29 January 2021

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TRIPARTITE CLUSTER FOR LANDSCAPE INDUSTRY ON THE REVIEW OF THE PROGRESSIVE WAGE MODEL FOR THE LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE SUB-SECTOR

1. OBJECTIVE

1.1 This report sets out the recommendations of the Tripartite Cluster for Landscape Industry (TCL) on its review of the Progressive Wage Model[1] (PWM) for the landscape maintenance sub-sector.

1.2 The members of the TCL are listed in Annex A.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 On 30 November 2018, the TCL recommended enhancements to the PWM Wage Ladder for the landscape maintenance sub-sector, including a mandatory PWM Bonus to be paid to eligible resident landscape maintenance employees from 2020 onwards. The TCL's recommendations were accepted by the Government and implemented under the Landscape Company Register[2] (LCR) administered by National Parks Board. The details of the PWM Wage Ladder can be found in the 2018 TCL Report and the 2019 TCL Addendum Report via *www.ntuc.org.sg/tripartiteguidelines*.

2.2 To re-affirm the tripartite partners' commitment towards upskilling the landscape maintenance workforce for them to stay relevant, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between National Trades Union Congress, National Parks Board, Workforce Singapore, SkillsFuture Singapore, Employment & Employability Institute and Landscape Industry Association Singapore in November 2018. The MoU aimed to galvanise the resolve and cooperation among the stakeholders to equip the workers with adaptive, technology and technical skills to enhance their productivity and ensuring sustainable wage increases. It will ensure that the landscape maintenance employees will be *Ready* for new jobs/assignments, *Relevant* with the right skillsets, and *Resilient* to new ways of working, which will lead to a competent and productive workforce.

2.3 Launched together with the Landscape Sector Transformation Plan (LSTP) in May 2019, the Skills Framework (SFw) for Landscape was developed to provide key information on the sector, career pathways, occupations/job roles as well as existing and emerging skills and competencies for landscape maintenance employees. The SFw maps out the various Technical Skills and Competencies (TSCs) for the various job functions to ensure workers are well equipped with the knowledge and abilities to perform their duties at their respective proficiency level.

[1] The Progressive Wage Model (PWM) provides a clear career progression pathway, enabling our workers to earn Better Wages with Better Work Prospects as they become Better Skilled and More Productive.
[2] As of 15 Sep 2020, there are 192 LCR companies. LCR validity ends on 31 October 2020 for Year 2020. Source: NParks

2.4 Since then, several rounds of consultations and focus group discussions were conducted with tripartite partners. With their active participation, necessary skillsets and technical competencies were identified to upskill the landscape maintenance workforce and support the SFw. This culminated in a set of recommendations, which were deliberated and endorsed by the TCL.

3. REVIEW OF THE PWM FOR THE LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE SUB-SECTOR

3.1 This recommendation report sets out the details of the Enhanced PWM Skills Ladder as well as the update to the PWM Wage Ladder. The key recommendations are summarised as follows:

(a) The current PWM training requirements stipulate that all resident landscape maintenance employees must complete at least three mandatory Workforce Skills Qualification (WSQ) Certificate in Landscape Operations modules. **The TCL recommends that the list of WSQ modules be expanded to allow landscape employers and employees greater flexibility in selecting the relevant training courses for the employee's skills upgrading needs.**

(b) The list of WSQ courses will be updated periodically and be validated and endorsed by the TCL. Such reviews will ensure training requirements are refreshed and kept relevant to meet industry needs.

(c) The enhanced PWM training guidelines or Skills Ladder will take effect from 1 February 2021.

3.2 <u>Expanded List of WSQ Courses</u>

(a) Validated by the industry, the Skills Framework for Landscape serves as a common reference guide for workers, employers and training providers. It facilitates skills recognition and supports the design of training programmes. It will also facilitate skills deepening for a leaner workforce, enhance business competitiveness and support workers' employment and employability.

