

Interview With A Nigerian Who Is Now An Australian Permanent Resident

by

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*Please, note that, in this interview, the interviewee is referred to as Mr. X because he has asked to remain

Interviewer: Can you give five reasons why Australia is a good place to relocate to?

Mr. X: The truth of the matter is that Australia is better when compared to Nigeria.

- 1.** As a permanent resident in Australia, you have access to free healthcare which is impossible in Nigeria.
- 2.** The educational system is also better in Australia. There are standard public schools which are free and for those who wish, the private school is cheaper than that of Nigeria.
- 3.** Another difference is the quality of life. There are labour laws guiding work ethics. You may work from home or even negotiate with your boss on the days you wish to work in the office and from home. The offices close at 5pm and you do not have to work overtime. There is a good work environment without intimidation.
- 4.** The unemployment rate in Nigeria is about 90% unlike that of Australia which is less than 2%. Most people can find jobs with decent pay. Using myself as an example, I had seven job interviews in my area of specialization within a month of being in Australia, whereas in Nigeria, seven job interviews in one year is a miracle.

Interviewer: You did this without connections?

Mr. X: There's no need for connections here. You have to research. The truth is, it's not a bed of roses, you have to work hard. The difference is you're rewarded for your hard work unlike in Nigeria.

You search job sites like **seek.com, indeed.com.au**. You also upgrade your CV to that required in Australia. You can get CV experts to help you review your CV.

And when you submit a job application, you see your recruiter's contact information. You can actually talk to your recruiter about your recruitment and the requirements. You would be told what you're lacking if you don't qualify for the job.

5. There is quality of life, safety, good electricity supply, low pollution and so on. Your wages are enough to cater for your needs.

Interviewer: What were the steps you took to successfully relocate to Australia that others can follow?

Mr. X: You need to log into the official Australian immigration service website www.homeaffairs.gov.au. You can validate or get more details on everything I will say on this website.

Step 1: Permanent residence migration to Australia is point based. It is not visa lottery. You must have a minimum point of 65. Your points are tied to your occupation.

You will find the list of occupations and the points you must earn on the website. You should calculate your points before starting.

If you calculate your points and you get 65 for an occupation that requires 69, you're good to go.

A lot of people start the process and realize their mistakes halfway through after spending a lot of money.

Choose the occupation that closely fit your qualifications. For example, the minimum point for Accounting is about 80.

You should avoid Accounting because you can only score this high if you schooled in Australia. There are points for schooling or working in Australia before the application.

You should look for occupations that fall between 60-65. 99% of occupations fall in this category except in a few cases like Accounting. Accounting and Tax Principle in Australia is different, this is why the points required are higher.

Calculate the points you obtained for age, education, experience, English proficiency and so on.

Aim to score above 65 points. Most likely, you should score between 60-65. One of the things that helped me was work experience.

This will be of benefit for people in their late 30s and early 40s. Being able to prove that you have work experience of 8 years and above

gives you the maximum marks for that category. This will make up for areas you score less. People in their early 20s will score higher for age and low for experience. **You should also aim to score high in your ‘International English Language Testing System(IELTS)’.**

Step 2: You must have an occupation in the skills list.

The Australian government has listed the occupations they need.

Occupations like mechanic, plumber, locksmith are in high demand.

Most Nigerians can fall into more than one category, so check the requirements and choose the one you're likely to score higher.

The problem with blue-collar skilled applicants from Nigeria is that they don't have certificates to prove their qualifications.

You need a work reference, certificate and we don't issue things like that in Nigeria. You can check the occupation list and requirements for details.

Step 3: Once you find your occupation in the list, find out your Assessing Authority. New lists are released every year.

If your occupation is not on the list, wait for the following year. In Australia, they believe that one body is not sufficient to assess everybody.

For me, I'm in IT industry, my assessing authority is Australian Computer Society. They believe that assessing authorities are more qualified to assess the qualifications and work experiences of applicants.

Here in Australia, they're interested in your educational background and your work experience.

For every occupation, there is an assessing authority. The assessing authorities for an IT Project Manager and for Construction Manager are quite different. **Finding your Assessing Authority is very important.**

Step 4: You need to visit the website of your assessing authority and find out the relevant documents for assessing your credentials.

This is very important.

For emphasis, I would repeat this. Find your occupation on the list and its Assessing Authority. Find out the relevant documents for assessing your credentials by visiting the website(of the Assessing Authority).

For me as an IT Project Manager, my first degree was B.Sc. in Computer Science and so my assessing authority wanted my transcripts and my work reference.

I had to get a letter from my HR, addressed to the assessing authority, stating that I have worked for eight(8) years as a project manager. Of course, I couldn't tell them at work that I was trying to relocate to Australia. I just told them I need the letter for a Computer Society in Australia I wish to join.

