

Good Employers' Toolkit

Promoting Good HR Practices for the Early Childhood Sector



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Republic of Singapore

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What is the Good Employers' Toolkit?

The Good Employers' Toolkit is a one-stop resource guide for child care operators to refer to on matters related to manpower. A joint initiative of the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sport (MCYS) and the Education Services Union (ESU), this toolkit details your legal responsibilities as an employer and provides guidance on the many training and funding schemes available to help you improve your business processes and productivity, and attract and retain child care professionals.

You will find this toolkit a quick and easy reference guide, complete with sample documents ready for you to use in your business as well as handy reference links to further resources online. Success stories and case studies specifically related to the child care industry, and told by fellow operators of child care centres in Singapore, give further insights into the best practices that you can adopt to ensure the smooth operation of your child care centre.



MCYS

The Child Care Division of Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports develops accessible, affordable and quality child care that supports families and family formation in Singapore – enabling young children to be nurtured in a safe and supportive environment. To ensure affordable child care for the community, we administer the government child care and infant care subsidy schemes.

To support the continuing growth of the sector, we promote the continuing professional development of early childhood educators to raise quality and standards of care and education in child care centres.

www.childcarelink.gov.sg

www.cdn.gov.sg



ESU

The Education Services Union (ESU) serves union members in the Education Services Sector. Our principal objectives are to promote good industrial relations between members and their employers; improve the working conditions of members or enhance their economic and social status; and achieve the raising of productivity for the benefit of members, their employers and the economy of Singapore.

ESU Hotline: 6872 1148 (Mon-Fri: 9 am – 6 pm)

Email: esu@ntuc.org.sg

www.esu.org.sg



PCECE

The Professional Chapter for Early Childhood Educators (PCECE) is an initiative by the Labour Movement and is spearheaded by the Education Services Union (ESU). The chapter aims to promote greater professional development and networking opportunities for early childhood educators.

www.ece.org.sg

How to use this toolkit

The following icons help you navigate through the toolkit and guide you to relevant information of interest.



For your use!

If you are using the printed version of the toolkit, you will find samples and further resources at the back of the toolkit in the Resources section. If you are using the online version of the toolkit, simply click on the icon to access the relevant resource directly.



Good to know!

We have highlighted certain facts that you should know as a child care centre operator and employer.



We're here to help!

We provide useful contact details of organisations that you can approach for direct support.



There's more online!

We have tried to include the important information you need to know in this toolkit. In addition, we have provided references to further useful reading and information online.



Courses Available

Here you will find details of relevant courses for enhancing skill sets.



Calculate it!

The toolkit provides a handy one-stop pay and leave calculation resource complete with formulas you need to know.



Quick Recap

At the end of each chapter, we provide a visual summary of the information presented in the chapter for your easy reference and recall.

1

FAIR AND PROGRESSIVE EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES



1 Adopt good recruitment practices

2 Adopt good retention practices

3 Reward employees based on performance, contribution and ability

4 Provide equal opportunities for training and development

Your employees are your most valuable assets. The working environment you provide will have a direct effect on their morale, motivation and performance, and, ultimately, the productivity and success of your business.

Managing your workforce will always present its unique challenges. However, with the guidance of the Tripartite Alliance for Fair Employment Practices (TAFEP), you can adopt fair, responsible and merit-based employment practices that will ensure your employees realise their full potential and your centre achieves organisational excellence.



The Tripartite Alliance for Fair Employment Practices

Leveraging its unique tripartite identity, TAFEP works in partnership with employer organisations, unions and the government to create awareness and facilitate the adoption of fair and responsible employment practices. TAFEP provides a range of services, tools and resources, including training workshops, advisory services and educational materials, to help organisations implement fair and responsible employment practices.

5 Principles of Fair Employment Practices

- 1 Recruit and select employees on the basis of merit (such as skills, experience or ability to perform the job), and regardless of age, race, gender, religion, family status or disability.
- 2 Treat employees fairly and with respect, and implement progressive human resource management systems.
- 3 Provide employees with equal opportunity to be considered for training and development based on their strengths and needs, to help them achieve their full potential.
- 4 Reward employees fairly based on their ability, performance, contribution and experience.
- 5 Abide by labour laws and Tripartite Guidelines on Fair Employment Practices.

Using these 5 principles as the backdrop, this chapter is an elaboration and recommendation of some leading HR practices for adoption.

1. Adopt good recruitment practices

Record and implement relevant and objective selection criteria for all aspects of employment:

- Recruitment
- Training
- Promotions
- Postings
- Retrenchments
- Dismissals

Selection criteria should not be based on age, race, gender, religion, family status, physical disablement unrelated to the candidate's ability to perform the required tasks, or other discriminating factors.

Examples of relevant and objective selection criteria:

- Type of experience required for the job, e.g. experienced in teaching children with special needs
- Amount of experience, e.g. three years of teaching experience
- Educational qualifications, e.g. Diploma in Pre-school Education or Diploma in Early Childhood Education
- Specific skills, e.g. proficient in playing the keyboard
- Candidate's willingness to commit to particular job requirements/characteristics, e.g. a particular work shift schedule

Placing Job Advertisements

State the selection criteria clearly in all job advertisements. These should be based on qualifications, skills, knowledge and experience.

Do not stipulate age, race, language, gender, religion and marital status as criteria unless it is a specific requirement for the job. If such criteria are listed, a valid reason should be given in the advertisement.

Words or phrases that exclude Singaporeans or indicate preference for non-Singaporeans should not be used in job advertisements.

Posting a job advertisement with clear and non-discriminatory criteria works in your favour because:

- it ensures that the job requirements are well understood by potential applicants.
- it expands the pool of eligible candidates for you to choose from.
- it avoids negative perceptions of the employer concerned.

Reviewing Job Applications

Review the fields in your current job application forms to ensure that they ask only information relevant to assessing an applicant's suitability for a job. This ensures that the job application will be assessed fairly and based on merit.

Additional personal data, if required for administrative purposes, can be collected after the candidate has been offered and has accepted the position. *If the additional personal data are asked in the application form, the form should state that the information is captured for administrative purposes only.*

Job Interviews

Interviewers should be conscious not to stereotype candidates on criteria that are not relevant for the job. Examples of questions that might not be relevant to ask during the interview would be whether the applicant is pregnant or has children. Interviewers should confine questions to those relevant to assessing an applicant's suitability for the job.

Tests

If you use tests for selection purposes, they should be specifically related to the job requirements and reviewed regularly to ensure that they remain relevant and free from bias in content or scoring.

2. Adopt good retention practices

Implement Clear SOP

Document and implement clear standard operating procedures (SOP) for each job function. Communicate this clearly so that every employee is fully aware of their roles and what is expected of them. When things go wrong, always look to failures in the SOP before blaming an employee. This ensures that you treat the employee fairly and listen to their side of the story before making judgements. Make changes to the SOP to avoid similar errors in the future, and review regularly to ensure it remains relevant.

Dismissals and Retrenchments

You should keep a record of your employees' performance and conduct. A decision to dismiss an employee should be based on documented poor performance or misconduct. An inquiry should be conducted to allow the employee to present his or her case before any decision is made with regard to dismissing the employee. In most cases, it is fair to give the employee a warning and sufficient time and training to correct poor performance before a final decision to dismiss is taken.

Where retrenchments are necessary, the retrenchment exercise should be carried out responsibly in consultation with the union (if the company is unionised), or with the employees affected (if the company is not unionised).

Grievance Handling

Ensure that you have procedures in place to deal with complaints of discrimination. You should handle all complaints of discrimination seriously, conduct proper investigations into complaints and respond to the affected person. Confidentiality should be observed and both the complainant and respondent should be treated fairly. Unionised employees can also seek advice from their unions in situations where they feel they have been discriminated against. Employees can also approach the Tripartite Alliance for Fair Employment Practices for advice.



3. Reward employees based on performance, contribution and ability

Remuneration

You should pay your employees wages that commensurate with the value of the job, and their performance, contribution and experience, regardless of age, gender, race, religion and family status.

Set KPIs

Document a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for each employee, discuss expectations of performance linked to rewards with each employee and get their agreement before implementing the KPIs. Use these agreed KPIs to assess each employee's performance at agreed regular intervals, for example, every three or six months. Recording your employees' performance against a set of KPIs will allow you to accurately and fairly review performance and reward your employees as agreed.

4. Provide equal opportunities for training and development

Appraisal, promotion, posting and training

Employers should adopt appraisal systems that are fair and objective, with measurable standards for evaluating job performance. This would help ensure that employees are assessed and promoted on the basis of merit. You can use the KPIs discussed above to do this.

Where opportunities for posting and training arise, inform all eligible employees of the conditions and procedure for application. Assess all interested candidates based on objective selection criteria to ensure that no one is overlooked. The eligibility criteria should also be regularly reviewed to ensure that they are not discriminatory.



Good to know!

As an employer, you should be familiar with the labour laws. If a complaint of unfair employment practices is made against your centre, the Ministry of Manpower and the Tripartite Alliance for Fair Employment Practices will make reference to the Tripartite Guidelines on Fair Employment Practices when addressing the complaint. Refer to <http://www.fairemployment.sg> for the handbook.

Employers should:	Employees should:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Abide by the Tripartite Guidelines on Fair Employment Practices; b) Adopt the principles of the Employers' Pledge of Fair Employment Practices; and c) Publicise the Guidelines and educate both management and employees so that they understand their roles and appreciate the sensitivities and issues involved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Familiarise themselves with the Tripartite Guidelines on Fair Employment Practices; b) Exercise mutual respect and understanding at the workplace to enhance workplace harmony; and c) Seek to resolve grievances arising from discrimination at work in a reasonable manner through dialogue, discussion and established procedures.



Quick Recap



2 EMPLOYMENT LEGISLATION



- 1 The Employment Act
- 2 Workplace Safety and Health Act and Work Injury Compensation Act
- 3 Retirement & Re-employment Act
- 4 Hiring part-time employees
- 5 Hiring foreign manpower
- 6 Employment rights of Professionals, Managers and Executives

As an employer running a child care centre, you need to be aware of the relevant legislation governing your obligations. This chapter covers some of the main points of the Employment Act, Workplace Safety and Health Act, Work Injury Compensation Act and Retirement & Re-employment Act as well as legislation governing the employment of foreign staff, part-time employees and the rights of Professionals, Managers and Executives (PMEs).

Other acts not listed in this toolkit, but which you need to comply with, are the Industrial Relations Act and the CPF Act. The Ministry of Manpower website (www.mom.gov.sg) and the CPF website (www.cpf.gov.sg) provide useful guides as to your obligations as an employer under the law. Alternatively, you can contact ESU for more information.



**We're here
to help!**

Email: esu@ntuc.org.sg

Tel: 6872 1148

1. Employment Act

(Source: www.mom.gov.sg)

With the exception of those employed in managerial, executive or confidential positions, all your employees (including part-time employees) are covered under the Employment Act. However, do note that managers and executives e.g. Principals and Supervisors who earn basic monthly salaries of \$4,500 and below are covered partially under the Employment Act for payment of salary.

The Employment Act states the minimum terms an employer is obliged to provide. Employers are encouraged to offer terms better than the Act to enhance their employee value proposition.”

Contract of service must include the following:

- Date of commencement of employment
- Appointment – job title and job scope
- Hours of work
- Probation period, if any
- Remuneration (e.g. salary, allowances)
- Employee benefits (e.g. sick leave, annual leave, maternity leave)
- Conditions for termination of contract – notice period
- Code of conduct (e.g. punctuality, no fighting at work)

Contract of Service

A contract is an agreement made verbally or in writing, where one person agrees to employ another as an employee and where the other person agrees to serve the employer as an employee. A contract of service can be in the form of a letter of appointment/employment.



Good to know!

- The provisions in the Employment Act will always take precedence over any contractual term that is deemed less favourable.
- The employer cannot change the terms and conditions of employment unless the employee agrees to it.
- If the employee does not agree to the changes, she should bring up the matter to her employer and try to negotiate for an acceptable agreement for both parties. If there is no agreement to the dispute, either may choose to refer the issue to MOM for conciliation. Either party may also refer the issue to the Union if the employee is a Union Member.

Salary

Salary refers to all remuneration including allowances payable to an employee with respect to work done under the contract of service.

It does not include:

- The value of accommodation or quarters, supply of light, water, medical attendance or other amenities
- Pension or provident fund contribution paid by the employer
- Travelling allowance
- Payments to defray special expenses incurred in the course of duty
- Gratuity payable on discharge or retirement
- Retrenchment benefits (if provided)



Calculate it!

Refer to Annex 2A for formulae to use to calculate pay.

Minimum Wage

There is no minimum wage/salary in Singapore. Salaries are subject to negotiation and mutual agreement between an employer and an employee or the trade union representing the employee.

Date of Salary Payment

- Salaries must be paid at least once a month but can be at shorter intervals.
- Salaries must be paid within 7 calendar days after the end of the salary period (or within 14 calendar days after the end of the salary period for overtime payment).
- Employees who resign and serve the required notice period must be paid on the last day of employment.
- Employees who resign without notice or without serving the required notice period must be paid within 7 days of the last day of employment.
- Employees dismissed on the grounds of misconduct and who have had their contract of employment terminated by the employer must be paid on the last day of employment or within 3 working days from the date of dismissal/termination.

Deducting Salary

Compensation should generally be recovered directly from employees, rather than through a salary deduction.

Salary deductions can be made under the Act for:

- absence from work
- damage to, or loss of, goods/money
- cost of meals supplied by the employer
- house accommodation, amenities and services
- the recovery of advances, loans or adjustment of overpayments of salary
- income tax payment
- CPF contributions
- payment to any registered co-operative society
- any other purpose which may be approved upon application from time to time by the Minister for Manpower



Good to know!

This section on deduction of salary does not apply to employees holding managerial and executive positions earning basic monthly salaries above \$4,500. PMEs earning \$4,500 and below are only partially covered on payment of salaries in the Act. (Refer to the section on Employment rights of Professionals, Managers and Executives in this chapter for further information.)

Hours of Work & Overtime

Contractual Hours of Work

An employee is not required under her contract of service to work more than 8 hours in a day or 44 hours in a week. This does not include break-time for tea/meals or rest. All work in excess of contractual working hours shall be considered overtime work. An employee is generally not allowed to work more than 6 consecutive hours without a break.

Overtime

It is mandatory to make overtime payment to an employee whose basic salary is \$2,000 or less a month, or to a workman whose basic salary is \$4,500 or less a month. For other categories of employees, overtime pay will depend on the terms stated in their employment contract. All work in excess of the contractual hours of work is considered overtime.

Overtime rate

Overtime must be paid at no less than 1.5 times the employee's hourly basic rate of pay for the salary period.

Maximum overtime permitted

An employee shall not be permitted to do more than 72 hours of overtime a month.

Calculating overtime pay



For your use!

Refer to Annex 2A for all salary calculations.



Rest Days

Your employees are entitled to one rest day of a whole day (midnight to midnight) every week. The rest day can be on a Sunday or any other day. You need to determine the rest day and inform each employee before the beginning of each month. It is not a paid day.

You cannot compel your employees to work on their rest days unless under very exceptional circumstances.

Examples of exceptional circumstances include:

- accident or threat of accident
- work that is essential to (i) life or the community, (ii) national defence, or (iii) security
- urgent work to be done to machinery or plant
- an interruption of work which was impossible to foresee



For your use!

Refer to Annex 2A to calculate payment for work done on a rest day.



Good to know!

The longest allowable interval between two rest days is 12 days.



Public Holidays

Employees are entitled to be paid for the gazetted public holidays in a year as long as they:

- do not absent themselves from work on the working day immediately before or after a holiday without the employer’s consent or a reasonable excuse;
- are on authorised leave (e.g. sick leave, annual leave) on the day immediately before or after a holiday; or
- are on approved no-pay leave

Compensation for Work on a Public Holiday

Rest day	Non-working day or Day off
The next working day will be a paid holiday.	The employer may decide to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compensate the employee with an extra day’s pay in lieu of that holiday; or • Give the employee another day off as a holiday.

Annual Leave

An employee is entitled to Annual Leave (AL) if she has worked for at least 3 months. Should an employee wish to take leave but is not entitled to it, or has taken the full allotment of leave entitled to her, you may, at your discretion, allow the employee to take unpaid leave.

An employee’s annual leave entitlement under the Employment Act is as follows:

Year of service	Days of leave
1st	7
2nd	8
3rd	9
4th	10
5th	11
6th	12
7th	13
8th and thereafter	14



For your use!

Refer to Annex 2B to calculate entitlement to leave.



Good to know!

An employee’s year of service begins from the day she starts work at your centre.

Sick Leave

An employee is entitled to paid sick leave, including medical leave issued by a dentist, if:

- the employee has served the employer for at least 3 months;
- the employee has informed or attempted to inform the employer of her absence within 48 hours. Otherwise, the employee will be deemed to be absent from work without permission or reasonable excuse; or
- the sick leave is certified by the company’s doctor, or by a government doctor if a company doctor is not readily available or during emergency situations. (As an employer, you have the discretion to accept medical certificates from a private doctor or a traditional Chinese medical practitioner.)

Sick Leave Entitlement

The number of days of paid sick leave an employee is entitled to is dependent on his/her service period:

No. of months of service completed of a new employee	Paid outpatient non-hospitalisation leave (days)	Paid hospitalisation leave (days)	Total annual sick leave entitlement
3 months	5	15	15
4 months	5 + 3 = 8	15 + 15 = 30	30
5 months	8 + 3 = 11	30 + 15 = 45	45
6 months	11 + 3 = 14	45 + 15 = 60	60
Thereafter	14	60	60

Example

Karen has already taken 14 days of outpatient sick leave in a particular year. Therefore, the maximum number of days of hospitalisation sick leave that she can take is 46 days (60 – 14 = 46).

Defining sick leave

Rest day, public holiday or non-working day	Annual leave	Half working day (e.g. Saturday)
<p>An employee is not entitled to paid sick leave on the following occasions, even if she is given a medical leave by the doctor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rest days • Public holidays • Non-working days • During annual leave • During no-pay leave 	<p>If an employee falls sick on her annual leave, her absence from work would still be treated as annual leave and not sick leave.</p> <p>However, her employer may cancel her annual leave and, as a concession, allow her to take sick leave instead.</p>	<p>Sick leave taken on a half working day (e.g. Saturday) should be considered one day's sick leave.</p>



Good to know!