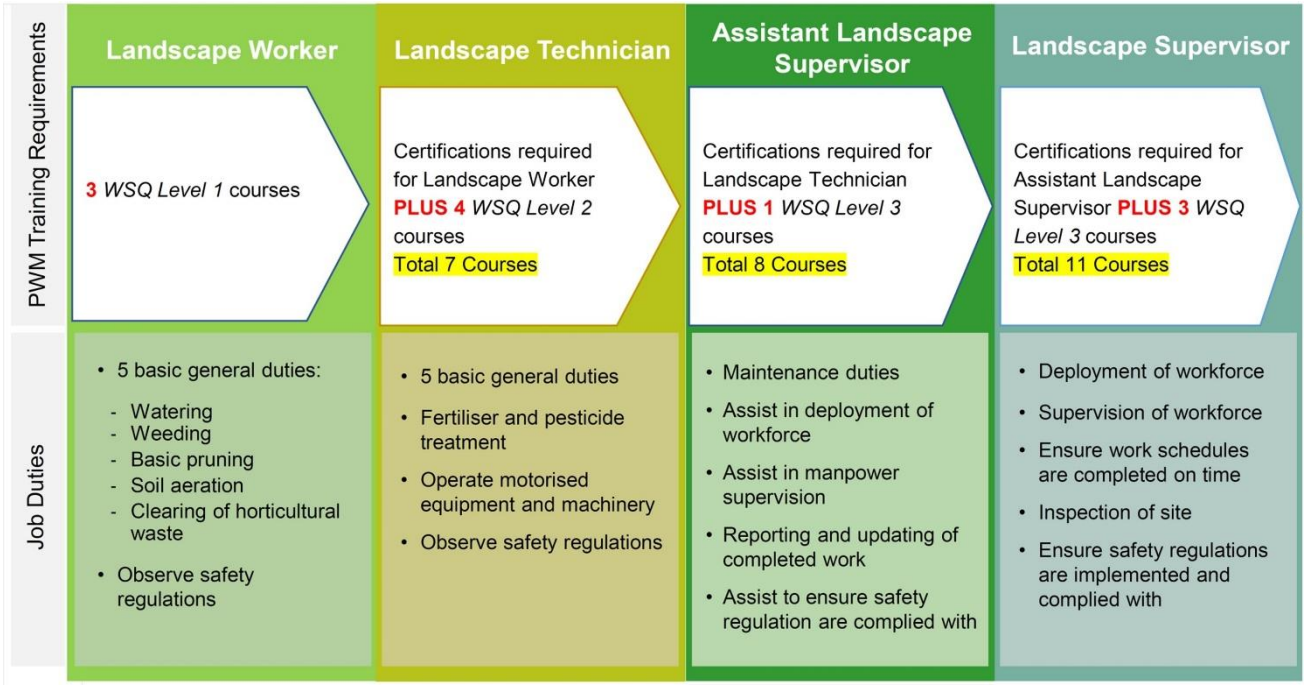
(b) In reviewing the PWM training requirements, the TCL considered the TSCs for each PWM job level in the landscape maintenance sub-sector. The TCL recognised the need to allow greater flexibility for the landscape employers and employees to choose relevant courses for their maintenance employees depending on the job requirements and employee's skills upgrading needs. As an example, if a landscape worker is required to perform mainly watering, pruning of shrubs and applying mulching material on soil, the worker may not need to be trained in grass or turf maintenance.

(c) Landscape employers and employees will be able to select from a wider menu of WSQ courses which are based on the TSCs for the following PWM job roles:

PWM Job Role	Current Training Requirements	Effective from 1 Feb 2021
Landscape Worker	3 mandatory WSQ courses	Select any 3 out of 5 WSQ courses
Landscape Technician	4 mandatory WSQ courses	Select any 4 out of 6 WSQ courses

(d) Based on the job description of each role, the proficiency level as indicated in the Skills Framework was designed to ensure that the worker has the required knowledge and ability to perform their duties that commensurate with the job requirements and in turn, the corresponding PWM wages. However, while a job level may only require a certain proficiency level, landscape employers are encouraged to send their workers for training in higher proficiency levels to prepare them for career progression and deployment to higher level job roles.

(e) The TCL is of the view that for job roles that are more complex in nature and/or require the worker to perform supervisory duties, the proficiency level should be higher. As Landscape Technicians, Assistant Landscape Supervisors and Landscape Supervisors are expected to carry out more complex landscape maintenance tasks and involve a certain degree of autonomy and/or supervisory duties, the WSQ courses that are applicable to these three job roles would be at a higher proficiency level. This is in addition to the training that these job roles must complete at the preceding job levels, e.g. a landscape technician must complete the required training of a landscape worker before he/she can progress to the landscape technician job level. Please refer to the below illustration.



