How to work as a medical practitioner in Australia: a step-by-step guide

Standard pathway

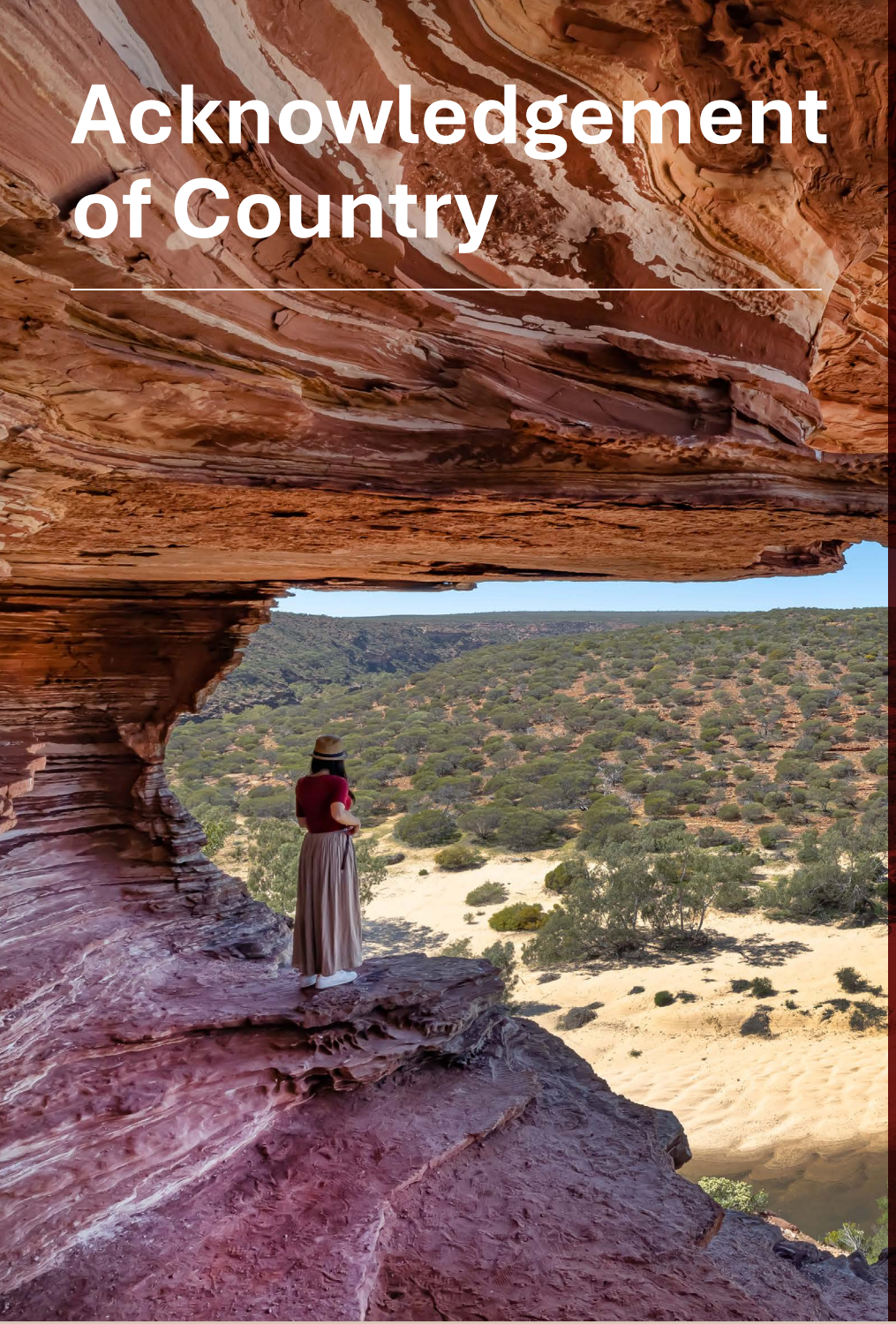
This guide was prepared on behalf of the Health Workforce Taskforce under the auspices of the Health Ministers Meeting. It responds to a recommendation in the final report from the independent review of Australia's regulatory settings relating to overseas health practitioners to centralise front-end support across jurisdictions for this cohort.

© Health Workforce Taskforce 2026

All rights reserved.

This material may be copied, modified, and shared for non-commercial purposes only. Distribution for profit, modification for commercial purposes, or resale of this work is not permitted.

Acknowledgement of Country



We acknowledge that we stand on Countries that always were, and always will be, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands. We pay our respects to Elders past and present. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Lands, Skies and Waterways across this continent, recognising and paying respect to their ongoing connections to land, water, community and culture. We are committed to respectful and collaborative ways of working, ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are meaningfully included.

Yulang Gurray – The Ripple Effect
Artist: Mitchell Groat of Marramarra Design

Artwork story
The artwork tells a story that begins at the centre and flows outward like a ripple effect, symbolising welcome, connection and lasting impact. Each element builds upon the last, reflecting how the Health Workforce Taskforce's work begins with cultural respect and extends to support individuals, systems and communities across the nation. The ripples represent how one respectful action can create widespread, positive change and reaching every corner of Australia's health landscape.

Introduction

This series of ***How to work as a medical practitioner in Australia: a step-by-step guide*** is for international medical graduates (IMGs) who received their medical qualification from a country other than Australia or New Zealand and want to understand the key steps to becoming registered and eligible to work in Australia. It is relevant to those already living in Australia as well as those undertaking the process from overseas.

Each guide collates key information from the multiple bodies involved in the registration, migration, relocation and employment processes, providing an overview of key steps, helpful tips and links to further information.

The information is tailored to those looking to stay and work in Australia over the medium to long term. Those looking to work for a shorter period (e.g. 2 years or less) or to undertake research or study may find some information helpful, but should also refer to the Medical Board and Department of Home Affairs websites for more relevant information.

Standard pathway

This guide for the Standard pathway is specifically for applicants undertaking the Medical Board of Australia (Medical Board) Standard pathway to registration, which is for those who are not eligible for the Competent Authority, Specialist or Expedited Specialist pathways. This pathway leads to general registration.

To find the right pathway, use the Medical Board's self-assessment tool. See the first step of this guide for more information.

Before you begin

Please note:

- This is intended as general information only and not specific advice on any individual circumstances. Some steps or sequences may not be relevant to your personal circumstances and there may be programs, courses and education pathways that are not listed here. You should seek advice specific to your circumstances before taking relevant action.
- The provided timeframes and cost ranges are estimates only. Actual timing and costs can differ significantly based on individual circumstances and other factors.
- The information is subject to change, so you should always check the relevant body's website for the most up-to-date and accurate information.

The information in this guide is current as at June 2026.

Other complementary resources

For general settlement information and resources to assist you and your family to settle into Australian life, see *Moving to Australia: a guide for health professionals* (*Moving to Australia* guide).[S1]

To orient to the Australian health system and prepare for safe practice, access *Working in Australia: an orientation to the health system* (*Working in Australia* orientation).[E41]

Using this guide

At the start of this document, you will find a contents page and a flowchart. You can click on these to jump to the relevant sections. To return to the contents page and flowchart, click the button or Flowchart button located at the bottom of each page.

The body of the document contains the main steps. You can use the navigation bar at the top to jump to the relevant sections. Each step includes key information and links to external websites for further information. The code following each link corresponds to an entry in the list of links at the end of the document, making it easy for you to find the link again. Links in red will take you to other sections inside this document.

See the Resources section at the end of the document for:

- additional information and context on some relevant topics
- a list of key documents required for the process
- a glossary and list of acronyms used in the guide
- a list of the links referred to in the steps.

This is an interactive contents page, please click to the relevant section.

Flowchart

1. Preparation

1.1 Access information on working as an international medical graduate (IMG) in Australia

1.2 Prepare to start the process

1.3 Prepare evidence of English competency

2. Pre-registration

2.1 Apply for primary source verification (PSV) of qualifications

2.2 Undertake the AMC Computer Adaptive Test Multiple Choice Question (CAT MCQ or Part 1) exam

2.3 Undertake AMC clinical exam and receive AMC certificate

3. Securing employment

3.1 Apply for employment

3.2 Complete interview(s) and screening checks

3.3 Receive and accept offer of employment

4. Limited or provisional registration

4.1 Undertake pre-employment structured clinical interview (PESCI) *(Conditional)*

4.2 Apply for limited or provisional registration

5. Visa

5.1 Apply for visa *(Conditional)*

6. Relocation

6.1 Relocate to Australia *(Conditional)*

7. Pre-employment

7.1 Apply for Medicare provider number (MPN) and Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) prescriber number

7.2 Arrange professional indemnity insurance

8. Employment

8.1 Complete onboarding and start job

8.2 Complete requirements for general registration

8.3a Undertake AMC clinical exam and receive AMC certificate *(Conditional)*

8.3b Enrol in and complete the workplace based assessment (WBA) program *(Conditional)*

8.4 Renew limited or provisional registration *(Conditional)*

9. General registration and beyond

9.1 Apply for general registration

9.2 Research your options following general registration

Resources

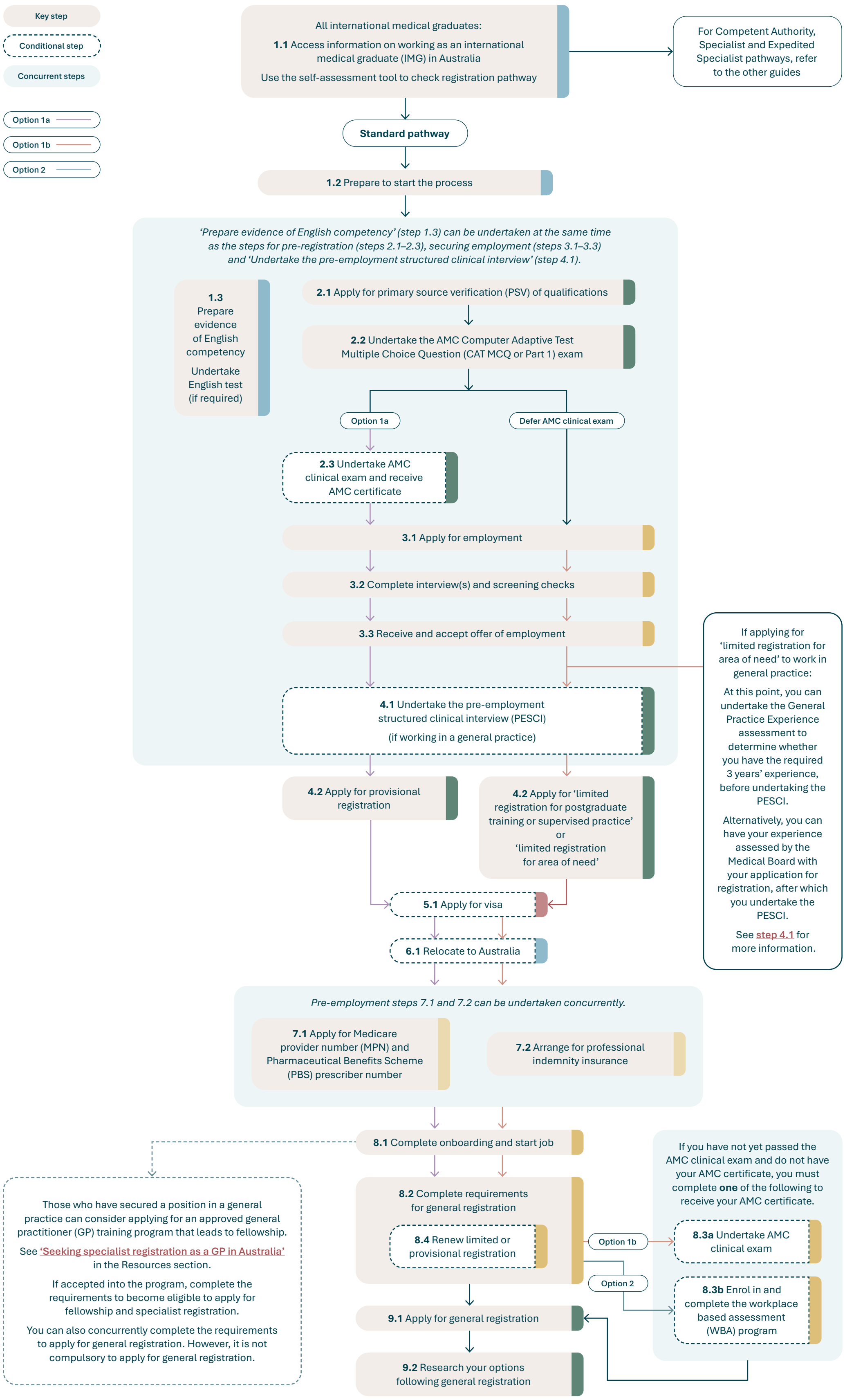
Flowchart

The sequences of steps to becoming registered and working as a medical practitioner in Australia are not fixed, as there can be many variations within each pathway. The flowchart illustrates commonly followed journeys. Some steps or sequences may not be relevant to your personal circumstances and there may be programs, courses and education pathways that are not listed here. Each person's journey is unique, so ensure you do your research and seek professional assistance (e.g. from a migration agent or lawyer) or clarification from the relevant bodies if required.

The steps in this flowchart are action-oriented and are an overview only. It is important to review the details within each step to fully understand the requirements, costs and timing.

Take note, you must have a valid visa with work rights and hold registration to work as a medical practitioner in Australia.

Click on each step or scroll through to carefully review the details including requirements, costs and timing.



1. Preparation

1.1 Access information on working as an international medical graduate (IMG) in Australia

Use the self-assessment tool to check your registration pathway

Summary and purpose

Gather information to understand the journey to work as a medical practitioner in Australia. This will help you decide whether Australia is the right destination for you and, if so, where you would like to live.

Undertake the self-assessment tool[R7] on the Medical Board of Australia (Medical Board) website to find your registration pathway.

Actions

Research what it is like to live in Australia to help you decide if it is the right destination.

- Speak to colleagues, family and friends about living in Australia in general. Read about other people's experiences on the internet.
- Read the *Moving to Australia* guide[S1] for information.

Research where you want to live in Australia and make a shortlist.

- Research the different costs of living, lifestyles, climates and education opportunities in various locations around Australia.
- Research the job market in different parts of Australia. Research supply and demand for your profession and the types of positions available, as well as average salaries. Salaries and working conditions vary between states and territories, and private and public employers. Most job advertisements include salary information.

Tips and considerations

Choosing where to live and work in Australia

- Australia is a large and diverse country. Lifestyles can differ greatly depending on where you live in Australia, including whether you live in a metropolitan, regional, rural or remote area. For example, in some areas, having a car and being able to drive could be essential for getting to work and everyday activities. Read the *Moving to Australia* guide[S1] for more information.
- Australian states and territories each have separate public health systems with different features, though free public hospital care is a fundamental feature in all locations. See the state and territory public health department websites[E39] for more information. In addition to public health providers, there are also private health providers and hospitals. Read about some of the differences between working in the public and private systems.
- There may be financial and non-financial incentives for IMGs moving to Australia, especially to work in regional, rural and remote areas, where more employment opportunities may also be available. Incentives differ based on the employer and location.
- If you work as a general practitioner (GP) or specialist in private practice or a private hospital, you will likely need to bill Medicare, Australia's public health insurance scheme. Take note that, for 10 years after first registering, IMGs are subject to section 19AB of the *Health Insurance Act 1973* (Cth), also known as the '10-year moratorium'. This means you generally need to work in locations with workforce shortages to be allowed to bill Medicare. If you are planning to work in a salaried position, such as in a public hospital, you generally do not need to bill Medicare. There may be some exceptions. See 'Section 19AB and section 19AA of the Health Insurance Act' in the Resources section.

Tips and considerations

Employment opportunities

- Be aware that successfully completing the steps towards registration (such as passing exams) does not guarantee employment.
- To improve your chances of securing a job, it is important to understand the different types of positions in Australia and apply for those that are suitable for your training, skills and experience.
- It is also important to research Australian recruitment processes for the type of position you are seeking. Understand the common selection criteria employers use to assess applicants. Take note that not all applicants who meet selection criteria are interviewed as employers may choose to interview those, for example, who have more recent experience and may require less supervision.
- Employment opportunities in metropolitan areas differ from those in regional areas. There are often more employment opportunities in regional and rural areas for the medical profession, where there is more demand for services and less competition for positions.
- It is important to consider how long you are willing and able to stay in the location of your choice, as certain visa types and relocation incentives may have conditions on changing employers in the short term. Additionally, when you first start practising in Australia, you will have to complete a period of supervised practice that is tied to your position. This means if you want to change employers or position, you will have to seek approval from the Medical Board. The duration of supervised practice varies between pathways and the time taken to complete the requirements.

