



Asian International Mobility  
for Students Programme

# OPERATIONAL HANDBOOK

Second Edition (Revised)  
2019-2023





The AIMS Programme

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Second Edition (Revised)  
2019-2023

SEAMEO RIHED is the Regional Centre for Higher Education and Development working for the 11 Member Countries in Southeast Asia under the umbrella of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO)

The AIMS Programme Operational Handbook

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## PREFACE

The AIMS Programme is a collaborative and multilateral student exchange programme that involves both governments and higher education institutions (HEIs) to enhance student mobility in Southeast Asia and beyond. The Programme initially began as the Malaysia-Indonesia-Thailand (M-I-T) Student Mobility Programme, launched in 2010 among the government of three countries to promote a cross-country student mobility. Following its successful implementation, the M-I-T Student Mobility Programme was renamed to AIMS Programme given the expansion of its membership to cover other countries. Supported by continued commitment from member countries, higher education institutions and students, AIMS Programme has offered the opportunity for an exchange to over 4173 students since 2010.

SEAMEO RIHED views enhancing academic mobility as a key driver to accelerate the harmonisation process of higher education in the region. The SEAMEO RIHED Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (2018-2022) articulates the role of active university networks and enhanced mobility in bringing a cooperation and synergy to the region's higher education systems. In the increasingly interconnected, disrupted world today, a mobility experience offers an opportunity for students to nurture a cross-cultural mindset and confidence as a global citizen. To higher education institutions, the institutional engagement in academic mobility schemes provides a platform to broaden a multilateral collaboration among partner institutions and share sound practices and policies.

Foreseeing the growing significance of academic mobility in the field of higher education and a potential for the programme expansion, this handbook was developed to assist programme stakeholders with the knowledge of programme development, managerial mechanisms and their respective roles in programme operation as well as guiding steps for a new members both at national and institutional levels.

Lastly, while this handbook is prepared by SEAMEO RIHED, the Secretariat of AIMS Programme, it would not have been possible without

the kind support and constructive input from AIMS Steering Committee Members and participating delegates at AIMS Review Meetings. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to all of them for the valuable contribution and continued support for the programme. I genuinely hope that the information provided in this handbook serves as a useful tool in operating and participating in the AIMS programme for all people involved, which would open up further learning opportunities for our learners in the region.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Chantavit Sujatanond". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr Chantavit Sujatanond  
Centre Director, SEAMEO RIHED



# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Purpose of The Handbook

This handbook has been developed by SEAMEO RIHED, with input from national authorities responsible for higher education and HEIs in order to support the operation of the AIMS Programme. This handbook provides information for Member Countries seeking to join the Programme, and assists national authorities responsible for higher education with details about the Programme, its processes, benefits, the stakeholders involved; and their role in the Programme. In addition, it provides operating guidelines for the ongoing technical management of the Programme and its parts, including the student placement process, protocols, criteria for participation, and information to support the Programme's national implementation and arrangement.

The first edition of this handbook was initially developed in 2012, following the successful piloting of the Malaysia-Indonesia-Thailand (M-I-T) Student Mobility Programme, and the expansion of the Programme to include additional Southeast Asian Member Countries. As the programme has continued to develop over the years, this handbook has been refined to provide the latest information and recommendations.

This handbook itself is the product of collaboration between SEAMEO RIHED and AIMS Member Countries undergoing continued inputs and review by the Steering Committee Meeting of the AIMS Programme, and the yearly Review Meeting of the AIMS Programme.

The intended recipients of this handbook are: (i) national authorities for higher education overseeing and coordinating national participation in the Programme, (ii) staff responsible for HEI participation and execution of the Programme at an institutional level (executives, faculty, and international relations officers), and (iii) other administrative and supporting parties.

## 1.2 Acronyms

<b>ASEAN</b>	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
<b>HEI</b>	Higher Education Institution
<b>IELTS</b>	International English Language Testing System
<b>IRO</b>	International Relations Office
<b>M-I-T</b>	Malaysia-Indonesia-Thailand Student Mobility Programme
<b>SEAMEO</b>	Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation
<b>SEAMEO RIHED</b>	Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation Regional Centre for Higher Education Regional Centre for Higher Education and Development (The Secretariat of the AIMS Programme and the Chair of AIMS Steering Committee)
<b>TOEFL</b>	Test of English as a Foreign Language

### 1.3 Glossary

**AIMS Annual Review Meeting:** *The annually held meeting where all Programme stakeholders come together to report on the Programme progress and discuss challenges and solutions*