An employee is deemed to be hospitalised if she is certified by a doctor to be in need of hospitalisation. She does not necessarily have to be warded in a hospital.

Payment of Medical Expenses

If your employee has worked for at least 3 months, you are legally obliged to bear the medical consultation fees. The employer is obliged to bear other medical costs, such as medication, treatment or ward charges, as provided for in the employment contract.

No Sick Leave Entitlement Remaining

If your employee is sick but has used up all the sick leave entitlement, you can:

- allow the employee to go on extended no-pay leave for an agreed period;
- make other working arrangements that are acceptable to both parties such as re-assigning the employee's duties; or
- obtain a medical assessment of the employee's suitability for continued employment.

If the employee is certified unfit for continued employment, you can terminate employment, compensating the employee:

- based on what is provided for in the employment contract; or
- by making an ex-gratia payment on a goodwill basis at your discretion.

Maternity & Child Care Leave

Maternity Leave

Eligibility for Maternity Leave benefits

Employees covered under the Employment Act	Employees covered under the Children Development Co-Savings Act
<p>An employee covered under the Employment Act will be paid for the first 8 weeks of maternity leave if she:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) has fewer than 2 living children (excluding the newborn); and (ii) has worked for the employer for at least 90 days before the birth of the child. <p>She will be paid at the gross rate for each day that she would normally have been required to work under her contract</p>	<p>Under the Children Development Co-Savings Act, an employee is entitled to maternity leave benefits if all the following are satisfied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the child is a Singapore Citizen; (ii) the child's parents are lawfully married; and (iii) the employee has worked for the employer for at least 90 days before the child's birth. <p>An eligible pregnant employee is entitled to absent herself from work for 4 weeks immediately before and 12 weeks immediately after delivery, totalling 16 weeks.</p> <p>Where there is a mutual agreement with her employer, an employee can flexibly take the extended eight weeks (9th to 16th week) of maternity leave over a 12-month period after the child's birth. The employee can consume an equivalent of eight weeks' worth of working days flexibly, up to a maximum of 48 days.</p> <p>She will be paid at the gross rate for each day that she would normally have been required to work under her contract.</p>



There's more online!

For employees who do not fit the above criteria, or have pregnancy complications, maternity leave entitlement varies. Refer to www.mom.gov.sg for Maternity Leave Entitlement Variations.

Refer to www.mom.gov.sg for detailed information on pay and leave entitlement.



Case Study

A case of business as usual

Ms Lynn Siah, Centre Supervisor, PCF Sparkle Tots (Nee Soon East)

When Lynn went into labour two weeks early, her colleagues were not quite ready for her departure to statutory maternity leave. PCF headquarters needed to ensure that the centre retained consistency in its day-to-day schedule, but as Lynn alone had been responsible for keying into the PCF central financial system and maintaining standard operating procedures, there was a significant knowledge gap for the teachers in her absence. One senior teacher was able to train the others in SOPs but when it came to accounting and financial matters, a representative from HQ needed to step in.

At first, the teachers called HQ to ask for the help they needed as questions arose, but it soon became clear that it would make more sense for someone from HQ to be seconded to the centre to oversee operations on site. Fortunately, staff also had the help of a comprehensive handbook written by PCF HR and this turned out to be indispensable for the team to maintain business continuity. They could refer to it for guidance on medical and holiday leave entitlements and also as a reference tool for SOPs.

Although Lynn was available to give advice during her maternity leave, and she had always provided teacher mentoring support during her time at the centre, she decided that, on her return, she would institute a programme that aims to also transfer her essential administration knowledge to other staff members to ensure business continuity.



Obligations of the employer and employee

Employees covered under the Employment Act	Employees covered under the Children Development Co-Savings Act
<p>Employers are prohibited from dismissing an employee who is on maternity leave. An employer who does so is liable to a fine and/or imprisonment.</p> <p>If a notice of dismissal is given without sufficient cause within 6 months of an employee's confinement, the employer must pay her the maternity benefits she would otherwise be eligible for.</p> <p>If the employee is retrenched within 3 months of her confinement, the employer must pay her the maternity benefits she would otherwise be eligible for. This payment is in addition to any retrenchment benefit that the employee is entitled to.</p> <p>An employer cannot employ a person on maternity leave during the 4 weeks immediately following her confinement. An employer also cannot contract out the maternity benefits.</p>	<p>An employee who resigns from service while she is on maternity leave is not allowed to use the maternity benefit period as notice of termination.</p> <p>She cannot work for another employer during the period of her maternity leave. If she does so, her maternity benefit will be forfeited. She may also be dismissed.</p> <p>An employee can claim paid maternity leave benefits from more than one employer, if she was working for multiple employers before she gave birth.</p>



There's more online!

Find out about Pro-Family leave schemes and obtain forms for reimbursement of salary paid to your employee while on Maternity Leave.

Visit www.fcd.ecitizen.gov.sg/ProFamilyLeaveScheme/Submissionofclaims/Government-Paid+Maternity+Leave.htm for more information and to download the claim form.



Child Care Leave

All employees with children, including fixed-term contract/temporary/part-time employees, are entitled to child care leave, provided the employee has been employed with the company for a period of not less than 3 months and meets the following eligibility criteria:

Criteria

Eligibility for Maternity Leave Benefits

Employees covered under the Employment Act	Employees covered under the Children Development Co-Savings Act
<p>Parents of non-citizens or single (unmarried) parents covered under the Employment Act are entitled to 2 days of child care leave per year if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The child (including legally adopted children or stepchildren) is below seven years of age; and • The employee has worked for the employer for at least 3 calendar months. <p>Child care leave for each parent is capped at 2 days per year regardless of the number of qualifying children.</p>	<p>An employee is entitled to 6 days of child care leave per year if he/she is covered under the Children Development Co-Savings Act.</p> <p>The Children Development Co-Savings Act covers all parents of Singapore citizens, including managerial, executive or confidential staff if all 4 of the following conditions are met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The child (including legally adopted children or stepchildren) is below 7 years of age on or after 31 Oct 2008. (ii) The child is a Singapore Citizen. (iii) The child's parents are lawfully married (including divorced or widowed parents). (iv) The employee has worked for the employer for at least 3 calendar months. <p>The first 3 days of child care leave will be employer-paid and the last 3 days Government-paid (capped at \$500 per day, including CPF). Regardless of the number of children, the total child care leave entitlement for each parent is capped at 6 days per year.</p> <p>The number of days of child care leave that a working parent can benefit from will add up to a total of 42 days over a seven-year period.</p>
<p>Leave is subject to the employer's approval.</p>	

Restrictions to Child Care Leave

- Child care leave is not transferable between spouses or between employees. Unused child care leave at the end of the yearly entitlement period will lapse and cannot be encashed.
- For new employees, child care leave may be pro-rated based on the duration of employment, subject to a minimum of 2 days, as the 2 days of child care leave under the Employment Act cannot be pro-rated.
- Child care leave cannot be used to offset the notice period for termination of employment. However, if an employee applies for child care leave during the notice period, as the employer, you are encouraged to grant the leave. The days of child care leave taken will not add to the notice period.

Other Types of Leave

Marriage, Paternity and Compassionate Leave

There is no statutory entitlement for marriage, paternity and compassionate leave under the Employment Act. The entitlement to such leave depends on what is in the employment contract or agreed mutually between employer and employee.



Retrenchment

Entitlement to Retrenchment Benefits

Employed at least 3 years: Under the Employment Act, an employee who has been employed in a company for at least three years before retrenchment can request for retrenchment benefits. As the law does not stipulate the amount to be paid, payment is subject to negotiation between the employee and employer and will also depend on the company's financial position.

Employed less than 3 years: An employee who has worked less than three years in a company is not entitled to retrenchment benefits under the Employment Act. However, the company may pay an ex-gratia payment at its discretion.



Good to know!

Both retrenchment benefits and ex-gratia payments do not attract CPF contributions.



Calculate it!

Refer to Annex 2B for formulae to use to calculate leave.

Notice of Retrenchment

As far as possible, affected employees should be informed of the impending retrenchment in accordance with the notice period stipulated in the contract of service. If the notice period is not stipulated, it will be in accordance with the Act as follows:

Length of service	Notice period
Less than 26 weeks	1 day
26 weeks to less than 2 years	1 week
2 years to less than 5 years	2 weeks
5 years and above	4 weeks

The employer is advised to notify Ministry of Manpower of any retrenchments.

Change of Employer

If your company undergoes a restructuring due to a merger, acquisition, sale of parts of your existing operation or the setting up a subsidiary company, you have the right to transfer your employees to the restructured entity. The obligations of both parties are as follows:

Obligations of an employer	Obligations of an employee
<p>The employer is required to:</p> <p>a) notify the affected employees or their union within a reasonable time of the impending transfer;</p> <p>b) inform the affected employees about the terms of transfer so as to enable the employees or their unions to enter into consultations with the company; and</p> <p>c) ensure that there is continuity of the period of employment of the affected employees when they are transferred to a new employer and that their terms of employment are not less favourable than what they have been enjoying before the transfer.</p>	<p>The employee is required to:</p> <p>a) hold the period of employment and terms and conditions of employment with the original employer as continuing and preserved under her employment with the new employer.</p> <p>b) serve the new employer as if the latter is the original employer who had entered into the employment contract with her.</p>

Termination of Contract

A service contract may be terminated by either the employer or the employee. When this happens, the following applies under the Employment Act:

Termination of contract with notice	Termination of contract without notice										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice of termination of contract must be given in writing. • Notice period to be given depends on what was agreed in the contract and includes the day the notice is given. In the absence of a written contract, the notice period will depend on any verbal agreement. • If the notice period is not specified, the following applies: <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Length of service</th> <th>Notice period</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Less than 26 weeks</td> <td>1 day</td> </tr> <tr> <td>26 weeks to less than 2 years</td> <td>1 week</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 years to less than 5 years</td> <td>2 weeks</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5 years and above</td> <td>4 weeks</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The length of notice to be given by an employee (in a resignation) and an employer (in a termination of employment) is the same. • By mutual consent, notice may be waived. 	Length of service	Notice period	Less than 26 weeks	1 day	26 weeks to less than 2 years	1 week	2 years to less than 5 years	2 weeks	5 years and above	4 weeks	<p>Both employer and employee may terminate a contract of service without waiting for the required notice period to expire, by paying the other party a sum equal to the salary that would have been earned by the employee during the required period of notice.</p>
Length of service	Notice period										
Less than 26 weeks	1 day										
26 weeks to less than 2 years	1 week										
2 years to less than 5 years	2 weeks										
5 years and above	4 weeks										



cont'd

cont'd

Termination of contract with notice	Termination of contract without notice
<p>Annual Leave (AL) : Offset notice period AL used to offset the notice period will not be paid. The employee may start work immediately with her new company after the last day of service.</p> <p>AL during notice period The employee will receive salary for the full notice period if AL taken is approved. In this case, the person is considered an employee of the company until the last day of her notice period.</p> <p>Unconsumed AL The employer cannot force her employee to go on leave during the period of notice unless the employee consents to it. Any unconsumed annual leave can be encashed by the employee.</p> <p>Sick leave If the employee was on sick leave (whether paid or unpaid) during the notice period, the sick leave taken should be treated as part of the notice period. The employer cannot claim for any short notice from the employee.</p>	<p>Employee An employee may terminate an employment relationship without giving notice to the other party, if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) the employer fails to pay her salary within seven days after salary is due; or ii) if she is called upon to do work that is not within the terms of the contract of service. <p>Employer An employer may terminate an employment relationship without giving notice to the other party, if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) the employee is absent from work continuously for more than two working days, without approval or good excuse; or ii) the employee is absent from work continuously for more than two working days without informing or attempting to inform the employer of the reason for absence. <p>The party that breaks the contract will have to pay to the other party salary in-lieu of notice.</p>



We're here to help!

Call ESU @ 6872 1148 for any queries related to the Employment Act.



There's more online!

For more information on the Employment Act, visit

http://statutes.agc.gov.sg/non_version/cgi-bin/cgi_retrieve.pl?actno=REVED-91



Calculate it!

Refer to Annex 2B to calculate leave entitlement.

2. Workplace Safety & Health Act and Work Injury Compensation Act

(Source: www.mom.gov.sg)

The Workplace Safety and Health Act (WSH Act) will cover all workplaces, employers and employees from 1 September 2011. Staff are also covered under the Work Injury Compensation Act (WICA). Under the WSH Act, employers must manage risks at work, while employees must adhere to safe work practices. In the event that employees sustain injuries in a work-related incident or contract an occupational disease, WICA allows them to claim work injury compensation.

Some examples of common accidents in workplaces like child care centres and kindergartens are:

- Falling on wet floors (e.g. after mopping floors, etc.)
- Falling over obstructions in walkways (e.g. toy boxes, etc.)
- Falling from heights (e.g. when getting materials from shelves)
- Bumping into door or glass panels
- Bumping into a person or object

Your Responsibility as an Employer

Risk management: Supervisors have a duty to ensure that workplaces and work environments are safe. Measures such as proper management of work risks must be taken to keep employees safe while they are working – e.g. risk assessment and communicating risks and control measures to all employees.

Work Injury Compensation-related Insurance: You are obligated under WICA to maintain work injury compensation-related insurance for employees earning \$1,600 or below.



Good to know!

It is not mandatory to buy insurance for employees not involved in non-manual work or earning above \$1,600. Nonetheless, you will be required to pay compensation in the event of a valid claim.

An employer can adopt the following six steps to implement a risk management programme.

Risk Assessment	Step 1: Preparation	Form a Risk Assessment (RA) team to gather relevant information.
	Step 2: Hazard Identification	Identify hazards or potential incidents.
	Step 3: Risk Evaluation	Estimate the risk levels of each hazard identified and rank them in order of priority.
	Step 4: Risk Control	Plan control measures and evaluate residual risks.
Step 5: Record Keeping		Keep risk assessment reports for at least three years.
Step 6: Implementation and Review		Review risk assessment whenever there is new information on risks or changes to work processes.

Ongoing communication amongst management, RA team and the employees.



There's more online!

For more information on your obligations regarding workplace safety, for procedures to follow in the event of an injury and a claim, and information on penalties for failing to comply, refer to the following websites:

For Workplace Safety and Health Act: <http://www.mom.gov.sg/workplace-safety-health/Pages/default.aspx>

For Work Injury Compensation Act: <http://www.mom.gov.sg/workplace-safety-health/work-injury-compensation>

3. Retirement and Re-employment Act

(A quick guide for the pre-school sector adapted from www.re-employment.sg)

Re-employing Mature Employers

As an employer, you need to be aware of the changes in legislation concerning retirement and re-employment that will take effect from 1 January 2012 under the Retirement and Re-employment Act (RRA) – previously known as the Retirement Age Act.

Under the RRA, you are required to offer re-employment to all eligible full- and part-time employees who attain the statutory minimum retirement age of 62 years old or contractual retirement age (whichever is higher) as long as they:

- Are medically fit to continue working
- Have demonstrated a satisfactory work performance
- Have been with you for at least 3 years

Redesigning Job Roles

There are many ways to redefine job roles to make way for the re-employment of retired workers. For example, you might want to redesign the job scope of a mature teacher such that she would be doing more teaching instead of carrying or caring for children.

Re-employment Engagement and Process

It is recommended that you engage your employees in re-employment consultation and planning at least 6 months before they attain the statutory minimum retirement age.

You are not obliged to offer the same job position or the same salary and terms, so you will need to come to an agreement on new employment terms that will accommodate both the employee's and your needs. The new position you offer does not even have to be within the same company. If you have more than one company and you offer the employee a position in any of your companies, you will be considered as having discharged your re-employment obligations.

The employee is not obliged to accept the re-employment offer, but will forfeit the one-time Employment Assistance Payment if the job offer is not taken up.

Employment Assistance Payment (EAP)

This is a one-time payment you must make to all employees who are eligible for re-employment at retirement age, but whom you cannot re-employ because you don't have a suitable job to offer. The objective of the EAP is to tide employees over while they look for alternative employment. It is not a retrenchment payment and should serve only as a last resort. Should you choose to make an ex-gratia payment to the employee upon retirement, this does not exempt you from your obligations to pay the EAP.

For employees who do not meet the re-employment criteria, although you are not required to pay the EAP, it is recommended that you consider granting an ex-gratia payment anyway, taking into account the employee's length of service and contributions.

Paying EAP

You can pay the EAP as a single lump-sum payment or in instalments as agreed with the employee. As the EAP is not regarded as income earned, it will not be taxable as income and will not attract CPF contributions.



Good to know!

The EAP is non-refundable. Should you later rehire the employee when a suitable job becomes available, you cannot claim back the EAP.



Re-employment Scenarios

You may have to manage manpower scenarios such as these below with employees who turn 62 years of age on or after 1 January 2012.

Case 1

Teacher Lily joined your centre on 1 January 2009. She would have completed four years of service by 31 December 2012 when she reaches the statutory retirement age of 62.

When you spoke to Teacher Lily on 1 June 2012, she communicated her interest to continue working as a child care teacher even after she turns 62 years old.

Case 2

Teacher Siti joined your centre on 1 January 2009. She would have completed four years of service by 31 December 2012 when she reaches the statutory retirement age of 62.

When you spoke to Teacher Siti on 1 June 2012, she communicated her interest to continue working as a child care teacher even after she turns 62 years old. However, at this point, you do not have a suitable position for her.

Case 3

Teacher Rosariyah joined your centre on 1 January 2010. She would have completed two years of service by 31 December 2012 when she reaches the statutory retirement age of 62.

Even though Teacher Rosariyah is keen to continue working after 62, you are not obliged to offer re-employment or Employment Assistance Payment to Teacher Rosariyah. This is because she has less than three years service as at 31 December 2012 (which is the minimum length stated under the Tripartite Guidelines to qualify for EAP).

However, you are encouraged to offer Teacher Rosariyah re-employment if possible. In the event that you are unable to re-employ her, you can consider granting an ex-gratia payment to her to tide her over while she looks for another job.

Case 4

Teacher Patricia joined your centre on 1 January 2010. She would have completed two years of service by 31 December 2012 when she reaches the statutory retirement age of 62.

You are not obliged to offer re-employment or Employment Assistance Payment to Teacher Patricia. This is because she has less than three years service as at 31 December 2012 (which is the minimum length stated under the Tripartite Guidelines to qualify for EAP).

However, when you spoke to Teacher Patricia on 1 June 2012, she communicated her interest to retire anyway. You are encouraged to consider granting an ex-gratia payment to her in view of her past service to you.

