

SGUNITED SKILLS PROGRAMME

FAQs

General questions

1. When does the SGUnited Skills (SGUS) programme start? How long is the programme expected to run?

Courses under the SGUS programme will commence from early Jul 2020, with new courses opening for enrolment through to Mar 2021. We target to support 20,000 jobseekers through the programme in 2020.

2. What is the difference between the SGUnited Skills (SGUS) programme and SGUnited Mid-Career Pathways Programme - Enterprise-based Training (SGUP-EBT)?

Both the SGUS and SGUP-EBT are full-time training programmes. The training is conducted in a modular format so that participants have the flexibility to exit the programme once they find jobs. Courses may last between 6 to 12 months.

The SGUS programme comprises certifiable courses developed and delivered primarily by Continuing Education Training (CET) Centres, including Institutes of Higher Learning (i.e. the universities, polytechnics and ITE).

On the other hand, courses under the SGUP-EBT programme are developed and delivered primarily by companies. Participating companies comprise market-leading companies in selected sectors.

The course fees for both programmes are highly subsidised, for example nett fees payable for a 6-month course is \$500, and nett fees payable for a 12-month course is \$1000.

3. How does the SGUS differ from the SGUnited Traineeship and SGUnited Mid-Career Pathways traineeship programmes launched by WSG?

The SGUS comprises full-time reskilling and upskilling courses delivered by CET Centres (including the Institutes of Higher Learning). These courses are designed to help trainees acquire industry-relevant skills that can improve their employability. Trainees will receive a monthly training allowance for the duration of their training to cover their basic expenses. They will also receive career advisory and employment assistance in their search for relevant jobs that will utilise their newly acquired skills.

In contrast, the traineeships under the SGUnited Traineeship and SGUnited Mid-Career Pathways Programme are hosted by employers and will help fresh graduates and mid-career individuals gain meaningful work experience as well as boost their employability for future job opportunities. Host employers and the Government will co-fund the training allowance paid to trainees.

4. How does the SGUS differ from the Career Transition Programmes under SkillsFuture Mid-Career Support Package?

The SGUS and Career Transition Programmes (CTPs) are both training programmes based on a Train-and-Place modality i.e. individuals enrol in a training programme, which will help with their job search. However, the programmes differ in their duration and funding support.

The SGUS is intended for mid-career jobseekers¹ impacted by the economic consequences of COVID-19. It comprises full-time reskilling courses of between 6 and 12 months. In view of the full-time training commitment, trainees receive a monthly training allowance to cover their basic expenses. The course fee is also highly subsidised, ranging from a nett fee of \$500 for a 6-month SGUS programme to \$1,000 for a 12-month SGUS programme. The SGUS programme is available for enrolment from Jul 2020.

The CTP targets mid-career individuals **aged 40 to 60** to help them remain employable and access good jobs. Like the SGUS, they cater to trainees who are seeking to reskill themselves to take on new or enhanced job opportunities. CTPs are of shorter duration and there is no training allowance provided. Course fees are also subsidised, albeit to a lower level than SGUS courses. The CTPs will be available for enrolment in Oct 2020.

The additional Skillsfuture Credit of \$500 under the SkillsFuture Mid-Career Support Package for individuals aged 40 to 60 can be used for both SGUS and CTP training programmes.

5. What are the bridging modules under the SGUS and how long do they last? How do trainees know if they would have to take them?

Trainees who need additional support in building up their foundational competencies (e.g. in workplace literacy, numeracy, and digital literacy) may be referred to take on bridging modules covering these skills as part of the SGUS programme. These modules could last up to 3 months, depending on the competency levels of the trainees. Individuals can approach the SGUS training providers for more information.

6. Why is the programme duration so long?

The SGUS programme is intended to help trainees acquire industry-relevant skills and enhance their employability to take on job roles in the sector as the economy recovers. Trainees obtain industry-recognised certifications as part of the programme, such as WSQ full qualifications, Post-Diploma or Professional Certificates from the IHLs. While

¹ This is defined as individuals who fall outside the eligibility for the SGUnited Traineeships. This means the SGUS would exclude SC/PRs who:

- a) Graduated or are graduating in CY19 / 20 from ITE, Polytechnics, Universities, and other educational institutions. This includes graduates from private universities as well as overseas institutions; or
- b) Graduated from the educational institutions mentioned in (a) but just finished serving their National Service (NS) in CY19 / 20 and are entering the labour force.

the programme is for six to 12 months, the training will be conducted in a modular format so that participants can have the flexibility to exit the programme once they find jobs.

