



Global Immigration alert

November 2024

Singapore

Updated COMPASS scoring criteria and increased salary requirements for Employment Pass applicants

Executive summary

On 1 November 2024, Singapore's Ministry of Manpower (MOM) announced updates to two scoring criteria under the COMPASS points-based framework and increased the salary requirements for experienced tech professionals who apply for Employment Passes (EPs) with a five-year validity period.

Background

The COMPASS framework for assessing EP applications was implemented for new applications effective 1 September 2023 and for applications to renew EPs expiring on or after 1 September 2024. Under COMPASS, applicants are assessed on four foundational criteria (salary, qualifications, diversity and support for local employment) and two bonus criteria (shortage occupation list, or SOL, and strategic economic priorities). The MOM expects to update the COMPASS criteria annually to ensure that the framework remains responsive to market conditions. In line with this, updated [C1 salary benchmarks](#) were released in August 2024 and will go into effect in phases starting 1 January 2025.

Key developments

The MOM recently announced amended requirements for the following criteria, which will go into effect for both new and renewal EP applications on 1 January 2025:

- **Criterion 2 (Qualifications).** The list of [top-tier institutions](#) that will be "awarded 20 points" has been updated, and applicants who have a degree from an institution in this list will continue to receive 20 points under the Qualifications criterion. The list of [professional qualifications](#) recognized as "degree-equivalent" has also been updated, and applicants

who have a relevant qualification from an institution in this list will continue to receive 10 points.

- **Criterion 5 (SOL).** The [SOL list](#) has been updated to include three more occupations in the semiconductor sector, and applicants who hold a job in this list will continue to receive up to 20 bonus points.

In addition, the minimum fixed monthly salary threshold for individuals who apply for an EP with a validity of five years will increase to at least SGD 10,700 or approx. USD 8,000 (up from SGD 10,500 or approx. USD 7,800) for candidates aged 36 or above, and to SGD 14,270 or approx. USD 10,680 (up from SGD 13,500 or approx. USD 10,100) for candidates aged 45 or above. This change will apply to new EP applications effective 1 January 2025 and renewal applications for EPs expiring on or after 1 January 2026.

The MOM's Self-Assessment Tool (SAT) has been updated to reflect all the above changes, and employers may use it to streamline pre-assessments of EP applications.

Impact on employers

Employers may consider the latest updates to the COMPASS framework when assessing and sponsoring EP applicants. The updates to the lists of top-tier institutions, professional qualifications and the SOL are expected to enable employees to earn points in areas where they previously could not. These updates are expected to benefit employers by providing them access to a broader group of international talent.

Key steps

EY will continue to monitor these developments. Should you have any questions, we encourage you to contact one of our immigration professionals.

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