Steps	Step 1: Engagement 1 June 2011 (6 months before retirement)	Step 2: Offer by Company 1 September 2011 (3 months before retirement)	Step 3: Offer take-up/Job Placement Assistance 1 October 2011 (2 months before retirement)	Step 4: Outcome 1 January 2012
Case 1 Employed 3 years or more at age of retirement	You engage Lily, Siti, Rosariyah and Patricia in re- employment consultation and planning	Inform Lily that a suitable position is available within the company and proceed to offer re-employment.	Lily accepts the re- employment offer and signs the re-employment contract. This could be a 3-year contract to be reviewed yearly OR a yearly contract up to age 65 renewable yearly.	Lily is re- employed.
Case 2 Employed 3 years or more at age of retirement		Inform Siti of the reason why you are unable to offer re-employment, i.e. no suitable positions are available.	Offer Siti a one-off Employment Assistance Payment (EAP) and assist her to look for jobs with external agencies/ companies.	Siti is awarded the EAP and leaves the company.
Case 3 Employed less than 3 years at age of retirement		Rosariyah has indicated that she would want to continue working after she turns 62 years old. You are not obliged to re-employ Rosariyah, but are encouraged to as you have a suitable position available. You offer Rosariyah re- employment.	Rosariyah accepts the re-employment offer and signs the re-employment contract. This could be a 3-year contract to be reviewed yearly OR a yearly renewable contract up to age 65.	Rosariyah is re-employed.
Case 4 Employed less than 3 years at age of retirement		You are not obliged to offer Patricia employment. However, you have a suitable position and offer Patricia re-employment.	Patricia declines the offer. You are not obliged to pay EAP or offer job placement assistance. However, as a gesture of goodwill, you offer Patricia an ex-gratia payment pegged to the length of service with you.	Patricia leaves the company and is not awarded the EAP but receives an ex-gratia payment.



Case Study

A long track record of supporting mature teachers

Ms Deniece Nathan, Assistant Director (Child Care), Presbyterian Community Services

By 2012, a new law will require all centres in Singapore to allow teachers over the age of 62 to retain their jobs, as long as they wish to work and pass the required medical examinations. But this practice isn't new to Presbyterian Community Services, as Deniece explains: "This is a policy we have always adopted because we recognise the experience of our older employees."

While the centre uses 62 as the benchmark age to retire workers who are underperforming, its policy is to keep employees who still add value, believing that employees should be assessed based on their ability to do the job, not their age.

In addition the centre's policy is not to reduce the employees' pay upon re-employment at 62, but to fix it at their current pay. The centre makes a performance-based review of salaries and increment annually. Presbyterian Community Services employs a number of teachers and cooks who are all over 62 and performing very well!



Re-employment Contract

The re-employment contract should observe **flexibility for employers** while maintaining **reasonable terms of offer for employees**.



For your use!

Refer to Annex 2C for features to be included in a re-employment contract.



We're here to help!

You can contact ESU for advice on or review of your re-employment contract.

Email: esu@ntuc.org.sg

Tel: 6872 1148



Good to know!

If you offer a teacher a reasonable re-employment contract and position, but she chooses to reject the offer, she will **not** be eligible for the EAP. This is the case even if she meets the above-stated re-employment criteria and clocks in the minimum three years of continuous service with the company by 31 December 2012.



There's more online!

More details on the Tripartite Guidelines on Re-employment of Older Workers can be found in www.re-employment.sg



4. Hiring part-time employees

(Source: www.mom.gov.sg)

Under the Employment of Part-Time Employees Regulations, a part-time employee is one who is required, under his contract of service with an employer, to work for less than 35 hours a week. Such employees will be entitled to all the statutory benefits provided under the Employment Act, on a pro-rated basis based on his weekly working hours

A contract of service for a part-time employee should include:

- hourly basic rate of pay;
- number of working hours for one day or one week;
- number of working days for one week or one month; and
- hourly gross rate of pay, with the description and amount of each allowance payable separately itemised.

Part A: Rest Day

A part-time employee is entitled to 1 rest day per week if she is required to work for at least 5 days in a week.

Part B: Overtime

It is mandatory to make overtime payment to a part-time employee if the basic salary is \$2,000 or less a month (or to a workman if the basic salary is \$4,500 or less a month). For other categories of employees, overtime pay will depend on the terms stated in their employment contract.

All work in excess of the contractual hours of work is considered overtime.

Overtime Calculation

Overtime of at least 1.5 times the basic hourly pay of a part-time employee is payable for hours worked exceeding the normal work hours of a similar full-time employee.

Part C: Public Holidays

Part-time employees are entitled to paid public holidays.

Treatment of Public Holidays for Part-time Employees

Scenario I: The employee is not required to work on a public holiday

In the event that the employer decides to offer pay in lieu of a public holiday, public holiday pay should be pro-rated based on the part-time employee's number of hours of work.

Otherwise, the employer may choose to declare the day a non-working day or compensate the equivalent hours into the annual leave of the part-time employee.

An Alternative Arrangement

The employer and the part-time employee may agree to encash the public holidays and incorporate this into the hourly gross rate of pay. This arrangement excludes part-time employees who work at least 5 days a week and between 30 -34 hours weekly.

Any such agreement must be clearly reflected in the contract of service.

Scenario II: The employee is required to work on a public holiday

A part-time employee should be paid the following if she is required to work on a public holiday:

1. The basic rate of pay for one day's work;
2. The amount she is entitled to for a public holiday; and
3. One day's travelling allowance if payable under her contract of service.



Part D: Annual Leave

A part-time employee who has completed at least 3 months of service is entitled to paid annual leave in proportion to the yearly entitlement of a similar full-time employee, on the basis of his working hours.

Encashment of Annual Leave

Instead of granting a part-time employee paid annual leave, the employer and part-time employee (except for those who work at least 5 days a week and between 30 hours and 34 hours a week) may agree to encash the earned annual leave, in the form of a higher hourly gross rate of pay.

Any such agreement must be clearly reflected in the contract of service.

Part E: Sick Leave

A part-time employee who has completed at least 3 months of service is entitled to paid sick leave in proportion to the yearly entitlement of a similar full-time employee, based on her hours of work. Sick leave entitlement may not be encashed.

Part F: Maternity Leave

A part-time pregnant female employee is entitled to the same maternity benefits and protection as a full-time pregnant female employee, as long as she satisfies the qualifying conditions under the Employment Act or the Child Development Co-Savings Act.



**Calculate
it!**

Refer to Annex 2A to calculate pay and Annex 2B to calculate leave entitlements.



5. Employing foreign manpower

(Source: www.mom.gov.sg)

All foreign employees are covered under the Employment Act, with the exception of those employed in managerial, executive or confidential positions.

Nevertheless, centre management staff who earn basic monthly salaries of \$4,500 and below are covered partially under the Employment Act for payment of salary. Please refer to the guidelines on the Employment Act earlier in this chapter for details.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Validity of Pass

A first-time applicant may be issued an Employment/S Pass for up to two years. However, Q1 Employment Pass and S Pass are usually granted for only one year. Subsequently, the Employment/S Pass may be renewed for a period up to three years depending on MOM.

The validity period for a Work Permit is generally two years and renewal period is also at the discretion of MOM.

Quota and Levy

In general, employers are allowed to staff up to 50% of the company's/firm's total workforce with work permit holders. S Pass holders can make up to 25% of the total workforce. PRC Work Permit holders can make up to 10% within the 50% Dependency Ceiling.



There's more online!

Find out about the different work passes applicable for child care centres. Visit <http://www.mom.gov.sg/foreign-manpower/passes-visas/Pages/default.aspx>



Good to know!

You may use the following online Employment/S Pass Self-Assessment Tool ("SAT"), to check on the eligibility of the foreigner that you are looking to employ prior to submitting the application.

Employment Pass Self-Assessment Tool
www.sat.mom.gov.sg/

You may use the following online Quota Calculator to check on the permissible quota for S Pass and Work Permit holders.

Quota Calculator
<https://app.quotacal.mom.gov.sg/ecalculator/industryinput.aspx>

Guide to Hiring of Foreign Employees in the Early Childhood Sector

Application Process for Work Pass/Work Permit for Foreign Pre-school Teachers

Recognition of Foreign Manpower Qualifications

To check the Singapore equivalent of a foreign applicant's qualifications, visit www.childcarelink.gov.sg and refer to Early Childhood Professionals > Getting Certified.

Application for Recognition

With effect from 1 June 2011, MCYS will process the Recognition of Pre-school Qualifications together with Teacher Certification. Child care centres who wish to recruit foreign pre-school teachers can apply directly to MOM for an Employment Pass after 1 June 2011. There is no requirement to submit the MCYS' Recognition Letter with the Employment Pass application.



1

Centre submits work pass application directly to MOM [MCYS' Recognition Letter is not required]

2

Once a valid MOM work pass/work permit is issued to the foreign pre-school staff, the centre will need to update her particulars in the Child Care Link System under new staff particulars. (Kindly ensure updating is done within 28 days from the day the staff joins the centre.)

3

MCYS will assess and issue the Letter of Notification (LON) based on complete submission of these documents:

- a copy of the Employment Pass; and
- certified true copies of certificates and transcripts of academic and professional qualifications.



We're here to help!

As a good practice, you should check with MCYS on the recognition of the foreign worker's educational qualification/certification prior to applying for an employment pass. This will prevent a case where the Employment Pass is approved by MOM but the foreign employee is rejected by MCYS because the educational certificates are not recognised.

Employers can refer to www.childcarelink.gov.sg to check on their foreign worker's educational qualifications.

Source: www.childcarelink.gov.sg/ccls/home/CCLS_HomeEarlyGettingCertified.jsp

6. Employment rights of Professionals, Managers and Executives

(Source: www.mom.gov.sg)

Professionals, Managers and Executives (PMEs) are expected to comprise 55% or more of the resident labour force come 2015 and beyond.

In response to the changes in labour force demographics, the Ministry of Manpower announced amendments to the Industrial Relations Act from 1 February 2011 to provide a tripartite dispute resolution process for PME and their employers.

For ECCE Organisations without Formal Partnerships with ESU

With the amendments in legislation from 1 February 2011, ESU can now formally assist PME union members who earn up to \$4,500 a month and are working in companies which presently are not in formal partnerships with ESU – in the areas of breach of employment contract, salary claims and payment of retrenchment benefits.

For ECCE Organisations with Formal Partnerships with ESU

ESU will continue to provide assistance to PME union members in the event of payment of retrenchment benefits, unfair dismissal or breach of contract, as provided for under the Industrial Relations Act.



There's more **online!**

www.mom.gov.sg



Quick Recap

1

- Pay
- Holiday and Leave Entitlement
- Employment of Part-time Employees
- Employment of Foreign Manpower

As covered under the Employment Act

2

- Retirement
- Re-employment

As covered under the Retirement and Re-employment Act

3

- Work Injury Compensation
- Workplace Safety and Health

As covered under the Work Injury Compensation Act & the Workplace Safety and Health Act

4

- Employment rights of Professionals, Managers and Executives

As covered under the Industrial Relations Act

3

HR FUNCTIONS



- 1** Recruitment
- 2** Retention
- 3** Continuing Professional Development
- 4** Compensation and performance management
- 5** Grievance handling
- 6** Employee misconduct, dismissals and appeals

Human Resources (HR) is an integral part of the internal operations of your centre. The HR function must aid the setting of the centre's objectives and develop HR initiatives that serve these objectives.

The right approach and management of teachers can greatly affect your centre's overall performance, so a strategic approach to Human Resource Management is vital. Starting from the right staffing to retaining well-performing employees, HR Management is key in developing not only your teachers and your centre but the whole Early Childhood sector.



This chapter highlights key HR functions that are critical for your centre:

- Recruitment
- Retention
- Continuing Professional Development
- Compensation and performance management
- Grievance handling
- Employee misconduct, dismissals and appeals

Each section will provide strategies for application, success stories in the Early Childhood sector and training opportunities for operators to extend their knowledge of HR functions. Resources and useful tools are also highlighted for relevant areas.

1. Recruitment

(Source: TAFEP)

Recruiting process at a glance

1. Create a clear and targeted job advertisement that will attract the right candidates.
2. Create a job application form designed to shortlist candidates based on skills and experience.
3. Interview promising candidates.
4. Inform the selected candidate and offer the position.

Recruiting for the Right Fit

Your hiring decisions are crucial for the success of your centre.

Hire the wrong candidate:

- Your reputation and results suffer
- You incur additional costs rehiring and retraining

Hire the right candidate:

You have someone who:

- adds value with the right skills and experience
- has the right attitude and mindset
- is a great team player who builds staff morale
- is able to contribute productively
- is more likely to stay with you as you build the business.

Your children learn early in life that you can't fit a square peg into a round hole. So you shouldn't be trying to either. This section will take you through how to recruit for the right fit first time, saving you much heartache in the long run.



Getting the Recruitment Process Right

Step 1

Create a job advertisement that clearly states the tasks and responsibilities of the job, and the skills, abilities, experiences and qualifications required to do the job.

For instance, a non-discriminatory job advertisement for an early childhood care and education educator position might reflect the following:

- **To reflect that the job might be physically and mentally/emotionally demanding:** Candidates are required to work with young children in a busy classroom environment and may be required to carry the children occasionally.
- **To reflect that the job requires the candidate to perform certain religious functions or might involve certain religious sensitivities:** Cook/Helper required for Muslim kitchen, familiarity with Halal food preparation required.
- **To reflect that the job requires proficiency in a certain language:** Chinese language teacher for pre-school centre. Good credit in 'O' Level Chinese required.



Step 2

Design a job application form to shortlist the right applicants for interview.

The form should only request for information relevant to the job. Additional personal data required for administrative purposes can be collected after selection or shortlisting. This ensures that job applicants are assessed fairly and based on merit.



For your use!

See Appendix 3A for a sample job application form.

Step 3

Shortlist candidates.

During job screening, shortlisting or interviews, interviewers should keep an open mind and dismiss any stereotype. It is recommended to reduce bias by having two or more persons with different backgrounds on the interview panel.

Some practical tips for the shortlisting process:

- Ask questions that are relevant to assessing the applicant's suitability.
- Share your job requirements with the interviewee and ask the interviewee if she can meet the job requirements, instead of making assumptions.



For your use!

Refer to Appendix 3B for a list of non-discriminatory interview questions.

Step 4

Inform the selected candidate and offer a fair employment contract.

Creating a Fair Employment Contract

You can find samples of employment contracts in the Resources section. You can use them as they are or adapt them to include your terms. However, be careful not to include such terms as:

- penalties for not meeting performance targets
- penalties for resigning within a certain period of time
- charges for tools or uniforms that are required to perform the job
- unequal notice periods for terminating the contract
- prohibition from being employed in similar positions after leaving the company



We're here to help!

If you are unsure as to whether your contracts reflect fair employment terms, you can have them checked by:

ESU: 6872 1148

TAFEP: 6838 0969



For your use!

See Appendix 3C for sample employment contracts.



There's more online!

For a list of recommended interview questions:
Tripartite Alliance for Fair Employment Practices:
www.fairemployment.sg



Good to know!

Employment terms that are not in compliance with the prevailing employment legislations will not be legally binding if the employee is covered under these prevailing legislations.

Publications on recruiting: Tripartite Alliance for Fair Employment Practices: www.fairemployment.sg



Case Study

Fair play at work

Ms Joey Lam, Senior HR Manager, Head of Rewards and Recognition, NTUC My First Campus

When it comes to fair employment, Joey Lam takes pride in being part of the NTUC First Campus family. As HR Senior Manager and Head of Rewards and Recognition, Joey has witnessed how the company has lived up to its reputation as an advocate and practitioner of fair employment practices.

What's unique about NTUC First Campus is that it does not require discriminatory information, such as age, gender, marital status, race and religion, from applicants – only upon hiring are these details requested. According to Joey, candidates undergo a rigorous selection process and are employed based on their qualifications, professional profile, interview and assessment results. Selected applicants then undergo a one-day attachment (for the novice), enculturation and training to get a feel of their new workplace. Employment contracts also adhere to recommended standards to encourage fair employment practices.

NTUC First Campus is a business partner to My First Skool, The Little Skool-House, The Caterpillar's Cove (a study and research centre) and SEED Institute (a training centre). It recognises its employees' need for schedule flexibility, and champions a healthy work-life balance. For this reason, it actually adopts 10 different flexi-time work patterns for part-timers to choose from, giving them more time to spend with their families. This is a win-win situation, which is advantageous to both the institute and its staff members, some of whom are recontracted retired staff.



2. Retention

High teacher turnover can be a serious obstacle to productivity, quality and profitability to your centre. It results in increased costs linked to rehiring and training, and damages morale, resulting in more teachers leaving.

What are the benefits of increasing teacher retention rates, in other words, getting the teachers you have hired and trained to stay with you?

- **Increased morale, productivity and efficiency:** When you keep staff, you have enough resources to get the job done without overburdening your team. Your staff are happy and productive as a result.
- **Stability and growth in the organisation:** When you have long-serving staff, you have a stable environment and people you can rely on to take on greater responsibilities as you grow.
- **Higher enrolment and achievements of students:** With a stable workforce comes a reputation for quality that will see your children enrolment increase.
- **Lower costs:** The cost of retaining teachers is lower compared to hiring, training, mentoring and inducting new teachers.

So How Do You Retain Teachers?

To create an effective retention framework, first we need to understand what makes teachers stay. The four main factors are:

- Compensation
- Working conditions
- Opportunities for advancement
- Mentoring support in the early years of teaching

You may want to consider adopting the following strategies when creating a retention framework for your centre.

Strategy 1: Create diversified pay structures that reward quality performance.

Performance-based pay systems help a centre to attract and retain effective and accomplished teachers. Before designing and implementing a pay system, you will need to consider the following questions:

1. What do you want to achieve through performance-based pay?
2. Which elements already exist in your centre that can support or feed into a performance-based pay programme?
3. What do you want to reward?
4. How will the pay programme directly address improving quality and equity (of teaching/ learning)?
5. How much time do you have for the creation/ design process—keeping in mind collaboration and negotiations, as well as the need to keep momentum?
6. Will you supplement the traditional pay scale or replace it?

The pay has to be differentiated based on valid measures of effectiveness such as a comprehensive appraisal process or KPIs. (Please refer to Compensation and Performance Management later in this chapter.)



