

ACS Guide to Skilled Migration For IT and Data Science professionals



With a huge and growing need for IT and Data Science professionals, Australia is a great place to build a thriving tech career. This handy guide will help you navigate Australia's visa system on your **path to migration success.**





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Introduction

The ACS Guide to Skilled Migration is a comprehensive, end-to-end guide designed to answer the questions asked by thousands of tech professionals considering a move to live in Australia and work in tech.

Who is ACS?

The Australian Computer Society (ACS) is the professional association and largest community for Australia's IT and Data Science professionals.

ACS is authorised to assess the skills and qualifications of IT and Data Science professionals on behalf of the Australian Government.

Did you know?

Skilled ICT migrants have high employment rates in Australia, with over 90% finding jobs, 80% within the IT sector.





Australian skilled migration in brief

Australia has a growing need for skilled ICT professionals like you. Australia needs around 60,000 new IT and Data Science professionals every year and many come from overseas.

To obtain a visa under Australia's skilled migration system, you must:

have an occupation on the relevant Skilled Occupation List

have a suitable skills assessment for the occupation

be invited to apply for a visa

satisfy the Points test







Key terms you need to understand

What are Skilled Occupation Lists?

These are lists of all in-demand occupations in Australia, published by the Australian government. The good news is that most ICT professions are included on these lists.

Examples of skilled occupation lists include:

- Skilled Occupation List (SOL)
- Short-term Skilled Occupation List (STSOL) tend to be for temporary visas
- Regional Occupation List (ROL) Australia's regions have their own needs and may require your ICT skills
- Medium and Long-term Strategic Skills List (MLTSSL) Skills in high demand across Australia, often with permanent visas

What are ANZSCO codes?

- ANZSCO stands for Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations
- Every job title on the occupations lists has its own unique six-digit ANZSCO code
- Example: if you are trying to migrate as a Software Tester (ANZSCO code 261314), you must include that specific ANZSCO code when you lodge your visa Expression of Interest (EOI)

ACS is the authorised assessing authority for a specific set of IT and Data Science ANZSCO codes. If your occupation is assessed by ACS, you must obtain a successful ACS Migration Skills Assessment before you can submit your visa EOI.

For more on the ACS Migration Skills Assessment, see page 18.

How does the 'Points' system work?

In the Australian skilled migration system, points are awarded based on various factors such as age, English proficiency, work experience, education, and other criteria. The higher your points, the better your chances of being invited to apply for a visa.





Five things that increase your odds of acceptance

The following factors can all help you earn points towards a visa:

- 1. Younger applicants typically receive more points than older ones
- 2. Educational qualifications
- 3. Skilled employment experience
- 4. Good English skills
- 5. Willingness to work in a regional area – this may reduce other visa requirements



Stages on your path to migration success

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To obtain a visa from the Australian government, you must first complete a number of steps. Be sure to review each step thoroughly to make sure you understand the process.



Stage 1

Finding the right visa for you

See page 10

Stage 2

Obtaining your ACS Migration Skills Assessment

See page 18

See page 23

Receive an invitation and submit your visa

Stage 1

Find the right visa for you

Australia has many different visas, each with its own requirements, processing time frames and costs. There are three main visa types for IT or Data Science professionals who want to live and work in Australia.



Student visas

For students who want to study IT in Australia. These visas give international students the right to live in Australia while studying at a registered Australian university or training institution.

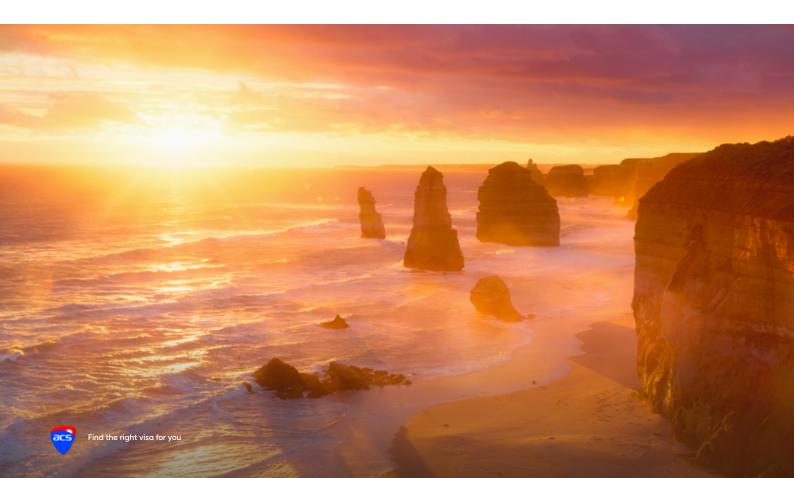
Skilled Independent visas

These visas allow skilled IT of Data Science professionals the to live and work in Australia without needing employer or state or territory government sponsorship.