Research how to register as a medical practitioner with the Medical Board in order to be allowed to work in Australia.

- Check whether your primary medical qualification, medical school and graduation year is recognised in Australia.[R15]
- Read about the registration types[R5] and pathways[R7] for IMGs.
- Use the Medical Board's online self-assessment tool[R7] to check which registration pathway you are eligible for.
- Read about the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency's (Ahpra's) English language skills requirements.[R9] Use the self-assessment tool[R8] for English language skills pathways and read the evidence guide on that page to understand how you can demonstrate your English competency.
- For tips and guidance, reach out to other health professionals from similar backgrounds or with similar experience who have recently completed the process.

Tips and considerations

Registration

- The National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (NRAS) is Australia's national system for regulating health practitioners. It is a national scheme, which means that all health practitioners registered under the scheme are required to meet the same national professional standards, regardless of the state or territory in which they practise. This also allows them to practise across state and territory borders without having to re-register in each jurisdiction. The NRAS regulates 16 health professions, including medical, nursing, midwifery and a range of allied health professions. These professions are overseen by 15 National Boards.

  If you want to work in one of these registered professions in Australia, **you must be registered with the relevant National Board before you commence any work**. Being registered means you have been assessed as suitably trained, qualified and safe to practise. In order to be registered, you must meet the registration standards set by the relevant National Board for your profession. You cannot call yourself a medical practitioner or use a specialist title in Australia before you are registered to practise, even if you have been practising overseas. This is because the titles of registered health professionals are 'protected'[R2] by law.
- The Medical Board sets out the registration standards all medical practitioners must meet to apply for and maintain registration. Read the registration standards[R6] documents carefully as they contain critical information for your registration.

  Ahpra works with the National Boards, including the Medical Board, to regulate registered health practitioners. Registration applications are submitted through the Ahpra portal. If your application is granted, you will be registered with the Medical Board and your information will be included in the Register of practitioners,[R3] which Ahpra manages. Read about Ahpra's 5 core functions.[R1]

Continued on next page

Registration

The Australian Medical Council (AMC) is a separate body from the Medical Board and Ahpra. It accredits education providers and training courses for the medical professions, and is responsible for verifying the qualifications of IMGs and administering exams for those on the Standard pathway. It also maintains the AMC portal, which stores documents on verification of IMG qualifications, AMC exam outcomes and specialist assessment outcomes. The portal is accessed by the Medical Board for registration purposes and by Australian medical colleges for specialist assessment purposes.

Specialist medical colleges (or 'medical colleges') are also separate bodies from the Medical Board, Ahpra and the AMC. There are 16 medical colleges who are accredited by the AMC to provide specialist training programs. These programs of study are approved by the Medical Board as providing a qualification for specialist medical registration. Medical colleges are also appointed by the Medical Board to assess specialist IMGs for the Specialist pathway.

- IMGs have a number of pathways to registration and practice in Australia. Each pathway has different eligibility and assessment requirements. An IMG may be on more than one pathway at the same time – for example, the Specialist and Competent Authority pathways, or the Specialist and Specialist – area of need (AoN) pathways. An IMG may also move from one pathway to another if they meet the eligibility requirements.

  Irrespective of the registration pathway, all medical practitioners must meet the recency of practice registration standard. An applicant may be granted registration in certain circumstances even if they don't meet recency of practice requirements as the Medical Board considers a number of factors when assessing applications, such as their registration and practice history; the nature and scope of practice prior to their break from practice; any CPD or education completed; as well as the proposed position and the intended scope of practice. The Medical Board will determine the appropriate level of supervision and any professional development requirements.

- There are different types of medical registration.[R5] Those most relevant to IMGs wishing to work in Australia for the medium to long term are limited registration, provisional registration, general registration, and specialist registration. Most IMGs will start working in Australia on limited or provisional registration, under supervision and other conditions, before gaining general or specialist registration, allowing them to work without supervision. The exception is IMGs who are eligible for the Expedited Specialist pathway, who can directly apply for specialist registration.
- General registration does not equate to registration as a general practitioner (GP). **General practice** in Australia[E11] is a specialty and is similar to roles such as primary care physician or family physician in some countries. GPs hold specialist registration in general practice. If you gain **general registration**, it will allow you to work in non-specialist positions, such as a resident or registrar in a hospital. From there, you can embark on other pathways to specialist registration or choose not to specialise.

  If relevant to you, see 'Seeking specialist registration as a GP in Australia' in the Resources section.

Research your visa options (if you do not already have a visa).

- If you do not already have a visa, use the Department of Home Affairs (Home Affairs) Visa Finder[V1] to find out more about visa options. Check your eligibility and which one meets your needs. Read about skilled visas[V6] and other types of visas[V2] as relevant.
- If you plan to seek employer sponsorship for a skilled visa, the employer will generally tell you which visa(s) they can sponsor. Review the different types of visas to determine whether their offer meets your needs.

Tips and considerations

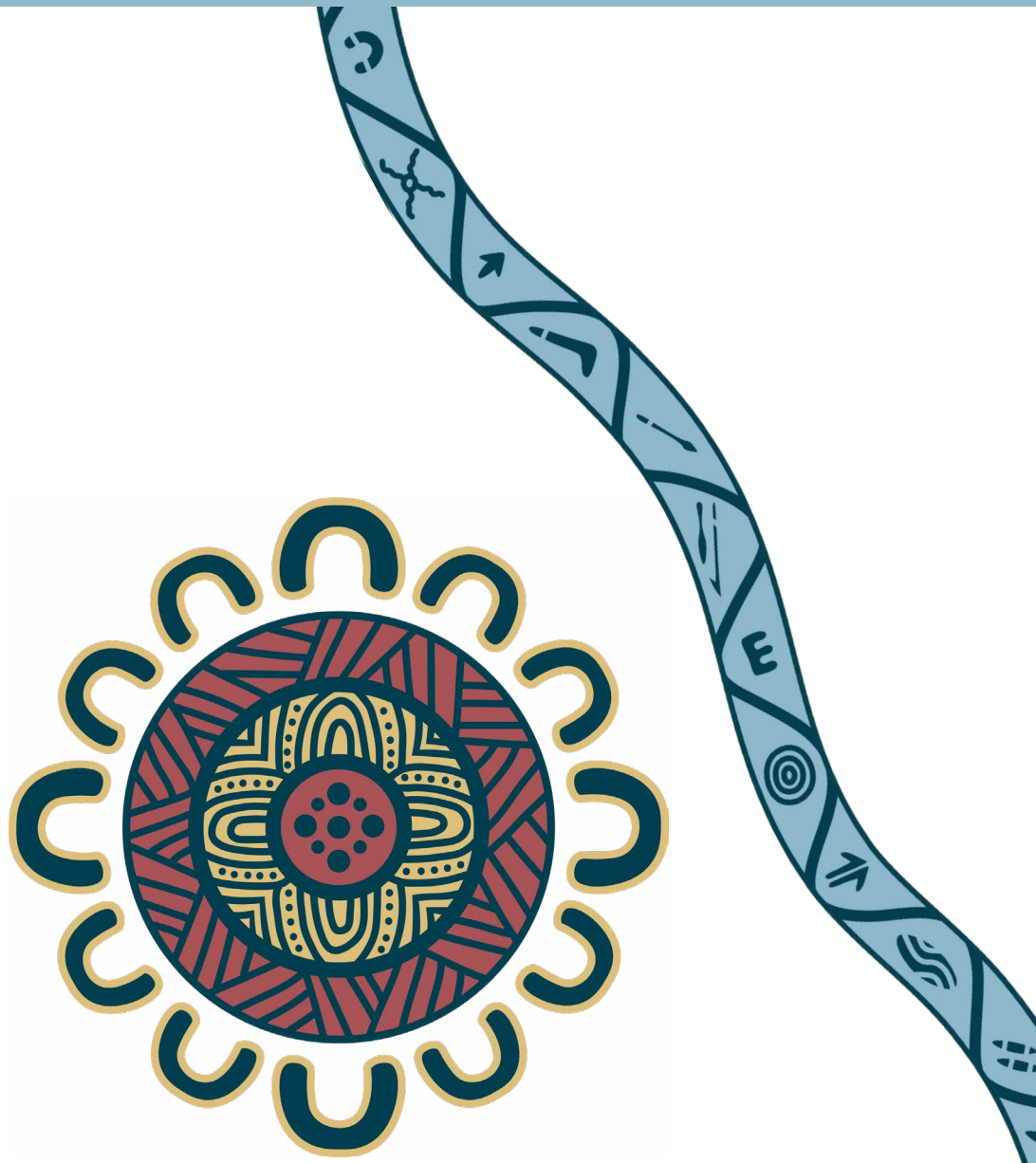
Work rights and skilled visas

- In Australia, Home Affairs is responsible for immigration and visas.
- You must have a visa that allows you to work in Australia. There are many types of visas, including family and skilled visas. If you already have a visa, use Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO)[V19] to check whether you have work rights and whether there are any conditions you need to know about.
- Some skilled visas require a skills assessment.[V7] For medical practitioners, the Medical Board is a recognised skills assessment authority, meaning your registration with the Medical Board will generally be accepted as your skills assessment. The type of registration required differs between visa types.
- Skilled visas can be employer sponsored, which means the visa is linked to your employer.
  - Not all costs will be covered by your employer. Find out more about sponsor obligations.[V9]
  - Some employer sponsored visas have conditions relating to changing employers, roles, work locations and more. Each visa type is different, so check the specific conditions that apply to the visa.
  - You typically need to be granted at least limited or provisional registration for an employer sponsored visa.
  - Not all employers offer sponsorship.
- You can apply for a skilled visa independently, meaning it would not be linked to your employer. However, to apply for this type of visa, you would typically need to hold general or specialist registration to fulfil the skills assessment component.
  - IMGs on the Standard, Competent Authority or Specialist pathway only become eligible for general and specialist registration after completing a period of supervised practice in Australia. This means that an independent skilled visa will generally only be available for an IMG on one of these pathways after you have worked as a medical practitioner in Australia for a period of time and completed the registration pathway.
  - IMGs on the Expedited Specialist pathway are eligible to apply for specialist registration directly, and so may be eligible to apply for an independent skilled visa without first completing the period of supervised practice and the registration pathway.
  - To apply for an independent skilled visa, you usually need to submit an expression of interest with Home Affairs and wait for an invitation to lodge an application.
  - Each visa type is different, so check the specific conditions that apply to the visa.

Continued on next page

Work rights and skilled visas

- Certain skilled visa types also have an age restriction of 45 years at the time of application. Exemptions may exist for certain visas if you meet the requirements.
- If you plan to arrive in Australia on a temporary visa and later apply for a permanent visa, ensure you research the pathways to permanent residency to choose the most suitable temporary visa.
- If you are considering applying for a permanent visa and would like to work in a position that requires you to bill Medicare, be aware that in addition to section 19AB requirements, as a permanent resident you must fulfil the requirements of section 19AA. This means you must have specialist registration or be actively working towards it to be eligible to bill Medicare. Read more about section 19AA.



Research the cost and timeframe of the whole process.

- It is important to understand the costs and timeframes for applying for registration and a visa, certifying and translating documents, taking exams and relocating.

  Note that not all employers provide financial support for this process.

Tips and considerations

Costs and timeframe for the whole process

- The processes to seek registration, apply for a visa and relocate can be costly and can take a long time. Total time required can vary greatly depending on your qualifications and where you received them, your visa type, the relocation process and many other factors. You may wish to research online and read about the experiences of medical practitioners from similar backgrounds as you.
- Take note that many employers in Australia do not cover your costs. Be prepared to cover these costs and budget accordingly.
- Upon starting work in Australia, be aware that you may not receive your first pay for a number of weeks, as many employers pay salary retrospectively (i.e. for time worked). When you receive your first pay may also depend on payroll cycles and completion of onboarding requirements.

Cost of the process

See the individual steps of this guide for information on costs. In addition to these, you may also wish to plan for other costs associated with:

- taking exam preparation courses (Standard and Specialist pathways)
- resitting exams in case you are not successful on the first attempt (Standard and Specialist pathways)
- travelling and finding accommodation to take the exams (Standard and Specialist pathways)
- requesting documents such as criminal history checks, plus translating and certification costs
- undergoing health exams and receiving vaccinations
- hiring a relocation specialist and/or migration agent
- relocating to Australia. See the *Moving to Australia guide*[S1] for more details.

Timeframe for the process

The timeframe for the whole journey to achieve general or specialist registration varies greatly based on a number of factors and the registration pathway. Depending on the pathway and other factors, from the time an IMG starts the pre-registration process, it may take a few months to up to 4 years or more to be granted general or specialist registration. The Standard and Specialist pathways typically take the longest, and the Expedited Specialist pathway is generally the fastest.

An IMG on the Standard, Competent Authority or Specialist pathway can start paid employment once you have been granted limited or provisional registration. You can then complete your supervised practice period and work towards your general or specialist registration. The supervised practice period is most commonly 3–24 months full-time equivalent for those on the Specialist pathway, and a minimum of 12 months full-time equivalent for those on the Standard or Competent Authority pathway.

An IMG on the Expedited Specialist pathway is eligible to apply for specialist registration directly and can start paid employment once registration has been granted and your supervised practice plan has been approved. The supervised practice period is typically 6 months full-time equivalent.

Refer to the steps in this guide for the approximate timeframes for each part of the journey.

Tips and considerations

Seeking professional assistance for the process

- If you are considering using a relocation specialist, research the different options and costs, and ensure the relocation specialist is reputable.
- You can choose to use a migration agent or lawyer to assist with the visa process. Review the Home Affairs information on who can help.[V14] If you use a migration **agent**, choose one who is registered with the Office of Migration Agents Registration Authority (OMARA).[V15] Migration **lawyers** are not registered with OMARA but rather with individual states and territories' register of lawyers.
- If you are considering working in general practice or in community health, you can seek assistance from Rural Workforce Agencies.[E18] These agencies help health professionals seeking to work in outer metropolitan, regional and rural communities with support to secure employment, access financial grants for relocation, find settlement information and more. There are different agencies in each state and territory (except the Australian Capital Territory).

1.2 Prepare to start the process

Summary and purpose

Make the right preparations to streamline your journey.

Cost

There may be costs for requesting, translating and certifying documents. These costs are varied.

Actions

1. If you have not done so, use the Medical Board's online self-assessment tool[R7] to check which registration pathway you are eligible for.

   Familiarise yourself with the requirements for your specific registration pathway. Make sure you can meet all the requirements and produce the required evidence.

   See information on the Standard pathway[R10] and read the registration standards.[R6]

2. Familiarise yourself with the requirements for your intended visa pathway and make sure you can meet all the requirements and produce the required evidence.

3. Prepare for documentation requirements:

   i. Check for any documents that you need to request; for example, from your academic institution, employer and/or criminal history check authority.

      See 'List of key documents' in the Resources section for the ones that are commonly requested.

   ii. Check translation and certification requirements.

      - Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG)[R21]
      - Ahpra: certification[R38] and translation requirements[R39]
      - AMC[R19]
      - For visas, this information is outlined under each individual visa page, under 'Steps to apply'.

   iii. Research how you can meet these documentation requirements in your country of residence as well as other countries where you have lived. Find out how long the process takes to request, certify and translate documents. Make note of any differences in translation and certification requirements from different bodies and plan how you can complete these processes as efficiently as possible.

   iv. Check the validity periods of documents, and map these against when you will need each document. The body requesting the documents determines the validity period, which means it can differ between bodies for the same document. Some documents such as a Certificate of Good Standing and the results of a criminal history check may be regarded as valid for only 3–6 months by some bodies. You will need to time your applications for these and other documents accordingly.

4. Draw up a plan of action for your journey that includes realistic timeframes. Refer to the steps in this guide for details on the approximate timeframes.