**AIMS Steering Committee Meeting:** *The meeting where representatives from Member Countries and HEIs screen emerging issues to guide overall Programme directions*

**HEI Focal Point:** *Institutional-level focal point responsible for overseeing the implementation of the AIMS Programme in their respective HEI*

**Home HEI:** *The HEI that regularly enrolls the student and is the home for his/her programme of study*

**Host HEI:** *The partner HEI that will host the student during the period of his/her exchange*

**National (Government) Focal Point:** *Country-level government focal point responsible for overseeing the national implementation of the AIMS Programme*

**Study Field:** *An area of study available for participation in the AIMS Programme (e.g. Engineering, International Business, ect.). Each study field forms a network of HEIs championing mobility within that discipline.*

## **2.0 PROGRAMME OVERVIEW**

## 2.0 PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

### 2.1 Programme Summary

Initiated and facilitated by SEAMEO RIHED, the AIMS Programme is a collaborative and multilateral student exchange programme that involves both Governments and HEIs with the goal of enhancing student mobility in the region and beyond. As of 2019, AIMS offers undergraduate students a single semester exchange across 9 participating Member Countries, 78 HEIs, and among 10 study fields.

AIMS Member Countries (in order of joining) are: Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, Brunei Darussalam, the Philippines, Japan, Republic of Korea and Singapore.



## 2.2 Objectives

AIMS aspires to create a vibrant programme for all citizens of SEAMEO Member Countries and beyond, promoting the mobility of students in order to cultivate globalised human resources for the region, create and nurture an ASEAN identity in the minds of young people of the region, contribute to the internationalization of higher education in the region, and build towards the formulation of an ASEAN Community and a regional higher education common space.

## 2.3 Programme Milestones

**2008** - In coordination with national authorities of higher education in the region, SEAMEO RIHED submitted the Proposal on “A Structured Framework for Regional Integration in Higher Education in Southeast Asia: The Road Towards a Common Space”, which was endorsed by the 43rd SEAMEO Council Conference (SEAMEC), held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The framework identified student mobility as a key priority area towards the development of higher education in Southeast Asia. SEAMEO RIHED, in mutual agreement and cooperation with governments of the region, began to explore the possibility of establishing a programme to enhance student mobility in the region.

**2009** - Under the direction of the Meeting of the Directors General, Secretary General, and Commissioner on Higher Education for Southeast Asia, and in collaboration with national authorities responsible for higher education in the region, SEAMEO RIHED initiated the Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand (or M-I-T) Programme as a Pilot Project to enhance student mobility in the region.

**2010** - The M-I-T Programme was officially launched with the first batch of students from Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand, with more than 120 students taking part in an exchange, among 23 participating HEIs, and 5 study fields.

**2011** - More than 150 students took part in the second batch. With the

number of students participating in the Programme rising, interest began to grow among other Countries in the region.

**2012** - Vietnam joined the AIMS Programme. With the admission of new members, the Programme was consequently renamed to the ASEAN International Mobility for Students (AIMS) Programme. With 4 participating Member Countries, the number of participating institutions rose to 32. More than 250 students took part in a mobility in the third batch.

**2013** - Brunei Darussalam, the Philippines, and Japan joined the Programme. The number of participating institutions climbed to 59. By this stage, more than 700 students had taken part in an exchange under the AIMS Programme.

**2014** - Member Countries agreed to expand the number of study fields to 10. The number of participating institutions rose to 61, with more than 400 students from across 7 Member Countries participating in the fifth batch. Over 1,200 students had then participated in AIMS Programme.

**2015** - More than 600 students took part in the sixth batch. Plans are unveiled to redesign the AIMS Website, and to form an AIMS Steering Committee to further support programme direction and alignment with national policy procedures.

**2016** - The Republic of Korea was welcomed to the Programme. By this stage, more than 2,600 students had benefited from an exchange under the AIMS Programme. The 1st Steering Committee Meeting took place on 8 October 2016 in Bangkok, Thailand. The new AIMS Website was launched, with features to support the generating of an AIMS Certificate of Completion.

**2017** - Singapore submitted its Letter of Interest to join the Programme. A total of more than 3,400 students had then participated in an exchange under the Programme. The 2nd Steering Committee Meeting took place on 6-7 July 2017 in Tokyo, Japan.



**2018** - The New AIMS Operational Handbook is published. The 3rd Steering Committee Meeting took place on 5-6 July 2018 in Incheon, Republic of Korea.