Sponsored visas

These visas allow skilled IT or Data Science professionals to be sponsored by an Australian company, organisation or state/ territory government that needs their skills.



Two ways to find the right visa for you:

- 1. Discover your ideal visa through the Department of Home Affairs (DoHA) Visa Finder
- 2. Explore Paths to migration success In this section of the guide, ACS matches visa types to your personal circumstances and explains how to use different visa types to achieve your migration goals



International students - see page 12



Young ICT professionals - see page 14



Highly experienced ICT professionals - see page 16

Did you know?

83% of ICT migrants surveyed said migrating to Australia was a good decision, 73% would encourage others to migrate.

Paths to migration success: International students

If you are an international student who wants to study IT or Data Science in Australia, you need to start with a student visa.

- To apply for a Student visa (subclass 500), you must be already enrolled in a course with a recognised Australian educational institution, who will provide you with a Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) to use in your visa application
- While on a student visa you may work up to 48 hours a fortnight

Once you have a student visa there are two paths you can take to permanent residence:

Path 1 Apply for a Skilled Independent visa

Student visa

Work experience and or Professional Year Skilled Independent visa

To earn enough points for a Skilled Independent visa, you can:



Gain relevant experience with an Australian employer while on your student or graduate visa.

or

B Complete the ACS Professional Year while on a graduate visa. This program helps IT graduates transition to working in Australia, earning you points towards a Skilled Independent visa and often leading to full-time job opportunities.

For more on the ACS Professional Year, see page 16.

Explore:

Student visa (subclass 500)

Temporary Graduate visa (subclass 485)

Skilled Independent visa (subclass 189)

ACS Professional Year



Path 2 Seek an employer to sponsor you after graduation

Student visa

Work experience

Employer-sponsored visa

After graduating from an Australian university, look for work in your field during your visa's remaining period. If your employer is impressed, they might sponsor you for an employer-sponsored visa.

Explore:

Employer Nomination Scheme (subclass 186)

Good places to search for tech jobs in Australia include:

LinkedIn.com

seek.com.au

Indeed.com

ACS members can also access:

ACS careers jobs board

What if I can't earn enough points or find a sponsor?

You still have options. A few years relevant experience in your home country might give you enough points to later **qualify for a Skilled Independent visa.**

Paths to migration success:

Young ICT professionals

If you're a young ICT professional with qualifications from outside Australia, for most visas you'll need:

- Three years of relevant work experience, or one year working for an Australian organisation in your field
- A recognised qualification, which many international ICT courses provide
- To pass the ACS Migration Skills Assessment, showing your skills meet Australian standards

If you pass the ACS Migration Skills Assessment, you have three options:

Path 1 Apply for a Skilled Independent visa



Explore:

Employer Nomination Scheme (subclass 186)

Temporary Skill Shortage visa (subclass 482)

Good places to search for tech jobs in Australia include:

LinkedIn.com

seek.com.au

Indeed.com

ACS members can also access:

ACS careers jobs board

Poth 2 Apply for a Skilled Independent visa

Pass the ACS Migration Skills Assessment

Submit Expression of Interest to DoHA If successful, receive invitation to apply for visa

This visa is designed for passport holders with skills that Australia needs, allowing them to live and work anywhere in the country permanently. Unlike some other visas, you don't need someone to sponsor or nominate you. However, you must receive an invitation to apply, and you must be under 45 years of age.

Please note: If you have studied and worked overseas, you might face more challenges in meeting the requirements for this visa. However, if you have at least three years of relevant experience and hold a recognised degree in IT or Data Science, you could still pass a points test and be eligible.

Explore:

Skilled Independent visa (subclass 189)

Path 3 Apply for a Regional visa nomination

Regional visa nominations are similar to employer sponsorship but provided by state or territory governments. They often require you to live and work in a specific region and are usually processed faster with a higher success rate.

For Regional visas by state and territory see page 26.

Explore:

Skilled Nominated visa (subclass 190)



ACS Professional Year - helping graduates enter Australia's tech sector

The ACS Professional Year in IT is a job-readiness program that bridges the gap between full-time study and employment in Australia's tech sector.

The program includes a guaranteed internship and the opportunity to build valuable connections working with trainers, IT professionals, and industry mentors.

Anyone completing the ACS Professional Year may be able to claim five points towards their skilled migration under an eligible IT skilled occupation.

Learn more

Paths to migration success:

Highly experienced ICT professionals

If you have extensive experience in a relevant field, there are several visa options you can explore.

Path 1 Apply for a Skilled Independent visa

Passing the points test for a Skilled Independent visa gets harder as you get older. But lots of experience, good English skills and other criteria can help you accumulate enough points to qualify.