5. Reach out to other health professionals from similar backgrounds or with similar experience who have recently navigated the process and can offer guidance.

Tips and considerations

Registration

- On the Standard pathway, there are 2 possible ways to become eligible for general registration:
  - **Option 1:** passing a multiple-choice exam administered by the AMC; then passing a **practical clinical exam**[R28] administered by the AMC and completing 12 months of supervised clinical practice. The practical clinical exam has a passing rate of 35% (according to an AMC report published in 2025) and can be undertaken before or after starting employment.
  - **Option 2:** passing a multiple-choice exam administered by the AMC; then successfully completing a 6–12-month AMC-accredited **workplace based assessment (WBA)** program[R32] in an Australian healthcare service while concurrently completing 12 months of supervised clinical practice. The WBA program has a passing rate of 99% (according to an AMC report published in 2025), but the program is in high demand and positions are limited. There is also a high cost for the program.

  These options have different requirements, durations and costs. See the steps in this guide for more information.
- While you should begin the pre-registration process before you apply for employment, you cannot complete and submit your application for limited/provisional registration without an offer of employment.
- You may wish to create your Ahpra account at this time.

Visas

- Check the specific requirements for the visa type you are applying for.
- If you are applying for an employer sponsored skilled visa: While you may start preparations for your visa application at this point, you cannot complete and submit the application until you have secured employment and a sponsorship agreement from an employer. You typically also need to be granted at least limited/provisional registration before you can lodge your visa application.
- If you are applying for independent skilled visas: General or specialist registration is typically required for these visas. IMGs on the Standard, Competent Authority or Specialist pathway can only become eligible for general or specialist registration after completing a period of supervised practice in Australia. This means that for IMGs on these pathways, independent skilled visas are generally only available after working as a medical practitioner in Australia for a period of time and completing the registration pathway.

Employment

- Passing the AMC exams on this pathway does not guarantee employment. You will need to apply for positions that matches your qualifications, skills and experience to increase your chance of securing employment. If you have not already done so, research the job market.
- If you are currently employed as a medical practitioner in your country, you may wish to maintain your employment while you prepare to apply for registration and seek employment in Australia. This will maintain your recency of practice, which will improve your chances of securing employment and being granted registration.
- Employers may request evidence of up-to-date immunisation records. The type of vaccinations required may differ depending on the employer and position. Read about the general Australian guidance,[E28] though note that individual employers will likely have additional requirements.

Preparing your documentation

- It is critical you understand the evidence requirements and prepare any documentation in a timely manner to speed up the employment, registration and visa application processes. Make sure you understand who is authorised to translate and certify your documents, as this can differ between requesting bodies.
- Ensure your name is exactly the same on all your documents, especially if you have changed your name or lived in different countries. If there is any variation in how your name appears, ask the requesting body what additional documentation you may need.
- Be aware that for documents with short validity periods, you may need to request these documents more than once at different points in the application process, and for different bodies.

General

- Research registration and visa pathways thoroughly and make sure you have a plan B or plan C in case your first plan is not successful or the steps take longer than planned. Read about the potential costs and timeframes.
- Create or use one central email address to receive correspondence and to register or sign up with bodies at different stages of the process. Create a document folder with all the evidentiary documents that may be required.

1.3 Prepare evidence of English competency

Undertake English test (if required)

Summary and purpose

You will need to demonstrate evidence of meeting the English language requirements for registration as well as for certain visa types.

This applies regardless of whether English is your first language or not.

Some applicants will need to sit an English language test in order to meet these requirements.

Sequence and prerequisites

There are no prerequisites to this step.

You can undertake this step at any time before applying for registration and your visa.

If you need to take an English test, be aware that receiving bodies set validity periods for English test results, so time this accordingly.

Cost

Costs for English tests vary depending on the test type and where you take the test. It can range from approximately $300 to $600 per sitting.

If you wish to take a preparation course, factor in the cost.

Approximate timeframe

Varied, depending on whether you need to take a test, and your preparation for the test.

Actions

1. Review Ahpra's information on meeting the English language standards.[R9] If you have not already done so, use the self-assessment tool[R8] for English pathway and read the evidence guide to understand how you can demonstrate your English competency.
2. Review the Home Affairs requirements[V4] if you are applying for a visa. If you intend to apply for a skilled visa, you will likely need to demonstrate your English competency unless an exemption applies. If applying for other visas, you may need to demonstrate this too. For some visa types, family members may also be required to demonstrate their English skills; otherwise, additional charges may apply to their visa application.

Continued on next page

3. Determine if you need to take an English test for registration and migration purposes, and if any of your family members need to take a test for migration purposes.

   - **If you need to take an English test**

   i. Check which test types are accepted for migration and registration purposes. Determine which test is most suitable for you and the minimum score you need to achieve, and prepare for the test.

   ii. Determine when you need the test results and check the validity periods accepted by Ahpra and Home Affairs. Book your test accordingly. You may need to sit the test more than once to achieve the score required, so allow time for this.

   - **If you do not need to take an English test**

   Prepare your documents in line with Ahpra and Home Affairs requirements to demonstrate your English competency.

Tips and considerations

Visa and migration

- Different visa types require varying levels of English proficiency. Refer to the individual visa information for details on the required level.
- Home Affairs accepts citizenship of certain countries as evidence of meeting the English requirement for some visa types. If your citizenship is not included in this list or you do not meet any other exemptions, you must take a test to demonstrate your competency.
- If you intend to apply independently for a skilled visa and include your partner on your application, your partner's English level may affect your chances of getting a visa. Refer to step 5.1 'Apply for visa' for more information about the points-tested system.
- For some visa types, family members over the age of 18 are required to show evidence of functional English.[V5] If this is not met, additional visa fees may apply.

Registration

- The level of English skills required is the same across medical registration types.
- Ahpra does not accept registration or residence in certain countries as evidence of English language competency. You must show that your education and qualifications were completed and assessed solely in English, in recognised countries. This list of countries differs from the Home Affairs list. If this does not apply to you, you may need to take an English test to demonstrate your competency.

Other differences between requirements for visas and registration

- The English test types accepted by Ahpra and Home Affairs differ. Check the accepted test types for each body carefully.
- Ahpra and Home Affairs may have different validity periods for English test results, even for the same test type. Check the validity periods carefully.
- Ahpra may accept results from 2 test sittings under some circumstances. Home Affairs does not accept this, except for a small number of test types, under certain circumstances and for certain visa types.

2. Pre-registration

2.1 Apply for primary source verification (PSV) of qualifications

Summary and purpose

Your medical qualifications must first be verified before you can progress on your registration pathway.

The Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) facilitates this process and shares the results with the Australian Medical Council (AMC). The information in the AMC portal is then made available to the Medical Board of Australia (Medical Board).

Sequence and prerequisites

To complete the PSV, you will need your medical qualification(s).

Cost

Approximately $200 for portfolio setup.

Approximately $150 per credential that needs PSV.

The costs for translating documents vary.

Approximate timeframe

The timeframe can vary from a few weeks to a few months, depending on many factors, including the time it takes for the institution that issued the qualification to respond to the ECFMG's request for verification.

Actions

1. If you have not done so yet, check that your medical school, primary medical qualification and graduation year[R15] are eligible.
2. Review the information on the AMC and ECFMG websites for detailed information on the process and what is required to be submitted.
   - AMC: Primary source verification[R16]
   - AMC: Primary source verification process – flowchart[R17]
   - AMC: How to apply – AMC account and portfolio[R18]
   - ECFMG: Special Instructions for Physicians Applying to Practice in Australia[R20] (on setting up MyIntealth™ account and EPIC Portfolio)
3. Review the ECFMG's translation requirements[R21] for documents that are not in English.
4. Create a MyIntealth™ account and submit a request to establish an Electronic Portfolio of International Credentials (EPIC Portfolio). Once MyIntealth™ has reviewed your request, it will provide you with a MyIntealth™ ID. Follow the instructions to upload your qualifications and other documents.
5. You will also need to create an AMC account[R19] separately and establish an initial portfolio. This includes providing information on the qualifications that are undergoing the verification process.
6. Link your MyIntealth™ ID to authorise the AMC and ECFMG to exchange your information. For each qualification in your account, you must request that the ECFMG sends a report to the AMC.
7. Once your credentials are verified, the ECFMG will send a report for each credential to the AMC.

Tips and considerations

- For any questions about your credentials, contact the ECFMG directly, as the AMC cannot provide advice on document requirements.
- The AMC can only accept specific categories of credential from ECFMG regarding verification for a medical degree. Certain types of documents are **not** eligible to be added to an AMC account. An administration processing fee will be charged if you add non-eligible document details to your AMC account when applying. Check the AMC webpage[R16] under 'PSV and the AMC' for a list of these documents.
- Ensure the first and last names in your AMC account are correct and match your other documents, as it will appear on your AMC certificate once you have completed all the assessments. Once the certificate is issued, you cannot change your name. This certificate will be required for your application to the Medical Board for provisional registration if you have passed the AMC clinical exam prior to securing a job, and/or for general registration at the end of the Standard pathway.

2.2 Undertake the AMC Computer Adaptive Test Multiple Choice Question (CAT MCQ or Part 1) exam

Summary and purpose

This computer-based exam assesses your basic and applied medical knowledge. Pearson VUE delivers the exams in dedicated centres worldwide.

You must pass the AMC CAT MCQ exam (also known as AMC Part 1) in order to progress on the Standard pathway.

Passing this exam does not guarantee employment or registration.

Sequence and prerequisites

You must have initiated the PSV of your qualifications.

Cost

Approximately $3,000 for each sitting.

This does not include the costs of any exam preparation courses.

Approximate timeframe

Exams are run most months of the year. There are 6 exam dates each month. The number of available places may vary by location.

The scheduling period for the exams typically closes 3–4 weeks before the exam date. The results are typically released 3 weeks after the exam.

The preparation time for the exam will differ from one individual to another.

Actions

1. Review the AMC's information about the exam,[R23] including the exam specifications.[R22]
2. Once you have initiated the PSV of your qualifications, you may apply via your AMC account for an authorisation to schedule an AMC CAT MCQ exam. This authorisation is valid for 12 months.
3. After receiving your authorisation, you can book your exam through Pearson VUE. Read the AMC's information on scheduling,[R24] which include available exam dates.
4. Prepare for the exam. You may choose to take a bridging course.[R26]
5. Review the AMC's information about the identity documents[R27] required to enter the exam venue.
6. Take the exam.

Tips and considerations

- Courses are available to help candidates prepare for the exam. These are run by independent providers and are not reviewed or accredited by the AMC. Some companies provide free mock tests online.
- The AMC provides an app[R25] to assist candidates to prepare for this exam.
- The pass rate for the CAT MCQ exam is 50% (according to an AMC report published in 2025).
- There is no limit on the number of attempts for this exam and your CAT MCQ exam result does not expire.

Once you pass the AMC CAT MCQ exam, you can choose from the following options.

Option 1a: Undertake and pass the AMC clinical exam before securing employment.

Passing the AMC clinical exam before securing a job will make you eligible to apply for provisional registration. After you secure a job, you will complete 12 months of supervised practice on provisional registration, leading to general registration.

Defer the AMC clinical exam, and

Option 1b: Secure employment and take the AMC clinical exam after starting your job.

Securing employment before you pass the AMC clinical exam will make you eligible to apply for limited registration. You can undertake and pass the AMC clinical exam during the supervised practice period and while you work. This will lead to general registration.

Option 2: Secure employment with a workplace based assessment (WBA) provider, then enrol in and complete the WBA program.

This is an alternative to taking the clinical exam. Secure a job with a WBA provider and confirm that it can nominate you for the program. Once you have been granted limited registration and begin your employment, you can apply for the WBA program. These programs are competitive and may have a waiting period. After you complete your supervised practice period and complete the WBA program, you can apply for general registration.

There are no practical differences between completing your supervised period on limited versus provisional registration, as the supervision requirements are the same on the Standard pathway and the minimum supervised practice period is 12 months in both cases.

2.3 Undertake AMC clinical exam and receive AMC certificate

Conditional: This step can be taken before or after commencing employment. It is not required if undertaking the WBA program. See step 8.3b for further details about the WBA.

Summary and purpose

This in-person exam assesses your clinical competence for safe and effective practice in the Australian healthcare system.

The exam takes place in Melbourne. An online option is available, though priority is given to those in rural and remote areas.

If you pass the AMC clinical exam before securing a position, you will be eligible to apply for provisional registration.

If you choose to not undertake this exam now or do not pass, you can still apply for employment and then registration. You will be eligible to apply for limited registration.

In either case, you must pass this exam to receive the AMC certificate, which will be required for your application for general registration in the final step of the Standard pathway.

Note that passing this exam does not guarantee employment or registration.

Sequence and prerequisites

You must have passed the AMC CAT MCQ exam.

You can take this AMC clinical exam before or after you secure employment.

Cost

Approximately $3,000 for each sitting.

This does not include the costs of any exam preparation courses.

Approximate timeframe

Exams are held most months of the year and there are typically 3–4 exam days per week. Additional dates may be added based on demand.

Exam places are booked during scheduling events, when exam dates are released in 3–4-month blocks. You can only submit a preference for dates in the upcoming exam block.

Scheduling events generally open around 3 months before the start of the exam block.

There is high demand for the exam and it may take 6 months to secure a spot.

The results are available approximately 3 weeks after the exam.

The preparation time for the exam will differ from one individual to another.

Actions

1. Review information about the exam on the AMC website,[R28] including the exam specifications.[R22]
2. Register for an exam.
   i. Check the AMC website for the next scheduling event. The AMC will announce the exact date of when scheduling opens a few weeks in advance.
   ii. Once scheduling opens, log in to your AMC account and register for your preferred date. Make the payment. You will then be notified of the outcome.
3. Prepare for the exam. You may choose to take a bridging course[R26] to help you prepare.
4. Take the exam. Log in to your account to see your results. If you pass, you will receive the AMC certificate.

Tips and considerations

- Exam places are limited, so register as soon as scheduling opens.
- Bridging courses are available to help candidates prepare for the exam. These are offered by independent providers and are not reviewed or accredited by the AMC.
- The pass rate for the clinical exam is 35% (according to an AMC report published in 2025).
- There is no limit on the number of attempts for this exam.
- You can take this exam before seeking and commencing employment. However, if you delay seeking employment in order to pass the exam, be aware that it may impact your ability to meet the recency of practice standard when you apply for registration.

3. Securing employment

Summary and purpose

Secure employment in order to apply for registration.

If you want employer sponsorship for your visa, you will need to find an employer who can offer this.

If you are selected for a position, you may receive a conditional offer of employment that is contingent on you gaining registration and obtaining a visa.

Sequence and prerequisites

Employers will generally require you to have completed the primary source verification (PSV) and passed the AMC CAT MCQ exam (AMC Part 1) before considering you for a position.

Approximate timeframe

The timeframe for securing employment varies greatly.

Hospitals often have structured recruitment cycles that may take several months. Recruitment processes in private clinics are generally less structured.

Some employers may take many weeks to shortlist candidates and send invitations for interviews.

After conducting the interviews, the employer may take several more weeks to choose a candidate and begin screening checks. The time to complete screening checks will vary depending on your circumstances.

If you are selected for a position and do not need to apply for a visa, it may be another 2–5 months or more before you can commence your employment. This depends on how long your registration process takes.

If you are selected for a position and need to apply for a visa to relocate to Australia, it may be 3–9 months or more, depending on your registration and visa process.

3.1 Apply for employment

Cost

Nil

Actions

1. **Review the requirements of your registration pathway and the set rotations required.**

   For this information, read the *Granting general registration to medical practitioners who hold an Australian Medical Council certificate Registration Standard* on the Registration Standards page[R6] under 'General registration'.

2. **Decide the work setting and locations you want to apply for.**

   If you have not done so, research the types of positions available to you (and your partner, if relevant) and the job market in your desired location.

   The position you work in will impact your supervised practice requirements for registration and how section 19AB and section 19AA apply to you, which impacts your eligibility to bill Medicare. Read about Medicare billing in public and private positions.

Continued on next page

Area of Need

You may choose to apply for Area of Need (AoN)[E7] positions. AoN means that there is a shortage of medical professionals in that area, which may make it easier for you to secure employment.