(f) The expanded list of WSQ courses can be found in Annex B and will be periodically updated to ensure relevance for the industry.

3.3 Implementation Timeline of the Enhanced PWM Skills Ladder

(a) The enhanced PWM Skills Ladder will take effect from 1 February 2021.

(b) For employees who had already met the PWM training requirements for their current job level, they are not required to attend any additional courses for purpose of fulfilling LCR conditions. However, employers are encouraged to continue to send their employees for upskilling to improve their work prospects and career progression.

3.4 Review of the PWM Career Ladder

(a) As part of its ongoing efforts to professionalise the sector and to attract new and younger entrants to the industry, the TCL had engaged the industry stakeholders to identify ways and solutions to address the current challenges of labour shortage and low perceived value of the profession. Arising from the various industry consultations, TCL will be proposing to introduce a *Specialist Track* under the PWM Career Ladder.

(b) Two new job roles have been proposed, namely (i) Landscape Specialist and (ii) Senior Landscape Specialist and these roles are currently in discussion. In addition to the current PWM Career Ladder which maps out the career path towards landscape supervisor, landscape maintenance employees who prefer specialization in landscaping skills such as horticulture would have this new option as well.

(c) For students pursuing or considering pursuing ITE Nitec course in landscape services, the Specialist Track would also allow them greater clarity on their career prospects. This in turn will support the TCL's efforts to encourage more younger Singaporeans to consider landscape industry as a viable and attractive career choice.

(d) The "Dual-Track Career Ladder" will offer an additional progression pathway for the landscape maintenance workforce and will offer better work prospects for both existing employees and new entrants to the industry.

(e) As the era of digital transformation and intelligent automation continues to unfold, this is also a step towards shaping the future of the workforce to one that is more highly skilled to meet the changing demands of the industry.

(f) Please refer to Annex C for the Enhanced Career Ladder. TCL will carry out further industry consultations to propose the appropriate wage points for the two new job roles, training requirements as well as the implementation timeline. More details will be announced when ready.

4. CLOSE PARTNERSHIP AND MUTUAL TRUST ARE KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

4.1 Service Providers

(a) The TCL encourages all landscape companies to support their landscape maintenance employees for continual skills upgrading and to recognise workers who have shown commitment to improve their work performance and competencies. TCL applauds those landscape companies that continue to invest in their employees' training and upskilling; and for their support in the transformation efforts to uplift the landscape maintenance employees' work prospects in the long run.

(b) The TCL encourages landscape companies to develop their workers' training plans early and work with their Service Buyers to take advantage of the available training grants/schemes to upskill their workers. The TCL believes that by equipping their landscape maintenance employees with relevant skills and competencies, the landscape companies would be able to reap the benefits of a more productive and effective workforce and deliver greater value to their clients.

(c) Service Providers may tap the Government's Productivity Solutions Grant (PSG) to adopt IT/digital solutions and equipment to enhance business processes in order to drive higher productivity. PSG has been enhanced with maximum funding support level up to 80% valid till 30 September 2021. More information on PSG is available at https://govassist.gobusiness.gov.sg/.

4.2 Service Buyers

(a) TCL would like to call upon the Service Buyers to support upskilling efforts. Where possible, as long as service standards are not compromised, Service Buyers may wish to allow landscape maintenance employees to go for training so as to improve skills, which would result in improvement in service outcomes.

(b) TCL encourages Service Buyers to leverage more mechanised equipment and technology-enabled solutions to improve labour productivity. They should recognise service providers who deploy higher-skilled maintenance workforce in their service contracts.

(c) To encourage landscape companies to place greater emphasis on workers' training, the TCL proposes that Service Buyers take reference from the Skills Framework's TSCs and include in their tender specifications additional courses which they would like the landscape maintenance employees to attain. This will ensure a level playing field for all interested bidders so that the costs for such training provisions are taken into consideration by the service providers when submitting their bids.

(d) It is important for Service Buyers and Service Providers to develop mutual trust through open communication and frequent dialogue to achieve win-win outcomes.