Good to know!

You should expect to incur more cost for a performance-based pay structure. However, you should also expect to see greater rewards.

Strategy 2: Improve working conditions.

Your employees will spend the best portion of their day at your centre. It's not surprising, therefore, that research has shown that working conditions factor more than salary in a teacher's decision to stay or leave a centre. Working conditions can be in terms of the physical environment and facilities available as well as the relationships built between teachers and management. Improving the working environment will go a long way to improving your employee retention rates. The most effective way to do this is to involve your employees and let them decide what they want in order to create a sense of ownership.

The physical environment

- Ask teachers what is important to them and what areas of the working environment need improvement.
- Set standards and measures to support continuous improvement of the centre climate.
- Centres can help teachers manage their classrooms by creating a safe and positive centre environment. This is achieved by setting clear, high and consistent expectations for behaviour.

A culture of collaboration

- Create a culture that fosters collaboration. Family and community involvement help to facilitate the teachers' ability to educate all students and their fellow teachers. Parental involvement has been shown to increase teacher morale, effectiveness and job satisfaction.
- Build positive and strong employee-to-employee and employee-to-management relationships.
- Celebrate people's successes. If anyone has performed exceptionally well, do display their name on the bulletin board. Let everyone read it and get inspired to perform better next time.
- Encourage morning meetings where individuals can come together and get to know each other well.
- Encourage group activities at the workplace and celebrate festivals and birthdays as one family, including your employees' family members.

Strategy 3: Provide opportunities for advancement and leadership training for teachers.

When you employ new teachers, introduce them to career pathway options in your centre so they have something to aim for and a reason to stay. Make it clear that career advancement and leadership opportunities will be offered.

Create a tiered system tied to salary, professional growth and student achievement. This will provide an opportunity to assess teacher performance as well as an opportunity and incentive for teachers to improve practice. However, the effectiveness of tiered systems depends on several factors:

- High teaching standards
- An effective system of evaluation
- Ample opportunity for professional growth tied to teaching standards
- Substantial incentives for advancement in the form of increased recognition, responsibility, and salary
- Establish teacher leadership positions and train teachers accordingly. To support quality teaching, your centre must support strong professional development. Continual Professional Development must become the norm for teachers.



**We're here
to help!**

For more information, please contact:

AECEs: 6281 4989

SEED Institute: 6332 0668



Case Study

Mentorship programme decreases pre-school turnover rates

Ms Teresa Tay, Principal, Pat's Schoolhouse @ Mount Emily

High teacher turnover rates are a challenge brought about by the increasing number of child care centres in Singapore, coupled with the stressful demands of the job. However, Teresa Tay, Principal at Pat's Schoolhouse Mount Emily, recognises the importance of a strong mentorship programme to counter this trend.

Pat's Schoolhouse HQ is in the process of implementing a mentoring system that allows both experienced and novice teachers to learn from one another. While this is being rolled out, Teresa has taken the initiative to embark on an informal programme, allocating two teachers per class, for an average of two to three classes per level. Experienced teachers are assigned as mentors.

Mentorship for new teachers include supporting them through classroom observations twice a year by the principal, and the curriculum team. Teresa also conducts an informal appraisal yearly before the formal one is due to touch base with teachers and guide their progress.

To help new teachers further fit in, Teresa organises team-building sessions regularly to discuss the curriculum, update the team on new developments and foster team bonding and support. Additionally, the centre's recreation club offers aerobics and other classes, and allocates a budget for recreational activities – all to make Pat's Schoolhouse a welcoming home to its staff.



Invaluable lessons in life

Ms Caren Ang, Child Care Teacher, Kinderland Child Care Centre@MOM

For Caren, each day with her students is a learning experience that she will carry with her through life.

Kinderland sponsored her certification course before she started work in Kinderland MOM. Subsequently, Caren acquired her diploma in Early Childhood Education after 15 months of study. After the course, she gained further knowledge from her colleagues in a mentorship programme.

Work has presented her with unexpected challenges, namely preparing lesson plans. However, with a newfound knowledge and skills set in understanding and teaching young children, she is able to cope with this task, and has gained confidence in teaching and efficiently set up classrooms with different curriculum themes. Additionally, she uses more hands-on activities, for example, cooking – which she finds very effective as an interactive teaching method. But what she finds more rewarding is that she learns with the children.

Caren has found her special niche in teaching. Planning her career progression, she intends to take a course in Special Needs so that she can help special-needs children.

Strategy 4: Provide high-quality induction and mentoring programmes.

The terms “induction” and “mentoring” are often confused. **Induction** is a process—a comprehensive, coherent and sustained professional development process—that is organised by a centre to train, support and retain new teachers. It is designed to seamlessly progress them into a lifelong learning programme. **Mentoring** is an action. Mentoring is not induction but rather a component of the induction process.

Research has shown that young teachers who benefit from intensive mentoring by expert colleagues are less likely to leave teaching in the early years. High-quality induction and mentoring programmes increase teacher effectiveness, which ultimately affects student learning positively.

- Create a comprehensive induction system in which mentoring and formative assessment are key components.
 - o Pair new teachers with a more experienced mentor to provide support and assistance to help novices navigate the difficult early years of teaching as they perfect their teaching skills.
 - o Provide a variety of different types of activities for new teachers — orientation sessions, teacher collaborative periods, meetings with supervisors, developmental workshops, extra classroom assistance, reduced workloads, and, especially, mentoring.
- All new teachers should be required to attend the induction programmes either before their first day or on their first day with the centre. It is highly recommended that your centre prepare a staff handbook to help induct teachers into their centre.

- Create a mentor training programme and guide to facilitate experienced teachers/mentors. Include topics such as:
 - o the distinctive learning needs of novices
 - o how to provide new teacher supports
 - o how to mentor new teachers
 - o how to observe teaching practice
 - o how to assess professional growth

Mentoring is important. You can tap on the WDA Mentoring Scheme to help introduce a mentoring framework at your centre. (Please refer to Chapter 5 WDA Mentoring Scheme for funding details.)



There's more online!

- 1) Association for Career and Technical Education. Working Models: Why Mentoring Programs May be the Key to Teacher Retention Techniques. www.acteonline.org
- 2) Teacher Attrition: A Costly Loss to the Nation and to the States. www.all4ed.org/files/archive/publications/TeacherAttrition.pdf
- 3) Teacher Attrition, Shortage, and Strategies for Teacher Retention. <http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED444986.pdf>
- 4) The Impact of Mentoring on Teacher Retention: What the Research Says. http://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1127&context=gse_pubs
- 5) A New Framework of Employee Engagement Center for Human Resource Strategy. http://www.chrs.rutgers.edu/pub_documents/EmployeeEngagementWhitePaperFinal.pdf
- 6) CPS Human Resource Services. Workforce Planning Toolkit: Gap-Closing Retention Strategies. <http://www.cps.ca.gov/workforceplanning/documents/ToolkitGap-Closing.pdf>



For your use!

Refer to Appendix 3D for a guide on how to prepare a comprehensive staff handbook and for a checklist to refer to when creating a comprehensive induction programme.

3. Continuing Professional Development

Effective recruitment and employment practices are crucial to the smooth operation of a child care centre. Your centre's HR and recruitment policy and practices will increase the chances of finding the right people and reducing staff turnover.

Besides ensuring that your staff meet the required academic and professional qualifications, you should encourage staff to continually upgrade their skills and knowledge through Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses and, in turn, provide a high quality of service to both children and parents.

The CPD framework for child care centres defines the required competencies for all levels of teaching staff employed in early childhood settings. It also serves as a document to help Early Childhood Education (ECE) operators and leaders plan and chart their employees' professional growth and career development, thereby helping to raise staff quality in an organised and systematic way.

The Advantages of CPD

CPD improves an individual's attributes, knowledge, understanding and skills. To be effective, CPD should:

- be directly relevant to the centre staff teachers and supervisors.
- have clearly identified intended outcomes.
- take account of previous staff's knowledge and expertise.
- model effective teaching and learning strategies.
- include impact evaluation designed as part of the activity from the outset.

CPD is important because it helps staff to carry out their work more effectively. This benefits:

- the centres because it secures quality standards of teaching and learning, and enhances the general functioning of the centre.
- the staff as it will increase their job satisfaction and career opportunities.

Many training providers have developed short courses to help in-service staff upgrade themselves. These courses, ranging from early childhood care and education to service, human resource, leadership and business management, to name a few, include ones that are accredited under the Workforce Skills Qualification (WSQ) framework, developed by the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA).

Examples of CPD activities

- Courses and conferences
- Leading or attending seminars/conferences/courses
- School visits
- Observing others and being observed
- Classroom research and investigation
- Writing papers, speaking at conferences
- Exchange visits or placement
- Team teaching
- Self-directed learning
- Peer support
- Distance or online learning
- Planning new materials or activities
- Involvement in support networks/Communities of Practice (CoPs)
- Professional development meetings/networks



Case Study

Before meets after

Ms Wendy Teh, Head Teacher, Learning Vision @ Work 201D Punggol Field

Learning Vision's efforts to upgrade the quality of teaching of its staff continue to reap rewards. The company sponsored 40% of Head Teacher, Wendy Teh's Bachelor in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) course and provided an interest-free loan for the balance payment. Wendy attended evening classes in her own time twice a week at Learning Capital, the Group's education arm.

Wendy found the course highly enriching and explains that it gave her a new perspective on teaching. "It enabled me to see the bigger picture inside the classroom, making me more focussed and professional as a teacher. As a result, I have a heightened respect for the children I teach". Now, Wendy is able to carry out positive practices such as adopting more hands-on activities that increase the children's imagination, creativity and input. The results: enhanced classroom environment and maximum interaction.

Employers can do their part in supporting teachers with their studies by providing additional days off for teachers to complete their assignments.



In addition to CPD, child care centre staff could maintain their professionalism by:

- membership and participation in professional associations such as the Association for Early Childhood Educators, Singapore (AECES), OMEP, etc.
- reading publications on early childhood education and research.
- participating in conferences, seminars and workshops in early childhood education (local and overseas).
- contributing to staff development in own centre as mentor, buddy teacher as well as trainee teachers for supervised practice teaching.



There's more online!

Visit www.cdn.gov.sg for CPD course details.

Visit www.wda.gov.sg/training_search to find the list of WSQ courses currently being delivered.

Visit www.otcinstitute.org.sg or email otcinstitute@ntuc.org.sg for more information on competencies.

Visit PQAC-accredited training agencies for details on their training schedules for ECE-related courses.



For your use!

Refer to Annex 3F for a list of training agencies offering CPD courses.





Case Study

Staff collaboration is the recipe for success

Ms Ivy Sim, Operator, Big Apple Child Care and Development Centre

Ivy Sim started Big Apple Child Care and Development Centre in 1988 because she was tired of the continual office politics she encountered working in publishing. She approached MCD (now MCYS) to find out how she could set up her own centre and soon she was launching Big Apple with three teachers and 40 children.

She skilfully took learnings from working in the corporate world and applied them to establish effective HR practices in the running of her own business. Because she had once been an employee, she was in a position to understand staff feelings better and avoided many of the mistakes and bad habits that she had previously experienced as an employee. For Ivy, the key was to build an inclusive culture; staff at Big Apple are encouraged to share their views, participate in writing the curriculum and take ownership of their roles. It is an environment that fosters mutual respect and thrives on collaboration.

Today, Ivy employs 12 staff and the centre welcomes 80 children through its doors every morning. The long-service record of many of Big Apple's teachers (some teachers have been with Ivy as long as 17 years) speaks volumes about a working environment where the boss' door is always open and everyone feels valued.

Teambuilding – the secret to a strong centre

Ms Christine Lee, Principal, Little Skool-House, SAFRA Jurong

Christine reveals that quality teambuilding programmes are the secret to creating a strong bond amongst experienced and beginner teachers alike.

Christine organises regular meetings with teachers to discuss concerns and challenges encountered, and to share ideas regarding the curriculum and children management. As a group, they are also able to support and communicate with each other openly.

Twice every year, the centre schedules after-school activities to strengthen the relationship among staff members through games and recreation; and at the company level, activities and retreats are organised every quarter. Little Skool-House allocates budget for the much-awaited company retreats, which help in building close-knit relationships among staff.

Christine begins to see how her passion is making a difference in the lives of people, and these teambuilding programmes are testimony of the centre's nurturing philosophy.



4. Compensation and performance management

(adapted from: A Guide for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) – Managing Performances to support Wage Restructuring by the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (2005))

As we mentioned earlier in the chapter, pay is an essential employee retention tool. So it follows that you should be aiming to create an attractive remuneration package for your valued employees.

Compensation and benefits are key components in an employee’s remuneration package and are complementary in nature. Compensation refers to payment to an employee in return for their contribution to the company and encompasses employee appraisal and wage structure. Benefits, however, are forms of value, other than payment, that are provided to the employee in return for their contribution to the company.

A good remuneration package can improve employee work satisfaction, reduce turnover and enhance the company’s attractiveness as a choice employer. Its foundation is a fair and effective compensation management system that aligns your employees’ future performance with your company’s goals, and which recognises and rewards your employees’ contributions.

You may consider all or some of these categories of compensation and employee benefits:

Compensation	Benefits	
	Mandatory under law	Discretionary
Salary	Annual leave	Medical insurance plans
Bonus	Sick leave	Dental and outpatient medical benefits
Commission	Medical consultation fees	Special leaves (e.g. compassionate leave, paternity leave)
	Maternity leave	Allowances (e.g. meal allowance)
	Child care leave	Sponsorship for training
	Work injury compensation	Provision of company outings

Key Components of an Effective Compensation Management System

1. Fair and effective performance appraisal and reward system
2. Competitive and flexible wage system
3. Effective staff engagement and communication of organisation’s compensation programme



There's more online!

Access the latest wages guidelines:
www.sgemployers.com/public/industry/NationalWagesCouncilGuidelines.jsp

Performance Management Framework

An effective performance management framework ensures the work of all departments and employees are aligned to achieve the key targets and goals of the company.

Critical to the success of the framework is a fair and well-communicated performance appraisal system. An overview of performance appraisal and a step-by-step guide to implementing an appraisal system customised to your company's set-up follows.

Performance Appraisal

Performance appraisal is a process usually performed annually by a supervisor for a subordinate. It is designed to help employees understand their roles, objectives, expectations and performance success.

Performance appraisal is important administratively as it allows the company to:

- make rewards and compensation decisions.
- determine transfers and assignments.
- determine promotion candidates.
- evaluate training programmes and progress.

Performance appraisal can also serve as the main platform for the company and employees to:

- communicate and discuss concerns/ challenges.
- provide performance feedback and recognise individual performance.
- evaluate goal achievement and identify/set new goals.
- identify individual strengths/weaknesses and training needs.



A Step-By-Step Guide to Implementing an Effective Performance Appraisal System

(Source: adapted from A Guide for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) – Managing Performance to support Wage Restructuring” by the Singapore Workforce Development Agency.)

Step 1: Establish company Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

Determine KPIs for each role. The following table is an example for creating KPIs for student retention.



Example - Child Care Teacher

Step	Area	Performance Indicator	Example
1	Identify Performance Area	<p>From your centre’s strategic goals, ask yourself “which area of business or business activity is essential to achieve my business goals”.</p> <p>The identified area of business or business activity becomes performance areas for your centre. They also become success factors for your business, to be used in Step 2 below.</p>	<p>My business goal is to become a centre of choice for parents, by providing the best quality of education and care for their children.</p> <p>To achieve this goal, I will need the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff 2. Curriculum 3. Customers 4. Service Delivery/Operations 5. Profitability/Business viability
2	Identify Critical Success Factors (CSFs)	<p>CSFs are indicators for business success in accomplishing its strategic plan and objectives.</p> <p>From the list of success factors, evaluate all of them and identify the ones which are essential towards your business achieving success. These would form the CSFs for your centre.</p>	<p>The following would be critical success factors to achieve the list of performance areas identified in Step 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quality Staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualified staff with up-to-date skills and knowledge • Engaged and satisfied staff 2. Quality Curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holistic and engaging curriculum 3. Quality Service Delivery & Operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valid licence to operate • SPARKS accreditation • Customer satisfaction 4. Healthy Enrolment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient enrolment • Profitability
3	Set Performance Indicators	<p>Performance indicators are usually numerical measures of achievements that are easy to collect and use. It should be derived from something you have control over and monitored at regular intervals.</p> <p>From the CSFs in Step 2, identify how you can measure each CSF.</p>	<p>For the CSFs on quality staff – i.e. having qualified staff with up-to-date skills and knowledge, the following are some possible performance indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of DECCE-T trained teachers 2. Number of hours spent by each staff for training annually 3. Staff Retention Rate 4. Employee Engagement Index
4	Identify Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	<p>KPIs are business metrics used to evaluate factors that are crucial to your centre. It should be expressed as a percentage, index, rate, levels or scores.</p>	<p>My target KPIs for the performance indicators in Step 3 are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. To achieve 75% of teachers to be DECCE-T trained by 1 Jan 2013. b. To achieve 80% of staff completing at least 80 hours of professional development training annually. c. To improve annual staff retention rate by 10% by 31 Dec 2011. d. To achieve an overall employee engagement index of 75% by 31 Dec 2011.

Step 2: Cascade and align KPIs within all levels in the company.

This ensures the work of all departments and employees are aligned to achieve your centre's KPIs and goals with the desired results.

- Cascading of KPIs is to ensure all key results are taken care of by specific supervisors and employees. These key areas are necessary to determine the performance outcome at the various organisational levels and attainment of organisational critical success factors.
- Aligning of KPIs is to avoid situations in which there may be an overlap of responsibilities, or scenarios in which there are no specific in-charges.

If this is done well, your centre will easily be able to identify the areas of work that value-add, and those that don't. It is also helpful for when you look to redesign jobs to ensure proper deployment of manpower resources for maximum results.

Step 3: Communicate performance matters regularly.

You should prioritise and initiate a practice of regular communication to:

- introduce the performance-based wage system, and explain its implications to employees in a clear and transparent way.
- explain the relationship of company KPIs and employee's performance requirements that are specific and measurable.
- periodically inform employees about the performance level of the company in a timely and accurate manner.
- inform employees of any performance gaps between expectations and actual performance, and how these gaps can be bridged through specific action plans.
- seek employees' feedback on how performance can be improved or enhanced. Then, employees should be informed of the actions that have been taken.

