

Complementary Assessment Framework (COMPASS) Navigating through the New Framework

COMPASS is a new framework that has been put into effect recently and will take some getting used to. Prior to the event, it is essential to familiarise yourself with some key fundamentals about COMPASS. With this document we aim to maximise your benefit at the event, where we will talk about more technical details and real-life scenarios.

What?

Announced On

March 4, 2022

Effective From

September 1, 2023

Objective

To enhance the skills and employability of Singaporeans and PRs.

The Framework

COMPASS is a points-based assessment system for Employment Pass (EP) applications.

The system evaluates various fundamental (4) and additional (2) criteria related to both applicants and employers, including salary, qualifications, diversity, and commitment to local employment support. It will run in conjunction with the existing EP system, and starting September 1, 2023, EP applications will also hold elevated salary requirements as well as having to attain a specified point threshold under the COMPASS system.

COMPASS is not a novel concept, and when developing the system research was conducted into other successful and similar point-based systems in countries such as the UK, Canada and Australia.

This new policy will bring more clarity and higher predictability to businesses with regard to employment visa matters, as opposed to the previous more vague system, which amongst other things was done to prevent 'gamification' of applications.

Who?

The framework affects all EP applications from September 1, 2023, and all EP renewals from September 1, 2024. It is quite encompassing but there are certain COMPASS exemptions, as follows:

- Earning a fixed monthly salary of more than S\$22,500.
- Assuming a short-term role lasting one month or less.
- Applying as an overseas intra-corporate transferee under the WTO's General Agreement on Trade in Services or an applicable Free Trade Agreement to which Singapore is a signatory.*

*Other internal mobility transfers or similar are mostly not exempted from COMPASS.

For all EP applications the qualifying salary will still apply. For all sectors, and from September 1, 2022 onwards, the minimum qualifying salary for an EP will be S\$5,000 per month. In the financial sector, the minimum qualifying salary will be raised to S\$5,500 per month.

How?

Applications are assessed based on four fundamental criteria. Points are awarded to applicants and employers who meet or - importantly to note - 'surpass' these expectations.

Moreover, extra points can be earned through bonus criteria related to skill shortages (e.g. Shortage Occupation List / SOL) and strategic economic priorities. To pass, applicants must accumulate a minimum of 40 points.

COMPASS POINTS SYSTEM FOR EMPLOYMENT PASS APPLICATIONS

All applications are scored on four foundational criteria

	Individual attributes	Firm-related attributes
Points for each criterion 20 Exceeds expectations 10 Meets expectations 0 Does not meet expectations	C1. Salary Relative to local PMET salary norms for sector C2. Qualifications For recognised qualifications	C3. Diversity Whether candidate improves nationality diversity in firm C4. Support for local employment Local PMET share relative to industry peers

Additional points awarded on bonus criteria

Bonus points for each criterion	Skills bonus (Shortage occupation list)	Strategic economic priorities bonus
Awarded to application that meets respective qualifying conditions	For candidates in jobs where skills shortages exist	For partnership with Government on ambitious innovation and internationalisation activities

Application will pass COMPASS with a minimum of 40 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application that meets expectations (earns 10 points) on all four foundational criteria will pass Application that does not meet expectations on a foundational criterion can make up the required points by exceeding expectations on another criterion or by scoring bonus points
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Applies to new EP applications from Sep 1, 2023 and to renewal applications from Sep 1, 2024

Infographic: Rofa Estrada Source: Ministry of Manpower, Mar 4, 2022

[Click to view the Bonus Criteria](#)

Key Essentials

Fair Consideration

The existing job advertising requirement as part of the FCF will remain in effect.

Professionals, Managers, Executives & Technicians (PMETs)

Companies with fewer than 25 PMETs automatically receive 10 points for Diversity and Support for Local Employment attributes.

Others

- The Ministry of Manpower (MOM) will initiate a pilot program called the Global Rotation Scheme to address employers' concerns about bringing in young, high-potential employees to Singapore as part of their global leadership initiatives.
- Indicative scores will be available on the MOM website. The scoring criteria will also be made available, enabling employers to access indicative scores for each application before submission. MOM will gradually release educational materials and provide further details on specific criteria.
- For renewal cases, COMPASS will only be applicable starting from September 2024, allowing employers ample time for adjustment and planning.

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