4.3 Landscape Maintenance Employees

(a) While the PWM Wage Ladder will see landscape maintenance employees benefitting from sustainable annual wage increments, it is equally important for workers to keep pace with the drive for productivity and upskill themselves to stay relevant. In line with the Landscape Sector Transformation Plan (LSTP), the TCL strongly urges workers to embrace upskilling and be ready to accept new methods and work processes to improve their productivity and employability.

(b) Landscape maintenance employees are encouraged to approach their supervisors or company's HR personnel to discuss their training needs and highlight any skills gap that they may have. They need to recognise the importance of continual upgrading so as to uplift their professionalism and instill a sense of pride in their work. They must not underestimate the important role that they play in ensuring Singapore remains a City in Nature, and the greenery that they maintain contributes towards a more livable environment for everyone.

4.4 A highly competent and productive workforce will ensure the landscape maintenance industry can continue to thrive, and everyone would then benefit from a green environment to work and live in. It will also support workforce to be prepared for the future especially in the midst of current challenges in the economy and business conditions.

4.5 As the landscape maintenance sector gears towards a vibrant, sustainable and professional industry that will provide services and solutions to help achieve the biophilic City in Nature vision and a green and livable Singapore, the close partnership and mutual trust among all stakeholders must continue to be nurtured and supported in order to realise this vision.

~ End ~

Annex A: Tripartite Cluster for Landscape Industry (TCL)

Position	Organisation	Representative
Chair	National Trades Union Congress	Mr Zainal Sapari Assistant Secretary-General
Co-Chair	Singapore National Employers Federation	Mr Felix Loh Deputy Honorary Secretary concurrently CEO, Gardens by the Bay
Labour Movement	Building Construction and Timber Industries Employees' Union	Ms Noor Irdawaty General Secretary
	Singapore Manual & Mercantile Workers' Union	Mr Surash R Mukundan Deputy Director
	Employment and Employability Institute	Mr Gilbert Tan CEO
Industry Association / Service Providers	Landscape Industry Association Singapore	Mr Goh Eng Lam Chairman
		Ms Jacqueline Allan 1st Vice-Chairman
		Mr Jeverss Choo Treasurer
		Ms Joeann Chua Executive Council Member
Service Buyers / Managing Agents	Mapletree Investments Pte Ltd	Mr Foo Say Chiang Head, Group Property Management
	Town Councils	Ms Png Chiew Hoon General Manager, Marine Parade Town Council
	Singapore International Facility Management Association	Mr Tony Khoo President
Government	Ministry of Manpower	Mr Lee Chung Wei Divisional Director, Workplace Policy & Strategy Division
	National Parks Board	Dr Yap Him Hoo Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Director-General
	Workforce Singapore	Ms Safrah d/o Mohamed Eusoof Director, Healthcare, Social and Business Services Division
	SkillsFuture Singapore	Ms Loh Gek Khim Director, Industry Development Division 1
Institute of Higher Learning	Institute of Technical Education	Mr Alfred Tan Wee Hiong Director, School of Engineering, ITE College East

Annex B: List of WSQ Courses Endorsed by the TCL

Applicable to all resident landscape maintenance employees (Singapore Citizen/Permanent Resident) of LCR companies

The following list will be updated periodically in consultation with TCL.

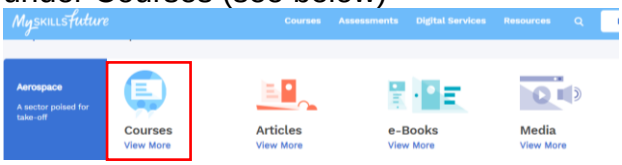
Interested parties may get more information on WSQ courses from the MySkillsFuture page. Please refer to the section on "How to Search for Training Courses" at the end of this annex.