Step 5: Get your credentials assessed by your assessing authority. Upload the credentials on their website for assessment after paying a fee. You'll be given a link to upload your documents. When you have

been successfully assessed, you will log into what is called '**Australian SkillSelect**'.

You open an account with SkillSelect, this is just like opening an email account. You will fill in your bio-data and some other information. Ensure that you fill in the accurate details.

At this point, a letter from your assessing authority and IELTS will be requested. Essentially, it is after being assessed that you can log into the SkillSelect.

The SkillSelect is the main body you submit all documents to and will give you an invitation to apply for Australian Permanent Residence.

At this point, you'll be asked for your IELTS score card, your transcripts, your work reference, a letter from your assessing authority, the passport number of you, your spouse and children, or any dependents, as the case may be.

You'll fill a form of about 10-15 pages, it may take days to complete. Be sure that you have the documents to back up every information provided.

Step 6: After completing and submitting the form, you'll be given a score by SkillSelect. You'll be selected from the pool for permanent residence based on that score.

Interviewer: You mentioned IELTS. How do people get to do IELTS? Is there an alternative?

Mr. X: You can do 'Pearson Test of English (PTE)' if you don't want to do IELTS.

Interviewer: Where can people get this PTE done?

Mr. X: I don't know where to do PTE because I didn't do PTE.

However, IELTS is organized by British Council. You can see the details for registration on British Council official website. You just need to register, pick a date and go and do the exam.

Interviewer: Apart from skills, what else is very important to get Australian permanent residency?

Mr. X: Australian permanent residency is skill-based, they only want professionals. It is their way of bringing in the best professionals into the country.

In Nigeria, it is basically for anybody that is working. They don't need you to have money in your account. What is important is that you can contribute to their society.

So, they'll want to see your payslip or ask for your account statement to check if salary is paid into your account.

Interviewer: Can people do this on their own without paying an agent?

Mr. X: I didn't use an agent. I believe anybody can go through the process without using an agent. I didn't go through an agent, I didn't go through anyone because it is quite straight forward.

Interviewer: How many months did it take you from start to finish of being awarded a permanent residency?

Mr. X: From start to finish, I would say it took me about 9-12 months. It can take you more or less than that.

Interviewer: Upon receiving Australian Permanent Residency, how soon must one relocate so as not to lose the permanent residency?

Mr. X: I believe it's six(6) months. You must activate within six months. Activation means entering Australia and doing your medical registrations and some other registrations which are free.

All these information are on the website and are reviewed from time to time.

The truth is you can't exhaust the benefits of relocating to Australia. The benefits I thought I knew, on getting here, I keep uncovering new benefits everyday.

Every year, the government is constantly reviewing ways of helping their citizens and permanent residents.

Once you get here as a permanent resident, you find out that when you apply for jobs, they are only interested in Australian citizens and permanent residents. There is priority for permanent residents and citizens in everything over every other form of visa.

If you want to do any course, Australian citizens and permanent residents pay less than 20% for education while others may pay 100%.

The same thing with school fees.

For example, if you arrive Australia as a PR and say you want to go to school, if the school fee is \$12,000AUD, for example, a PR can pay just about \$4,500AUD.

Also as an Australian PR, you can decide you want to be doing online or part-time courses, which is not available for people with student visa. They're not allowed to do part-time anyhow.

They have rules because the reason why they came to Australia is to school. Unlike, for an Australian PR, you can structure your studies to really be flexible.

Interviewer: You mentioned that a resident who wants to buy a house will only drop a little percentage for a house, can you explain?

Mr. X: As an Australian citizen or permanent resident, the government actually gives you between \$10,000 to \$20,000 as a grant for your first house.

You don't have to pay the money back. Mortgage loans are at an interest of 3%. At age 55, the government gives you a house if you don't have one.

Interviewer: So, the future of a PR is secured, at least in terms of housing?

Mr. X: Yes. Not only that, the government takes care of you. Like I said, we can talk about the benefits are numerous and I am still uncovering them myself.

Interviewer: Does permanent residency make you a citizen? Is there a difference as regards entitlements and benefits?

Mr. X: Permanent residency is not the same as citizenship. This might change but after 5 years, you're supposed to become a citizen and get your Australian Passport.

You have to do validation and get your passport to become a citizen. There is no difference between permanent residents and citizens in terms of benefits and entitlements. The only difference is that a

permanent resident cannot vote or be voted for until you become a citizen.

Also, as a permanent resident, you have to travel with your Nigerian passport unlike the citizens who use Australian passports.

Be that as it may, you can travel to a few countries like New Zealand without a visa as an Australian permanent resident.

You're also given special treatment in most countries and it opens doors for you, irrespective of the fact that you are carrying a Nigerian passport.

The permanent residency to citizenship is not automatic, you have to go through the Visa process. I think that's all.

Interviewer: Alright. Thank you for your time.