**2019** - AIMS Celebrates the 10-Year Anniversary of the Programme.

## 2.4 What Makes AIMS Different?

“

*In Southeast Asia, past efforts to promote student mobility have concentrated on bilateral agreements between HEIs in the region. Benefits, therefore, have only been limited to HEIs with these agreements. AIMS overcomes this limitation by working with both Governments and HEIs to develop a truly regional Programme.*

”

One of the key features that make AIMS different is the autonomy that it offers Member Countries, whilst providing a structure for collaboration through 3 underlying key principles that guide its implementation.



Self-sufficiency  
&  
Sustainability

whereby each Member Country supports its own participation in the Programme, and where new members are encouraged to join based on their own readiness to participate.



Balanced  
Mobility  
&  
Reciprocity

whereby national authorities responsible for higher education nominate HEIs to participate in study fields, and where the number of exchange students is mutually agreed upon and reciprocated in each study field.



Regional  
Mechanisms

whereby regional coordination is undertaken by SEAMEO RIHED to support the programme implementation and give stakeholders key opportunities to feedback, address challenges and propose further developments to the Programme. There are 2 regional mechanisms that support the programme - the AIMS Annual Review Meeting and AIMS Steering Committee Meeting.

## 2.5 Programme Benefits

### 2.5.1 For the Region

- Strengthen multilateral collaboration and support regional alignment of higher education systems and structures
- Invest in and cultivate global citizens for the region as a foundational pillar for nation building and stronger social and economic development
- Enhance understanding, intercultural knowledge, mutual trust, and cooperation across borders among all nations and stakeholders in the mobility process
- Develop internationally aware regional leaders who will lead the future of ASEAN Community

### 2.5.2 For Member Countries

- Strengthen the international profile and visibility of member countries in higher education
- Build intra-regional partnerships to support nationwide higher education development
- Enhance nationwide processes and capacities for coordinating international education and mobility
- Develop nationwide systems and structures for the delivery of international education programmes and curriculum

### 2.5.3 For HEIs

- Strengthen capacities of HEI international relations offices (IROs) to support mobility and international education programmes
- Improve the quality of programmes and courses through sharing experiences in internationalising curriculum, teaching and research
- Enhance networking with other international HEIs towards new possibilities for cooperation and innovation
- Offer students a study pathway that equips them with intercultural skills, whilst enhancing their sense of ASEAN identity and improving their academic ability to apply skills in diverse contexts

### 2.5.4 For Students

- Gain exposure to diverse cultural contexts and international environments
- Cultivate skills necessary to become a well-rounded, responsible global citizen
- Develop career opportunities as part of an extensive network of AIMS alumni
- Build friendships and community ties both regionally and internationally
- Enhance their sense of ASEAN identity

## 2.6 The Study Fields

There are 10 study fields for participation. The Study Fields are determined based on a mutual agreement between national authorities and HEIs:

Hospitality and Tourism	Economics
Agriculture	Engineering
Language and Culture	Environmental Management and Science
International Business	Biodiversity
Food Science and Technology	Marine Science

“The above 10 study fields have been refined and selected through ongoing discussion and mutual agreement between stakeholders in the Programme, as either common areas of focus for Member Countries, participating HEIs, or as strategic priority areas for developing expertise in the Southeast Asian region. The study fields are periodically reviewed, and subject to reorganisation in the event that a study field becomes inactive (see Section 6.1 ‘Inactive Study Fields’)”