PWM Job Role	TSC Code and Name	Proficiency Level	Training Requirement
Landscape Worker	LNS-GNM-1019-1.1 Vegetation Planting	1	Choose any 3 [1]
	LNS-GNM-1016-1.1 Plant Pruning	1	
	LNS-GNM-1018-1.1 Turf Maintenance	1	
	LNS-GNM-1014-1.1 Plant Health Management and Disease Control	1	
	LNS-GNM-1015-1.1 Plant Identification	1	
	[1] *Supersede the following from 1 February 2021:* <u>Compulsory 3 units</u> • Plant, Maintain and Mulch Planted Areas • Prune Plants (Not exceeding 3 metres in height) • Maintain Amenity Turf and Open Grassed Spaces		
Landscape Technician	LNS-GNM-2015-1.1 Plant Identification	2	Choose any 4 [2]
	LNS-GNM-2014-1.1 Plant Health Management and Disease Control	2	
	LNS-GNM-2017-1.1 Soil and Media Assessment and Remediation	2	
	LNS-GNM-2011-1.1 Horticultural Chemical Usage	2	
	LNS-WSH-2087-1.1 Hazards and Risk Control, and Policy Management	2	
	LNS-GNM-2016-1.1 Plant Pruning	2	
	[2] *Supersede the following from 1 February 2021:* <u>Compulsory 4 units</u> • Recognise Plants and Their Growth Requirements • Recognise Pests, Diseases, Invasive and Noxious Plant Species • Improve Soil and Media • Safe Use and Handling of Non-Hazardous Chemicals Under Supervision		
Assistant Landscape Supervisor	LNS-WSH-3087-1.1 Hazards and Risk Control, and Policy Management	3	Mandatory 1 [3]
	[3]*Supersede the following from 1 February 2021:* <u>Compulsory unit</u> • Control Risk and Safety Hazards of Sector Specific Practices		
Landscape Supervisor	LNS-GNM-3017-1.1 Soil and Media Assessment and Remediation	3	Mandatory 4 [4]
	LNS-WSH-3087-1.1 Hazards and Risk Control, and Policy Management	3	
	LNS-GNM-3015-1.1 Plant Identification	3	
	LNS-GNM-3014-1.1 Plant Health Management and Disease Control	3	
	[4]*Supersede the following from 1 February 2021:* <u>Compulsory 4 units</u> • Implement Soil/Water/Plant Health Management Programme • Maintain Workplace Safety and Health Policies and Procedures • Classify Plants • Identify Symptoms and Infestations of Pest and Diseases in Horticultural Situations		

Note: Landscape maintenance employees must attain training requirements at the preceding levels before progressing to the next level.

How to Search for Training Courses in ***myskillsfuture.sg*** Portal

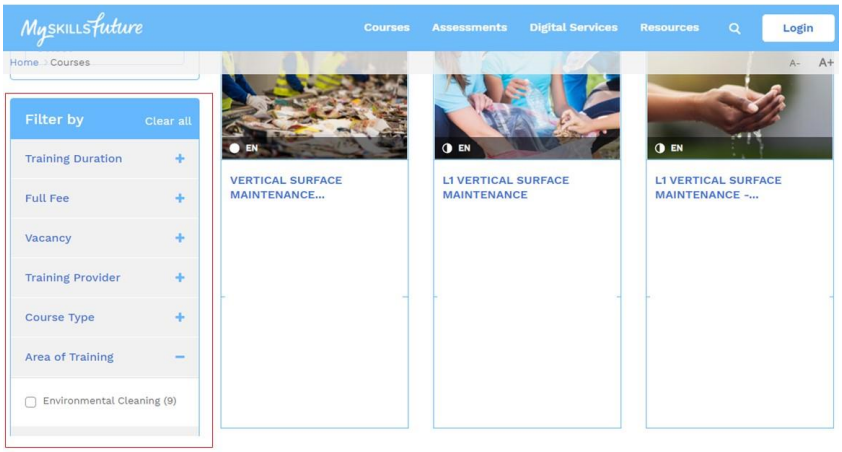
In the web browser, enter **www.myskillsfuture.sg**, scroll down and click on “View More” under Courses (see below)



https://www.myskillsfuture.sg/content/portal/en/training-exchange/course-landing.html