Regular communication between management and employees will foster employee commitment and enhance performance delivery with mutual vision. The following ways are some methods to communicate with employees:

Direct communication methods	Indirect communication methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short employee information sessions • Business meetings • Discussion with ESU (for companies in partnership with ESU) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice boards • Email • Company newsletter • Pamphlets and brochures • Company Intranet
<p>Pros and Cons: Facilitates immediate, two-way feedback but can be time-consuming.</p>	<p>Pros and Cons: Wider readership but lacks the intimacy and feedback of direct communication methods.</p>



Step 4: Ensure proper documentation of performance matters.

It is important to track employee performance delivery through simple and proper documentation. This is to ensure performances are delivered in accordance with plans. The documents can also be referenced during the annual performance review.

Proper observation and documentation of performance before the formal annual performance review will allow timely intervention in the event performance gaps are observed.



**For your
use!**

Refer to Annex 3G for a sample Expectation Setting and Observation Form.

Step 5: Review and monitor performance.

Assessing an employee's performance is a continuous process. Before making an assessment of the final performance, there may be occasions during the year where performance gaps are identified and need to be addressed.

Performance gaps can be due to:

- Lack of necessary skills or knowledge
- Inability to apply the skills or knowledge
- Wrong tools or environment provided to apply the skills and knowledge
- Inability to understand performance instructions

There may be a need for training, coaching and counselling in order to address these gaps.

An employee's performance can be assessed on either:

- **What the person does** – refers to the behaviours, actions at work and means of getting something done. This is an area in which a person's behaviours and capabilities are assessed.
- **What the person achieves** – refers to the final results and outcome of work, which can be both qualitative and quantitative. This is an area in which an individual's performance goals, targets or objectives are assessed. This is sometimes known as Management by Objectives (MBO).



**For your
use!**

Refer to Annex 3E for a sample of an employee performance review form.

Step 6: Determine a performance-based reward framework.

The results of the performance assessment in Step 5 above can then go towards deciding the rewards your employees will receive.

Management can retain the flexibility of moderating the final payout to individual/group of employees based on considerations such as learning, career potential, centre performance and other market-related factors.

The Exit Interview

Should an employee decide to leave despite your retention strategies, it is advisable to conduct a formal exit interview to establish the reason for leaving. You can make improvements in these areas if necessary so that she may think of returning to the centre in the future, should the opportunity arise.



**For your
use!**

Refer to Annex 3H for a sample exit interview form.



**There's more
online!**

- 1) PowerPoint Presentation by Monica Belcourt York University and Charlie Cook The University of West Alabama (www.academic.cengage.com/resource_uploads/downloads/0176501789_283653.ppt)
- 2) Recommendations of the Tripartite Taskforce on Wage Restructuring
 - Book 1 (Recommendation on Wage Restructuring): http://www.re-employment.sg/web/ImgCont/73/Report_on_Wage_Restructuring_Book1.pdf
 - Book 2 (Reports of Sectoral Working Groups): http://www.re-employment.sg/web/ImgCont/73/Report_on_Wage_Restructuring_Book2.pdf



**We're here
to help!**

**ESU members can involve
ESU in the event of the need
to moderate bonuses.
Hotline: 6872 1148**



Case Study

A blueprint for service quality and employee satisfaction

Ms Shirley Leong, Head of Human Resource Department, PAP Community Foundation (PCF)

When Shirley joined PCF, she had 22 years of experience within commercial HR and wanted to use her knowledge to implement a standardised system that would make the running of this large school network smoother, simpler and highly efficient. Over the last three years, Shirley has introduced a whole array of measures that have seen service levels improved and staff progress being measured effectively.

The first step was to arrange insurance and medical benefits across the board – when she joined the organisation, 60% of staff had neither of these. Concomitant with the raising of the professional quality of teaching staff by the regulatory bodies, Shirley set up a salary harmonization competency framework which saw extensive revisions to the remuneration packages for teaching staff, principals, and supervisors. Salaries were harmonised and banded according to ability, academic and professional qualifications and experience. The revised salary ranges will also enable PCF to attract qualified early childhood educators and the salary structure was set-up to measure for market competitiveness and wages aligned internally.

From there and with management support, Shirley introduced employment terms and conditions, formal employment contracts, standard operating procedures and recruitment policies, and began to devise career progression pathways and scholarship programs in order to attract, motivate and retain staff. The HR objective is to build PCF into an Employer of Choice and in this regard, strives to provide continual quality professional support and HR services to all staff.

The HR system began to take shape and a master handbook was created that, over time, significantly reduced calls to the PCF HR helpdesk. Shirley admits that the process took stamina and perseverance, particularly when negotiating with and standing her ground against Branch staff and committees. However, she knew that change was essential to reduce staff turnover rates, and standardise the quality of teaching and administration of PCF centres.



5. Grievance handling

(Source: TAFEP, ESU)

A work-related grievance is any discontent or feeling of unfairness related to work. Grievances may arise under the following conditions:

- Relations between employer and employee e.g. difficulty working with a specific employee
- Employment e.g. dissatisfaction related to job descriptions, job duties, functions and activities
- Non-employment e.g. employer's act of termination of employment is unfairly or not properly managed or administered
- Terms of employment e.g. matters relating to wages or salary, allowances, rewards and benefits
- Transfer of employment e.g. unhappiness and uncertainty of having to work under a different employer after transfer, doubts as to whether the transfer is actually an outsourcing exercise, etc.
- Conditions of work e.g. matters relating to safety and health conditions, discriminatory acts and unfair treatment by the employer

Set up a Grievance-handling Procedure

You will need to set up a grievance-handling procedure that clearly documents the steps an employee may take to address a grievance. The recommended steps in the procedure should be followed in order. In the event the grievance has been escalated to the highest level of appeal stated in the grievance-handling procedure and the employee continues to express dissatisfaction with the settlement offered, it may be useful to seek the assistance of a third party, e.g. Ministry of Manpower, with the view of amicably resolving the matter.

Step 1: Draw up an organisation-appropriate grievance-handling procedure.

Your grievance-handling procedure should state:

- Levels of appeals
- Duration for the employee to wait for action to be taken at each level of appeal



Step 2: Put in place tools to support the grievance-handling procedure.

Some useful tools to put in place:

- Training for Line Managers
- Grievance Lodge Form

Step 3: Communicate the finalised grievance-handling procedure with employees.

Employees should be informed about the grievance handling procedure through formal documentation, such as through the employee's handbook. (Refer to Annex 3D for information on how to compile an Employee handbook.)



There's more online!

Grievances Handbook: www.fairemployment.sg



Good to know!

An employee who is a union member can seek assistance from the Education Services Union (ESU) in respect of raising the grievance to her employer. For centres in partnership with ESU, this option will be stated in a mutually agreed grievance handling procedure.



Courses Available

Employer can also attend the Fair Grievance Handling workshop conducted by TAFEP. Log on to www.fairemployment.sg for more details.



For your use!

Refer to Annex 3J for a sample of a grievance-handling procedure form.

6. Employee misconduct, dismissals and appeals

(Source: www.mom.gov.sg)

As much as you try to maintain a dispute-free environment, you will not be able to completely eliminate the possibility that you will have to discipline staff for misconduct and perhaps, following an unsuccessful attempt at retraining, dismiss them.

It is important that you put documented procedures in place that will ensure staff know what is expected of them and what behaviour crosses the line and can be considered grounds for dismissal. Once that line has been crossed, it is important that you take the appropriate action immediately and commence inquiry proceedings so that you can make an informed decision on the matter.

Conducting an Inquiry into Misconduct

There is no prescribed procedure for conducting an inquiry into an act of misconduct. As a general guideline:

- the person hearing the inquiry should not be in a position which may suggest bias; and
- the employee being investigated for misconduct should have the opportunity to present his case.

Appeals

Employees who feel that they have been unfairly dismissed¹ by their employers may appeal to the Minister for Manpower to be reinstated to their former employment.

Appeals must be made by the employee, or the union on behalf of the employee, in writing within one month of dismissal.

If the employer has given notice and the contractual terms of termination are complied with, the onus would be on the employee to show proof that the dismissal was unfair. The Ministry of Manpower will continue to be stringent in assessing such appeals.

If it can be established that an employee was unfairly dismissed, the Minister may consider reinstating the employee in his former employment or ordering a sum of money as compensation, as the Minister deems fit.



Good to know!

Under the Employment Act, you may suspend the employee from work during an inquiry, for a period not exceeding one week. The employee should be paid not less than half his salary for the suspended period.



There's more online!

MOM website: <http://www.mom.gov.sg/employment-practices/employment-rights-conditions/contract-of-service-termination/Pages/contracts-of-service-and-termination.aspx>



We're here to help!

If you require assistance in drawing up a structured disciplinary procedure for your company/organisation, you can approach ESU for assistance.

Email: esu@ntuc.org.sg

Tel: 6872 1148

¹ Dismissal means termination of the contract of service of an employee by his employer, with or without notice and whether on grounds of misconduct or otherwise.



We're here to help!

SPRING Singapore Programmes

SPRING Singapore, through its HR Capability Programme, assists SMEs to implement good HR practices through a flexible **HR Capability Package**. The package offers key guidelines, tips and pointers, tools and templates to help companies in six key HR modules: manpower planning, recruitment and selection, compensation and benefits, performance management, learning and development and career management. Qualifying companies can receive up to 50% funding support as long as they select at least three of the six modules offered.



There's more online!

Visit www.spring.gov.sg/EnterpriseIndustry/BC/HRCP/Pages/Overview.aspx for more information on SPRING Singapore Programmes



Quick Recap

1

Recruitment

- The right fit
- Fair contracts

2

Retention

- Pay and reward strategies
- Improve work conditions
- Provide opportunities
- Induction and mentoring programmes

3

Continuing Professional Development

- Relevant
- Identifiable outcomes
- Take account of previous knowledge and expertise
- Model effective teaching and learning strategies
- Include impact evaluation

4

Compensation & Performance Management

- Performance appraisal and reward system
- Competitive flexible wage system
- Staff engagement
- Communicate compensation programme to staff

5

Grievance Handling

- Set up procedure
- Put tools in place
- Communicate procedure to employees

6

Employee misconduct, dismissals & appeals

- Set up inquiry system
- Communicate expectations
- Document procedures

4 REGULATIONS ON QUALITY AND STANDARDS



- 1 Licensing and Quality Management
- 2 Teacher certification and Training Pathway

As with any business, it is your legal obligation to ensure that you operate your child care centre within the guidelines of the law. Chapter 2 has provided important legislative information to help you do this, but there are other legal guidelines to consider.

In addition to abiding by general legal guidelines such as the Employment Act, there are regulations for child care centres specifically that you will need to comply with. These come in the form of licensing and teacher certification.



This chapter will cover the actions you need to take and the resources you can draw from to ensure that your centre remains in full compliance with the necessary regulations surrounding licensing, accreditation and teacher certification.

1. Licensing and Quality Management

Child care centres are licensed by the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports under the Child Care Centres Act (Cap. 37A) and Regulations. Child care centres provide care and education for children from aged 2 months to below 7 years and offer a variety of programmes ranging from full-day, half-day to flexi-care.

Centres are required to meet acceptable standards of care and education. They are assessed based on the licensing instrument – “Assessment of Licensing Standards in Child Care Centres”.

The main areas assessed are:

1. Physical Environment
2. Safety/Health/Hygiene and Nutrition
3. Staff Training/Qualifications and Staffing Requirements
4. Programme and Curriculum
5. Administration

Besides ensuring that children in child care centres receive adequate care and education, the licensing instrument also serves as a useful resource for employers in the area of staff management and administration.

Staff Development

Your teachers are a key determinant of the quality of your centre. They work closely with the children to bring out their full potential so it is critical that they are continuously developed through guidance and appropriate training for informed practice. You are encouraged to set aside funds for staff development, for the training and development of teachers and other personnel in your centre.

Work-Life Balance

Child care centres operate from 7.00 am to 7.00 pm, with some centres providing extended hours of care to meet the needs of working parents. With such long operating hours, there is a need for employers to look into work-life balance through:

- rostering of staff
- use of teacher assistants for non-programme hours
- part-time arrangements and casuals



Workplace Ambience

When planning the physical layout of the centre, provide a staff rest area – a suitable environment for staff to take breaks, have discussions, prepare lesson plans or do other administrative work. This can also serve as a resource area for teachers as well.

Administration of Staffing Matters

Child care centre staff come into close contact with children on a regular basis. For the well-being of both the staff and the children, it is important that all staff clear the pre-employment medical clearances, including a chest X-ray, before they commence work at the centre. A copy of the staff's medical clearance is to be kept in the centre and be produced as required for verification and reference.

Other staff documents that need to be maintained in the centre include:

- letter of appointment
- declaration of offences
- academic and training certificates
- teacher certification documents

SPARK and Quality Rating Scale (QRS)

Another resource which employers can make reference to is the Quality Rating Scale (QRS), which is used for assessing centres under the Singapore Pre-school Accreditation Framework (SPARK). SPARK certification is an endorsement of the quality of a child care centres's kindergarten programme. There are 7 areas of focus in SPARK accreditation:

- Leadership
- Planning & Administration
- Staff Management
- Resources
- Curriculum
- Pedagogy
- Health & Safety

Requirements in the areas of Leadership, Strategic Planning and Staff Management set benchmarks for employers in the management of their centre.



**There's more
online!**

Visit www.moe.gov.sg/education/preschool/spark/ for more information on SPARK.

Visit http://www.childcarelink.gov.sg/ccls/home/CCLS_HomeOperators.jsp for information on the utility of staff rest area and a licensing checklist.



Case Study

A bright SPARK in the education sector

Ms Susan Tan, Centre Supervisor, Kinderland@MOM Child Care Centre

The Kinderland group of pre-schools firmly believes in accreditation and that's why it set out on a mission to gain the coveted Singapore Pre-school Accreditation Framework (SPARK) accreditation. The idea behind SPARK is to drive excellence via a quality assurance framework; achieving certification involves hard work and dedication.

For Kinderland, there were a few challenges that its staff needed to overcome as they began the accreditation process. Initially, they were required to document all their standard operating procedures and refine them. At that stage, they had quite a number of different practices, depending on the type of centre; it was a long process that increased the amount of administration work. Some teachers were wary of being observed and Kinderland Principals needed to provide ongoing reassurance. But, for four of their centres, the three-month-long journey has resulted in a great sense of satisfaction. They are proud to have attained the recognition as leading centre in Singapore (with the SPARK logo proudly printed on all of their stationery!), and by 2014, Kinderland aims to have all its centres SPARK accredited.

What differences has SPARK made? Kinderland believes that as a result of completing SPARK accreditation, it can operate more efficiently – all its processes are clearly laid out in black and white. Additionally, the team has a robust training and induction programme in place and has set its sights on progressing from a Grade 2 accreditation to the highest level, Grade 6.



2. Teacher certification and Training Pathway

Standards for New Child Care Teachers

All child care teachers joining the early childhood sector on or after 1 January 2009 have to meet stipulated minimum educational requirements.



Good to know!

All certificates and documents sent in must be certified-true copies. It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that you have seen the original documents before signing and certifying true copies to the duplicate copies. There will be legal implications should there be any discrepancies found during the teacher certification process.

To Apply for Teacher Certification

To ensure that your application is processed smoothly, keep your records at Child Care Link up to date and submit the following documentation in full:



1. Cover letter (Indicate the name and contact number of sender, centre's name, centre code, and a short summary of the intent of the mail).
2. Certified copy of NRIC
3. Certified copies of academic/educational qualifications (including GCE 'O' and 'A' level certificates, diplomas and degrees (local and overseas) with transcripts and translations)
4. Certified copies of professional qualifications



There's more online!

For the latest training pathways and more details on teacher certification, and list of course providers accredited by PQAC refer to www.childcarelink.gov.sg > Professional Development.

Please post/fax all applications to:

Child Care Division
 Professional Development Section
 Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports
 510 Thomson Road
 #13-00 SLF Building
 Singapore 298135

Fax No: 6259 8763



Training Pathway for Early Childhood Sector

PQAC Training Pathway

The Pre-school Qualification Accreditation Committee (PQAC) was set up to oversee the standards and quality of pre-school teacher training for both the kindergarten and child care sectors in Singapore.

PQAC oversees the various levels of training offered along the PQAC Training Pathway to ensure that it caters to the different needs and career aspirations of teachers. These include courses to prepare teachers for leadership positions in the sector or specialised fields within the Early Childhood Sector.

The PQAC Training Pathway was designed to equip pre-school professionals to:

- provide our young with an enriched learning environment;
- nurture their social skills and values; and
- prepare them for lifelong learning.

Academic entry points are specified for the Certificate and Diploma level courses.

2. The Certificate in Early Years (CEY) will be introduced in July 2012. It is open to new entrants who have completed Secondary 4 education with WPL level 5 and a credit in EL1 or its equivalent. Existing teachers who have completed the Certificate in Infant and Toddler Care or CIC will be able to apply for CEY if they have a WPL level 5. The course will be conducted by accredited training agencies who have met the criteria set by WSQ WDA.

3. The Advanced Certificate in Early Childhood Care and Education (CECCE) course, open to new entrants with 3 'O' level credits including EL 1 or its equivalent. Existing teachers who have completed Secondary 4 education and have a WPL level 5 and WPN level 4 will also be eligible to apply.

With this WSQ training pathway in place, child care centres can tap into a bigger pool of potential candidates to be trained and certified as early years educators.