## 2.7 Operational Process

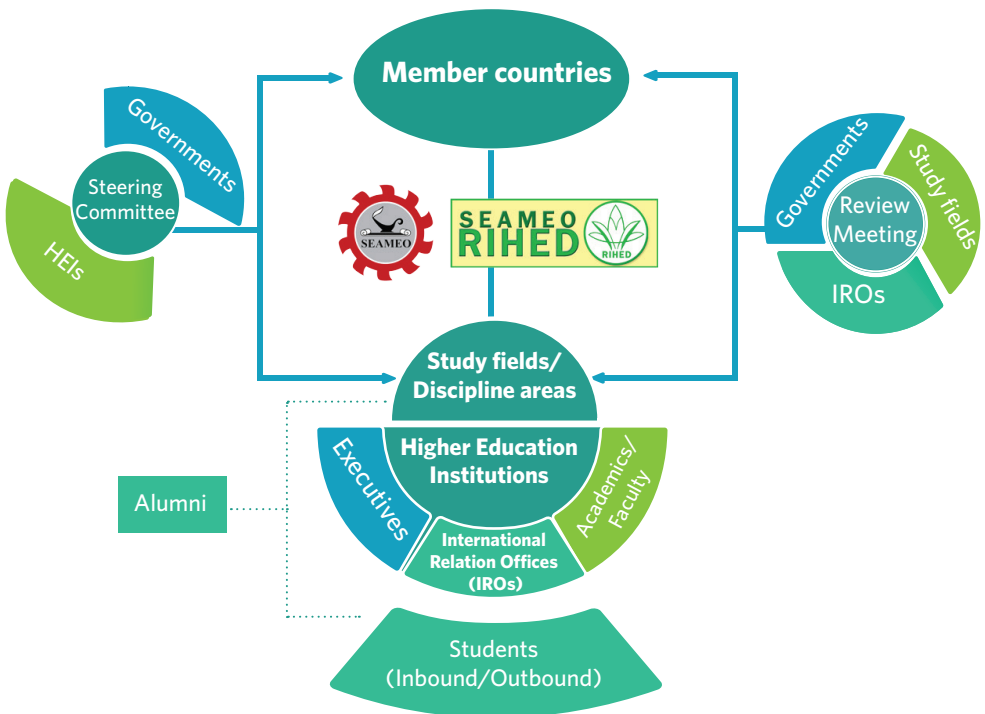
### 2.7.1 Summary of Steps

- Member Countries join the Programme based on their own financial readiness in line with programme principles
- Member Countries nominate HEIs to take part and select 1 or more (of 10) study fields, in which the HEI will participate
- Member Countries decide internally on a budget for their participation and decide how many students will take part country-wide
- Member Countries are responsible for funding or management in a way that best complements the Member Country’s national procedures and structures

- In assigned Study Fields, HEIs discuss common courses with the clusters, which will support the recognition of the studies in mutual agreement together
- HEIs execute the mobility with the guidance of respective national authorities
- Member Countries and HEIs participate in the annually held Review Meeting to report on progress, reflect on challenges and consider future development opportunities. Their representatives also attend the Steering Committee Meeting to support programme synergy with national policy procedures

### 2.7.2 Programme Structure

The diagram below shows the Programme structure and the key stakeholders involved:



### 2.7.3 Role of SEAMEO RIHED

As the initiator of the programme with Member Country Governments, SEAMEO RIHED serves Member Countries and HEIs as Secretariat and facilitator for the AIMS Programme through providing support for the Programme Meetings, undertaking regional administration tasks and activities, and providing synergy for the Programme's regional operation both at a policy level and an administrative level. SEAMEO RIHED is the organiser for the annual Review Meeting and Steering Committee Meetings and chairs the AIMS Steering Committee.

Beyond this, SEAMEO RIHED also works at a policy level with SEAMEO countries and partners to ensure synergy across higher education systems and structures and support for academic mobility within the region and beyond.

### 2.7.4 Role of Governments

In acknowledging the principle of balanced mobility towards ensuring an equal number of students between HEIs in the Programme, the Member Country Government first commits to signing a letter of agreement to join the Programme and identifies a national focal point for participation. Following this, they will be invited to observe and present a Country proposal during either the next Review Meeting or Steering Committee Meeting.

The Member Country Government then nominates HEIs to take part and assigns the study fields that they will participate in (see Section 3.2 Selection of HEIs for criteria for selecting HEIs to participate in the Programme). The Member Country Government then identifies the number of scholarships that will be made available and oversees the release of scholarship funds to HEIs or students. In order to ensure a smooth mobility process for the student, Member Country Governments are advised to consult with authorities responsible for immigration to support visa application for inbound students.

Member Country Governments ensure the availability and provision of funds to support the mobility of its own outbound students and associated costs (see Section 3.5 Allocation a Budget). Member Countries commit to host the Review Meeting and Steering Committee Meeting (on a rotational basis) and encourage HEI members to attend. They also play a key role in providing updated information to SEAMEO RIHED (such as number of students, focal point, etc.).

The Member Countries Government should maintain a close relationship with participating HEIs to ensure the arrangement of suitable accommodation, tuition fee waiver, provision of student services and support for academic procedures (e.g. recognition of credit and learning outcomes). In line with the aforementioned, the Member Countries Governments play a role in ensuring higher education policies related to internationalisation and synergy in its national context.