If you plan to work in private practice and may need to bill Medicare, AoN positions often fall within the areas eligible for an exemption to section 19AB. Check the Health Workforce Locator.[E4]

Once you have secured the position, if you plan to apply for 'limited registration for area of need', your employer must provide their AoN certificate to Ahpra as part of your registration application. Refer to step 4.2 'Apply for limited/provisional registration' for more information on the different types of registration.

Working in general practice

To work in general practice on the Standard or Competent Authority pathways, you must undertake a pre-employment structured clinical interview (PESCI)[R29] after securing employment. In most cases, you should undertake and pass the PESCI before applying for your limited or provisional registration. However, this sequence differs if you are intending to apply for 'limited registration for area of need' to work in general practice. See step 4.1 'Undertake pre-employment structured clinical interview (PESCI)' for more information.

Note, the Medical Board prefers that IMGs with limited or provisional registration work in general practices that are currently accredited to the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) Standards for general practices. If a practice is not accredited, the supervisor must satisfy the Medical Board that appropriate structures are in place to ensure the IMG can practice safely. See 'Accreditation of general practices' on the Supervision page[R41] for more information.

Working in general practice in an AoN

- If you are intending to apply for 'limited registration for area of need' to work in general practice, in addition to passing the PESCI, you will need to show evidence of 3 years' experience in general practice or primary care.
  - You can choose to have this assessed by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP)[R31] prior to undertaking the PESCI and applying for 'limited registration for area of need'. If you have previously undertaken this assessment for another reason (e.g. to assess your eligibility for one of RACGP's programs or pathways) and it confirmed you have 3 years' experience, you do not need to undertake it again.
  - Alternatively, you can choose to have this assessed by the Medical Board together with your application for registration.

See step 4.1 'Undertake pre-employment structured clinical interview (PESCI)' and the Medical Board's FAQ[R14] for more information.

- If you are eligible to apply for provisional registration (i.e. you have passed the AMC clinical exam), you do not need to provide evidence of 3 years' experience in general practice or primary care. However, you will need to be successful in the PESCI.

3. Use job search portals and create a job shortlist.

- Read each job description carefully, including the scope and required duties and any attachments. Look for positions that match your training and experience.
- Review the working conditions and geographic location to find those that are a good fit for you and your family. Research how you can get to work from where you plan to live, as some locations may not be easily accessible by public transport and may require a car. Read the *Moving to Australia* guide[S1] for more information on living and working in Australia.
- Check that the position will allow you to fulfil the requirements of your registration pathway.
- If you plan to apply for a workplace based assessment (WBA) program[R32] instead of the AMC clinical exam, you will need to find a job with an accredited provider.[R34] Be aware that securing a position with a provider does not guarantee your enrolment in the WBA program. See step 8.3b 'Enrol in and complete the Workplace Based Assessment (WBA) Program' for more information on the program.

4. If not in the job advertisement, contact the employer to clarify some key information.

Examples of information include:

- the expected salary or income, and the relevant working conditions
- your eligibility for the position, based on your registration pathway and immigration status
- whether they can provide a suitable supervisor. Not all employers can provide this, so checking this early will help to avoid delays in your registration process. Information on the minimum requirements for IMG supervisors can be found in *Guidelines - Supervised practice for international medical graduates*.[R41]
- whether you will be required to bill Medicare and, if so, whether the position qualifies for an exemption to section 19AB.[E3] Remember, you may still be eligible for a 'refer and request' Medicare provider number (MPN) even if you are not eligible to bill Medicare

Continued on next page

- whether they can provide sponsorship for a skilled visa (if relevant), the types of visas they can sponsor, and whether they are temporary or permanent. Not all employers offer sponsorship, including for a permanent visa, so finding out early in the process will help you determine your visa pathway
- the ANZSCO code the job falls under, as this will determine which visa pathways are available and any visa-specific requirements
- whether they can provide relocation support (if required), and assistance with application and document translation and certification costs. This may not be available for all positions
- any health checks and vaccination requirements for the position.

The answers to these questions will help you decide which positions are right for you.

5. **Apply for the job.**
   - Prepare your curriculum vitae (CV), which you may know as a 'resume', and a cover letter using Australian formats. Tailor your CV and cover letter to each job, ensuring you address the selection criteria in the job advertisement.
   - Complete any additional written or other tasks required for your application. Collate any required documents.
   - Follow the instructions on applying for the job, noting that a recruitment agency may be advertising on behalf of a health organisation.

Tips and considerations

Using job search portals

- Healthcare jobs in Australia are advertised on a range of platforms. Some platforms also provide resources for job hunting, such as tips on writing your CV and preparing for an interview. These include:
  - Seek[E19]
  - Indeed[E20]
  - Rural Workforce Agencies Network.[E18]
- Jobs are also advertised through employer portals and websites.
  - **Public sector jobs:** each state and territory has a separate public health system and separate recruitment portals.[E39] Even within the same state or territory, there may be multiple public health employers, each with its own portal, processes and requirements.
  - **Private sector jobs:** private employers may hire across hospital services, primary care and more. There may also be agencies that hire on behalf of employers.
- Different states and territories use different titles for medical positions, even for a similar type and level of position. It is important to review information specific to the state and territory you wish to work in; for example, New South Wales.[E21]
- The following steps may help increase your chances of success:
  - Build your online presence and use employment networks such as LinkedIn to reach out to potential employers. Some employers actively use these networks to recruit.
  - Set up alerts on job search websites.
- Be aware of recruitment scams.[E40] If you use a recruitment company, ensure it is reputable.

Searching for a suitable job

- You should seek a job that matches your qualifications, training and experience as this is critical to your chance of being successful in the position, and being granted registration.
- The Medical Board requires that all IMGs who are working under limited or provisional registration be supervised. In deciding on the level of supervision required, the Medical Board considers a range of factors including the type of position the IMG has been offered, and their qualifications, training and experience.
- Your supervision level may be more important to some employers than others. When applying for a job in regional, rural or remote areas, or in private practice, your ability to practise with less supervision can be a key factor for employers, as they will assess whether the service can meet your supervision needs when reviewing your job application.
- If your supervised practice requirements include doing rotations (i.e. experience in specific areas such as emergency medicine, medicine and surgery) check with the employer that these minimum requirements can be accommodated. Not securing the required rotations can delay the completion of your supervised practice requirements.
- If you are seeking a position with a WBA provider,[R34] consider contacting the provider directly to enquire if they are recruiting for any positions. Given the limited number of places, you may need to contact several WBA providers at the same time.

  The accredited provider must be willing to nominate you into the WBA. They may have an additional application and selection process. Clarify their application process and their waiting list for the WBA program.

See the *Moving to Australia* guide[S1] section 'Job search and employment' for more information about where to search for jobs and other tips.

Understanding salary and working conditions

- Most job advertisements include a brief job description, salary information, mandatory requirements and working conditions. Many also include attachments that provide further details on the specific scope and duties.
- In Australia, jobs across many industries are commonly covered by 'awards'.[E24] These are legal documents that outline the minimum pay rates and conditions of employment, and differ by industry and occupation. If the position is covered by an award, you can use the Pay Calculator[E25] to find out the pay rates and conditions. Some jobs are covered by an enterprise agreement (EA), which applies to one business or group of businesses only, instead of an award.

  Medical practitioners may also be self-employed as a contractor, which means there are no employment-related benefits such as superannuation and paid leave.

  Refer to step 3.3 'Receive and accept offer of employment' for more information.
- If you need clarification about salary and conditions, call or email the contact person identified in the advertisement.

Preparing your application

- Review the position description and any attachments and address the selection criteria explicitly in your application, to increase your chances of getting an interview.
- Selection criteria are the qualifications, knowledge and skills you need for the job. They may be categorised in the job advertisement as 'essential' and 'desirable'. These are what employers will assess your application against, so it is important to clearly write in your application how you meet these criteria.
- Research how to write CVs and cover letters for Australian health jobs. The format and expectations can be very different to those in your country of origin. As a starting point, you may wish to review Ahpra's guide on information to include in the CV[R36] you submit for registration.
- If you are looking at public health positions, state and territory health departments[E39] will generally have publicly available information about their recruitment standards and public service standards. You can view this information on their websites to help you understand their recruitment standards, and use it to prepare your application and for your interview.

International medical graduate preparation programs

Some public health services offer structured programs to help international medical graduates (IMGs) who are already in Australia gain experience in the health system and be competitive in the job market. These programs are not compulsory for securing employment or being granted registration and do not guarantee employment.

They are generally 12 weeks in length but the topics covered and the level of clinical participation vary. The purpose of these programs is to provide participants with exposure and experience to apply for suitable positions.

Some programs are free while some have an associated cost.

Entry and eligibility requirements vary. They typically include having permanent residency or a visa with unrestricted working rights in Australia, having previous experience working as a medical practitioner, passing the AMC CAT MCQ exam (AMC Part 1), and being eligible to apply for limited or provisional registration. Some have recency of practice requirements. Check the requirements of each individual program and contact the service if you have any questions.

The following programs require successful candidates to be granted registration before they commence the program, and will provide support for the registration process. Completion of the programs meets the Medical Board's recency of practice standard.

- **Queensland:** The North Queensland International Medical Graduate Preparation Program.
- **Victoria:** Monash IMG Preparation Program (MiPreP)

The following program does not require candidates to be granted registration before they commence the program. Completion of the program does not meet the Medical Board's recency of practice standard, but does meet the continuing professional development (CPD) requirements.

- **New South Wales:** IMG Clinical Readiness Program (ICRP)

Other public health services may offer similar programs not listed here, as new programs become available.

In addition to these, there are observerships that help IMGs prepare for a career in Australia, although these do not involve clinical practice.

3.2 Complete interview(s) and screening checks

Cost

You may have to pay for screening checks, such as criminal history and working with children checks. Costs vary, depending on the location and type of check.

Actions

1. **Prepare for your interview(s).**
   - Familiarise yourself with the online tool (e.g. Teams or Zoom) you will be using if it is a virtual interview. If it is face to face, research the location and how to get there.
   - Complete any pre-interview screening checks.
   - Gather documents required to verify your identity and qualifications. Employers cannot access documents you provided to the AMC, Ahpra or the Medical Board, so you will have to provide them directly.
   - Ask your potential employer what post-interview screening tasks – such as for qualifications, immunisation records, references and criminal history checks – are required if you are the preferred applicant. This will enable you to prepare early.
   - Ask your chosen referees for permission to nominate them and brief them on the job description.
2. **Complete your interview(s).**
   - Find a quiet location where you won't be interrupted before your interview and test your internet connection and computer equipment.
   - Be ready with original, translated and certified documents, as you may need them to verify your identity at the time of the interview.
3. **Meet all screening requirements following the interview(s).**
   - Complete any post-interview screening checks.
   - Be prepared to undertake health checks and provide up-to-date immunisation records that may be part of the screening process.
   - You may also have to apply for a working with children check.[E29] This assesses each employee for their suitability to work with children. The body conducting these checks differs between states and territories. In some states and territories, you can only complete this after you arrive in Australia and are able to prove your identity using Australian documents such as a Medicare card or Australian bank card. Check the requirements and processes in the state or territory where you will be living and plan accordingly.
   - Find out about any additional documents you may need to provide if the employer is sponsoring your visa.

Tips and considerations

Preparing for your interview

- Contact the hiring manager if you have any questions about the interview process.
- Carefully check differences in the time zones, including any upcoming daylight saving changes, to avoid missing your interview slot.
- Research how to perform effectively in interviews in the Australian context. Expectations may be very different to those in your country of origin. Look up the STARR (situation, task, action, result and reflection) method or the SAO (situation, action and outcome) method of responding to interview questions.
- Keep translated and certified documents ready, as they may be required to verify your identity at the time of the interview.
- You may choose to use AI tools to help you prepare for interviews. However, avoid using AI **during** your interview. Your responses should reflect your own experience and perspective to help the panel get to know you.

Preparing for screening checks

- Prepare for screening checks early to speed up the screening process if you are the preferred applicant. These checks can take a number of weeks, especially if you require documents from another country.
- Ensure you have the correct contact details for your referees and prepare backup referees in case one or more of your preferred referees are not available when the check is conducted. Most jobs will require at least 2 referees.
- Prepare your immunisation records early and check with your employer on the vaccination requirements. This may differ from your country of origin. Your offer of employment may be delayed if you cannot provide this evidence.

  The type of vaccinations required may differ depending on the employer and the position. See the general Australian guidance,[E28] but bear in mind that individual employers will likely have additional requirements.
- Check the employer's accepted validity period for criminal history checks. If your previous criminal history check has expired, you will need to apply for a new one.
- Some screening checks can only be completed in Australia. Speak to your employer if you are experiencing any challenges.

3.3 Receive and accept offer of employment

Cost

Nil

Actions

1. Review your employment offer letter, and ask questions if anything is unclear. You may be able to negotiate changes to your contract, though the scope for negotiations may be more limited for public employers than private employers. You may also need to agree on a start date.
2. Accept the employment offer once you are happy with it. Keep a copy of the offer letter to provide to Ahpra when you apply for registration.
3. Start discussing the registration and visa (if relevant) requirements with your employer and find out how they can support you with the required documents.
4. Stay in contact with your employer and update them on any possible delays or changes to your employment start date.

Tips and considerations

Arranging your start date and relocation

- Ensure your employment start date is realistic, based on your registration and visa pathway. It may take 3 months to more than 9 months to finalise your visa and registration. You also need to allow time after your visa has been granted to arrange your relocation.
- When negotiating your start date, consider allowing one to 2 weeks between arriving in Australia and starting your job. This will give you time to set up bank accounts, find accommodation, enrol your children in school and complete other tasks.
- If the employer has indicated that they are able to provide sponsorship for your visa, discuss with them the next steps.
- Check if the organisation can provide any relocation support (financial or non-financial) to help you and your family settle in. Ask if there is a contact person who can answer queries about moving to Australia.

Understanding your working conditions

- The Fair Work Ombudsman[E22] is a key body in Australia that provides information about workplace entitlements and assistance to employers and employees. States and territories may have their own bodies that provide assistance to and resolve employment disputes for employees working in the public health service.
- In Australia, jobs across many industries are commonly covered by 'awards'. These are legal documents that outline the minimum pay rates and conditions of employment that apply to an employer and employees, and differ depending on the industry and occupation. An individual's employment contract may apply in addition to the award, but it cannot provide for less than the minimum legal entitlements.[E23] In some jobs, instead of an award, employees may be covered by an EA, which applies to one business or group of businesses only.

  Learn about awards, EAs and contracts.[E24] If the position is covered by an award you can use the Pay Calculator[E25] to find out the pay rates and conditions.
- If you will be working with a public employer, your salary may be fixed by the relevant award or EA, which means you will have limited room to negotiate your contract. However, you may be able to negotiate your employment start date and relocation allowance.
- Many medical practitioners working in a private-billing context, such as GP clinics, work as self-employed contractors[S5] in medical practices rather than as salaried employees. This means they do not receive employment-related benefits such as superannuation and paid leave as covered in the National Employment Standards, in exchange for greater autonomy and a higher rate of pay. To work as a self-employed contractor you will also need an Australian Business Number (ABN)[S4] in addition to a tax file number (TFN).[S2] Seek the advice of an accountant or tax professional for more information.

4. Limited or provisional registration

4.1 Undertake pre-employment structured clinical interview (PESCI)

Conditional: if working in a general practice

Summary and purpose

You must undertake the PESCI to work in a general practice. It is not required for other positions.

A PESCI uses scenarios to assess whether you are suitable to practise in a specific position.

Organisations accredited by the Australian Medical Council (AMC) conduct the PESCI. Some providers offer online interviews only, while others may offer an online and face-to-face option.

Sequence and prerequisites

You must secure a position before undertaking the PESCI, as it is specific to that position and the level of supervision. If you change positions, you may have to undertake the PESCI again.

In most cases, it is advisable to pass the PESCI before applying for registration, as this streamlines the registration process.

The sequence differs if you are intending to apply for 'limited registration for area of need' to work in general practice. It is recommended you first undertake an assessment of your experience before you undertake the PESCI. This approach ensures you do not need to pay for the PESCI if you are assessed as lacking the 3 years' experience in general practice or primary care required for this type of registration. There are two options for this assessment which affect when you undertake the PESCI. See 'Tips and considerations' of this step for more details.

