VISA PAK ISSUE 611 — 20 DECEMBER 2024

WORK EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCREDITED EMPLOYER WORK VISA (AEWV) APPLICANTS

To be granted an Accredited Employer Work Visa (AEWV), an applicant will need to demonstrate that that they meet the minimum skills threshold under WA4.10.6. This can either be demonstrated through a qualification at Level 4 or higher or three years or more of relevant work experience with sufficient evidence from a third party. The purpose of this Visa Pak is to provide some further advice to immigration officers on assessing the minimum skills threshold at WA4.10.6. The requirements for applicants to be suitably qualified to do the job according to the requirements specified at the Job Check WA4.10.5 apply in addition to the minimum skills threshold at WA4.10.6.

Part-Time Work Experience

If an applicant provides evidence of part time work experience (less than 30 hours a week), we can accept this on a pro rata basis so that it is the equivalent of 30 hours a week for three years. For example, an applicant who works 15 hours a week for six years can be assessed as having an equivalent of three years' experience at 30 hours a week.

Self-Employment

Self-employment can be accepted if the applicant can show they worked in the business lawfully as well as owning it. In order for them to have worked in the business, it must have been genuinely operating, i.e. not just existing on paper but actually trading. An immigration officer may require evidence that the business was operating, evidence of business registration or evidence that the owner worked in the business.

It may be difficult for self-employed people to show evidence of the hours they worked. Immigration officers can accept self-declarations about the number of hours they have worked if they are credible given the nature of the business. For example, someone who owns a small shop with only one employee is likely to have been working in the shop in some capacity for more than 30 hours a week, whereas someone who owns a large factory is unlikely to have been working as factory worker.

Relevance of Work Experience

Immigration New Zealand takes a broad approach to defining relevant work experience and this is assessed based on the role as a whole. The work will need to be within the same industry or field as the role offered, however, it does not need to be the exact same role or skill level. Industry means

work in the overall type of business, for example, primary industry, health, manufacturing, construction, financial services, retail, etc. Field means the type of work – for example preparing food, looking after animals, serving customers, building structures, developing software etc.

Industry and field can be considered broadly, for example, for a dairy farm role, experience in any other practical agriculture role would be sufficient as would experience in another primary industry, such as forestry, fishing or horticulture. However, automotive or manufacturing experience, for example, would not be relevant to the role as a whole, even if they do provide skills the employer thinks would transfer.

Evidence of Work Experience

The evidence of relevant work experience can include, but is not limited to; letters of reference, certificates of employment, payslips or tax certificates as set out in Immigration Instructions WA4.10.6 (d). The fact that a document provided is listed in instructions does not automatically mean that an immigration officer will be satisfied that the applicant meets work experience requirements. All information submitted (whether or not it is listed in the instructions) is considered as part of an overall assessment of whether the immigration officer is satisfied that the applicant has three years of relevant work experience, or more if specified by the employer, supported by sufficient evidence from a third party or parties**.**

Under Immigration Instructions E7.5, immigration officers must be satisfied that any document or information provided with an application is genuine and they may take necessary steps to verify that a document or information is genuine. An application may be declined if an immigration officer is not satisfied that sufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate that instructions are met. Applicants claiming work experience based on a letter of reference or certificate of employment from an employer who are unable to provide other supporting evidence such as payslips or tax certificates may not be able to satisfy an Immigration Officer that they meet WA4.10.6 (d).