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**The Hon. Scott Morrison MP**  
Prime Minister

**The Hon. Alan Tudge MP**  
Minister for Population, Cities and Urban Infrastructure  
Acting Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services and Multicultural Affairs

## **JOINT STATEMENT**

Thursday 9 July 2020

### **HONG KONG**

Australia and Hong Kong have always shared a close relationship.

Our people-to-people links include close family connections, business ties and shared values. Australia is a favoured destination for people from Hong Kong, and has been for many years.

Australia has a long history of attracting Hong Kong's best and brightest who have contributed significantly to our economic growth and job creation, and we are committed to ensuring this is further strengthened. That's why Australia will introduce new measures for students, temporary graduates and skilled workers from Hong Kong who want to live, work and study in Australia.

New visa arrangements will provide further opportunities for Hong Kong passport holders to remain in Australia, with pathways to permanent residency.

They will also attract talent and companies to our nation in order to boost productivity and create further job opportunities for Australians.

- Temporary graduate and skilled workers will be offered an additional five years of work rights in Australia on top of the time they've already been in Australia, with a pathway to permanent residency at the end of that period.
- Students will be eligible for a five year graduate visa from the conclusion of their studies, with a pathway to permanent residency at the end of that period.
- Future Hong Kong applicants for temporary skilled visas will be provided with a five year visa, based on meeting the updated skills lists and Labour Market Testing requirements.
- Existing arrangement will continue to apply for those applicants who study and work in regional areas to help address skills shortages in those areas, with pathways to permanent residency after 3 years.

There are almost 10,000 existing temporary skilled, temporary graduate and student visa holders in Australia who will be eligible for these special arrangements, with a further 2,500 outside Australia and 1,250 applications on hand.

The Government will also enhance efforts to attract businesses from Hong Kong. There are more than 1,000 international companies that have their regional headquarters based in Hong Kong which might consider relocating to Australia. Our government will develop further incentives to attract these companies, particularly where they have a strong potential for future growth and employment of Australians.

Further detailed information is attached.

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## **Special visa arrangements for Hong Kong**

### **Students**

- Current and future students from Hong Kong will be eligible for a five year temporary graduate visa on the successful conclusion of their studies, with a pathway to permanent residency after five years.
- Former students already on a temporary graduate visa will be eligible for an extension of five years from today in addition to the time they've already been in Australia, with a pathway to permanent residency at the end of that period.
- Students who study at a regional campus will continue to be able to access a pathway to permanent residency after three years.

### **Temporary skilled visas**

- Current temporary skilled visa holders from Hong Kong will be eligible for an extension of five years from today in addition to the time they've already been in Australia, with a pathway to permanent residency at the end of that period.
- Future Hong Kong applicants for temporary skilled visas will be eligible for a five year visa, provided they:
  - meet occupational skills lists and Labour Market Testing requirements; or
  - qualify through the Global Talent temporary visa scheme, which is for exceptional talent where the sponsoring employer pays above the Fair Work High Income Threshold of \$153,600.
- These future temporary skilled visa holders will also have a pathway to permanent residency after five years.

There are almost 10,000 existing temporary skilled, temporary graduate and student visa holders in Australia who will be eligible for these special arrangements, with a further 2,500 outside Australia and 1,250 applications on hand.

### **Attracting the best and brightest**

- The Government will bolster efforts to attract Hong Kong's best and brightest through the Global Talent and Business Innovation and Investment Programs, both part of the permanent migration program.
- These programs will be prioritised and a dedicated Global Talent officer will focus on facilitating the Hong Kong caseload.
- To support future applications we will re-open our visa application centre in Hong Kong which shut down during COVID-19.

### **Attracting businesses**

- New incentives will be developed to attract export-oriented Hong Kong based businesses to relocate to Australia. As well as economic incentives, there will be permanent visa pathways available for all critical Hong Kong based staff of the relocated business. The government will particularly target businesses that presently operate their regional headquarters out of Hong Kong who may be looking to relocate to a democratic country.

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