Cost

Around $2,500, excluding any administrative fees for rescheduling and other changes.

This does not include the costs of any preparation courses.

Approximate timeframe

Availability of PESCI slots depends on the provider; it may take place 1–3 months after you submit your application.

The results are generally available and sent to Ahpra 2–3 weeks after the assessment.

Actions

1. Review the Medical Board information about the PESCI.[R29] Contact Ahpra if you are unsure about whether you need to undertake a PESCI.
2. See the list of AMC-accredited PESCI providers.[R30] Review the providers' information about the process and eligibility.
3. Select a provider and follow its instructions to apply and make the payment.
4. Use the resources from the provider to prepare for the PESCI. Preparation courses and workshops are also available to help you prepare.

Tips and considerations

- Some providers offer an online option only, while others may offer both face-to-face and online options.
- If you are undertaking the PESCI online, carefully check differences in the time zones, including any upcoming changes to daylight saving time, to avoid missing your interview slot.

- The PESCI provider will provide the results of the PESCI to you and to the Medical Board, and advise the Medical Board whether you are suitable for the position. While the Medical Board is guided by the recommendations of a PESCI panel, the PESCI panel report is only one piece of information the Medical Board considers when deciding whether to grant you registration.
- If you plan to apply for 'limited registration for area of need', you will need, in addition to the PESCI, a minimum of 3 years of full-time equivalent experience in general practice or primary care.

  This assessment is separate to the PESCI. You have two options for this assessment, which affect when you undertake the PESCI:

  - Complete the General Practice Experience (GPE) assessment[R31] by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP). If you are assessed as having 3 years' experience, you can then undertake the PESCI, then apply for registration.
  - Apply for registration and have your experience assessed by the Medical Board. If you are assessed as having the required experience, you can then undertake the PESCI. You must pass the PESCI for your registration to be granted.

  If you have previously undertaken the GPE assessment for another reason (e.g. to assess your eligibility for one of RACGP's programs or pathways) and it confirmed you have 3 years' experience, you do not need to undertake this assessment again.

  See the Medical Board's FAQ[R14] for more information.
- The success rate for the PESCI differs among providers, averaging around 50% across the 3 providers. Annual data on this is published on the AMC website.[R30]
- If you are not successful, you may consider pursuing the appeals process through the provider, attempting the PESCI again for the same position, or securing a different position and attempting the PESCI again. You may also wish to seek feedback from the PESCI provider and engage in upskilling to address the feedback.

4.2 Apply for limited or provisional registration

Summary and purpose

Apply through the Ahpra portal for registration as a medical practitioner.

You will need to be granted limited/provisional registration to start practising in Australia.

If you are applying for a skilled visa, your registration is also required as evidence of a skills assessment for your visa application.

Sequence and prerequisites

You must have an offer of employment when you apply for registration.

You can apply for provisional registration if you have passed both AMC exams.

You can apply for 'limited registration for postgraduate training or supervised practice' if you have passed only the CAT MCQ (AMC Part 1).

You can apply for 'limited registration for area of need' if you have secured an AoN position.

If you are required to take an English test to demonstrate your English competency, you must have the test results showing you achieved the required score(s).

Cost

There are separate fees[R47] for the application and the registration, which are both paid at the time of application.

The application and registration fee combined is around $1,300 for provisional registration, and around $2,100 for limited registration.

The costs for document translation and certification vary.

Approximate timeframe

The initial review of applications can take 21 days and assessment of applications can take 4–6 weeks.

During peak periods, the initial review can take 35 days and assessment of applications up to 9 weeks. Check the Ahpra website[R4] for current timeframes.

If your documentation is incomplete or incorrectly translated or certified, this can extend the timeframe.

It is recommended you apply for registration at least 3 months before you intend to start work.

If you need to apply for a visa once you have been granted registration, it is recommended you apply more than 3 months before your employment start date.

Applications for registration are accepted as early as 6 months before you intend to start work. If you have a successful application outcome, you can delay the start of your registration by up to 90 days if you are not ready to begin your employment.

Actions

1. Discuss when you need your registration with your employer, so you can determine when to lodge your application.
2. Create your supervised practice plan.
   i. Review the Medical Board's *Guidelines - Supervised practice for international medical graduates*.[R41]
   ii. Discuss the availability of a suitable supervisor or supervisors with your employer. In most cases, employers will assign you a supervisor.
   iii. Complete a supervised practice plan and the declaration form with your supervisor(s). See 'What supervision arrangements and PDF forms do I need?' on the Standard pathway page[R10] for the required forms.
3. Review the Medical Board's information outlining its requirements and document checklist. See 'What documents do I need to gather for registration' on the Standard pathway page.[R10]
   - If you have passed the AMC clinical exam and have received the AMC certificate, you can apply for **provisional registration**.[R11]
   - If you do not have the AMC certificate, you can apply for **'limited registration for postgraduate training or supervised practice'**[R12] or **'limited registration for area of need'**.[R13]
   - If you are applying for **'limited registration for area of need' to work in general practice**, you will need to provide evidence of 3 years of full-time equivalent experience working in general practice or primary care. See the Medical Board's FAQ[R14] for more information.
4. Review Ahpra's general document requirements.[R37] Check the requirements for certifying[R38] and translating[R39] these documents. Collate and prepare your documents accordingly.
5. Create an account on the Ahpra portal if you have not done so already. Apply for registration online[R35] and upload your supporting documents, including your supervised practice plan.
6. You will also be asked to nominate a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) home[R43] (unless exempt), which you can change at a later date if you wish.

Tips and considerations

Creating a supervised practice plan

- If working in general practice, the Medical Board has 4 prescribed levels of supervised practice.

  If working in a hospital setting, the Medical Board may permit the use of existing hospital supervision structures.

  Read about the different supervision levels in the *Guidelines - Supervised practice for international medical graduates*.[R41]
- You can speak to your colleagues for tips.

Preparing your documents

- It is **critical** to carefully check the document requirements and submit all your documents accordingly. The processing of your application will be delayed if your documents do not meet the requirements.
- Some documents required for your application, such as the criminal history check and Certificate of Good Standing, may have a validity period of only 3–6 months. You will need to time this accordingly.
- Once you submit your application, Ahpra will conduct an initial review to check that all your documentation is complete and meets its requirements. If you are requested to provide missing documents or amended versions of documents, it is crucial to respond promptly. Your application assessment will only begin once all documents are complete and correct.

Submitting your application

- All medical practitioners must meet the recency of practice registration standard. An applicant may be granted registration in certain circumstances even if they don't meet recency of practice requirements as the Medical Board considers a number of factors when assessing applications, such as their registration and practice history; the nature and scope of practice prior to their break from practice; any CPD or education completed; as well as the proposed position and the intended scope of practice. The Medical Board will determine the appropriate level of supervision and any professional development requirements.
- You can nominate your employer or your immigration agent as an authorised representative[R40] on your Ahpra account. This will allow them to see your application status, contact Ahpra and act on your behalf.
- When you apply for registration, you must declare that you will not practise unless you have professional indemnity insurance arrangements in place. See step 7.2 'Arrange for Professional Indemnity Insurance' for more details.
- All medical practitioners must join an AMC-accredited CPD home (unless exempt). The homes coordinate the programs and provide support to doctors. Review the Medical Board's information about CPD requirements[R42] and join a CPD home. You will need to complete 50 hours of CPD each year.
- Contact Ahpra directly by phone or email if you require further information or support during your registration process.

Changing positions after your registration has been granted

- Your limited/provisional registration is tied to your specific position and supervised practice plan. If you change positions, worksites, supervisors or employers while on limited/provisional registration, you must apply to the Medical Board for a change in circumstance and wait for approval before starting your new position.
- If you undertook the PESCI, its outcome is also tied to your position. If you change positions and the new position is in a general practice, you may have to undertake another PESCI. You can apply to the Medical Board for an exemption if the new position is similar to the one you completed the PESCI for. More information is available in the change of circumstance application form.
- Your limited/provisional registration is valid for 12 months. If you cannot complete the requirements to apply for general registration within this period, you will need to renew your limited/provisional registration.

5. Visa

5.1 Apply for visa

Conditional: if you do not have a visa with work rights already

Summary and purpose

You must have a valid visa to live and work in Australia.

If you already have a visa, check your work rights using Department of Home Affairs' (Home Affairs') online tool.[V19] If you do not have a visa, you will need to apply to Home Affairs for one.

Many types of visas are available. If you are applying for a skilled visa,[V6] it can be:

- employer sponsored or independent
- temporary or permanent
- limited to regional areas or not limited.

You can choose to use a migration agent or lawyer to assist with this process.

Sequence and prerequisites

If your employer is providing sponsorship for your visa

You will need to have spoken to your employer to confirm that they can sponsor your visa.

Typically, you can only apply for your visa once you have your registration as a medical practitioner.

Check the specific requirements relevant to your visa.

If applying independently

You will need to have been granted registration to submit your expression of interest (EOI). You will generally need to have been granted general or specialist registration.

Cost

Cost varies by visa.

Typical cost for the primary applicant is $3,000–$5,000, with additional costs for partners and other dependents. You must pay the fee when you lodge your application. Your application will not be processed until you pay the fee.

There may be additional costs for requesting and translating documents. These costs vary.

The cost for family members may increase if they are not able to demonstrate their English skills.

Approximate timeframe

Timeframes for processing visa applications vary greatly and can be anywhere from 3 months to over 1 year.

Use the guide on the Home Affairs website[V3] to check for the latest information.

Actions

1. **Select a visa to apply for.**

   If your employer is providing sponsorship or nomination for a skilled visa, they will usually tell you which type of visa(s) they can sponsor.

   If you are applying independently, determine the right visa using the visa finder.[V1]

Permanent residency and billing Medicare

If you are considering applying for a permanent visa and are planning to work in a position that requires you to bill Medicare, be aware that in addition to the requirements of section 19AB, you must fulfil the requirements of section 19AA. This means that if you have permanent residency or citizenship, you must have specialist registration or be actively working towards it to be eligible to bill Medicare. See 'Section 19AB and section 19AA of the Health Insurance Act' in the Resources section.

2. **Read the eligibility and documentation requirements**, and information on visa conditions, timeframe for processing the visa application, and how to apply.

   Check that you can meet all the requirements, including the documentation requirements.

3. **If you are applying for a skilled visa, select an ANZSCO code** for your application. Generally your employer will advise you of the appropriate ANZSCO code. Check that you meet the specific skills, qualifications, experience and other requirements relevant to the ANZSCO occupation and visa you are applying for. Read about ANZSCO codes.

Continued on next page

4. **Create an ImmiAccount[V13] and apply for your visa**. If you choose to use a migration agent or migration lawyer to assist you with this process, you may nominate them in your visa application.

   - **If your employer is providing sponsorship or nomination for your skilled visa**

   Your employer must first submit a nomination application and receive a nomination Transaction Reference Number (TRN). You will need this to apply for your visa.

   Once your employer has provided the nomination TRN, you can lodge your visa application through your ImmiAccount and submit the required documents.

   You do not need to wait for the nomination to be approved to lodge your visa application.

   - **If applying independently for a skilled visa**

   For certain skilled visa types that are not employer sponsored, you must be 'invited' to apply for the visa. This includes visas for which you must be nominated to apply by a state or territory government agency.

   i. Create an account in the SkillSelect portal.[V10] This is separate to your ImmiAccount.
   ii. Submit an EOI, which is free. The EOI will be assessed based on a points system, and whether places are allocated for your occupation.
   iii. Wait for an invitation to apply for a visa. This can take up to 2 years from when you submit the EOI.

   During this time, start preparing the documents you will need for the visa application. If invited, you only have 60 days to lodge your application, and this time cannot be extended.

   If you receive an invitation to apply for a visa, follow the instructions to lodge your application through your ImmiAccount and submit all the required documents, including evidence of your registration.

   - **If applying for other visas**

   Check carefully for the eligibility and documentation requirements. Follow the instructions to lodge your application and submit all the required documents.

5. **Once you receive your visa**, ensure you understand your work rights, and any conditions and obligations.

   Your partner may have different working rights than you. For more information on visa conditions, check the visa grant letter or use Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO).[V19]

Tips and considerations

Understanding the visa process

- Australia's visa system is complex. Each visa category has many subclasses, and requirements and entitlements for visa holders differ depending on the subclass. Check the webpage for your specific visa to find the most accurate information on eligibility requirements and how to apply.
- The most common employer sponsored or employer nominated visas for health professionals are the Skills in Demand visa (subclass 482) and the Employer Nomination Scheme (subclass 186).
- Some skilled visas require a skills assessment.[V7] For medical practitioners, the Medical Board is a recognised skills assessment authority, which means your registration with the Medical Board can generally be accepted as your skills assessment. The type of registration required differs between visa types.
- On the Home Affairs website, some visa subclasses only list full registration – i.e. general or specialist registration – as a valid skills assessment for medical practitioners. This applies to independent skilled visas. For employer sponsored visas, limited and provisional registration may also be accepted as a valid skills assessment in certain circumstances, although you or your employer may be asked to provide further information. Check the specific requirements that apply to your occupation and visa type.

Continued on next page

- Check that the visa you are applying for has work rights. Skilled and family visas usually allow full work rights, whereas other visas may have limitations on your right to work.
- If you plan to arrive in Australia on a temporary visa and then apply for a permanent visa later, research the pathways to permanent residency so you can choose the most suitable temporary visa. Also research the age requirements and available exemptions.
- Both migration agents and lawyers are qualified to assist in the visa process. If you decide to use a migration agent, choose one who is registered with the Office of the Migration Agents Registration Authority (OMARA).[V15] If you want to consult a migration lawyer, check they are on the relevant state or territory register of lawyers. Migration lawyers are not registered with OMARA. Review Home Affairs information[V14] on who can provide assistance.

Preparing and lodging your visa application

- You may be required to submit some of the same documents you provided for your registration. However, you will need to check the translation requirements and validity periods because they may differ for immigration purposes.
- Documents not in English must be translated and provided in colour, but they do not have to be certified. Check the 'Step by step' information under each visa page.
- If you have an Australian visa that was granted in the previous 2 years (except a bridging, tourist or Working Holiday visa), you may be eligible to use the Free Translating Service for up to 10 personal documents. Check your eligibility.[V17]
- Some visas require the applicant and all family members to undergo a health examination. If you complete the examination before submitting your application, it may speed up the processing time. However, health examinations are generally valid for 12 months only. You may also be able to lodge your application first and wait for Home Affairs to prompt you to complete the health examination. See When to have health examinations[V18] for more information.
- Reference checks may need to be conducted with your previous employers as part of the visa process. Ask your chosen referees for permission to nominate them and ensure their contact information is up to date. You may also wish to prepare alternative referees in case your preferred contacts are not available when the checks are conducted.
- As part of the visa application, you may be asked to provide a record of your previous travel into and out of Australia and other countries. For travel into and out of Australia, you can request your movement records[V16] from Home Affairs.
- If you applied for your visa online, you can check the status of your application through your ImmiAccount. The process can be shorter or longer than the timeframe estimates on the Immigration website.

Additional tips for those submitting an EOI for an invitation to apply for a visa

- EOIs are assessed against a points system that is calculated using factors such as your age, skills and experience, as well as those of your partner if they are moving with you.* Use the points calculator[V11] to estimate your points. For more information about how points are allocated, search for the points table for the visa subclass you would like to apply for.

  The points listed on the visa subclass page are the minimum required for you to be considered. However, many professions require a higher threshold for EOIs to succeed, and the threshold may change from year to year. You can check the minimum score from previous invitation rounds[V12] for your occupation.
- For visas that require nomination by a state or territory government agency, the relevant state or territory agency will assess your EOI based on its own skilled occupation lists and selection criteria. You may wish to review the relevant state or territory information by searching online for the specific state or territory and 'skilled visas'.

* In May 2026, the Australian Government announced an overhaul of the permanent migration points test for skilled visas. Always refer to the Home Affairs website for the latest information.

6. Relocation

6.1 Relocate to Australia

Conditional: if required

Summary and purpose

Move to Australia.

You can use a relocation specialist to assist.

Sequence and prerequisites

You can only move to Australia after you receive your visa.

Cost

Relocation costs are highly variable – see the *Moving to Australia* guide[S1] for more information.

