme of study that met the standard requirements (NZQF level and duration) to qualify for a post-study work visa. This includes someone who was studying the first of two qualifications that, once both are completed, would meet the level and duration requirements (e.g. studying at Level 5 but follows this with a Level 6 qualification in the next academic year).

### Transitional arrangements for current post-study work visa holders

Anyone who (as at 8 August 2018) held a...	May be eligible (from 26 November)...
one-year open post-study work visa	for a further two-year open work visa
two-year employer-assisted post-study work visa	to apply for a VOC to have the job and employer stated on their work visa removed

### Applications for a WD work visa received before the 26 November 2018 changes come into effect

#### *New graduates applying for a post-study work visa*

Students who complete their qualification(s) after 8 August 2018 and need to apply for a post-study work visa before the policy changes come into effect in November, will have to apply under the current policy.

Provided they have completed an eligible qualification, they can apply for a one-year open post-study work visa. Following that, they will be able to apply for a further two-year open work visa (as part of the transitional policy).

#### *Open post-study work visa holders*

Holders of a one-year open post-study work visa that expire after 8 August 2018 and before the changes come into effect in November can apply for an employer-assisted post-study work visa under current instructions. They need to meet the requirements to be granted that visa, including a full-time job offer relevant to their qualification.

### Post-study work visa entitlements for new students (from 26 November 2018)

The table below shows what new student visa applicants may be eligible for under the new post-study work visa instructions. A new student visa applicant is someone who, on 8 August 2018, did not hold a student visa and did not have a student visa application accepted for processing.

<b>Level 7 Bachelor's degree qualification or higher</b> Studied for at least 30 weeks in New Zealand	Three-year open post-study work visa
<b>Level 7 Graduate Diploma</b> Studied for at least 30 weeks in New Zealand	One-year open post-study work visa, if the study is in Auckland, and one additional year if they are working towards registration with a professional or trade body Two-year open post-study work visa, if the study is outside Auckland (excluding distance/online learning)*
<b>Other non-degree Level 7 qualification (such as a Diploma)</b> Studied for at least 30 weeks in New Zealand	One-year open post-study work visa, if the study is in Auckland Two-year open post-study work visa, if the study is outside Auckland (excluding distance/online learning)*
<b>One qualification at Level 4 to 6</b> Studied for at least 60 weeks in New Zealand	One-year open post-study work visa, if the study is in Auckland Two-year open post-study work visa, if the study is outside Auckland (excluding distance/online learning)*

<b>Two consecutive qualifications at Levels 4 to 6</b>  Studied for at least 60 weeks in New Zealand (30 weeks per year) and the second qualification is at a higher level than the first	One-year open post-study work visa, if the study is in Auckland
	Two-year open post-study work visa, if the study is outside Auckland (excluding distance/online learning)*

\* To qualify for this, the entire qualification must have been studied at a campus outside Auckland, and successfully completed by 31 December 2021. If the qualification(s) is completed after that date, only a one-year open post-study work visa will be available. One additional year can be applied for if the applicant is a Graduate Diploma graduate and is working towards registration with a professional or trade body.

### Other changes – partners of student visa holders

From 26 November 2018, an open work visa will only be granted to the partner of a student studying towards a Level 7 or 8 qualification where the qualification is specified on the Long Term Skills Shortage List. Previously this only applied to students studying towards a Level 7 qualification. Students studying at Levels 9 and 10 will continue to be able to support a work visa for their partner, regardless of their area of study.

### Further information

[Student factsheet](#)

[Media factsheet](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)