



## NEW ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEST OPTIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENT VISAS

On 20<sup>th</sup> May 2011, the Australian Minister for Education and Citizenship, Chris Bowen announced a significant change in the English language test options for international student visa applicants.

In addition to the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) used currently, the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE Academic) and the Cambridge English: Advanced (CAE) from Cambridge ESOL will be used for applicants from all countries. However, IELTS will continue as the test required for the growth category of skilled migrants sponsored by employers. Already some have welcomed the additional test

options because they will speed up the assessment process.

This change has been described by Bernard Lane (The Australian, 20/05/2011) as having weakened the IELTS English language test monopoly in the Australian visa business. Lane further comments that the recent controversy surrounding the selection of previous international students for skilled migrant permanent residency will now be less of an issue.

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