

FACTSHEET ON FOREIGN WORKFORCE POLICY ANNOUNCEMENTS AT COS 2023

The Ministry of Manpower (MOM) will be updating our foreign workforce policies to:

- Strengthen the complementarity and diversity of our foreign workforce;
- Support industry transformation; and
- Provide greater clarity and certainty to businesses.

Details on the updates to our foreign workforce policies are outlined below.

NO CHANGE TO EMPLOYMENT PASS QUALIFYING SALARY FOR 2023

2. As announced in MOM's COS 2022, MOM has set the benchmark for the Employment Pass (EP) qualifying salary based on the top one-third of local PMET¹ wages. The EP qualifying salary will be reviewed annually against the benchmark. There will be no change to the EP qualifying salary for 2023, including that for the Financial Services sector.

UPDATE ON THE COMPLEMENTARITY ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

3. As announced at MOM's COS 2022, a new points-based Complementarity Assessment Framework (COMPASS) will apply to new EP applications from September 2023, and to renewal EP applications from September 2024. (The COMPASS scoring rubric is in **Annex A**.)

4. MOM has been progressively releasing details on the COMPASS foundational criteria, through [MOM's website](#) and additional tools. Firms now have access to a Workforce Insights tool on [MyMOM Portal](#), which allows firms to understand their performance on the firm-related criteria of COMPASS and benchmark their performance against industry peers. We encourage firms to use the Workforce Insights tool to assess how their future EP applications will likely fare under COMPASS.

¹ Professionals, Managers, Executives and Technicians.

Skills Bonus – Shortage Occupation List (C5)

5. The COMPASS Shortage Occupation List (SOL) recognises EP holders in occupations that require highly specialised skills currently in shortage in the local workforce. EP candidates filling an occupation on the SOL can earn up to 20 bonus points on COMPASS.² The SOL complements efforts by sector agencies and industry to develop the local pipeline for these jobs to address the shortages over the medium term.

6. The SOL is developed by MOM and MTI through a robust evaluation process, in consultation with sector agencies and tripartite partners. The SOL will include specialised roles in areas such as infocomm technology, healthcare, and sustainability. The full list of eligible occupations will be published on the MOM website by end-March 2023.

Strategic Economic Priorities Bonus (C6)

7. The Strategic Economic Priorities (SEP) Bonus recognises firms that are contributing to Singapore's strategic economic priorities through ambitious investment, innovation, internationalisation, or company and workforce transformation activities. Firms receiving the SEP bonus will be awarded 10 bonus points on COMPASS for each EP application submitted.

8. To qualify for the SEP bonus, firms must be supported by sector agencies or NTUC. To be considered, firms must participate in one of the eligible programmes run by sector agencies or NTUC, and show commitment to developing the local workforce or ecosystem.

9. Firms supported will receive the bonus for up to 3 years. To continue receiving the SEP bonus after 3 years, firms are required to have a workforce profile that meets expectations³ on the COMPASS firm-related criteria, Diversity (C3) and Support for Local Employment (C4). More details on the SEP bonus will be published on the MOM website by end-March 2023.

MANDATORY VERIFICATION OF QUALIFICATIONS FOR EP APPLICANTS

10. Today, employers are already responsible for ensuring the authenticity and quality of the academic qualifications of the candidates that they wish to hire.

11. Under the COMPASS framework, applicants can score up to 20 points on the Qualifications criterion (C2). To ensure the qualifications submitted are authentic and to guard against the submission of fraudulent qualifications, MOM will require

² Bonus points are reduced to 10 points if the candidate's nationality forms one-third or higher of their firm's PMETs, to encourage resilience and diversity in firms in areas requiring critical skills.

³ This refers to scoring at least 10 points on C3 for all nationalities and at least 10 points on C4.

employers to verify candidates' educational qualifications declared in their EP application to score points under C2.

12. In line with the rollout of COMPASS this verification requirement will apply to new EP applications from 1 September 2023, and for renewal applications from 1 September 2024. More details will be made available on the MOM website in due course.

PROCEED WITH INCREASE IN S PASS QUALIFYING SALARY AND LEVY

13. As announced in MOM's COS 2022, MOM has set the benchmark for the cost of hiring an S Pass holder, which comprises both the qualifying salary and levy, based on the top one-third of local APT⁴ wages. The S Pass qualifying salary and levy will be raised progressively over three steps to reach this benchmark (more details in **Annex B**). The first step of the S Pass qualifying salary and levy increase was implemented on 1 September 2022. MOM will proceed with the second step increase of the S Pass qualifying salary and levy.

14. As part of the second step increase, the S Pass minimum qualifying salary will be increased from \$3,000 to \$3,150. The qualifying salary will continue to increase progressively with age, up to \$4,650 for a candidate in their mid-40s. The Financial Services (FS) sector will continue to have a higher S Pass qualifying salary, given its higher wage norms. The S Pass minimum qualifying salary for the FS sector will be raised from \$3,500 to \$3,650. The qualifying salary will increase progressively to \$5,650 for a candidate in their mid-40s.