7. Will the SGUS come with job placements?

As the SGUS programme operates on a Train-and-Place model, training providers will provide career advisory and employment assistance to help trainees in their job search in relevant sectors. However, there is no guarantee of a job placement and trainees would need to be open to the job opportunities available. The programme is also conducted in a modular format which allows trainees the flexibility to leave the programme should they gain employment before the end of the full programme.

8. How will the SGUS courses be conducted?

The training modality varies according to the different courses, and generally includes a combination of in-person training, online learning and/or project work with companies. In view of the COVID-19 situation, SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG) has advised training providers that online learning should remain the default delivery mode wherever feasible, during this period.

Programme Fees

9. Do trainees have to pay for the programmes? If yes, how much?

The nett fee after Government subsidy ranges from \$500 for a 6-month programme to \$1,000 for a 12-month programme. Fees have been kept affordable as the programme is targeted at unemployed individuals. In most cases, Government subsidies for such courses will cover more than 95% of the course fees. Trainees can offset the nett course fees using their SkillsFuture Credit, including the top-ups announced in the 2020 Unity Budget.

10. Do trainees pay the full amount of nett fees upfront or at the end of the programme?

The nett fees are to be paid upfront.

11. Can trainees have advance use of their SkillsFuture Credit top-up and additional SkillsFuture Credit (Mid-Career Support)?

Yes, trainees can use their SkillsFuture Credit top-up and additional SkillsFuture Credit (Mid-Career Support) for SGUS programmes once they are enrolled, even before 1 Oct 2020 when those top-ups will be available for use across a wider set of programmes.

12. Is the nett course fee for the SGUS programme inclusive of GST?

Yes

Programme eligibility

13. Is this programme open to permanent residents?

Yes, the SGUS programme is open to Singapore Citizens (SC) and Singapore Permanent Residents (PR) who meet the eligibility criteria.

14. Why are fresh graduates ineligible for the SGUS?

Fresh graduate jobseekers are encouraged to consider the jobs and traineeship opportunities available under the SGUnited Jobs & Skills Package, as these initiatives allow fresh graduates the opportunity to apply their skills in job-specific roles. In particular, the SGUnited Traineeship positions are reserved for those who graduated or completed their full-time National Service in 2020 or 2019.

SC/PR fresh graduates from the Autonomous Universities, polytechnics and ITE who wish to upskill should consider the free CET modules offered by their alma maters, of which some modules can be stacked into micro-credentials.

The SGUS is designed to cater to mid-career jobseekers who require support.

15. Will trainees have to possess certain academic qualifications to sign up for the SGUS programme?

Trainees will be assessed by the training provider on their suitability for the selected courses prior to enrolment. Academic qualifications are but one of several assessment criteria.

16. Will existing trainees under other programmes be allowed to join the SGUS programme?

As the SGUS is a full-time training programme, existing trainees and jobseekers should not apply for the programme if they are unable to commit to full-time training over the six to 12-month training duration.

17. Will trainees, who drop out of the programme midway, be penalised or required to refund the course fee subsidy?

The programmes allow trainees to exit without penalty if they are successfully placed into a job or have secured a job on their own accord while undergoing training. However, trainees who exit the programme without a valid reason may be asked to return the course fee subsidy that they have received.

18. Will trainees who fail the programme be required to refund the course fee subsidy?

Similar to existing requirements for other training grants administered by SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG), trainees must fulfill minimum attendance requirements and pass the assessments to qualify for course fee subsidies. Trainees who are unable to meet

these requirements may be asked to return the course fee subsidies that they have received.

19. Will SSG allow trainees, who did not manage to find a job after completing a course, take up another course under the SGUS or SGUP-EBT programme?

In order to provide opportunities for as many Singaporeans and Permanent Residents as possible, individuals can only enrol in the SGUS or SGUP-EBT programme once.

Supported Courses

20. Where can prospective trainees find the list of SGUS training courses available? How can they apply for the courses?

The list of courses offered under the SGUS and their respective training providers are published in the MySkillsFuture portal (myskillsfuture.sg) progressively from 1 July 2020. Interested participants can search for SGUS courses by visiting the course directory via <https://www.myskillsfuture.sg/content/portal/en/training-exchange/course-landing.html> or scanning the QR code below, and keying in “SGUS” in the search bar. Interested participants can apply directly to the training providers. More courses and training places will be added over time.



21. Which sectors will the SGUS programme be rolled out in?

SGUS courses are offered in sectors that can provide job opportunities as the economy recovers. Some examples include ICT and manufacturing.

