

11 September 2014

Visa Requirements for Overseas Guest Speakers

In the last few days we have become aware of questions relating to the visa requirements for international guest speakers. Safaa Haddad, a Business Advisor with MBIE, has provided the following clarification in regards to this issue:

Special categories of visitor visas such as Approved arts or music festivals, Conference delegates, visiting academics could involve material benefits such as air tickets, accommodation and/or other material rewards. However, people coming under these special categories of visas are not considered to be working.

So even if a conference delegate gets material rewards for speaking or training other delegates in a conference, they still come under visitor visa provided that the speaking/training is done as part of that conference activities.

Conference delegates from visitor visa-waivered countries need to have their conference letter of invitation/registration with them when they arrive at the Border (Airport) in case they are asked for it. They do not need to apply for a visitor visa before travelling to New Zealand. Delegates from visa required countries need to submit their letter of invitation to the conference with the other required documents when they apply for their visitor visa.

We advise that conference organisers send details of the their conference well ahead of its start to INZ Student& Visitor mailbox INZ-OpsStudentandVisitor@mbie.govt.nz