If you use a relocation specialist, the cost can vary.

A tax file number is free.

The fee for a working with children check varies by state and territory.

Approximate timeframe

Variable.

Actions

1. **Prepare for your move.**
   - Read the *Moving to Australia* guide[S1] for more information about living in Australia and to prepare for your move.
   - Plan your costs for the first few months of living in Australia, and ensure you have adequate savings. You may not receive your first pay cheque for a few weeks as many employers pay salaries retrospectively (i.e. for time worked). When you receive your first pay may depend on payroll cycles and completion of onboarding requirements. Check with your employer if you have any questions.
2. **Prepare for your employment.**
   - If you are currently working, advise your new Australian employer of the notice period for your current job.
   - Keep your Australian employer informed of your relocation plans, including any changes to your employment start date.
   - Apply for a tax file number (TFN)[S2] as soon as possible after you arrive in Australia. You can do this through the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) Individual Auto Registration system.[S3]
   - If required, apply for an Australian Business Number (ABN).[S4] Medical practitioners working in private practice are commonly self employed,[S5] meaning you need an ABN in addition to a TFN. Speak to your employer to understand if this applies to you. You may wish to seek advice from an accountant or tax professional regarding your obligations under an ABN.
   - Research superannuation funds in the market. Superannuation,[S6] or 'super', is the main way Australians save for their retirement. It is compulsory for employers to pay a percentage of each employee's total salary into a super fund. This money cannot be withdrawn until retirement or until the requirements to withdraw it early are met. You can choose the super fund you want your superannuation contributions paid into. Various tools and resources, including Moneysmart[S7] and the YourSuper comparison tool,[S8] are available to help you compare super fund options. If you do not choose a super fund, your super will be paid into your employer's default super fund.
   - If your employer requires it, apply for a working with children check.[E29] This assesses each employee for their suitability to work with children. The body conducting these checks differs between states and territories. In some states and territories, you can only complete this after you arrive in Australia and are able to prove your identity using Australian documents such as a Medicare card or Australian bank card. Check the requirements and processes in the state or territory where you will be living and plan accordingly.

Tips and considerations

Relocating and finding accommodation

- If you choose to use a relocation specialist, ensure they are reputable.
- Prioritise finding accommodation as many areas in Australia have high demand for housing. This means it may take time to find suitable housing within your budget.

Getting a tax file number

- TFN applications typically take up to 28 days to process.
- You can start work before you have received your TFN, but you only have 28 days to get it before your employer will have to start deducting tax at the highest tax rate. If you do not have a TFN, you must declare this when your employer asks you to complete the TFN declaration form. Once you receive your TFN, share it with your employer. The ATO does not send your TFN directly to your employer.
- For more information on taxation and superannuation, read the *Moving to Australia* guide.[S1]

Tips from others who have made the move

- Use social media to connect to groups in the neighbourhood where you will be living or to your children's school. You can do this before or after you arrive in Australia.
- Plan to have one to 2 weeks or more between arriving in Australia and starting your job. This will give you time to set up bank accounts, find accommodation, enrol your children in school and complete other tasks.
- Prioritise getting a driver's licence, and setting up bank accounts and key government services as soon as you arrive to make other processes smoother.
- When you arrive in Australia, it may initially feel very challenging and overwhelming, but it will become easier with time. Give yourself time to learn. Seek the support of your colleagues and local community. Asking for help is a strength, not a weakness.

7. Pre-employment

7.1 Apply for Medicare provider number (MPN) and Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) prescriber number

Summary and purpose

Many medical practitioner positions, whether in a public hospital or private clinic, will require you to have an MPN.

This allows you to refer patients, request services and, if eligible, bill Medicare and receive payment for your services.

The prescriber number allows you to prescribe medication subsidised under the scheme.

For detailed information about billing Medicare, refer to the *Working in Australia* orientation.[E41]

Sequence and prerequisites

To apply for an MPN, you must have:

- secured a position and confirmed your practice location
- been granted registration
- a valid visa.

This step is usually completed after arriving in Australia and obtaining Australian-issued documents. If you already have the required documents, you may be able to undertake this step before arriving in Australia.

IMGs are eligible to apply for a 'refer and request' MPN, but are not eligible to bill Medicare for the first 10 years of registration in Australia, unless working in certain locations or have another exemption. This is known as section 19AB[E1] or 'the 10-year moratorium'.

If you have or gain permanent residency, you must hold specialist registration or be actively working towards it to be allowed to bill Medicare. This is known as section 19AA[E2] and is in addition to section 19AB requirements. See 'Section 19AB and section 19AA of the Health Insurance Act' in the Resources section.

Cost

Nil

Approximate timeframe

Typically, it can take up to 28 days to process MPN and prescriber number applications, but it can be longer during peak periods.

You can apply for an MPN and a prescriber number at the same time.

Actions

1. Ask your employer whether you need to apply for an MPN and a prescriber number. These are a requirement for many medical practitioner positions. See 'Salaried and private billing positions' in the Resources section.
2. Review the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing information on whether you are eligible to bill Medicare. Different requirements apply, depending on whether you hold a temporary or permanent visa.

   See 'Section 19AB and section 19AA of the Health Insurance Act' in the Resources section.
3. Review Services Australia's information on eligibility to apply[E33] for an MPN and a prescriber number, as well as eligibility to apply online.[E35]

   If you are not eligible to bill Medicare, you may apply for a 'refer and request' MPN.

   In a public hospital, this type of MPN will allow you to refer patients to other health practitioners and request services that are eligible for a Medicare benefit.

   In a private hospital or clinic, this will allow you to offer services in a private billing context. Your patient will not be able to receive benefits from Medicare. This type of MPN will allow you to refer patients to other health practitioners and request services that are eligible for a Medicare benefit.

   - **If you are eligible to bill Medicare**
     i. Follow the instructions[E34] to set up a Provider Digital Access (PRODA) account.
     - If you have Australian Government–issued identity documents, you can register online.
     - If you do not have Australian Government–issued identity documents, you will need to complete a PDF form and either email it to Services Australia or return it in person at a Services Australia centre.

     ii. Once your PRODA account is set up, follow the instructions to set up Health Professional Online Services (HPOS) access and apply for your initial MPN and prescriber number online.
   - **If you are not eligible to bill Medicare**

   You can apply for a refer and request MPN by completing the HW019 form.[E36] Where prompted, tick the box *'Refer and request only (such as hospital interns)'*.

- **Services Australia**[E30] is an Australian Government agency that administers the following programs and services:
  - Medicare
  - Centrelink
  - Child Support
  - myGov.

Tips and considerations

- **Important:** If you are billing Medicare on a temporary visa and then you gain permanent residency, you must immediately notify Services Australia. The eligibility requirements to bill Medicare are different for those with permanent residency and you may no longer be eligible to bill Medicare. If you continue billing Medicare while ineligible, you will accumulate a debt with Services Australia.
- Separate MPNs are required for separate places of practice.
- You can use the same form to apply for an MPN and a prescriber number.
- Read about Medicare[E31] and the PBS.[E32]
- For information on billing Medicare, see:
  - *Understanding Medicare: Provider Handbook*[E37]
  - *Working in Australia* orientation.[E41]

7.2 Arrange professional indemnity insurance

Summary and purpose

Registered medical practitioners must not practice without appropriate professional indemnity insurance (PII). This insurance is a requirement of your registration and protects you from legal claims.

This is usually provided by your employer in salaried positions, so check with them. You may choose to arrange for separate cover.

If you will be working in private practice, you will generally be responsible for arranging your own cover. Make sure you are insured for every context in which you will practice.

Sequence and prerequisites

PII must be in place before you start practising.

Cost

Variable.

Approximate timeframe

Variable.

Actions

1. Read the Medical Board's *Registration standard: PII arrangements*.[R6]
2. Ask your employer whether they will provide PII and what is included in their cover. Seek advice on whether you should purchase additional cover independently.
3. If required, research your options and arrange for an appropriate level of cover that will indemnify you for every context in which will you practice.

Tips and considerations

- An employer's PII may not cover, for example, legal representation or penalties arising out of disciplinary proceedings, or any work undertaken outside the scope of your employment contract. You may choose to arrange for separate PII to the cover provided by your employer.
- You are not required to upload evidence of PII to the Ahpra portal. However, in some circumstances you may be asked to submit it.
- If you are working in a rural area, you may be eligible for the Premium Support Scheme (PSS),[E38] which is a government subsidy to help with the cost of medical indemnity insurance.

8. Employment

8.1 Complete onboarding and start job

Summary and purpose

Onboarding activities and training modules will introduce you to your work organisation, the health system in Australia, and other essential knowledge for your position.

Sequence and prerequisites

Generally, most onboarding activities will take place once you start your job. However, some employers may require you to undertake certain onboarding activities before you start.

Cost

Nil

Approximate timeframe

Variable.

Actions

1. Undertake all onboarding and orientation processes required by your workplace. This may include ID verification, credentialling checks, IT access and setup, mandatory training, and more. You may need to complete some of these tasks before your first day.
2. Complete an orientation to the Australian health system as a requirement of your registration. This will be conducted by your employer.
3. After 3 months of practice, you and your supervisor will need to complete an orientation report and a work performance report for the Medical Board. The forms are available in the section 'Next steps while registered' on the Standard pathway webpage.[R10]

Tips and considerations

- If your employer asks you to complete certain onboarding processes before you start work, stay in contact with them and ask for assistance if you have any problems. This will help to ensure a smooth start to your employment and avoid delays processing your first pay.
- An online orientation to the Australian health system[E41] is available for internationally qualified health professionals.
- Your employer may request proof of your work rights. You or your employer can use Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO)[V19] for this.
- Understand your workplace's policies on your rights and obligations, including anti-racism and discrimination policies, reporting pathways and available supports. Knowing your rights and obligations will help you succeed and be empowered in your job.

  You can also read the Fair Work Ombudsman's information on workplace rights and obligations[E26] and workplace discrimination.[E27]
- All employees, regulated workers and independent contractors have the right to join or not join a union.[E42] This is called 'freedom of association'. It also means that all workers can choose whether to be represented in their workplace by a union and take part in lawful industrial activities.

Tip from internationally qualified health professionals who have moved to Australia

When you start work, do not be afraid to ask questions and seek help. Find out where to get information about the processes in your workplace to help you learn and settle in more quickly.

For IMGs seeking specialist registration as a general practitioner (GP) in Australia

If you have secured a position in a general practice, at this point you can consider applying for an approved GP training program that leads to fellowship with the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) or the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM). You may have to work in general practice for a number of months, and in some cases one year or more, to successfully gain entry into these programs. See 'Seeking specialist registration as a GP in Australia' in the Resources section for more information about these programs.

If accepted into the program, complete the requirements to become eligible to apply for fellowship and specialist registration. See the last step of the Specialist pathway guide for information on applying for specialist registration.

If you wish to also apply for general registration (not compulsory), you can also continue on the Standard pathway and concurrently complete the requirements.

8.2 Complete requirements for general registration

Summary and purpose

Complete the supervised practice requirements and other requirements for general registration.

Sequence and prerequisites

You can start completing the requirements once the Medical Board has approved your supervised practice plan and you have started work.

Cost

Variable.

CPD homes charge a joining fee and there may also be fees for courses.

Approximate timeframe

Limited/provisional registration is granted for 12 months. During this time, you will work on completing the requirements for general registration.

If you cannot complete all the requirements in 12 months, you can renew your limited/provisional registration.

Actions

- Complete the supervised practice requirements in line with your supervised practice plan.
- Review the Medical Board's information about continuing professional development (CPD) requirements[R42] and join a CPD home.[R43] Complete 50 hours of CPD.

Tips and considerations

Completing the requirements

- If your supervised practice requirements include doing rotations (i.e. experience in specific areas such as emergency medicine, medicine and surgery), you must keep track of rotations and speak to your employer if there are any issues securing the necessary rotations.
- During this period, your supervisor must complete certain tasks and paperwork. Ask your supervisor if you can block out time in their calendar to ensure they have adequate time to complete the required tasks.
- All medical practitioners must join a CPD home[R43] (unless exempt) that is accredited with the AMC. The CPD home can be a college or non-college home, and should be suitable for their scope of practice. The homes coordinate the programs and provide support to doctors.

Changing employers, positions or employment locations

- If you want to change your position, work site or supervisor (even if your employer remains the same) for which your limited/provisional registration was granted, you must apply to the Medical Board for a change in circumstances by completing a PDF form.[R35] You must wait for Medical Board approval before starting your new position. If you leave or lose the position for which your registration was granted, you must not practise until you secure a new job and the Medical Board approves your change in circumstances.
- If you undertook the PESCI, its outcome is also tied to your position. If you change positions and the new position is in a general practice, you may have to undertake another PESCI. You can apply to the Medical Board for an exemption if the new position is similar to the one you completed the PESCI for. More information is available in the change of circumstance application form.
- If you are changing your employment location and would like to change from 'limited registration for area of need' to 'limited registration for postgraduate training or supervised practice', or vice versa, you will need to reapply for registration.

8.3a Undertake AMC clinical exam and receive AMC certificate

Conditional: if not already completed, and if not enrolled in a workplace based assessment (WBA) program

Summary and purpose

This in-person exam assesses your clinical competence for safe and effective practice in the Australian healthcare system.

The exam takes place in Melbourne. An online option is available, though priority is given to those in rural and remote areas.

Pass the AMC clinical exam to receive the AMC certificate, which is required for your application for general registration.

For cost, appropriate timeframe, actions, tips and considerations please refer to step 2.3 'Undertake AMC clinical exam and receive AMC certificate'.

Sequence and prerequisites

You must have passed the AMC CAT MCQ exam (AMC Part 1).

8.3b Enrol in and complete the workplace based assessment (WBA) program

Conditional: if you have secured employment with a WBA provider and are not undertaking the AMC clinical exam

Summary and purpose

This is an alternative to the AMC clinical exam.

This program is delivered by AMC-accredited employers and is a structured assessment program of 6–12 months. It assesses IMGs on the job on a range of clinical and professional skills.

Successfully completing the program will make you eligible for the AMC certificate, which is required for your application for general registration.

Sequence and prerequisites

You can only apply for this program if you have a job with an accredited WBA provider.[R34]

Note that securing a position with a provider does not guarantee enrolment in the WBA program.

Cost

WBA programs can cost around $12,000, which is paid to the WBA provider.

A registration fee of around $1,000 is also payable to the AMC.

Approximate timeframe

Different WBA program providers have different intake frequencies.

Provider waiting lists for enrolment can range from several months to several years.

Actions

1. Review the AMC's information on the WBA program,[R32] eligibility and application process.[R33]
2. Once you have started working with the health service, speak to its WBA officer about the internal process for enrolment.
3. If the health service offers you a position on the program, they must then nominate you via the AMC's WBA portal.
4. Once the AMC has verified your eligibility for the program, you will be notified and asked to pay the fee.
5. Complete the WBA requirements, then apply for the AMC certificate.

Tips and considerations

- WBA programs are in high demand and the intake process can be very competitive.
- Some providers may require you to undertake a pre–workplace based assessment program.
- You will have limited registration for the duration of the WBA program.
- The pass rate for WBA programs is 99%.
- While the pass rate is higher than for the AMC clinical exam, spots are very limited and the cost is considerably higher.

8.4 Renew limited or provisional registration

Conditional: if required

Summary and purpose

If you cannot complete the requirements for general registration within 12 months, you must apply to renew your limited/ provisional registration to continue practising.

Sequence and prerequisites

You must apply online before your registration expires.

After your registration expires, you have one month to submit your renewal, to be allowed to continue practising. You will have to pay a late fee for your renewal application. The late period is not available to those who have exhausted the allowed number of renewals.

Cost

Approximately $1,000 for limited registration and $500 for provisional registration. See the Medical Board website[R47] for details.

Actions

1. Review Ahpra[R44] and the Medical Board's information[R45] about registration renewal.
2. Complete a renewal of registration application through the Ahpra portal. You will need to:
   - demonstrate compliance with any conditions, undertakings or requirements on your registration set by the Medical Board
   - submit work performance reports
   - demonstrate that you have performed satisfactorily in the prior registration period. This is usually demonstrated through the submission of work performance reports.