NEW WSQ Training Pathway

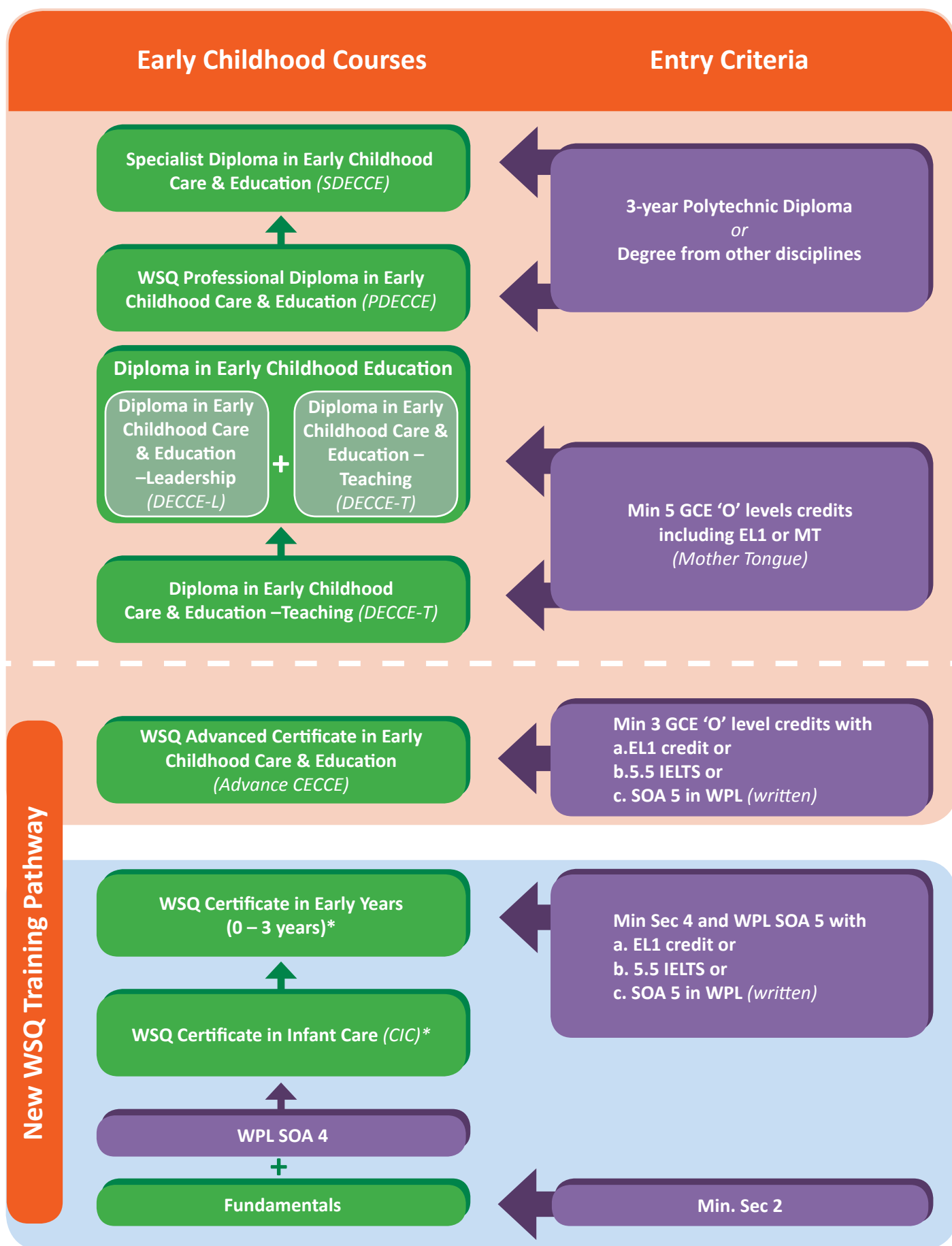
In conjunction with the launch of the Early Years Development Framework that will help raise the quality of programmes for the 0-3 age group in child care centres, a new training pathway to facilitate professional upgrading of existing teachers will be introduced.

This new training pathway adopts the Workforce Development Agency (WDA) Employability Skills (ES) Certification as an alternative entry requirement. A person equipped with Secondary 4 and the requisite ES qualification (Workplace Literacy (WPL) and Workplace Numeracy (WPN)) will be able to join the child care sector to teach in the 0-3 age group. A new teacher certification process will certify those who have completed the required courses to teach in licensed Infants, Toddlers and N1 settings. The courses under this training pathway are:

1. The Certificate in Infant Care (CIC) will allow existing teachers who have completed Secondary 2 education and Fundamentals in Early Childhood Care and Education with WPL standard of level 4 to apply.



Training Route for Child Care Teachers and Educarers



Refer to www.childcarelink.gov.sg for more details and regular updates.

*Takes effect from July 2012



Case Study

A rewarding career pathway

Ms Nur Hidayah Aziz, Child Care Teacher, Kinderland Child Care Centre@MOM

Nur Hidayah Aziz has always found fulfilment in teaching and taking care of children. Her career with childhood education started at a Kinderland franchise as a teacher for six months. But little did she know that early childhood education would entail much more than simple babysitting which she had done for her nieces and nephews. Filled with passion for children and the desire to provide quality teaching, she pursued, first, a certificate course to improve her teaching skills and, second, a part-time diploma course in childhood education. She attended evening classes three times a week for two and a half years, which helped open her eyes to the challenges and rewards of her job.

Now, Nur Hidayah has a deeper understanding of the needs of children of various age groups and is equipped with knowledge of various classroom hands-on activities. The course has also improved her communication skills and helped her motivate and relate better with her children.

Nur Hidayah also embarked on a company-sponsored Speech and Drama certificate. This has given her a career direction she hadn't anticipated previously. Having seen the positive and dramatic impact drama has on motivating children to express themselves, bringing them out of their shell, Nur Hidayah has set her sights on a career path that involves the teaching of speech and drama, and intends to specialise in this area moving forward.





Quick Recap

1

Licensing and Quality Management

Compliance with relevant Acts for:

- Premises layout
- Facilities
- Teacher qualifications
- Management of centre

2

Teacher Certification

- Teacher certification application
- Training pathways

5 FUNDING SCHEMES



- 1 Upgrade your staff
- 2 Re-employ staff
- 3 Improve work/life initiatives in your centre
- 4 Increase productivity

The government continues to invest in raising the standards of pre-school education in Singapore by providing scholarships, bursaries and teaching awards to incumbent teachers, principals, and pre-service teachers from child care centres and not-for-profit kindergartens.

These schemes help to fund professional development courses in Early Childhood Care and Education.



This additional support will help grow a pool of well-qualified early childhood educators by attracting new entrants into the sector, as well as providing opportunities for professional upgrading for existing educators to develop leadership skills or deepen teaching skills in areas such as Music and Movement, Drama or Chinese Education.

This chapter provides information on the various funding schemes available to you to:

- 1 Upgrade staff
- 2 Re-employ staff
- 3 Improve work-life initiatives in your centre
- 4 Increase productivity

1. Upgrade your staff

The quality of early childhood education provided by your centre depends greatly on the skills of your teachers. You can leverage the existing funding schemes available to enhance teacher training and qualifications. This will ensure that your preschool professionals are well equipped to provide an enriched learning environment, to nurture children's development and learning, and prepare them for lifelong learning.

This section of the chapter details the various funding schemes, scholarships and awards available to you to upgrade staff skills.

MCYS Scholarship for Early Childhood Care and Education

Since 2009, MCYS has been offering scholarships to encourage child care teachers to continue to develop and upgrade themselves. MCYS Scholarships are available for Diploma, Bachelor and Master in ECE Programmes for in-service child care teachers.

Who Can Apply

- Registered child care teachers who are in service and recommended by a child care centre
- Singapore Citizen or Permanent Residents aged 21 years and above
- Must not concurrently hold or be serving out a bond for other scholarships, bursaries or funding
- Must meet the academic requirements and be accepted by the training provider into the selected course

Components of the Scholarship

The scholarship:

- covers the course fee
- provides Learning Resource Allowance to scholarship recipients
- provides a subsidy to the child care centre to engage relief teachers to allow for study leave for scholarship recipients
- gives a cash award to the recipient upon successful completion of the course

Requirements

- Maintain minimum grade requirement stipulated by MCYS and all academic conditions required by training provider
- Remain in employment of the nominating child care centre during the duration of the course
- Bond to the child care sector upon completion of the course

Scholarships Are Tenable for Selected Programmes Offered at the Following Institutions:

Diploma:

Ngee Ann Polytechnic www.np.edu.sg
 Temasek Polytechnic www.tp.edu.sg
 KLC School of Education www.klc.edu.sg
 Asian International College www.aic.edu.sg
 SEED Institute www.seedinstitute.edu.sg

Degree:

SIM University www.sim.edu.sg
 SEED Institute www.seedinstitute.edu.sg
 KLC Institute www.klcinstitute.edu.sg

Master:

National Institute of Education www.nie.edu.sg
 SEED Institute www.seedinstitute.edu.sg

Teaching Award

Teaching awards are available for the degree courses identified.

The award sponsors 80% of the course fee and includes a learning resource allowance, centre subsidy and a cash award.

WDA Scholarships for MCYS-registered Child Care Teachers

WDA also offers scholarships for MCYS-registered child care teachers. Please email ecce_wsq@wda.gov.sg for further details.



There's more online!

More details on MCYS scholarships and teaching awards are available at www.childcarelink.gov.sg and www.cdn.gov.sg



Case Study

Going beyond the call of duty

Ms Sua Swee Lee, Senior Teacher, Healthy Start Child Development Centre

After eight years in the food and beverage industry, Sua Swee Lee felt it was time for a change. Thus, four years ago, she made the bold choice of switching careers to the Early Childhood Education sector, having taken a part-time diploma in Early Childhood Care and Education in Teaching. Since then she has been teaching with Healthy Start Child Development Centre, a division of local NGO Beyond Social Services, an organisation focussed on improving the lives of families and individuals from disadvantaged low-income backgrounds.

With her strong commitment to work with children and families, she was awarded an MCYS scholarship in 2010, and commenced her three-and-a-half-year journey towards a Bachelors in Early Childhood Education with Management course at UniSim. She says that her horizons have been broadened, with more opportunities for leadership positions opening up as a result, complementing her position as Senior Teacher at the Centre.

Swee Lee expressed that she has always had an interest in teaching, and despite her currently packed schedule – working from 9 am to 6 pm, and then attending classes from 7 pm to 10 pm two to three times a week – she enjoys her job, and gains satisfaction from the positive results she sees in the children she teaches. She says having a hand in educating these children has been a thoroughly inspiring experience.

Mentoring other teachers and lesson planning also falls under her purview, and this is where studying for her degree has proven especially useful, as she applies her knowledge of theories in child development into real-world practice. As a result of the confidence and knowledge she has gained through the scholarship, Swee Lee sees herself in a management role in the future, helping colleagues to further enrich the lives of children.



WDA Funding Schemes

Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA) offers various funding schemes and incentives to support Continuing Education and Training.

Workfare Training Support Scheme (WTS)

WTS aims to encourage older low-wage Singaporean workers to upgrade their skills through training to enhance their employability and acquire better jobs. Employers are incentivised to send their older low-wage workers for training through the higher course fee subsidies and absentee payroll available.

WTS covers training courses offered under the Singapore Workforce Skills Qualification (WSQ) system, including Employability Skills (ES) training courses. WSQ is a national credentialing system developed by the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA) in 2005. It articulates the skills set required of the different job roles across various sectors of the economy. Through the competency-based WSQ training, individuals will be able to upgrade their skills and advance in their careers.

Employer-sponsored funding for ECCE Qualification Courses and Short WSQ Courses

Through the Skills Development Fund (SDF), employers can enjoy course fee grants when they send their staff for training.

Self-sponsored funding for ECCE Qualification Courses and Short WSQ Courses

For applicants who wish to self-sponsor their training, WDA has appointed a CET Centre for the ECCE sector to deliver training to self-sponsored applicants. Generally, the applicants will receive the same or higher course fee and absentee payroll funding rates as under SDF funding.

Besides the CET Centre for the ECCE sector, self-sponsored applicants can also approach agencies such as National Trade Union Congress, Chinese Development Assistance Council, Mendaki and Sinda to participate in their Surrogate Employers Programme (SEP). Through SEP, the applicants can enrol with other training providers and obtain support for SDF subsidies.

CET Qualification Award (CQA)

As a further incentive for training, WDA will award a CQA to staff who attain a full WSQ qualification.



For your use!

Refer to Annex 5A for WDA funding subsidies and funding schemes.



There's more online!

www.wda.gov.sg/funding - for more information on SDF employer sponsored funding

www.wda.gov.sg/CET_Centres - for more information on the CET Centre for the ECCE sector

www.wda.gov.sg/cqa - for more information on CQA

www.moe.gov.sg/education/preschool/teachers/

www.wda.gov.sg/wts - for more information on WTS schemes



Courses Available

Refer to Annex 5B for a list of training programmes.

2. Re-employ staff

New legislation will come into effect in 2012 to make re-employment of workers aged 62 compulsory as long as they are medically fit for work and there is a suitable position available for them. To assist companies to rehire older workers, funding schemes are in place that will ready employers, enabling them to redesign job scopes to better position themselves to re-employ older workers.

ADVANTAGE! Scheme

The ADVANTAGE! Scheme is a re-employment initiative developed by WDA, in partnership with its Tripartite Partners, the National Trade Union Congress (NTUC)

and the Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF) to address the issues of an ageing population and the shortage of skilled labour.

Open to all Singapore-based companies, it offers financial grants of up to \$400,000 in support of initiatives in implementing HR systems, changes to working environment and business and operational processes that directly boost the recruitment, retention and re-employment of mature workers.

Through the ADVANTAGE! Scheme, companies enjoy greater flexibility in managing their resources, allowing them to remain cost competitive in the long term.



**We're here
to help!**

To apply for ADVANTAGE! Scheme, contact NTUC or SNEF at Email:

NTUC Tel: 6213 8382

or

SNEF Tel: 6827 6827

3. Improve work-life initiatives in your centre

Your staff are your most critical resource. But their ability to function productively at work depends on them achieving a healthy work-life balance. With globalisation and advances in technology, the workplace concept is changing rapidly. Flexible workplace arrangements that support individuals and families cope with their multiple roles is fast becoming the new norm.



There's more online!

For more details on the Flexi-Works! Grant and WoW! Fund refer to www.mom.gov.sg

Flexi-Works! Grant

Flexi-Works! is an initiative by the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA), in partnership with the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) and the Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF) to help companies hire new workers on part-time or flexible work arrangements. The scheme offers a grant of up to \$100,000 to support a company's efforts in doing so.



Good to know!

Flexi-Works! has been extended to run to 31 December 2012.

Work-Life Works! Fund (WoW!)

The Work-Life Works! (WoW!) Fund is a one-time grant given to businesses to encourage the introduction of Work-Life strategies at the workplace. The WoW! Fund helps to defray costs incurred by organisations while introducing Work-Life measures. An approved project can be funded up to 80% of costs subject to a maximum of \$20,000.

Email applications to:
mom_worklife@mom.gov.sg



We're here to help!

For more information contact NTUC:

Email: wds@ntuc.org.sg

Tel: 6213 8382

Or SNEF:

Email: flexiworks@snef.org.sg

Tel: 6827 6827

4. Increase productivity

The Inclusive Growth Programme (IGP)

To increase skills, expertise and innovative capabilities of workers and businesses, a new initiative, which is a redevelopment of the old Job Re-Creation Programme to better meet the needs of today's economy has arisen.

The Inclusive Growth Programme is aimed at driving productivity and improving the skills and pay of employees earning \$1,400 and below.

The scheme will track how you have enhanced productivity, how you measure it and how you share gains with employees.

The following avenues are covered under IGP:

- Up to 50% funding for use of equipment, technology, tools, software, etc.
- Up to 50% for process redesign
- Up to 90% for customised training not funded under the CET initiative

The funding for the programme is capped at \$150,000 per project and \$500,000 per company.



We're here to help!

Contact e2i (Employment and Employability Institute) at www.e2i.com.sg



Quick Recap

1

Upgrading your staff

- MCYS Scholarship and Teaching Award for Early Childhood Care and Education
- WDA funding schemes

2

Re-employing staff

- ADVANTAGE! scheme

3

Introducing work-life initiatives

- Flexi-Works! Grant
- Work-Life Works! Fund (WoW!)

4

Increasing Productivity

- Inclusive Growth Programme (IGP)

6

RESOURCES



The following resources are included for your use and are correct at the time of printing. For the most up-to-date versions, please refer to the PDF version of the toolkit where links will take you to the most recent posts online.

Annex 2A

Calculating Pay

Basic Rate of Pay

For a monthly-rated employee

$$\frac{12 \times \text{monthly basic rate of pay}}{52 \times \text{average number of days an employee is required to work in a week}}$$

For a piece-rated employee

$$\frac{\text{Total pay earned (without allowance) during the 14 calendar days immediately before a rest day/public holiday/outpatient sick leave}}{\text{Number of days worked during the same period of 14 calendar days}}$$

Gross Rate of Pay

For a monthly-rated employee

$$\frac{12 \times \text{monthly gross rate of pay}}{52 \times \text{average number of days an employee is required to work in a week}}$$

For a piece-rated employee

$$\frac{\text{Total pay earned (with allowance) during the 14 calendar days immediately before a rest day/public holiday/outpatient sick leave}}{\text{Number of days worked during the same period of 14 calendar days}}$$

Salary payable to a monthly-rated employee for an incomplete month of work

$$\text{Salary payable for incomplete month of work} = \frac{\text{Monthly gross rate of pay}}{\text{Total number of working days in that month}} \times \text{Total number of days the employee actually worked in that month}$$

Overtime pay

$$\text{Hourly basic rate of pay} \times 1.5 \times \text{Number of hours of overtime worked}$$

Pay for work done on a rest day

Work done at employer's request

- One day's salary when the employee works up to half the normal daily working hours; or
- Two days' salary when the employee works more than half the normal daily working hours.

Work done at employee's request

- Half day's salary when the employee works up to half the normal daily working hours; or
- One day's salary when the employee works more than half the normal daily working hours.

If an employee works beyond the normal daily working hours on a rest day, she should be paid at least 1.5 times the hourly basic rate of pay.

Pay for work done on a Public Holiday

$$\frac{\text{No. of working hours per year of a part-time employee}}{\text{No. of working hours per year of a similar full-time employee}} \times \text{No. of days of public holiday of a similar full-time employee with equal length of service} \times \text{No. of working hours in a day of a similar full-time employee}$$

Encashing Public Holidays

$$\frac{\text{Annual entitlement to public holidays of a part-time employee (in hours)}}{\text{Weekly working hours of that part-time employee} \times 52 \text{ weeks}} \times \text{Hourly gross rate of pay}$$

Annex 2B

Calculating leave

Annual Leave

$$\frac{\text{No. of working hours per year of a part-time employee}}{\text{No. of working hours per year of a similar full-time employee}} \times \text{No. of days of annual leave of a similar full-time employee with equal length of service} \times \text{No. of working hours in a day of a similar full-time employee}$$

Encashment Annual Leave

$$\frac{\text{Annual leave entitlement of a part-time employee (in hours)}}{\text{Weekly working hours of that part-time employee} \times 52 \text{ weeks}} \times \text{Hourly gross rate of pay}$$

Pro-ration of Annual Leave

$$\text{Length of service}/12 \times \text{leave entitlement for the year}$$

Sick Leave

$$\frac{\text{No. of working hours per year of a part-time employee}}{\text{No. of working hours per year of a similar full-time employee}} \times \text{No. of days of sick leave of a similar full-time employee with equal length of service} \times \text{No. of working hours in a day of a similar full-time employee}$$

Maternity Leave

$$\text{No. of hours work per week} \times \text{No. of weeks on maternity leave} \times \text{Hourly rate of pay}$$

Annex 2C

Features of a Re-employment Contract

NOTIFICATION

Notification Period: 3 Months

At least 3 months before employee reaches age 62, employer should provide employee with detailed offer or non-offer of re-employment.