“

*Member Country Governments should seek to set appropriate timeframes for the release of funds to ensure it is received ideally before the student's departure, and, in case this is not viable, no later than 1 month following the student's return.*

”

### 2.7.5 Role of HEIs

In line with the government's role, HEIs commit to acknowledging the principle of balanced mobility, ensuring an equal number of students between HEIs. HEIs assign a focal point for the programme. HEIs then select partner institutions, ensuring that courses and/or learning outcomes are matched based on student requirements and institutional mutual arrangement.

Both institutions mutually agree on a system for recognising credits earned during the student's mobility with other participating institutions. HEIs provide courses taught in English (at least 5 international programmes or 10 international courses per semester)

and ensure that updated information is publicly available in English. HEI selects participating students according to requirements set by the host institution. Selection requirements and procedures, including criteria for language proficiency, should be clearly specified with guidance provided by the host institution. HEIs set timelines for the mobility, including notification of acceptance and cancellations.

Home institutions shall ensure timely release of scholarship payments for outbound students, while host HEIs ensure tuition fee waivers for inbound students. HEIs should prepare students for exchange through pre-departure and on-arrival orientations with applicable safety orientations based on arrangements at the HEI. HEIs also provide a student information package and clean, safe and convenient accommodation for inbound students. In addition, HEIs are encouraged to facilitate student exposure to local and international culture through the introduction of the buddy system, special programmes, and other activities.



*Student requirements*

*Course may be 1) complementary to the student's programme at home HEI; 2) aligned with learning outcomes of student's programme; and 3) intended as a supplement to the student's chosen study.*



Upon completion of the student's course of study, HEIs issue an AIMS Certificate of Completion generated from the AIMS Website (refer to section 2.9) and student's transcript of study. HEIs facilitate student involvement in the alumni network. HEIs commit to attending the annual review meetings and consistently update information to government and SEAMEO RIHED.



*In some cases, students may be expected to cover costs related to:*

- *Visa and stay permit*
- *English proficiency testing*
- *International travel*
- *Accommodation*





## 2.7.6 Role of Students

Students should understand the AIMS Programme objectives and fulfil the selection criteria at their home or host institution in order to take part in the Programme. Students should take full advantage of all learning opportunities available at the Host/Receiving Institution, while respecting its rules and regulations, and endeavour to perform to the best of their ability. Students are also expected to satisfy national and institutional entry requirements (including undertaking applicable medical examinations, English proficiency tests, obtaining a valid visa and permit of stay, etc.).

## 2.8 Programme Support

### 2.8.1 National Level

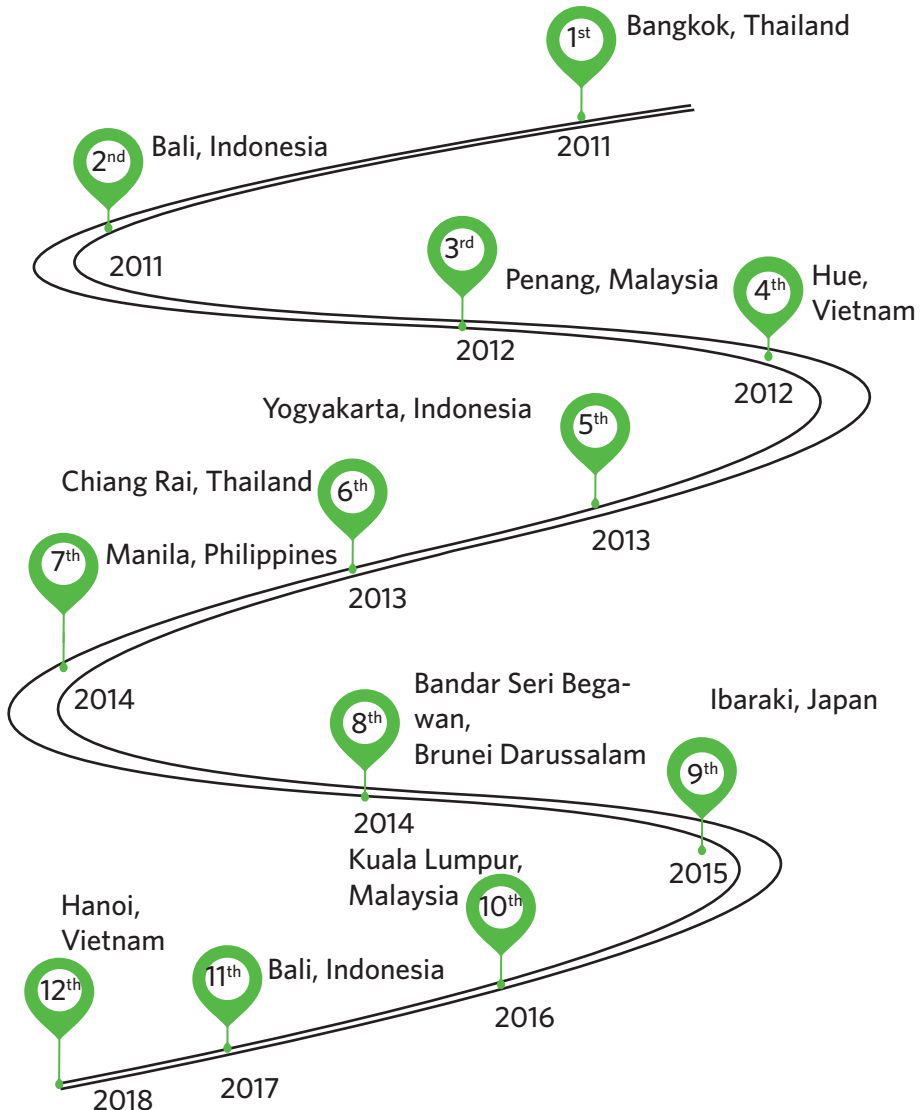
The Member Country Government and HEIs together provide the foundational level of support for the Programme implementation at a national level, working closely with one another to ensure synergy between Programme parts.