Tips and considerations

- There is a cap on how many times you can renew your limited/provisional registration.
  - Provisional registration can be renewed twice (for a total of 3 years).
  - Limited registration can be renewed 3 times (for a total of 4 years). This includes 'limited registration for area of need'.

  If you have exhausted the allowed number of renewals and not met the requirements for general registration, you will need to submit a new application for your limited/provisional registration. You must be able to show progression to general registration. You will not be able to continue practising once your registration expires, unless new registration has been granted. There is no late period available. It is recommended you apply 3 months before your registration expires to ensure there are no gaps in your registration.
- If you intend to apply for general registration soon but your limited/provisional registration is close to expiring, you will need to lodge an application to renew your limited/provisional registration while the Medical Board assesses your general registration application. This means you may have 2 applications open at the same time. If you have exhausted the number of renewals, you will have to lodge a new application for limited/provisional registration.

  Note that the fee for renewal of limited/provisional registration while an applicant is waiting for their general registration to be processed is very low. If you are not eligible to renew your registration you must pay for a new limited/provisional registration application. Ahpra will refund the fees if you withdraw the application due to your general registration being granted.
- Your employer may need to apply for an extension to their AoN certificate if it is nearing the end of its validity.
- If you have confirmation in the Ahpra portal that your renewal application has been received, you can continue to practise while your application is being assessed, even if this extends past your registration expiry date.

9. General registration and beyond

9.1 Apply for general registration

Summary and purpose

General registration will allow you to undertake training pathways for specialisation.

If you have completed an approved general practitioner (GP) training program and have been awarded fellowship with Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) or the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM), you can also apply for specialist registration. See the Specialist pathway guide for information on applying for specialist registration.

Sequence and prerequisites

You must first complete all the requirements for general registration and gather the required documentation and evidence.

Cost

There are separate fees[R47] for the application and the registration, which are both paid at the time of application.

Combined, the fees are around $1,600 for those with provisional registration, and $2,700 for those with limited registration.

Costs for translation and certification of documents vary.

Approximate timeframe

Applications to change from limited/provisional registration to general registration typically take 10–14 days to be processed, if documentation is complete.

It can take longer during peak periods.

Actions

1. Review the Medical Board document checklist on the Standard pathway page[R10] for transitioning from limited/provisional registration to general registration. Note, documents that you already submitted with your application for limited/provisional registration may be waived.
2. Collect evidence that you have achieved the learning outcomes from your supervised practice period. See 'When can I apply for general registration' on the Standard pathway page[R10] for the requirements. If relevant, collect other supporting evidence. If any validity periods have passed, you may need to request the documents again and/or re-certify them.
3. Apply online through the Ahpra portal[R35] and upload supporting documents.

Tips and considerations

- In most cases where you have already provided documents, such as proof of identity and Certificate of Good Standing, in your application for limited/provisional registration, you will not need to provide them again when applying for general registration. There can be exceptions; for example, if your identity documents have expired. See the document checklist for more information.
- If you need to submit any documents, ensure you have met the translation and certification requirements.
- Once you have been granted general registration, it must be renewed by 30 September every year.

9.2 Research your options following general registration

Summary and purpose

Gather information about employment options and specialisation pathways following your general registration.

Tips and considerations

You may choose to pursue specialist training or continue to practise under general registration.

Note that some colleges require candidates to have Australian permanent residency or citizenship to be eligible for their specialist training program.

Sequence and prerequisites

N/A

Cost

Specialist training programs vary in cost.

Actions

If you are interested in specialisation:

- research the training pathways offered by medical colleges[R49]
- review the Medical Board's information on specialist registration.[R48]

Resources

- Additional information
- List of key documents
- Glossary
- List of links

Additional information

Seeking specialist registration as a GP in Australia

IMGs seeking to work as a GP in Australia should apply for registration via the Expedited Specialist pathway or the Specialist pathway, if you have overseas specialist qualifications in general practice and meet one of the pathway's eligibility criteria.

If you are not eligible for either pathway, you can take the Standard pathway or Competent Authority pathway and consider the following 2 options:

Option 1

1. Secure a position in an accredited general practice in certain regional, rural or remote areas, and undertake a Pre-Employment Structured Clinical Interview (PESCI) (see step 4.1 'Undertake the Pre-Employment Structured Clinical Interview').
2. Once you have been granted **limited or provisional registration**, consider applying for one or more of the following training programs:
   a. Remote Vocational Training Scheme (RVTS)*[E12]
   b. Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) – Independent Pathway*[E13]
   c. Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) – Fellowship Support Program Standard Entry pathway*[E14]

   These programs have different eligibility criteria (including employment locations and visa types) and costs, so review them carefully. It may take a number of months, and in some cases one year or more, to successfully gain entry into these programs. Those on the Specialist pathway – area of need are not eligible for the above programs.

   These programs range from 2–4 years. The RVTS requires you to stay at one location, working under a remote supervision model for the duration of training. The other programs may require rotations in different locations.

   Completing one of these programs will make you eligible for RACGP or ACRRM fellowship and for specialist registration.
3. If you are unsuccessful in gaining entry to the above programs, consider completing the Pre-Fellowship Program (PFP),[E16] which allows you to gain experience to move onto a fellowship program. IMGs on limited or provisional registration are eligible for financial support under the PFP. But not everyone who is eligible will receive financial support. These programs range from 3 months to 2 years, depending on experience.

Option 2

1. Once you have completed the Standard or Competent Authority pathway and have been granted **general registration**, you can consider:
   a. the above programs, as they are open to those with general registration. Note that the entry and training requirements may differ for those with general registration compared to those with limited or provisional registration. Or
   b. the 3–4-year Australian General Practice Training Program (AGPT).[E15] This program is offered by the ACRRM and the RACGP and is funded by the Australian Government (excluding certain fees), but you must be an Australian citizen or permanent resident, or hold one of certain temporary skilled visas to be eligible. The program typically requires trainees to complete rotations in different locations.

   Note that from 2026, the Rural Generalist Training Scheme (RGTS) previously available to those with general registration will be delivered under the AGPT and will no longer be run as a separate program.

* RVTS: Program is government funded except for exam fees.
ACRRM: Program fees are approximately $40,000 plus exam fees.
RACGP: Program fees are approximately $40,000 plus exam fees.

Helpful information

- These programs use the Australian Modified Monash Model (MMM) to identify eligible employment locations, which differs between programs. The MMM is a classification system that categorises metropolitan, regional, rural and remote areas according to both geographical remoteness and town size. Read about the MMM[E5] and how to search for an area's MMM classification.
- Many GP positions will require practitioners to bill Medicare, which means you will be subject to section 19AB (the 10-year moratorium). To be eligible to bill Medicare in your first 10 years as an IMG, you will need an exemption, such as by working in a Distribution Priority Area (DPA).[E6] The DPA classification uses MMM boundaries. See 'Section 19AB and section 19AA of the Health Insurance Act' in the Resources section.
- Learn about the incentives and support[E17] that may be available for GPs, based on MMM location.

Section 19AB and section 19AA of the Health Insurance Act

- If you work as a GP or specialist in private practice or a private hospital, you will likely need to bill Medicare, which is Australia's public health insurance scheme. If so, sections 19AB and 19AA of the Health Insurance Act are relevant to you as an IMG.

  If you are working in a salaried specialist position in a public hospital, you may or may not need to bill Medicare. This depends on the type of position you are working in and how you are paid, so check with your employer.

  If you are working in a non-specialist salaried position in a public hospital, you will not need to bill Medicare.

  See 'Salaried and private billing positions' in the Resources section for more information.
- To bill Medicare, apply to Services Australia for a Medicare provider number (MPN). If you are working in more than one service location, you will need a separate MPN for each location when billing Medicare. Services Australia separately assesses each location for eligibility.
- **If you are not eligible to bill Medicare**, you may still be eligible for a 'refer and request' MPN. This will allow you to refer patients to other health practitioners and request services that are eligible for a Medicare benefit. See step 7.1 'Apply for Medicare provider number (MPN) and Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) prescriber number' for more information about applying for an MPN.

- **Services Australia**[E30] is an Australian Government agency that administers the following programs and services:
  - Medicare
  - Centrelink
  - Child Support
  - myGov.

Section 19AB (the 10-year moratorium)

- For at least 10 years after your first registration, as an IMG (also referred to as an 'overseas-trained doctor' on the Australian Department of Health, Disability and Ageing website, and the Services Australia website) you are subject to section 19AB.[E1] This means you cannot bill Medicare and your patients will need to pay the full cost themselves.

  The restriction ends after 10 years from the date of your first registration, provided you have become an Australian permanent resident or citizen. If you remain a temporary resident, the restriction continues until you take up permanent residency or citizenship.

  To be allowed to bill Medicare during this period, you must have a section 19AB exemption.[E3]
- The most common exemption is for working in certain areas of workforce shortage; that is, a Distribution Priority Area (DPA) or District of Workforce Shortage (DWS) for your specialty. These areas are generally in outer metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas.

  You can use the Health Workforce Locator[E4] to check the classification of any location in Australia.

- Examples of other exemptions that allow you to work in any location include situations where:
  - you are working outside regular hours (between 6 pm and 8 am Monday to Friday and any time on Saturday, Sunday and public holidays); for example, at a general practice clinic or medical deputising service. If this applies to you, consider applying for the Approved Medical Deputising Services program.[E8] Participation in this program also satisfies section 19AA if it applies to you, and is limited to 3 years without entering a specialist training program
  - your spouse is a medical practitioner or a skilled migrant, and you wish to work near their place of employment. Information about spousal exemptions is in the application form[E9]
  - you have been granted specialist registration with the Medical Board in certain specialties of acute shortage.
- Submit your exemption request with your application for an MPN. See step 7.1 'Apply for Medicare provider number (MPN) and Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) prescriber number' for more information about applying for an MPN.
- You can reduce the 10-year timeframe by working in certain non-metropolitan areas to gain scaling credits.[E10]
- If you are working in a mixed role, such as in a hospital and a private clinic, and they both require you to bill Medicare, ensure that both positions allow you to meet the requirements for eligibility to bill Medicare. MPNs are location specific and you must have one in place for each place of practice where you are billing Medicare.

Section 19AA

- If you have a permanent Australian visa or are considering applying for a permanent visa, and you would like to work in a position that requires you to bill Medicare, be aware that in addition to the requirements of section 19AB, you must fulfil the requirements of section 19AA.[E2] This means you must hold specialist registration or be actively working towards it to be eligible to bill Medicare. Section 19AA applies to all permanent residents and citizens, and there are no exemptions and no end period.
- If you don't hold specialist registration and you are a permanent resident, and you are:
  - working in general practice – to be eligible to bill Medicare, you must be participating in a college-led GP training program (3GA training programs) or a workforce training program. See the list of eligible programs at the bottom of the section 19AA webpage.[E2]
  - working in or undertaking training in another specialty – if you are undertaking training, you will likely be working in salaried positions and will not need to bill Medicare. If you are in a position that requires you to bill Medicare, speak to your employer and/or medical college.

Changing from a temporary visa to permanent residency

- If you start working and billing Medicare while on a temporary visa and then you gain permanent residency, you must immediately notify Services Australia. Becoming a permanent resident may change how sections 19AB and 19AA affect you, including your eligibility to bill Medicare. If you continue billing Medicare while ineligible, you will accumulate a debt with Services Australia that you need to repay.

Salaried and private billing positions

This section outlines some general features of working in the public and private health system, as relevant to IMGs seeking employment. It is general guidance only and there may be exceptions – and alternative working and billing arrangements – not mentioned here.

More detailed information about Australia's health system and Medicare can be found in the *Working in Australia* orientation.[E41]

In Australia, healthcare is delivered through a mix of private and public systems, with the majority of services publicly funded by the Australian, state and territory governments.

Medical practitioners may work in the public health system, in private practice or in a mix of both. Many services in both systems are funded or subsidised by Medicare, which is Australia's public health insurance system that provides free or subsidised healthcare. Depending on the setting and the service, funding may also come from the Australian government, state and territory governments, private health and other insurance arrangements, with patients paying out-of-pocket expenses, and more.

Patients can choose to be treated in the private or public system. A patient in a public hospital can also choose to be treated by a specialist as a private patient, with informed financial consent, if this is available at the hospital where they have been admitted. If this is available, they can choose their doctor and may incur out-of-pocket costs.

Working in the public system

Each state and territory in Australia manages its public health system individually, meaning that the types of positions, salary and working conditions will vary between states and territories.

Most non-specialists and hospital-based staff specialists are employed by their state or territory governments on a salary. Medicare billing arrangements differ based on the type of patient.

Public patients in public hospitals:

- The medical practitioner does not bill Medicare.
- The patient does not pay any costs.

Private patients in public hospitals:

- Specialists may treat private patients in a public hospital.
- Costs are billed through Medicare and/or private health or other insurance, depending on the service.
- The employed hospital-based specialist may receive a portion of this private billing in addition to their salary. Arrangements differ across employers.
- Any costs not covered by Medicare will be paid by the patient and/or through their private health or other insurance, if available.

If billing Medicare, the practitioner must meet the eligibility requirements, including sections 19AB and 19AA. Employers may have arrangements for hospital-based specialists who are not eligible to bill Medicare.

Salaries and employment conditions

- Salaries are set by awards or enterprise agreements (EAs) that set out the pay rates and conditions of employment for employees, based on the position and experience.
- Employees receive regular pay, leave entitlements and other benefits. Read more about awards[E24] and the minimum entitlements for employees.[E23]
- Awards vary between each state and territory, and EAs vary between employers. This means salary and conditions will vary, even for similar positions.

Independent contractors (also known as Visiting Medical Officers or VMOs)

- Some practitioners work in the public system as independent contractors. In some states, these are known as 'Visiting Medical Officers' (VMOs).
- Independent contractors are generally not guaranteed hours or work, and do not receive employment-related benefits such as superannuation and paid leave.
- Practitioners may treat both private and public patients in the hospital depending on the agreement.
- Depending on the contractual agreement with the hospital, the hospital may pay them an hourly or daily rate, or on a fee-for-service basis.
- Generally, the cost of services to public patients is covered by the hospital, while services to private patients are billed to Medicare, private health or another insurance provider, and/or the patient themselves.

Working as a specialist in private practice, including as a GP

Specialists working in private practice generally work on a fee-for-service basis. Many, but not all, will be self-employed as a contractor in a medical practice or hospital rather than being an employee on a salary. This means they do not receive employment-related benefits, such as superannuation and paid leave as covered in the National Employment Standards,[E23] in exchange for more autonomy and a higher rate of pay. An example of an exception is GPs who are engaged as employees in services such as an Aboriginal medical service.

Medicare billing arrangements differ based on the type of patient and setting.

Private clinics such as a GP or other specialist clinic

- Practitioners may bill Medicare directly, or they may bill the patient who then receives a benefit from Medicare, their private health or other insurance provider, or another relevant scheme.
- The patient will pay any costs not covered by a scheme.

Private patients in public hospitals

- Practitioners will generally bill Medicare, private insurance, another relevant scheme and/or the patient themselves.
- Practitioners may pay a portion of the earnings to the hospital to cover facility and service costs.

Public patients in a public hospital (working as an independent contractor)

- Depending on the contractual agreement with the hospital, the contractor may be paid an hourly or daily rate by the hospital, or work on a fee-for-service basis.

See the point above on working as an independent contractor in the public system.

Private hospitals

- Practitioners may bill Medicare, private health or other insurance provider, and/or the patient themselves.
- The hospital may bill for its fees separately.
- Some private hospitals may be contracted by a state or territory government to deliver public hospital services. In this case, specific funding arrangements will be in place.

The practitioner must meet the eligibility requirements to bill Medicare, including sections 19AB and 19AA. Even if the practitioner bills the patient directly, the practitioner must be eligible to bill Medicare for the patient to claim a Medicare benefit. If the practitioner is not eligible, they must let the patient know before treating them and the patient may have to pay the whole cost themselves if the services are not covered by private insurance or another scheme. See 'Section 19AB and section 19AA of the Health Insurance Act' in the Resources section.

In private practice, income can vary greatly depending on the practitioner's experience, the location, the volume of patients and the specialty. In Australia's rural and remote areas, government incentives and high demand for care mean a practitioner's income may be higher than if they were working in a metropolitan area.

