

FAQS ON LITERACY ASSESSMENTS FOR WORK PERMIT HOLDERS IN THE SERVICES SECTOR

(A) General FAQs	
Q1	What tests are included in the Workplace Literacy (WPLN) assessment?
A	<p>The WPLN assessment comprises standalone tests for English literacy in Reading, Listening, Speaking and Writing, as well as Numeracy. It will produce separate results for each of these skills.</p> <p>From 2 January 2020, the British Council will take over from the SkillsFuture Singapore's Centre of Employability Skills (CES) to conduct the WPLN assessment. It will include an additional "Core Grammar and Vocabulary" component.</p> <p>Employers may visit British Council's website (https://www.britishcouncil.sg/exam/wpln) to find out more, or register for the new WPLN assessment.</p>
Q2	Why should Work Permit holders take an English literacy assessment?
A	<p>While English literacy is not a mandatory requirement, the language is commonly used in the Hotel, Retail and Food & Beverage (F&B) industries. It is important that service staff can speak and understand simple English to help them interact with customers.</p>
Q3	If Work Permit holders had taken the WPLN assessments earlier with CES, are their results/WSQ SOAs still valid?
A	<p>The results of Work Permit holders who have taken the WPLN assessments under the CES system (i.e. before 14 December 2019) will remain valid going forward. There is no expiry to test-takers' results or WSQ SOAs.</p> <p>They can check their WPLN assessment results and certification using the MySkillsFuture portal using the Work Permit holder's FIN or other identification.</p>
Q4	How can WPLN help Work Permit holders in the hotel, retail and F&B industries qualify as higher-skilled workers?
A	<p>All Work Permit holders in the Services sector need to have relevant academic or skill/trade qualifications to qualify for higher-skilled status.</p> <p>Non-Malaysian Work Permit holders in the Hotel, Retail and F&B industries, will also need to obtain level 4 of the WPLN listening and speaking assessments, in addition to the those qualifications.</p>

	Alternatively, Work Permit holders who meet the criteria for the Market-Based Skills Recognition Framework will automatically be upgraded to higher-skilled status. They would need to earn a fixed monthly salary (including fixed allowances) of at least S\$1,600 and have at least four years of working experience in Singapore. They are not required to pass the WPLN assessments to qualify for higher-skilled status.
Q5	Is this a new requirement for Work Permit holders?
A	No. Non-Malaysian Work Permit holders in the Hotel, Retail and F&B industries have had to pass English literacy assessments to attain higher-skilled status since 2010.
Q6	Will MOM recognise other qualifications such as Test of English as Foreign Language (TOEFL), Service English for Retail Professionals (SERP) in lieu of the WPLN assessments?
A	No. MOM does not recognise other English language qualifications for the purpose of obtaining higher-skilled status. Work Permit holders in the Hotel, Retail and F&B industries will enjoy higher-skilled status as long as they pass the WPLN assessments in addition to possessing the relevant academic, skill or trade qualifications. However, companies are encouraged to send their Work Permit holders for English language courses or conduct their own training sessions should they wish to improve their workers' language proficiency.
Q7	Are existing higher-skilled Work Permit holders required to pass the WPLN assessments?
A	No. A Work Permit holder who previously passed the Service Literacy Test is exempted from having to take the WPLN assessments to retain the higher-skilled status.
Q8	What type of Work Permit holders can take the WPLN assessments to achieve higher-skilled status?
A	Non-Malaysian Work Permit holders can take the WPLN assessments to achieve higher-skilled status. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing basic-skilled non-Malaysian Work Permit holders who have met all other requirements for higher-skilled status <p>Higher-skilled status will be automatically given if the worker obtained level 4 of WPLN listening and speaking assessments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New non-Malaysian Work Permit holders who have been issued with