If the employer is silent about re-employment arrangement, the retiring employee would be deemed to be re-employed on the existing terms.

DURATION OF CONTRACT

Duration of Contract: Up to age 65

3-year contract to be reviewed yearly OR Yearly contract up to age 65 renewable yearly.

What are the general terms in a Re-employment Contract and their respective scopes?

WAGES

- Paid for value of job;
- Factor experience and knowledge of employee;
- Factor in any adjustments made at age 60.
- Further adjustments made from a performance based wages system should be based on the 4 reasonable factors of:
 - Employee's productivity;
 - Employee's performance;
 - Employee's duties; and
 - Employee's responsibilities.

MEDICAL BENEFITS

- Possible co-payment of medical benefits
- Possible caps on claimable amounts
- Employers may provide additional contribution to employees' Medisave
- May be offered the same medical benefits (in-patient and outpatient) as a new hire
- Should not be less favourable than those provided by the Employment Act

ANNUAL/SICK LEAVE

- Employees do not need to serve the qualifying period to be eligible for annual leave and sick leave
- Benefits should be fair and reasonable
- Benefits should not be less than what is provided to new employees

TERMINATION NOTICE

- Notice must be the same for both employer and employee
- In the event of unfair dismissal, re-employed employees may approach Ministry of Manpower or their unions for assistance

Annex 3A Sample Job Application Form

Personal Information

Name (as in NRIC or passport): _____
(Please underline surname)

Are you (tick one): Singapore Citizen Singapore Permanent Resident
 Foreigner requiring a pass to work in Singapore

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____

Contact No.: _____ Email address: _____

Academic Qualifications

Date		Schools/Institutions Attended	Qualifications Obtained ('O'/'A' Levels, Diploma, Degree)	Subjects/Grades
From	To			

Other Qualifications/Courses Attended/Awards Attained

Date		Qualifications/Awards Obtained	Awarding Institution
From	To		

Employment History

Date		Firm/Institution (in chronological order)	Position Held	Key Responsibilities	Reason(s) for Leaving
From	To				

Details of Current Employment

No approach will be made to your present employer without your consent.

Present Employer: _____ Designation: _____

Present monthly salary: _____ Bonus: _____

Key Responsibilities: _____

Notice required (to end present employment): _____ (weeks)

Reason for leaving: _____

Referees

Please give details of two referees whom we may approach for references.

1. Name: _____ Designation: _____ Organisation Name: _____

Contact No.: _____ Email Address: _____

2. Name: _____ Designation: _____ Organisation Name: _____

Contact No.: _____ Email Address: _____

Please tell us why you applied for this job and why you think you are the best person for the job.

I verify that the above information is correct to the best of my knowledge. I accept that providing deliberately false information could result in my dismissal.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Annex 3B

Sample Interview Questions

Section 1: Examples of Non-Discriminatory Phone Interview Questions

1. Can you tell me more about yourself?
2. Why are you applying for this position?
3. How many years of experience do you have in _____?
4. What are your responsibilities in your current position?
5. Why are you considering leaving your current position?
6. Tell me what you know about our company/position?
7. What is the most important thing you are looking for in a company/job?
8. Describe to me the most significant accomplishment in your career so far?
9. What is your greatest weakness/strength?
10. Where do you see yourself in five years?
11. When would you be available?
12. What is your salary expectation?
13. Do you have any questions?

Section 2: Examples of Non-Discriminatory Face-to-face Interview Questions

1. Qualifications

- a. What is your highest level of education?

2. Job skills

- a. What do you think are the skills requirement for the job you are applying for?

3. Job experience

- a. What were the challenges in your past experience as a (Job title)?

4. Analytical skills – pertaining to centre manager/ principal

- a. What would you do to increase productivity/job satisfaction in your centre? How would you carry out the tasks?

5. Willingness to work in a team

- a. Who are your team members in your present job? What is your working relationship with each of them?
- b. Tell us the challenges you faced when you were working with a team.

6. Passion for job and company

- a. What are the goals and objectives of your present company? Do you know our company's goals and objectives?

7. Integrity

- a. How would you respond if you were to discover that a co-worker is using the office phone for personal long distance calls?

8. Self confidence

- a. When was the last time you were given a task that was beyond your scope of work? Tell us about that situation.

9. Self development

- a. Do you think it is important to continue learning throughout one's lifetime? Why?

10. Working long hours

- a. The job involves occasional helping out at road shows. On these occasions, you will likely have to stay back late to complete the tasks. Would it be a problem for you?

11. Questions on carrying young children

- a. You will have to carry children (about 10-20 kilogrammes) in this job. Can you handle that?

12. Foreign languages

- a. You will be dealing with *Chinese-speaking customers most of the time. Many of them are unable to speak English. Can you communicate with them in Mandarin?

* Insert language of choice.

13. Handling bigger roles and leadership

- a. If you are a supervisor and one of your subordinates is uncooperative and refuses to take instructions from you, what would you do?

14. Questions on experience

- a. In view of the position that we are offering, tell me about your relevant experience.

15. Handling emotions

- a. Give me an example of a crisis situation you were involved in. What did you do?
- b. Has there been a time when a person's anger was misdirected at you. How did you react?

16. Adaptability

- a. Tell me about the most difficult job-related task you have faced.

17. Interpersonal skills

- a. How do you give your subordinates negative feedback?
- b. Were you ever a member/leader of a team in a professional setting? How did you perform in that role?

18. Questions on competencies

- a. Other than the requisite skills, what other skills do you have that would help you perform this job well?

Annex 3C

Samples of Employment Contracts

The sample contracts in this section are designed to help you draft an employment agreement. They include all the essential elements of a typical contract. You may modify them to suit your specific needs and situations. Keep in mind that these documents are a starting point and not a finished product. You need to make sure that the actual agreement reflects the relationship between you and your employee. (Sources: TAFEP website; Ministry of Manpower)

Sample Employment Contract 1

1. Date of Employment

Your first day of work is: _____

2. Place of work: _____

3. Job Title: _____

4. Salary

Payment Date: _____ day of every month; by Cash / Cheque / GIRO

4.1	(a) Basic Salary	\$ _____
	(b) Other Allowances/Payments in Kind (to itemise)	\$ _____
	Gross Salary [(a) + (b)]	\$ _____
4.2	CPF	
	Employee contribution	_____% of gross salary
	Employer contribution	_____% of gross salary
4.3	Take Home Salary = Gross Salary – Employee CPF	\$ _____
4.4	If you work overtime, you will be paid at a rate of 1.5 times your basic hourly salary:	\$ _____ /per hour of overtime work

5. Working Days / Hours of work / Overtime

5.1 Working days will be 4/ 5 / 5.5 / 6* / _____ days a week.

5.2 The normal working hours will be from _____ to _____ hrs.

5.3 Rest day on _____

5.4.1 You will earn overtime pay if you work more than 8 hours a day, or 44 hours a week. Total overtime hours should not exceed 72 hours a month.

OR:

5.4.2 MOM has approved the following overtime arrangements: _____
(to be described as per approved arrangement).

6. Rest Day Work

6.1 You may be requested to work on a rest day. If you agree to such a request, you will be paid as follows:

6.1.1	≤ ½ the normal daily working hours	1 day's basic salary
6.1.2	Up to the normal daily working hours	2 day's basic salary

6.2 You can also request to work on a rest day. If your employer agrees to such a request, you will be paid as follows:

6.2.1	≤ ½ the normal daily working hours	½ day's basic salary
6.2.2	Up to the normal daily working hours	1 day's basic salary

7. Public Holidays

7.1 You will be paid full pay for all official public holidays.

7.2 If you work on a public holiday, you will be paid an additional one day's basic pay and travel allowance for that day (if any).

8. Annual Leave

8.1 If you have served for at least 3 months, you will be entitled to 7 days of paid leave for the first 12 months of continuous service. For every additional 12 months of continuous service, you will get 1 more day of paid leave, up to a maximum of 14 days.

8.2 If you have served more than 3 months of continuous service but have not completed each year of service, the leave entitlement will be pro-rated accordingly. Pro-rated paid leave is computed in proportion to the number of completed months of service in the year.

9. Sick Leave

9.1 No hospitalisation: Maximum 14 days each year.

9.2 If hospitalised: Maximum 60 days (including the 14 days in 9.1) each year.

9.3 You will get sick leave after three months of employment. Before that, any sick leave taken will be considered unpaid leave.

9.4 You must notify the employer as soon as possible if you are absent on sick leave. You will be required to produce a medical certificate.

10. Deductions from Remuneration

The employer may not deduct any monies from the employee's wage other than those allowed under the Employment Act or ordered by the Court.

11. Termination of Employment

Either party can terminate this agreement with (1day/1week/2weeks/1month) written notice or by paying salary in lieu of notice for the relevant period.

12. Other conditions of employment or benefits

13. General

13.1 Any changes to this agreement will only be valid if they are in writing and have been agreed and signed by both parties.

THIS AGREEMENT SIGNED AT _____ ON THIS _____ DAY OF _____ 20____

Name of Employer: _____ Name of Employee: _____

Sample Employment Contract 2

This Employment Agreement dated this _____ day of _____ 20____ is made between:

_____ (herein after referred to as “the employer”)

Address of employer:

and _____ (herein after referred to as “the employee”)

Address of employee:

1. Commencement of Employment

This employment contract will begin on _____ and continue until terminated as set out in clause 14 (below).

2. Place of work

3. Job description

3.1. Job Title _____ (e.g. Teacher, Security Officer, Security Supervisor, Driver, Cleaning Specialist, child minder, gardener, etc.)

3.2. Duties

4. Remuneration

4.1 The employee’s basic salary shall be paid in cash/by cheque or through GIRO on _____ \$_____per month/day/week

4.2 The employee shall be entitled to the following allowances/payment in kind (if any):

4.2.1 A weekly/monthly fixed transport allowance or reimbursement (based on days worked) at a rate of _____ per day \$_____

4.2.2 A weekly/monthly fixed meal allowance or reimbursement (based on days worked) at a rate of _____ per day \$_____

4.2.3 A weekly/monthly fixed laundry allowance of \$_____

4.2.4 A weekly/monthly fixed site allowance of \$_____

4.2.5 A weekly/monthly fixed shift allowance of \$_____

4.2.6 Accommodation per week/month to the value of \$_____

4.3 The total value of the above remuneration shall be \$_____ (The total of clauses 4.1 to 4.2.6) (Modify or delete clauses 4.2.1 to 4.2.6 as needed)

4.4 The employee shall also be paid the overtime (OT)¹ for work beyond 8 hours in a day or 44 /per hour hours in a week. The total amount of OT paid every week/two weeks/month will be made on _____

4.5 employer shall review the employee’s remuneration/salary upon confirmation in the appointment and subsequently once a year.

5. Working Days/Hours of work/Overtime

5.1 Working days will be 4/ 5 / 5.5 / 6 / ____ days a week.

5.2 The normal working hours will be as follows:

- (i) First shift: XXXX — XXXXhrs
- (ii) Second shift: XXXX — XXXXhrs
- (iii) Third shift: XXXX — XXXXhrs

5.2.3 Rest day _____

5.4 Overtime will only be worked if authorised or agreed upon between the parties from time to time.

6. Meal Intervals

6.1 The employee shall have a meal (lunch/dinner) break of 45 minutes/1 hour (delete the one that is not applicable).

Meal time will be taken from:

Lunch: _____ to _____ daily;

Dinner: _____ to _____ daily.

6.2 The employee engaged in shift work shall have a meal break of 45 min/1 hour for every 8 continuous hours of work from time to time. [S38(b)(i) EA]

7. Sunday or Rest Day Work

7.1 Any work on Sundays/rest days will be by agreement between the parties from time to time.

7.2 If the employee works on a Sunday/rest day at the request of the employer he/she will be paid 1 day's basic salary for working up to half the normal daily working hours or 2 day's basic salary for working for more than half the normal daily working hours. [S37(3) EA]

7.3 If the employee works beyond his/her normal daily working hours on his rest day, he shall be paid 1 1/2 times his hourly basic rate of pay.

7.4 If the employee works on a Sunday/rest day at his own request, he/she will be paid ½ day's basic salary for work up to half the normal daily working hours or 1 day's basic salary for working for more than half the normal daily working hours. [S37(2) EA]

8. Public Holidays (See Explanatory Notes 4)

8.1 The employee will be entitled to all official public holidays on full pay.

8.2 If the employee works on a public holiday he/she shall be paid an additional one day's basic pay and travel allowance (if any) for that day. [S88(4) EA]

9. Annual Leave

9.1 The employee, who has served for at least 3 months, is entitled to _____ days of paid leave for every 12 months of continuous service. For each completed year of service, the number of days of annual leave will increase by _____ days until a maximum of _____ days. (This clause can be deleted if the number of days of annual leave provided is already above the statutory requirement.)

9.2 Where the employee's period of employment is more than 3 months but less than 12 continuous months of service, the annual leave entitlement will be in proportion to the number of completed months of service in that year. [S43(2) EA]

10. Sick leave

10.1 The employee will be entitled to paid sick leave not exceeding:

10.1.1 14 days in each year if no hospitalisation is necessary; or

10.1.2 60 days (including the 14 days in 10.1.1) in each year if hospitalisation is necessary.

10.2 During the first three months of employment the employee will not be entitled to paid sick leave and any sick leave taken during the period will be considered as unpaid leave.

10.3 The employee is to notify the employer as soon as possible in case of his/her absence from work through illness after certification of his sick leave by company's doctor or a Government doctor or any other certified medical practitioner or medical officer.

11. Maternity leave (to include if applicable)

11.1 The female employee will be entitled to paid 16 weeks maternity leave if she fulfils the following conditions:-

i) The child is a Singapore Citizen;

ii) The child's parents are lawfully married; and

iii) The employee has worked for the employer for at least 90 days before the child's birth.

11.2 The female employee who does not fulfil criteria (i) and (ii) of 11.1 may still be entitled to 12 weeks maternity leave if she meets criterion (iii) of 11.1 and is covered under the Employment Act.

11.3 The 16 week maternity leave is to be distributed in the following manner:

i) 4 weeks immediately before the delivery of her child; and

ii) 12 weeks immediately after the delivery of her child.

11.4 Alternative distribution of the 16 week maternity leave will be by agreement between the female employee and the employer and be guided under Section 9 of the Children Development Co-savings Act (Cap. 38A). [S9 CDCA]

11.5 The female employee will also be entitled to receive payment from the employer at the gross rate of pay for the entire 16 weeks of maternity leave.

11.6 Any work that the female employee is required to perform during her maternity leave shall be by agreement between parties from time to time.

11.7 Where the female employee is required to work for any day during the period that she is on maternity leave, she is entitled to receive an additional amount equivalent to a day's pay at the gross rate of pay or to absent herself from work on another day at the end of her maternity leave. [S76(3) EA]

11.8 The female employee has to notify her employer on her delivery (estimated time of delivery) as soon as practicable and her decision on how she intends to consume the maternity leave. The employer should be given at least one week's notice by the female employee before she goes on maternity leave.

12. Child care leave

12.1 The employee (working parent) with any child below seven years of age, will be entitled to six days paid child care leave per year, to a maximum of 42 days, provided he/she has worked for the employer for at least 3 months. Employees who are only covered under the Employment Act will be entitled to two days paid child care leave per year, if the child is below seven years of age and the employee has worked for the employer for at least three months. [S12B(1) & (2) CDCA, S87A EA]

12.2 The employee is entitled to be paid by the employer the gross rate of pay for every day of such leave taken by the employee. [S12B(9) CDCA, S87A(5) EA]

12.3 Any child care leave unconsumed at the end of the calendar year (or any period of 12 months as agreed between parties), or upon cessation of the employer/employee relationship, will be forfeited and no payment in lieu will be paid to the employee. [S12B(8,11) CDCA, S87A(4,6) EA]

13. Deductions from remuneration

13.1 The employer may not deduct any monies from the employee's wage other than those allowed under the Employment Act or ordered by the Court.

14. Termination of employment

14.1 Either party can terminate this agreement with (1day/1week/2weeks/1month) written notice or by paying salary in lieu of notice for the relevant period. In the case where an employee is illiterate notice may be given by that employee verbally (delete if not applicable).

15. Uniform (Delete this clause if not applicable)

15.1 _____ sets of uniforms will be supplied to the employee by the employer and will remain the property of the employer.

16. Work Injury Compensation Insurance

16.1 Where personal injury is sustained by the employee in the course of his employment, the employer will be liable to pay compensation where applicable under the Work Injury Compensation Act (Cap. 354). [S3 – S5 WICA]

16.2 The employer will insure and maintain insurance under one or more approved policies with an insurer against any liability that he would incur to any employee employed by him where applicable under the Work Injury Compensation Act (Cap. 354). [S23(1) WICA]

17. Other conditions of employment or benefits

18. General

18.1 Any changes to this agreement will only be valid if they are in writing and have been agreed and signed by both parties.

THIS AGREEMENT SIGNED AT _____ ON THIS _____ DAY OF _____ 20____

Name of Employer: _____ Name of Employee: _____

Witness By: _____

Signature: _____ Designation: _____

Enclosed: (relevant instructions / company policy guidelines)

e.g: Standing Operation Procedure and Standard Operating Instructions

1: The overtime will be calculated at the rate of not less than one and a half times the employee's hourly basic rate of pay.

2: The employee will not be permitted to work overtime for more than 72 hours a month.

Annex 3D

How to Create an Effective Employee Handbook

An employee handbook is a valuable resource for your business. It clearly communicates on paper the expectations you have of your employees, therefore leaving no room for miscommunication regarding their expected behaviour.

You can prepare the manual yourself then have a lawyer look it over to ensure it complies with Singapore laws. Alternatively, you can contact ESU for assistance in vetting your handbook.