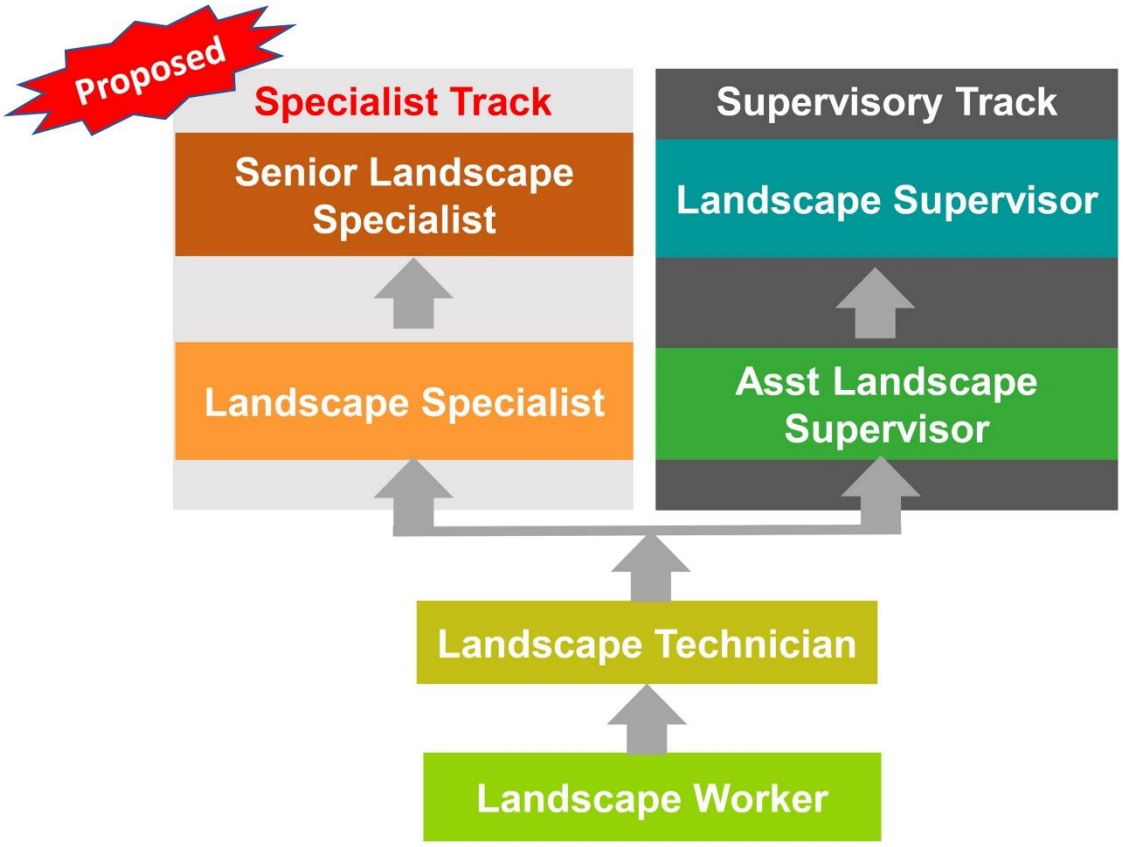
Search by Keyword

- Under the Search box, type the TSC Title of the course you wish to search. Please include inverted commas to the TSC title, e.g. “Plant Pruning” to have more relevant search results.
- The screen will display all available courses that match the TSC Title.
- To narrow the search, use the “Filter by” feature on the left column (see screenshot below) and select “Landscape” under Area of Training or select any other filtering options.



Visit **skillsfuture.sg/skills-framework/landscape** for the Skills Framework for Landscape

Annex C: Dual-Track Career Ladder



Annex D: PWM Wage Ladder and PWM Bonus

PWM Job Role	1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021	1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022	1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023
Landscape Worker	$1,450 +$100	$1,550 +$100	$1,650
Landscape Technician	$1,650 +$100	$1,750 +$100	$1,850
Assistant Landscape Supervisor	$1,850 +$100	$1,950 +$100	$2,050
Landscape Supervisor	$2,250 +$100	$2,350 +$100	$2,450

Note: All wages refer to basic wages

PWM Bonus (effective since January 2020)

Who is eligible?

- Full-time and part-time resident (i.e. Singapore / PR) landscape maintenance employees
- Employee must have worked for minimum 12 months with the same employer, unless there is a change of service provider

How much is the PWM Bonus amount?

- The total PWM Bonus quantum in a given year must be no less than two weeks of the employee's prevailing basic monthly wage

Visit www.ntuc.org.sg/tripartiteguidelines to download the full 2018 TCL Report and the 2019 TCL Addendum Report