AustraliaMigrate Examines Skilled Migration Points Test Reform

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CHATSWOOD, NSW - July 09, 2026 -

AustraliaMigrate, a registered migration agency established in 2000, has published an examination of the Australian Government's planned reform of the skilled migration points test. The reform was confirmed in the 2026?27 Federal Budget, with consultation opening in June 2026 and draft legislation expected by December 2026.

The points test determines which applicants receive invitations for the Skilled Independent (subclass 189), Skilled Nominated (subclass 190) and Skilled Work Regional (subclass 491) visas. The Government has stated that the redesigned test will give greater weight to younger, highly educated and higher-skilled applicants, following recommendations from the 2023 Migration Strategy and subsequent Treasury and Home Affairs reviews.

According to the AustraliaMigrate examination, the areas under review include age scoring, the weighting of educational qualifications, English language bands, partner points, regional study credits and the 65-point

minimum threshold. The examination notes that work experience claims are also expected to face closer scrutiny, with points likely to be limited to experience gained after an applicant became formally qualified in their nominated occupation.

"This is the most substantial redesign of the points test in more than a decade, and it will produce winners and losers," said Ian Singer, Director and Principal Registered Migration Agent at AustraliaMigrate. "Applicants who score well today on partner points, older age bands or overlapping study and work claims cannot assume those points will survive the redesign. The current test is a known quantity, and the next one is not."

The examination sets out practical steps for candidates who are already eligible. Applicants with a competitive score under the current test should complete their skills assessment, sit their English test and lodge an Expression of Interest in SkillSelect without waiting for the new structure. Those below the current invitation scores should identify which proposed factors work in their favour, such as strong qualifications or superior English results, and prepare evidence in advance.

Mr Singer said the reform lands in an already tighter program. "The 2026?27 program holds 185,000 permanent places with around 55,000 reserved for offshore applicants, and net overseas migration is forecast to keep falling. A redesigned points test on top of a smaller offshore share means preparation quality will separate successful applicants from the rest. Candidates should treat the current program year as the window in which the rules are known."

The examination also addresses common misconceptions reported by the agency, including the belief that lodged applications will be reassessed under the new test. Australia Migrate advises that applications and invitations issued under the current test are assessed under the rules in force at the time, which is a further reason for eligible candidates to act during the consultation period rather than after implementation.

AustraliaMigrate has published guidance on points planning, skills assessment timing and state nomination strategy for each affected visa subclass on its website. The firm monitors Department of Home Affairs and Treasury announcements and updates its guidance as the consultation progresses.

AustraliaMigrate is based in Chatswood, Sydney, and has assisted individuals, families and businesses with Australian visa applications for more than 25 years. The firm's agents are registered with the Office of the Migration Agents Registration Authority and provide advice across skilled, employer-sponsored, partner, parent and student visa categories. For more information about the Skilled Independent visa, state-nominated visas or the points test examination, visit the AustraliaMigrate website: https://www.australiamigrate.com

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Australia Migrate Pty Ltd

AustraliaMigrate is a trusted leader in immigration & visa services. Led by Director Ian Singer and a team of five registered migration agents, we provide expert visa solutions for individuals and businesses of all sizes.

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