22. Who can trainees contact if they need advice on suitable courses to take?

In addition to the MySkillsFuture portal, trainees can receive more personalised skills and training advice via the various SGUnited Jobs and Skills events. Trainees can sign up for one-to-many sectoral webinars, and/or short one-to-one consultation sessions with SSG Skills Ambassadors. Registration details will be made available on MySkillsFuture portal.

23. What are the supporting documents required to be submitted by the trainees?

As part of the application, trainees will be required to furnish their personal particulars and contact details, as well as any document requested by the training provider for assessing the trainee's suitability for the respective course.

24. As a training provider, can I register to deliver SGUS courses?

Training providers that are interested to deliver SGUS courses can indicate their interest to SSG for consideration via www.ssg.gov.sg/feedback.

Training Allowance

25. How is the training allowance determined?

The training allowance under SGUS is intended to help cover basic expenses incurred by the trainees over the duration of training. The rates of other schemes that provide income relief support, such as the COVID-19 Support Grant (CSG) and the Self-Employed Person Income Relief Scheme (SIRS), were considered in determining the SGUS training allowance amount. The quantum is higher than under the CSG and SIRS in recognition of the training commitment involved.

26. Why is the training allowance higher for the SGUP-EBT than the SGUS?

The higher training allowance under the SGUP-EBT takes into account the more stringent training requirements as required by the training company.

27. How do trainees apply for the training allowance? What are the supporting documents needed?

Trainees can apply for the training allowance with the training provider offering the SGUS courses, as part of the enrolment process. The training provider will help submit the completed training allowance application to SSG on the trainees' behalf. Trainees should consult their respective training providers to understand the course requirements, and conditions for receiving the training allowance.

28. Will trainees be eligible for training allowance if they do not complete the programmes?

Trainees will only be eligible for training allowance for the months in which they attend training and meet the minimum attendance requirement. The training allowance will be discontinued once the trainee leaves the programme, including early exit due to job placement.

There is no proration of the training allowance for trainees who leave after completing a partial month of training.

29. When and how will trainees receive their monthly training allowance?

Trainees will receive their training allowance at the beginning of the subsequent month via PayNow. Trainees will need to have a PayNow account linked to their NRIC. Prior to payment, training providers will also need to verify that the trainees have fulfilled the minimum attendance requirement for each month.

For courses that commence in the middle of the calendar month, the training allowance for the first and last calendar months of the course will be allocated as follows:

Course Start Date	Training allowance for first calendar month	Training allowance for last calendar month
1 st to 15 th of month	Full-month training allowance	No training allowance as full-month training allowance was paid out in the first calendar month
16 th to 31 st of month	Half-month training allowance	Half-month training allowance

30. Will recipients of existing subsidies and grants such as Self-Employed Person Income Relief Scheme be allowed to take part in the SGUS programme?

Recipients of the COVID-19 Support Grant (CSG) and the Self-Employed Person Income Relief Scheme (SIRS) may participate in the SGUS programme to enhance their employability. However, they will not receive the full training allowance of \$1,200 while they are receiving CSG/SIRS payouts. CSG recipients will receive an additional \$400 and SIRS recipients will receive an additional \$200, on top of their CSG/SIRS payouts. They will receive the full SGUS training allowance of \$1,200 after those payouts are completed.

31. Will trainees on the SGUS be eligible to apply for CSG or SIRS?

Individuals who are already on the SGUS will not be eligible for CSG and SIRS.

32. Will trainees on the SGUS be eligible for the hourly training allowance under the NTUC Training Fund (SEPs) (previously known as Self-Employed Person Training Support Scheme) and Workfare Skills Support Scheme for the courses taken under the programme?

As monthly training allowances are already provided to trainees under the SGUnited Skills Programme, they will not be eligible for the hourly training allowance under the NTUC Training Fund (SEPs) nor the Workfare Skills Support Scheme (WSS).

Hiring Incentive

33. Is the Enhanced Hiring Incentive applicable to the SGUS programme?

Yes, the SGUS programme is eligible for the Enhanced Hiring Incentive, which was first introduced as part of the SkillsFuture Mid-Career Support Package in the February 2020 Unity Budget and expanded under the Fortitude Budget.

The incentive has been expanded to cover workers of all ages, with higher support for those aged 40 and above. Employers who hire SGUS trainees aged below 40 can receive 20% salary support for 6 months (capped at \$6,000 in total), while those who hire trainees aged 40 and above can receive 40% salary support for 6 months (capped at \$12,000 in total).

Further details on the application process and qualifying period will be released subsequently.