15. The new S Pass qualifying salary will apply to new S Pass applications from 1 September 2023, and to renewal applications from 1 September 2024.

16. As part of the second step increase, the S Pass Tier 1 levy will also be raised from \$450 to \$550 from 1 September 2023.

UPDATES TO NON-TRADITIONAL SOURCES OCCUPATION LIST

17. MOM introduced the Non-Traditional Sources (NTS) Occupation List at MOM's COS 2022 to allow firms in the Services and Manufacturing sectors to adjust to the increase in S Pass qualifying salary and levy (previously-announced details in **Annex C**). Firms will be allowed to hire NTS Work Permit holders for seven occupations from **1 September 2023**, when the first increase of S Pass qualify salary for renewal applications is implemented.

18. Firms who wish to hire NTS Work Permit holders on the NTS Occupation List will be subject to the following controls:

⁴ Associate Professionals and Technicians.

- a) **8% NTS sub-Dependency Ratio Ceiling (DRC)** to guard against over-reliance on NTS workers and ensure employers diversify their workforce; and
- b) **Fixed Monthly Salary criterion of at least \$2,000** to safeguard against cheap-sourcing and incentivise employers to hire higher-skilled or more experienced workers.

19. MOM will continue to work closely with agencies and industries to review the NTS Occupation List from time to time.

Table 1: COMPASS Scoring Rubric

Table 1 below summarises how points are awarded. More details on COMPASS can be found on [MOM's website](#).

40 points are required to pass COMPASS.

	Individual Attributes	Firm-Related Attributes
Foundational Criteria	C1. Salary	C3. Diversity
	Fixed monthly salary compared to local PMET salaries in sector by age	Share of candidate's nationality among firm's PMETs*
	≥ 90 th percentile 20	< 5% 20
	65 th to < 90 th percentile 10	5 to < 25% 10
	< 65 th percentile 0	≥ 25% 0
	C2. Qualifications	C4. Support for Local Employment
	Based on candidate's qualifications	Firm's share of local PMETs within its subsector*
	Top-tier institution 20	≥ 50 th percentile 20
Degree-equivalent qualification 10	20 th to < 50 th percentile 10	
No degree-equivalent qualification 0	< 20 th percentile 0	
Bonus Criteria	C5. Skills Bonus	C6. Strategic Economic Priorities Bonus
	Job on the Shortage Occupation List +20 [#]	Firm meets specific assessment criteria investment, innovation, internationalisation, or company and workforce transformation activities +10

Skills bonus is reduced to +10 if the share of candidate's nationality among the firm's PMETs is one-third or higher.

*Small firms with fewer than 25 PMET employees score 10 points on C3 and C4 by default. PMETs are proxied by employees earning at least \$3,000 per month.

Table 2: S Pass qualifying salary changes

Sector	For new applications submitted on or after 1 Sep 2022/ From 1 Sep 2023 for renewals	From 1 Sep 2023 for new applications / From 1 Sep 2024 for renewals	From 1 Sep 2025 for new applications / From 1 Sep 2026 for renewals
All (except financial services)	\$3,000 (increases progressively with age from age 23, up to \$4,500 at age 45 and above)	\$3,150 (increases progressively with age from age 23, up to \$4,650 at age 45 and above)	At least \$3,300 (to be finalised)
Financial services	\$3,500 (increases progressively with age from age 23, up to \$5,500 at age 45 and above)	\$3,650 (increases progressively with age from age 23, up to \$5,650 at age 45 and above)	At least \$3,800 (to be finalised)

The finalised qualifying salary for September 2025 will be announced closer to implementation date based on prevailing local APT wages at that time.

Table 3: S Pass levy changes

Current Tier 1 levy rate	From 1 Sep 2023	From 1 Sep 2025
\$450	From \$450 to \$550	From \$550 to \$650

There are no changes to the S Pass Tier 2 levy, which will remain at \$650.

Table 4: NTS Occupation List (announced in 2022)

S/N	Eligible Occupations	Additional Notes
1	Cooks in Indian restaurants	This will better support our multi-ethnic food culture. Restaurants (Services sector) can already hire WPHs from Malaysia, PRC and North Asian Sources.
2	Food Processing Workers (e.g. vegetable pickler, condiments and sauce makers in food processing firms)	Excludes the following occupations: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supervisors and General Foremen (Food Processing), 2. Food and Beverage Tasters and Graders 3. Bakers, Pastry-Cooks and Confectionery Makers
3	Sheet Metal Workers	
4	Welders and Flame cutters	
5	Metal Moulders and Coremakers	
6	Riggers and Cable Splicers	
7	Structural Metal Preparers and Erectors	

Note: Workers in s/n 3 to 7 are typically hired in manufacturing firms, such as general manufacturers, precision engineering, transport engineering and automotive firms.