	<p>Work Permits and who have met all other requirements for higher-skilled status</p> <p>Higher-skilled status will be automatically retained if the worker obtains level 4 of the WPLN assessments. Employers can register their workers who have received their Work Permit cards for the WPLN assessments.</p> <p>There is no need to inform MOM that the Work Permit holders have obtained level 4 of the WPLN assessments, as British Council will inform MOM of it within a month from taking the assessments.</p>
Q9	Will there be any concession for new Work Permit holders that possess the relevant academic or skill/trade qualifications?
A	New Work Permit holders that possess the relevant academic, skill or trade qualifications would be given a three-month provisional higher-skilled status. They must obtain level 4 of the WPLN assessments to retain the higher-skilled status after the provisional higher-skilled status expires.
(B) English Language Courses to Prepare for the WPLN Assessments	
Q1	Where can employers find information on training providers or programmes that they can send their workers to?
A	<p>Companies can send their Work Permit holders for English language courses or conduct their own training sessions should they wish to improve their workers' English language proficiencies.</p> <p>Employers can refer to British Council website at https://www.britishcouncil.sg/exam/wpln for details on the WPLN assessments.</p>
Q2	Can employers pass the WPLN assessment costs on to their foreign workers?
A	<p>No. Under the Work Permit conditions, employers are prohibited from recovering employment-related costs from their workers. MOM will monitor and enforce against employers who attempt to recover employment-related costs from their foreign workers through salary deductions. Those who do so will be prosecuted and/or barred from hiring foreign workers.</p> <p>Any employer who contravenes the Work Permit conditions faces a fine of up to \$5,000, and/or imprisonment of up to six months upon conviction.</p>

(C) Registration and Payment for the WPLN Assessments	
Q1	How can employers register their eligible Work Permit holders for the WPLN assessments?
A	Please refer to British Council website for the registration process details.
Q2	When can an employer start sending the Work Permit holder for the WPLN assessments?
A	The employer of a newly-arrived Work Permit holder can register the worker for the WPLN assessments once the Work Permit card has been collected.
Q3	Are Work Permit holders guaranteed an assessment slot?
A	No. Assessment slots are available on an eligibility and first-come-first-serve basis.
Q4	What is the cost of the WPLN assessments? Will there be any Government subsidies for the WPLN assessments?
A	Employers will have to pay for the WPLN assessments. Please refer to British Council website for the cost of the WPLN assessments. The fees will not be subsidised.
Q5	Will employers be reimbursed with the Work Permit holders' pay for the day when they take WPLN assessments?
A	<p>No, there will be no reimbursement of the employees' salary for the day when the Work Permit holders go for the assessments. Under the Work Permit conditions, employers are prohibited from recovering employment-related costs from their workers. MOM will monitor and enforce against employers who attempt to recover employment-related costs from their foreign workers through salary deductions. Those who do so will be prosecuted and/or barred from hiring foreign workers.</p> <p>Any employer who contravenes the Work Permit conditions faces a fine of up to \$5,000 and/or imprisonment of up to six months upon conviction.</p>
Q6	Who can employers/Work Permit holders contact if they have problems with registration?
A	For assistance on WPLN registration, employers/Work Permit holders may contact British Council at https://www.britishcouncil.sg/about/contact .

(D) Taking the WPLN Assessments									
Q1	Will employers need to submit the results to MOM?								
A	No. British Council will send the results of the WPLN assessments to MOM.								
Q2	Do employers need to re-send a Work Permit holder to take the WPLN assessments if the worker changes companies?								
A	No. The WPLN assessments results will continue to be valid even if the Work Permit holder changes companies.								
Q3	Will the WPLN assessment results expire?								
A	No. There is no expiry date for the WPLN assessment results.								
Q4	What will happen to the Work Permit holders who fail the WPLN assessments?								
A	<p>Work Permit holders may attempt the WPLN assessments until they pass. They are encouraged to attend English language training before their next attempt at the WPLN assessments.</p> <p>Their Work Permits will not be cancelled if they fail the WPLN assessments, but they will not be given higher-skilled levy status after the three-month provisional higher-skilled status. Employers can still employ these Work Permit holders, but they have to pay the higher basic-skilled levy.</p>								
(E) Work Permit Matters									
Q1	How would an employer know if his Work Permit holders are required to take the WPLN assessments to attain higher-skilled status?								
A	<p>If the company's Industrial Classification falls under the following codes (i.e. the company is classified as Hotel, Retail or F&B), their non-Malaysian Work Permit holders will need to obtain level 4 of the WPLN listening and speaking assessments to qualify for higher-skilled status:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="290 1666 1342 1856"> <thead> <tr> <th>Singapore Standard Industrial Classification 2005</th> <th>Singapore Standard Industrial Classification 2010</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>51XXX</td> <td>47XXX</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5811X</td> <td>55101 and 55102</td> </tr> <tr> <td>582XX</td> <td>561XX and 562XX</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Singapore Standard Industrial Classification 2005	Singapore Standard Industrial Classification 2010	51XXX	47XXX	5811X	55101 and 55102	582XX	561XX and 562XX
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