Check the Department of Home Affairs points calculator to see where you stand

Explore:

Skilled Independent visa (subclass 189)

Path 3 Look for an Australian business to sponsor you

Australian businesses need skilled workers. If you find an employer who needs your skills, they might sponsor you. If your company has an Australian branch, they could transfer you.

Explore:

Employer Nomination Scheme (subclass 186)

Path 2 Apply for a Global Talent visa

A permanent visa for professionals who are distinguished in their field and who can help to advance the Australian tech sector. You will need a nominator – ACS can provide nominations.

Explore:

Global Talent visa (subclass 858)

How to apply for ACS nomination >>

Path 4 Seek a Regional visa nomination

Regional visa nominations are similar to employer sponsorship but provided by state or territory governments. They often require you to live and work in a specific region and are usually processed faster with a higher success rate.

Explore:

Skilled Nominated visa (subclass 190)

Once you have found the right visa for you, it's time to obtain your ACS Migration Skills Assessment.

Stage 2

Obtain your ACS Migration Skills Assessment

The ACS Migration Skills Assessment is a critical part of your migration journey. Following these steps carefully and in order will increase your chances of a successful assessment.



Get your skills assessment application right first time

Designed to help applicants to the ACS Migration Skills Assessment check eligibility, choose assessment pathways and gain answers to their questions, ACS AppAssist is a 30-minute, one-on-one consultation with a member of the ACS migration team.



results letter

Step 1

Make sure ACS is the right assessing authority for you

ACS assesses for wide range of IT and Data Science occupations. Before you apply, make sure your occupation is on the list. Check the list of ANZSCO codes assesed by ACS.

Tip:

If you are a student or recent graduate, look for occupations that match your qualifications.

Step 2 Choose an Assessment Pathway

Most of the 39,000 people we help on their migration journey follow one of four Assessment Pathways. The portal will ask you to nominate a pathway when you start your application.

Tip:

Be sure to choose the Assessment Pathway that best describes you – choosing the wrong pathway will almost certainly lead to a negative assessment.

General Skills	For IT or Data Science professionals with recognised tertiary qualifications and several years of experience. Application fee: \$1,450.00
Temporary Graduate 485	For international students who have completed an Australian Bachelor degree of higher with an IT or Data Science major and want to remain in Australia temporarily. Application fee: \$600.00
Post Australian Study	For international students who have completed an Australian bachelor's degree or higher with an IT or Data Science major who are seeking permanent residency. Application fee: \$1,100
Recognition of Prior Learning	For seasoned IT or Data Science professionals who have ample experience but lack formal qualifications in their fields. Application fee: \$605.00

Step 3 Check your eligibility and

Each Assessment Pathway has different eligibility criteria and document requirements.

Tip:

Before you settle on an Assessment Pathway, be sure to review the eligibility criteria on the ACS Migration Skills Assessment website. See **Assessment Pathways and eligibility.**

prepare your documents

Once you've confirmed that you meet the eligibility criteria, gather the documents you will need to complete your online application.

The portal will prompt you to upload documents as required, with links to examples of what these documents **must include.**

Tip:

Be sure to check the document requirements. Many applications are delayed by incorrectly submitted evidence.



Step 4 Complete and submit your application

The application for ACS Migration Skills assessment is done through the intuitive and easy-to-use Applicant portal, with clear guidance at every step.



How ACS simplifies the process:

- You can scan your proof of identity documents directly into the portal
- The system automatically suggests one or more ANZSCO codes that match your skills
- You can select up to three ANZSCO codes for assessment within the same application fee, boosting your chances of a positive outcome
- When uploading documents, the system provides visual examples to help you avoid errors
- You can authorise a Registered Migration Agent to complete your application for you

Start your application without delay

You can start you application and come back to it any time. All you need are your **proof of identity documents** and the means to pay your application fee.

Apply now

For full details of the ACS skills assessment process, visit the **ACS Migration skills assessment website.**

Tip:

Make sure you keep all the documents you collect for your skills assessment to use later in your visa application.

Step 5 Receive your ACS results letter

Once your application is assessed, you will receive an ACS Outcome Letter confirming whether your assessment was successful.

You must submit this letter to the Department of Home Affairs (DoHA) when applying for your visa.

Complimentary ACS Membership

A complimentary 12-month ACS membership is offered as part of your ACS Migration Skills Assessment. ACS members enjoy a wide range of membership benefits including exclusive events, offers, training and career development opportunities.



Stage 3

Submit your Expression of Interest

Once you have obtained a successful ACS Migration Skills Assessment, you can to submit your visa Expression of Interest (EOI) to the Department of Home Affairs.

Step 1

If you haven't already, create an ImmiAccount to access Department of Home Affairs online services.

