

Fact Sheet

Overseas Electricians must now gain on-the-job experience before being entitled to an Electrician's Licence

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The pathway to gain an Electrician's Licence for an overseas trained electrician has changed.

An overseas electrician is now assessed against the Certificate III in Electrotechnology Electrician and issued an Offshore Technical Skills Record (OTSR) by a Trades Recognition Australia approved Registered Training Organisation (RTO).

The process to obtain an OTSR requires an overseas electrician to undertake a skills assessment with an approved RTO in their country of origin. The assessment is conducted in English and is undertaken in three steps:

1. A self-assessment to assist the overseas electrician to determine if they have the required skills.
2. A paper-based assessment is undertaken to review the overseas electrician's trade qualifications and work experience evidence. If the evidence meets the requirements, the overseas electrician will proceed to the practical skills assessment.
3. A practical skills assessment, including a technical interview, is conducted in the candidate's home country.

The technical interview and practical assessment is conducted by an approved Australian electrician and assessor and involves a series of interview questions specifically developed for an electrician. Questions focus on the electrical work competencies, are written in plain English and use a mix of open ended questions and questions requiring specific answers.

The practical assessment involves a series of 'challenge tests' or simulated activities that integrate a number of the competencies relevant the Australian qualification.

Upon successful completion of the assessments an overseas electrician is issued an OTSR. This certifies that an overseas electrician has been assessed against all the technical components in the Units of Competency comprising the Certificate III in Electrotechnology Electrician training package other than the Australian context.

Upon arriving in Australia the overseas electrician presents the OTSR to EnergySafety and applies for an Electrician's Provisional Licence to work under general supervision for a licensed electrical contractor.

An overseas electrician is required to undertake the Australian Context Training through a Western Australian RTO to obtain a Certificate III in Electrotechnology Electrician qualification to be eligible for the issue of an Electrician's Licence.

The Electrician's Provisional Licence is not restricted to an employer or supervisor to enable a candidate to gain up to 12 months on-the-job experience in electrical installing work under Australian conditions.

A nominal time of up to 12 months is an estimate and may vary depending upon the overseas electrician's on-the-job experience in Australia.



The Australian Context Training is the minimum requirement for a non-Australian trained electrician to achieve an Australian electrician's licence.

When all the off-the-job Units of Competency have been completed successfully and the on-the-job experience has been verified by the RTO and employer, an electrician is then required to complete successfully the practical assessment.

When the theory and practical assessments have been completed successfully the Certificate III in Electrotechnology Electrician is issued.

When EnergySafety receives the Certificate III in Electrotechnology Electrician an Electrician's Licence will be issued.

Please note an overseas electrician cannot be issued an Electrician's Licence until the off-the-job and on-the-job experience has been completed and the Certificate III in Electrotechnology Electrician has been received by EnergySafety.

Who can provide **general supervision**?

Before the electrician with an Electrician Provisional Licence (EPL) commences any electrical work the Supervising Electrician must:

- Ensure there are no exposed live parts and the apparatus is safe, isolated (de-energised), tested as needed and is tagged.
- If the EPL holder carries out all or part of the isolation and certifying, to gain practical experience under Australian conditions, the EPL holder must have been assessed as competent in this task and the work must be carried out under the Supervising Electrician's direct and constant supervision.
- Ensure that the EPL holder does not carry out any live work (except as below) and there are no exposed live parts (e.g. greater than 50V AC or 120 V DC) that can be touched in or near the work area.
- Clearly instruct the EPL holder under his/her supervision on which tasks he/she is expected to do and which ones he/she should not be doing until he/she is instructed on how to do the tasks.
- Ensure that the worker understands the instructions.
- Attend the work place on a regular basis to monitor the progress of the work being undertaken. The frequency on face-to-face contacts between the supervisor and the worker may be gradually decreased as and when the supervisor is confident that the worker is competent to perform the required tasks safely.

Live Work

All testing is to be carried out on de-energized circuits and apparatus. However, where testing and fault finding cannot be carried out de-energized (ie. voltage measurements) then the work must be carried out under the direct and constant supervision of the Supervising Electrician ie. the supervisor physically present.

This does not alleviate the requirements of Regulation 50 of the Electricity (Licensing) Regulations 1991.