The handbook will detail your centre’s policies and should include the following:

- general working hours
- company rules and regulations (dress code, how people interact with customers, safety regulations, etc.)
- how annual leave is earned
- paid holidays and personal days
- sick leave
- salary and performance reviews
- overtime policy
- health and medical benefits
- other fringe benefits
- maternity policy
- termination policy
- any other rules or regulations

Be sure to have your employees sign for it

Don’t simply hand out printed copies of the manual to your employees. Have them sign to acknowledge that they have read and understood it. Give a copy of this signed acknowledgement to the employee, and place another in the employee’s file. This will help protect you from possible claims that a person was dismissed for rules she did not know about.

As a fair and good employer, you should discuss with employees or employee representatives before making changes. Do also keep your employees informed of changes made to the handbook and ensure an updated copy is issued or is made easily accessible to employees.

A Sample Induction Programme

A Checklist for Induction Programme Development and Guidelines

- [] Establish Overall Program Goals, Objectives, and “Curriculum”
- [] Decide on Responsibility/Accountability for Programme: Who Oversees an Implements?
- [] Identify Program Strategies and Tasks for Programme Coordinators
- [] Develop Timeline for Induction Sessions and Tasks to be Accomplished
- [] Identify and Commit Resources(i.e., costs of programme – materials and personnel)
- [] Put Together a Handbook for Induction Coordinators and Inductees: Define Terms, Goals, Tasks and Methods of Evaluation to be Used
- [] Conduct Training for Induction Coordinators
- [] Set Requirements for Completing Induction Programme
- [] Evaluate the Programme to Determine Effectiveness/Possible Modification

Annex 3E

Sample Employee Performance Review

Performance Review Form 1 is based on “what the person does”, and emphasises the behaviour and process aspects of work. This is usually used for non-management employees, and ratings are relatively straightforward.

Employee Name: _____

Position/Department: _____

Date of Appointment: _____

Date Completing Review: _____

Ratings: Please rate the employee on the factors listed below, using the following rating codes:

1 = Unsatisfactory/Fails to meet minimum requirements

2 = Acceptable, but needs improvement to meet requirements

3 = Meets expected requirements

4 = Generally exceeds requirements

5 = Far exceeds requirements

N/A = Not Applicable or too soon to rate employee on criteria

1. Ratings

1	Adaptability	(Adjusts to changing situations, learns new and different tasks)	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
2	Attitude	(Shows enthusiasm towards the job; works overtime when asked by supervisor)	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
3	Commitment to Children and Children Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher demonstrates commitment to the well-being and development of children and their intellectual, social, emotional and physical growth. Teacher provides an environment for learning that encourages children to be problem solvers, decision makers and lifelong learners 	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
4	Attendance	(Does not disrupt operations by being habitually tardy or absent; works as scheduled)	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
5	Professional Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher has knowledge of the subject matter, the curriculum, and education related legislation. Teacher is aware of a variety of effective teaching and assessment practices. Teacher knows a variety of effective classroom management strategies. Teacher is knowledgeable in how children learn and factors that influence children’s learning and achievement. 	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
6	Teaching Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher actively uses professional knowledge and understanding of children, curriculum, legislation, teaching methodology, and classroom management strategies. Teacher communicates effectively with children, parents, and fellow colleagues. Teacher adapts and refines teaching practices through continuous learning and reflection. Teacher is able to use appropriate technology in teaching and related professional responsibilities. 	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
7	Leadership and Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher is able to collaborate with other teachers and centre colleagues to create and sustain a positive learning environment in the centre. 	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
8	Continuing Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher engages in continuing professional development and apply it to improve teaching practices 	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

2 (a). Overall Performance Rating (70%):

- **Unsatisfactory (0 – 13 pts)**
Does not meet the key requirements of the job. Immediate improvement required.
- **Needs Improvement (14 – 26 pts)**
Met the key requirements, but did not meet job requirements in all areas. Performance is inconsistent and at times fails to meet the standards of the job.
- **Meets Requirements (27 – 31 pts)**
Met the job requirements in all key areas. Performance consistently meets the standards of the job.
- **Exceeds Requirements (32 -36 pts)**
Met the key requirements of the job in all areas and exceeded the requirements of the job in many areas. Performance is characterised by consistent high achievement.
- **Far Exceeds Requirements (37 – 45 pts)**
Far exceeded the requirements in all areas. Performance consistently characterized by exceptional accomplishment.

2(b). Overall Goals (30%):

The overall agreed goals accomplished during the year. (Please provide brief statements and score)

2(c): Total Overall Score:

Unsatisfactory	(50% and below)
Needs Improvement	(51 – 60%)
Meets Requirements	(61 – 70%)
Exceeds Requirements	(71 – 80%)
Far Exceeds Requirements	(Above 80%)

3. Other Areas

3(a). Employee's major strengths and abilities and how they relate to the job requirements.

3(b). Areas Requiring Improvement:

Describe the specific areas in which you feel the employee needs to improve. Also describe the specific actions that will be taken by the employee to strengthen these areas, any training required, and the deadline for which improvements are expected.

4. Employee Comments:**5. Required Signatures:**

Employee: _____

Date: _____

Reviewer: _____

Annex 3F

Selected List of Training Agencies Offering CPD Courses:

Advent Link - SAUC Education Centre Pte Ltd:	www.alsauc.edu.sg
Asian International College:	www.aic.edu.sg
Association for Early Childhood Educators:	www.aeces.org
First Learning and Training Centre:	www.fltc.com.sg
Human Capital Singapore:	www.hcs.com.sg
KLC School of Education:	www.klc.edu.sg
SEED Institute:	www.seedinstitute.edu.sg
Singapore Centre for Chinese Language:	http://en.sccl.sg
Singapore Human Resource Institute (SHRI):	www.shri.org.sg
Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF):	www.sgemployers.com

Visit www.cdn.gov.sg or www.wda.gov.sg/training_search for the full suite of courses.

Annex 3G

A Sample Example for Expectation Settings & Observation Form

Name: Lily Lee

Position: Child care Teacher

Output/Results (Key Areas)	Essential Duties And Responsibilities	Standards of Performance	Performance Observed
Student retention	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom management, i.e. nurture and care for children under her charge Prepare and deliver curriculum in timely and effective manner Parent-teacher interaction e.g. prepares children portfolios, updates communication books of children in their care 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve scoring of 6 or above in yearly parents' satisfaction survey (1 being poor and 10 being excellent) Classroom materials are prepared and delivered in accordance with centre's curriculum plan and schedule. Students reflect understanding of curriculum matter taught Achieve scoring of 6 or above in yearly parents' satisfaction survey for category of parent-teacher interaction (1 being poor and 10 being excellent) 	Average monthly student attrition rate of 1% or lower.

Annex 3H

A Sample Exit Interview Form

A good practice is to conduct an exit interview with an employee who has tendered her resignation. This will enable the employer to better understand ground sentiments in respect of the work environment, conditions etc. The employer can determine what the likely push factors are and work on making improvements in these areas. A sample exit interview format is provided below.

Exit Interview

Your opinion is important to us.

Name: _____

(optional)

Department: _____

Supervisor: _____

(optional)

Position: _____

1.	Why are you leaving the company?	Personal reason	Medical benefits	Quality of supervision	Work environment
		Further Studies	New Career Opportunity	Dissatisfied with current role	Family Commitments
Other: _____					
2.	Please explain your reason(s) for leaving in more detail.				
3.	What suggestions for improvement do you have for us? / What things would you change to make this a better place to work?				
4.	If we implemented those suggestions, would you return to work here?	Yes	No		
5.	Would you recommend this company to your friends as a good place to work?	Yes	No		
	In this section, please rate the following statements:	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
6.	I believe that I was treated like a valuable member of the company .	1	2	3	4
7.	My immediate supervisor let me know when I was doing a good job.	1	2	3	4
8.	I felt free to suggest to my supervisor changes that would improve my department.	1	2	3	4
9.	My job duties and responsibilities were clearly defined.	1	2	3	4

10.	I received the proper training in order to perform my job effectively.	1	2	3	4
11.	Employee problems and complaints were resolved fairly and promptly in my department.	1	2	3	4
12.	In your view, have there been adequate career opportunities available in the company?	1	2	3	4
13.	If I had questions or concerns, I felt comfortable speaking with:				
	My immediate supervisor	1	2	3	4
	Upper management	1	2	3	4
	Human resources	1	2	3	4
14.	I was kept well informed about the company, its policies and procedures, and other important information.	1	2	3	4
15.	I felt that the company provided me with job security.	1	2	3	4
16.	Please rate the benefits that you received at the company (keeping in mind the benefits offered by other companies that you have worked for):				
	In this section, please rate the following items:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
	Medical	1	2	3	4
	Dental	1	2	3	4
	Flexible benefits	1	2	3	4
	Paid time off	1	2	3	4
		1	2	3	4
	Please list any additional benefits that you would have wanted the company to offer:				

Additional comments and suggestions are encouraged.

Interview questions

- 1) How would you describe the culture here?
- 2) How would you describe the management style within the department?
- 3) How often did you receive feedback from your manager?
- 4) If changes could be made to build on your manager's effectiveness, what recommendations would you make?
- 5) What recommendations can you make to improve the overall communication?
- 6) Were there other benefits you feel should have been considered?

Annex 3J

Sample Grievance Handling Procedure Form

Date : _____

To : _____ Department : _____

From : _____ Department : _____

Nature of Grievance/ Complaint:

*(Select where applicable)

In accordance with Article _____ of the Company Handbook on HR policy & Procedures* OR In accordance with Clause _____ of the Collective Agreement*, I would like to request a meeting with you on _____ (Date), _____ (Time) at your office. In accordance with the above-mentioned Article/ Clause*, I shall have the right to appeal to higher authority should I fail to hear from you by _____ (Date).

Reason(s) for raising this grievance/ complaint (tick where applicable):

- Received no response within the Time-Lag by _____ (Name)
- Grievance was not addressed to my satisfaction by _____ (Name)
- Any other reasons (please state) _____

Annex 5A WDA Funding Subsidies

Training Qualification	Course Fee Support	Absentee Payroll
	SDF Funding for Employer Sponsored Trainees	SDF Funding for Employer Sponsored Trainees
PQAC Diploma in ECCE – Teaching	50% of course fees capped at \$15 per training hour	80% of hourly basic salary capped at \$4.50 per training hour
PQAC Diploma in ECCE- Leadership		
PQAC Certificate in ECCE	80% of course fees capped at \$7 per training hour	

Workfare Training Scheme (WTS) Funding

WTS eligibility	WTS Benefits		
	Course Fee Support for WSQ Courses	Absentee Payroll for WSQ Courses	Training Commitment Award
Singaporeans aged 35 and above, earning \$1,400 and below monthly	95% of course fees	95% of hourly basic salary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$200 awarded for every 2 WSQ Statement of Attainments achieved • An additional \$200 awarded by trainee for completion of a full WSQ qualification • Total TCA is capped at \$400 per year per WTS trainee
Singaporeans aged 35 and above, earning \$1,700 and below monthly	90% of course fees	90% of hourly basic salary	

Annex 5B

HR, Leadership and People Management and ECCE WSQ Training Programmes

Refer to www.wda.gov.sg/training_search for ECCE WSQ courses

HR Area	WSQ	Course	What Operators Will Learn
Recruitment	HR	Define job profiles	How to create job descriptions and review job design processes
	HR	Implement recruitment and selection methods	How to select and use appropriate recruitment and selection methods
	HR	Conduct interview and make hiring decisions	How to plan for, conduct an interview and how to make a hiring decision
	HR	Implement fair employment practices	How to review human resource practices, enhance fair employment practices and communicate fair employment practices information
Grievance	HR	Resolve grievances and disputes	How to prepare to address and manage grievances, disputes and negotiation processes
	HR	Manage employee relations	How to establish and review communication channels, identify opportunities and concerns from ground sentiments, implement resolution strategies
Employee Misconduct, Dismissals and Appeals	HR	Develop and implement voluntary and involuntary termination policy and framework	<p>How to develop and implement voluntary and involuntary termination frameworks in consultation with relevant stakeholders and aligned with business, legislative and contractual requirements</p> <p>How to monitor the application of policies for consistency and evaluate, identify areas for improvement</p>
Retention	ECCE	Plan activities with student teachers	How to develop an orientation programme for new teachers, mentor their progress, evaluate, assess and report on their progress
	ECCE	Manage student teacher practicum / attachments and mentoring programmes for student teachers	How to establish and implement a mentoring system, including induction programmes for new teachers and existing staff
	HR	Implement wage restructuring	How to execute wage restructuring strategies and implement interventions
	HR	Implement and evaluate remuneration programmes	How to develop processes for the delivery of remuneration, facilitate implementation of, monitor and review remuneration processes
	LPM	Enable people	How to identify team leaders' skill requirements, facilitate learning opportunities of team leaders and coach team leaders
	LPM	Encourage people	How to identify and address skill development needs and motivate employee independence and development
	LPM	Cultivate workplace relationships	How to build workplace relationships, promote workforce diversity and manage conflict

Retention	LPM	Support team	How to conduct team planning activities, demonstrate organisational values, build support and commitment within the team
	LPM	Build team relationships	How to participate in networks, develop team cohesiveness and resolve conflict within the team
Performance Management / Compensation	HR	Develop strategies for total remuneration	How to assess remuneration strategy requirements, facilitate implementation of and monitor the remuneration strategy
	HR	Implement performance management programme	How to promote understanding and awareness of performance management programme, provide support to conduct performance management reviews and monitor and review performance management programme and activities
	HR	Manage employee benefits	How to manage employee benefits policies, programmes and processes
	HR	Manage payroll	How to determine organisational payroll management requirements, establish policies and procedures for payroll management and supervise payroll activities
	LPM	Manage achievement of results	How to develop team plans, manage and reward team performance and monitor implementation of team plans
	LPM	Support achievement of results	How to interpret and implement team plans and manage and reward team performance

The HR, LPM, ECCE WSQ training is currently offered by WSQ Approved Training Organisations (ATOs) as well as WDA's appointed Continuing Education and Training (CET) Centres. Please visit www.wda.gov.sg/training_search for full details of the ATOs and CET Centres delivering HR, LPM and ECCE WSQ training, as well as the full suite of modular HR/LPM and ECCE training programmes.

Define it for me!

Basic Rate of Pay

“Basic Rate of Pay” is the total amount of money (including wage adjustments and increments(s) which an employee is entitled to under her contract of service but does not include overtime payment; bonus payment or annual wage supplement (AWS), any sum paid to the employee to reimburse her for special expense incurred by her in the course of her employment, productivity incentive payment; and any allowance however described. The “Basic Rate of Pay” is used to calculate pay for work on rest days, work on public holidays and overtime work.

Contract of Service

A contract of service is an agreement whereby one person agrees to employ another as an employee and the other agrees to serve his employer as an employee. Under a contract of service, the employer must contribute CPF, and provide relevant statutory benefits such as annual leave, sick leave, etc. for its employees engaged.

Gross Rate of Pay

“Gross rate of pay” is the total amount of money including allowances which an employee is entitled to under her contract of service, but does not include overtime payments, bonus payments or annual wage supplements (AWS), any sum paid to the employee to reimburse her for special expenses incurred by her in the course of his employment, productivity incentive payments and travelling, food or housing allowances. The “gross rate of pay” is used to calculate payment of salary in lieu of notice of termination, deduction of pay for absence from work, paid holidays, paid annual leave, paid sick leave and paid maternity benefits.

Hours of Work

An employee’s “hours of work” is the period during which the employee is expected to carry out the duties assigned by her employer. It does not include any intervals allowed for rest, tea breaks and meals.

Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

KPIs should provide all staff with clear goals and objectives, strengthen shared values and create common goals for the success of the Centre.

Part-time Employee

Under the Employment of Part-Time Employees Regulations, a part-time employee is one who is required, under her contract of service with an employer, to work for less than 35 hours a week. Such employees will be entitled to all the statutory benefits provided under the Employment Act, on a pro-rated basis based on her weekly working hours.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

An SOP is a written document or instruction detailing all steps and activities of a process or procedure.

Useful Resources:

Alliance for Excellent Education	www.all4ed.org
Association for Career and Technical Education	www.acteonline.org
Child Care Link	www.childcarelink.gov.sg
Child Development Network	www.cdn.gov.sg
CPS HR Consulting	www.cps.ca.gov
Education Resources Information Center	www.eric.ed.gov
Education Service Union	www.esu.org.sg Tel: 68721148
Family & Community Development @ eCitizen	www.fcd.ecitizen.gov.sg
Human Capital Singapore	www.hcs.com.sg
Ministry of Education	www.moe.gov.sg
Ministry of Manpower	www.mom.gov.sg
Ong Teng Cheong Labour Leadership Institute	www.otcinstitute.org.sg
Productivity and Innovation Credit Scheme	www.iras.gov.sg/irashome
Professional Chapter of Early Childhood Educators	www.ece.org.sg Email: ece@ntuc.org.sg
Re-employment of Older Employees Portal	www.re-employment.sg
Singapore Productivity Association	www.spa.org.sg
Singapore Statutes OnLine	http://statutes.agc.gov.sg
Singapore Workforce Development Agency General Inquiry for WDA	www.wda.gov.sg Tel: 6883 5885 www.skillsconnect.gov.sg
Matters related to SDF, WTS, TCA funding rates, absentee payroll	www.wda.gov.sg/funding www.wda.gov.sg/wts
Enquiries about WSQ	Email: Ecce_wsq@wda.gov.sg
List of WSQ training providers	www.wda.gov.sg/training_search
Singapore National Employers Federation	www.sgemployers.com
SPRING Singapore	www.spring.gov.sg
Tripartite Alliance for Fair Employment Practices	www.fairemployment.sg

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- Ministry of Manpower (MOM)
- Tripartite Alliance for Fair Employment Practices (TAFEP)
- Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA)

2. Child Care Organisations and Centres

- Big Apple Child Care and Development Centre
- Healthy Start Child Development Centre
- Kinderland Education Services
- Knowledge Universe
- Learning Vision
- Metro YMCA Child Care
- My First Classroom
- NTUC First Campus
- Pat's Schoolhouse
- Presbyterian Community Services (PCS)
- Preschool for Multiple Intelligence
- PAP Community Foundation
- The Caterpillar's Cove Pte Ltd
- The Little Skool-House In-the-Treehouse

3. Training Institutes (for photographs)

- Asian International College
- SEED Institute

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