If you work in a medical practice with multiple practitioners, you will generally receive a percentage of the fees you generate from patients, with the rest of the fees going into running the practice. You may also choose to establish your own medical practice.

Selecting an occupation (ANZSCO) code for your skills assessment and visa application

- Australia and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) is a classification system[V8] used to categorise all occupations and jobs in Australia and New Zealand. Each occupation is tied to a numerical code and contains information on the skill level, qualifications and experience required. It is used by various government bodies for different purposes, including by Home Affairs for visa and migration purposes.
- The Australian Bureau of Statistics has introduced a new classification system, Occupation Standard Classification for Australia (OSCA). As of June 2026, Home Affairs continues to use ANZSCO codes for visa and migration purposes. A transition to OSCA may occur in the future.
- When applying for a skilled visa, you will usually be required to nominate an ANZSCO code. Generally, your employer will advise you of the appropriate ANZSCO code. You will need to check that you meet the specific skills, qualifications, experience and other requirements relevant to the ANZSCO code. If you are unsure, please contact Home Affairs or seek assistance from a registered migration agent or lawyer.
- If you are applying for a temporary skilled visa (independent or permanent), it will generally have conditions attached that mean you can only work within the scope defined in the ANZSCO code, even if your registration with the Medical Board allows for a broader scope.
- If you are applying for an employer sponsored visa (temporary or permanent), ensure the ANZSCO code you select for the visa application matches the code your employer is using for the visa nomination.

List of key documents

Here are some documents you **may** be asked to provide during the registration, visa application and employment processes. Please note that this is not a comprehensive list and it may change. Please check the relevant body's website for an accurate list of documents.

Check document validity periods. These are determined by the body requesting the document, which means it can differ between bodies. Some bodies may regard certain documents, such as a Certificate of Good Standing and a criminal history check, as valid for only 3–6 months. You may wish to request these documents closer to the time you need them.

Your name should be consistent across the documents. If your name differs, you will need to provide evidence of name change.

Proof of identity and general documents
Proof of identity and passport (including documents to support any variations in your name across documents)
Evidence of name change (if applicable)
Passport-style photo of your face
Criminal history check/police clearance from the countries where you have lived. **Some bodies may regard such certificates as valid for only 3–6 months**
Evidence of English language proficiency, which may include English language proficiency test results
Qualifications and work history
An eligible primary qualification in medicine and surgery from a training institute listed in the World Directory of Medical Schools
Medical school transcripts
Certificates for postgraduate medical training (if applicable)
Evidence of specialist qualifications, including results of any specialist medical college exams (if applicable)
Proof of internship completion or other supervised practice
Registration documents, including registration history outside Australia
A Certificate of Good Standing (also known as Certificate of Registration Status) from each registration authority the applicant may have been registered with. **Some bodies may regard such certificates as valid for only 3–6 months**
A detailed and up-to-date curriculum vitae

Professional reference letters
Supporting documents to meet the Recency of Practice registration standard (if you do not have recent practice)
Additional documents for visa
Proof of work experience
Proof of health insurance
Health checks for you and any dependents
If you are applying for visas for your family members, you will also need additional documentation to prove their identity and relationship to you
Other
As you progress through the steps of this process, entities will also require evidence that you have completed the prerequisites (such as any Australian exams and assessments)

Glossary

ABN: Australian Business Number; required for medical practitioners who are working as independent contractors, for example, in private practice. See step 3.3 'Receive and accept offer of employment' for more information.

Ahpra: Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency; works with the National Boards to regulate registered health practitioners, among other functions. See step 1.1 'Access information on working as an international medical graduate (IMG) in Australia' for more information on their role.

AMC: Australian Medical Council; verifies the qualifications of international medical graduates, administers exams for those on the Standard pathway, and accredits education providers and training courses for medical professions. See step 1.1 'Access information on working as an international medical graduate (IMG) in Australia' for more information on its role.

ANZSCO: Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations; categorises all occupations and jobs in Australia and New Zealand by numerical codes. See 'Selecting an occupation (ANZSCO) code for your skills assessment and visa application' in the Resources section for more information.

AoN: Area of Need; a geographical location with a shortage of medical practitioners. State and territory governments determine their own AoN locations.

ATO: Australian Taxation Office; the Australian Government's principal tax collection agency.

Awards: Legal documents that outline the minimum pay rates and conditions of employment for employees in that specific industry and occupation. Awards do not apply when an enterprise agreement is in place or when a medical practitioner is working as a self-employed contractor. See step 3.3 'Receive and accept offer of employment' for more information.

CAT MCQ exam: Computer Adaptive Test Multiple Choice Question exam; a requirement for international medical graduates on the Standard pathway.

Certificate of Good Standing (also known as 'Certificate of Registration Status'): An official document issued by a registration authority to prove current registration status, including any conditions and restrictions.

CPD: Continuing professional development; how medical practitioners maintain and broaden their knowledge and skills. See step 8.2 'Complete requirements for general registration' for more information.

DPA: Distribution Priority Area; identifies the locations with a shortage of general practitioner services. The Australian Government determines DPAs.

DWS: District of Workforce Shortage; identifies the areas with poor access to specialist medical practitioners (excluding general practitioners). The Australian Government determines DWAs.

EA: Enterprise agreement (or EBA, enterprise bargaining agreement); sets out the entitlements the employer agrees to provide to employees in their business or organisation. Each EA applies to only one business or group of businesses. See step 3.3 'Receive and accept offer of employment' for more information.

ECFMG: Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates; facilitates the primary source verification of international medical graduates' qualifications. See step 2.1 'Apply for primary source verification (PSV) of qualifications' for more information.

EPIC: Electronic Portfolio of International Credentials; required as part of the primary source verification process.

Fellowship: Recognition that a medical practitioner has completed an advanced training program (often known as a 'fellowship program') run by an Australian Medical Council–accredited medical college to become a specialist.

GP: General practitioner; similar to a primary care physician or family physician in some countries. General practitioners hold specialist registration.

Home Affairs: Australian Government Department of Home Affairs; responsible for visas and immigration-related matters, among other responsibilities.

HPOS: Health Professional Online Services; a platform run by Services Australia for health professionals to manage business related to the Medicare Benefits Schedule, Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and more.

IMG: International medical graduate; in this guide, it refers to individuals who received their medical qualifications in a country other than Australia or New Zealand. Some entities, such as the Australian Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, and Services Australia, use the term 'overseas-trained doctors' to refer to these individuals, while including foreign graduates of Australian medical schools in their definition of IMG.

Medical Board: Medical Board of Australia; sets out the registration standards all medical practitioners must meet to apply for and maintain registration, and registers medical practitioners and students, among other responsibilities. See their website for more information about their role.

Medicare: Australia's public health insurance scheme; subsidises the cost of hospital and health services for Australians and eligible visitors.

MMM: Modified Monash Model; a classification system that categorises metropolitan, regional, rural and remote areas according to geographical remoteness and town size. Areas are categorised from MM 1 to MM 7, where MM 1 is a major city and MM 7 is very remote.

MPN: Medicare provider number; required for health professionals to claim under the Medicare Benefits Schedule and Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

NRAS: National Registration and Accreditation Scheme; Australia's national system for regulating health practitioners.

OMARA: Office of Migration Agents Registration Authority; registers and oversees registered migration agents who give immigration assistance.

OSCA: Occupation Standard Classification for Australia; a new system for categorising all occupations and jobs in Australia by numerical codes. As at June 2026, the Department of Home Affairs continues to use Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupation (ANZSCO) codes for visa and migration purposes. A transition to OSCA may occur in the future.

PBS: Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme; an Australian Government program that subsidises the cost of medicines for Australians and eligible visitors.

PESCI: Pre-employment structured clinical interview, required for international medical graduates on the Standard and Competent Authority pathways to work in general practice. See step 4.1 'Undertake pre-employment structured clinical interview (PESCI)' for more information.

PFP: Pre-Fellowship Program; allows medical practitioners to gain experience in general practice to move on to a college-led fellowship program and become a general practitioner.

PII: Professional indemnity insurance; protects practitioners from legal claims and is a requirement of registration. See step 7.2 'Arrange professional indemnity insurance' for more information.

PRODA: Provider Digital Access; an online identity verification and authentication system that allows individuals and organisations providing health and other services to access online government services.

PSS: Premium Support Scheme; a government subsidy to help those working in rural areas with the cost of medical indemnity insurance.

PSV: Primary source verification; a process to verify an international medical graduate's qualifications directly with their training organisation.

Section 19AA: A section of the *Health Insurance Act 1973* (Cth) that applies to medical practitioners who are permanent residents or citizens of Australia, and states the conditions under which they can access Medicare benefits. See 'Section 19AB and section 19AA of the Health Insurance Act' in the Resources section for more information.

Section 19AB or the '10-year moratorium': A section of *Health Insurance Act 1973* (Cth) that restricts access to Medicare for IMGs and foreign graduates of Australian medical schools. See 'Section 19AB and section 19AA of the Health Insurance Act' in the Resources section for more information.

Skills assessment: Required for some skilled visas. It checks whether an individual's skills and qualifications meet the standards for their occupation. For medical practitioners, registration with the Medical Board of Australia is generally accepted as a valid skills assessment, although the type of registration required varies depending on the visa type. See step 1.2 'Prepare to start the process' for more information.

TFN: Tax file number; a personal reference number for use in the tax and superannuation systems. See step 6.1 'Relocate to Australia' for more information.

TRN: Transaction Reference Number; a number used to track an individual's visa application if it was lodged online. It can be found in your ImmiAccount.

VEVO: Visa Entitlement Verification Online; an online Department of Home Affairs portal to check an individual's current visa details and conditions.

WBA program: Workplace-based assessment program; an alternative to taking the Australian Medical Council clinical exam. See step '8.3b Enrol in and complete the workplace based assessment (WBA) program' for more information.

List of links

Registration

General information	Primary source verification
R1. Ahpra: Core functions	R15. Check eligible medical schools, medical degree and graduation years
R2. Ahpra: Protected titles	R16. AMC: Primary source verification
R3. Ahpra: Register of practitioners	R17. AMC: Primary source verification flowchart
R4. Ahpra: International health practitioners	R18. AMC: How to apply – AMC account and portfolio
R5. Medical Board: Types of medical registration	R19. AMC: Account guide including translation requirements
R6. Medical Board: Registration Standards	R20. ECFMG: Special Instructions for Physicians Applying to Practice in Australia
R7. Medical Board: Pathways to registration for international medical graduates	R21. ECFMG: Translation requirements
R8. Ahpra: English language skills	
R9. Ahpra: English language skills registration standards	
Standard pathway	
R10. Medical Board: Standard pathway	
R11. Medical Board: Provisional registration for Australian Medical Council certificate holders	
R12. Medical Board: Limited registration for postgraduate training or supervised practice	
R13. Medical Board: Limited registration for area of need	
R14. Medical Board: FAQ on Limited registration for area of need	

Registration

Exams and assessments	Preparing and submitting applications
R22. AMC: MCQ and clinical exam specifications	R34. Medical Board: Registration portal
R23. AMC: MCQ exam general information	R35. Ahpra: Standard format for CVs
R24. AMC: Scheduling the MCQ exam	R36. Ahpra: IQHP application checklist
R25. AMC: MCQ preparation app	R37. Ahpra: Certification requirements
R26. AMC: Bridging courses	R38. Ahpra: Translation requirements
R27. AMC: MCQ examination events	R39. Ahpra: Authorised representatives
R28. AMC: Clinical exam general information	R40. Medical Board: Supervised practice – guidelines and templates
R29. Medical Board: PESCI	R41. Medical Board: Continuing Professional Development
R30. AMC: Pre-employment Structured Clinical Interviews	R42. Medical Board: About CPD homes
R31: RACGP: Applying for a General Practice Experience Assessment	R43. Ahpra: Registration renewal
R32. AMC: Workplace based assessment	R44. Medical Board: Registration renewal
R33. AMC: Workplace based assessment - eligibility and how to apply	R45. Medical Board: General registration for Australian Medical Council certificate holders
R34. AMC: Accredited WBA programs	R46. Medical Board: Fees
	Beyond general registration
	R47. Medical Board: Specialist registration
	R48. AMC: Specialist medical colleges

Visas

General information	Preparing and lodging applications
V1. Home Affairs: Visa finder	V13. Home Affairs: ImmiAccount
V2. Home Affairs: List of visas	V14. Home Affairs: Who can help you with your application
V3. Home Affairs: Visa processing times	V15. Office of the Migration Agents Registration Authority
V4. Home Affairs: English language visa requirements	V16. Home Affairs: Requesting travel records
V5. Home Affairs: Demonstrating Functional English	V17. TIS National: Free Translating Service
Skilled visas	V18. Home Affairs: When to have health examinations
V6. Home Affairs: Skilled occupation list and eligible visas	V19. Home Affairs: Check visa details and conditions (VEVO)
V7. Home Affairs: Skills assessments	
V8. Home Affairs: ANZSCO codes	
V9. Home Affairs: Sponsor obligations	
Submitting an expression of Interest	
V10. Home Affairs: SkillSelect	
V11. Home Affairs: Points calculator	
V12. Home Affairs: Invitation rounds outcomes	

Employment

Employment locations and billing Medicare	Securing employment
E1. Department of Health, Disability and Ageing: Section 19AB	E18. Rural Workforce Agencies Network
E2. Department of Health, Disability and Ageing: Section 19AA	E19. Seek
E3. Department of Health, Disability and Ageing: Section 19AB exemptions	E20. Indeed
E4. Department of Health, Disability and Ageing: Health Workforce Locator	E21. NSW Health: Glossary of medical position terms
E5. Department of Health, Disability and Ageing: Modified Monash Model (MMM)	**Employment conditions**
E6. Department of Health, Disability and Ageing: Distribution Priority Area (DPA)	E22. Fair Work Ombudsman
E7. Department of Health, Disability and Ageing: Area of Need	E23. Fair Work Ombudsman: National Employment Standards
E8. Department of Health, Disability and Ageing: Approved Medical Deputising Services (AMDS) program	E24. Fair Work Ombudsman: About awards
E9. Department of Health, Disability and Ageing: Spousal provision exemption	E25. Fair Work Ombudsman: Pay Calculator
E10. Department of Health, Disability and Ageing: Reducing the Moratorium via scaling	E26. Fair Work Ombudsman: Workplace rights and obligations
Working in general practice	E27. Fair Work Ombudsman: Workplace discrimination fact sheet
E11. Department of Health, Disability and Ageing: General practitioners	**Screening checks**
E12. Remote Vocational Training Scheme	E28. Department of Health, Disability and Ageing: Immunisation for healthcare workers
E13. Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine: Independent Pathway	E29. Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission: Working with children checks
E14. Royal Australian College of General Practitioners: FSP program	
E15. Department of Health, Disability and Ageing: Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) Program	
E16. Department of Health, Disability and Ageing: Pre-fellowship program	
E17. Department of Health, Disability and Ageing: Incentives and support for GPs and general practices in MM locations	

Employment

Applying for a Medicare Provider Number and Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme prescriber number	General
E30. Services Australia	E39. Department of Health, Disability and Ageing: State and territory health departments
E31. Department of Health, Disability and Ageing: Medicare	E40. ScamWatch: Jobs and employment scams
E32. Department of Health, Disability and Ageing: The Pharmaceuticals Benefits Scheme	E41. Working in Australia: an orientation to the health system
E33. Services Australia: Provider eligibility	E42. Fair Work Ombudsman: Role of unions and employer associations
E34. Services Australia: IMG application for provider or prescriber number	
E35. Services Australia: Can I apply online for a Medicare provider number (MPN)?	
E36. Services Australia: HW019 form	
E37. Department of Health, Disability and Ageing: Understanding Medicare Provider Handbook	
Professional indemnity insurance	
E38. Department of Health, Disability and Ageing: Premium Support Scheme (PSS)	
See also R6. Medical Board: Registration Standards	

Settlement

S1. Moving to Australia: a guide for health professionals

S2. Australian Taxation Office: Tax file number

S3. Australian Taxation Office: Online TFN registration

S4. Australian Business Register: Applying for an ABN

S5. Australian Taxation Office: Working as an independent contractor

S6. Australian Taxation Office: Super for individuals and families

S7. Moneysmart: Choosing a super fund

S8. Australian Taxation Office: YourSuper comparison tool