Click here

Step 2

Submit your EOI at: SkillSelect – an online system for professionals who want to apply for skilled migration to Australia. SkillSelect allows the Australian Government and regional governments to invite skilled workers to apply for visas.

Submit your EOI

Important

When submitting your EOI, be sure to specify:

- the visa class
- the ANZSCO occupation code (this will be detailed in your ACS Migration Skills Assessment Outcome letter)

Step 3

Wait until DoHA sends you an invitation to apply for the visa.



Stage 4

Submit your visa application

Once you receive an invitation from DoHA, you can apply for the specified visa. All you need to do is Log into your **ImmiAccount** and complete and submit your application. **Good luck!**

Visa processing times

For an indication of processing times for your selected visa, use the DoHA visa processing time guide tool.

Tip:

Keep all the documents you collect for your skills assessment and use them to complete your visa application.







Regional visa nominations

Regional visas in Australia are offered by state or territory governments, similar to employer sponsorship. They are usually processed faster with a higher success rate, but require you to live and work in a specific specific state, territory, or regional area. If you're having difficulty obtaining an independent or employer-sponsored visa, a Regional visa could be a good alternative.

Explore:

Employer Nomination Scheme (subclass 186)

Regional and state sponsorship visas:

- Australian Capital Territory
- New South Wales
- Northern Territory
- ➤ Queensland
- → South Australia
- ➤ Tasmania
- ➤ Victoria
- → Western Australia

Did you know?

Skilled migration to regional Australia offers great career and lifestyle opportunities. Today, 27% of ICT migrants claim to reside outside of Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane up from only 18% in 2017. 「日本」

10 tips from previous applicants

- 1. Research Australian demand for your occupation. Check occupations and ANZSCO codes assessed by ACS. To boost your job prospects, adapt your skills and knowledge based on in-demand skills, emerging technologies, and promising industries.
- 2. Get to know the points-based system used in Australian skilled migration to maximise your points to increase your chances of receiving an invitation.
- 3. Gain relevant work experience. Prioritise gaining relevant work experience in your field before migrating. Australian employers often value local work experience, so consider internships, freelance projects or remote work with Australian businesses to establish a track record.
- 4. Get familiar with the ACS skills assessment process used to validate your IT or Data Science qualifications and experience.
 - ➤ ACS Migration Skills Assessment
- 5. Boost your English skills by taking courses or prepping for tests like IELTS or TOEFL. Higher scores earn more points and better communication helps you get a job and succeed at work.

- 6. Tailor your resume and cover letter when applying for jobs. Highlight your relevant skills, experience and achievements clearly and concisely.
- 7. Stay up to date with visa requirements: regularly check the **DoHA immigration website** for the most accurate and up-to-date information.
- 8. Networking and professional connections. ACS International Membership makes you a member of Australia's largest tech community. Apply now for a 33% discount.
- 9. Consider state and territory sponsorship opportunities: Research the nomination criteria and assess whether you meet the requirements.
- 10. Seek professional advice: Consider consulting a registered migration agent or immigration lawyer, who can assess your eligibility and guide you through the application process.





Preparing for life in Australia

Once your visa application has been accepted, it's time to start preparing for your new life in Australia and the next stage of your thriving tech career.





Finding work

Find out about work opportunities available in Australia. Search jobs on the Government's Workforce Australia website.

Click here

Your rights at work and study

Visa holders and migrant workers have the same workplace entitlements and protections as all other employees in Australia.

Important things to know about your rights.

Your rights

Students can see their rights and protections.

Students

Understanding Australia's government

Australia has three levels of government which provide services for migrants and residents.

Click here

Getting a tax file number

Australian workers pay income tax. To receive an income in Australia, you will need a tax file number (TFN).

Click here

83% said migrating to Australia was a good decision, 73% would encourage others to migrate.

Help with English

Free English classes can be accessed via the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP).

Click here

Health and wellbeing

Permanent resident visa holders generally have access to health care under Medicare. Medicare is the Australian Government's national health care scheme, which helps pay for some medical expenses. Temporary visa holders may require Overseas Visitors Health Cover (OVHC), depending on the visa type.



Getting to know Australian culture

Australia is a multicultural society that embraces diverse lifestyles and customs. While you don't need to abandon your own culture, it's helpful to learn about Australian culture and adapt to it. For instance, Australians commonly use first names when addressing each other.

Australia's multicultural broadcaster SBS offers one of the best guides to these kinds of cultural rules.



Regional Australia is benefiting from the changes to visa rules implemented in 2019:

27% said they were residing outside of Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane up from only 18% in 2017.





Powering Australia's technology brilliance

We champion the technologies, people and skills critical to Australia's future.

Contact us

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