### 2.8.2 Regional Level

SEAMEO RIHED facilitates the programme coordination at the regional level with Member Country Governments. There are 2 regional mechanisms that provide ongoing support for the Programme implementation:

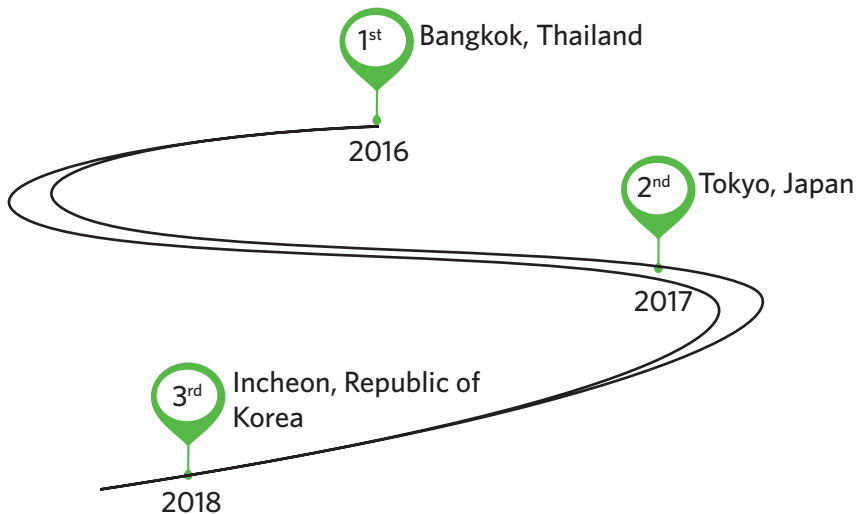
**The AIMS Annual Review Meeting** provides an opportunity for all stakeholders, including government, HEIs (executives, IROs, academic and faculty staff), students and alumni to (a) report on the Programme, (b) address challenges or obstacles, and (c) consider future development of the Programme. Additionally, it marks an occasion where academics can: (i) consult together to improve their curriculum, teaching and learning processes; (ii) explore further possibilities for innovation, academic exchange, or other regional creative projects or initiatives; and

(iii) reflect on further strategies for enhancing student and academic mobility in the region. Initially, the AIMS Review Meeting was set to be convened twice per year, but as of the 8th Review Meeting, on 2-3 December 2014, in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, it was decided to hold the meeting just once per year.



**The 1<sup>st</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> Review Meetings**

**The AIMS Steering Committee Meeting** was first held in 2016, with the purpose to serve as the administration to screen issues arising or raised by Member Governments or HEIs in order to guide Programme directions and support regional alignment of national systems that promotes regional mobility. The AIMS Steering Committee is comprised of 1 government representative, and 1 HEI representative from each AIMS Member Country, and meets once a year following the Annual Review Meeting. The Steering Committee Members are officially nominated by the Ministry of Education of each AIMS Member Country. Changes in the assigned Steering Committee Members are continuously updated to SEAMEO RIHED followed by an official letter formalising the nomination.



**The 1<sup>st</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> Steering Committee Meetings**

## 2.9 The AIMS Website

**The AIMS Website** is a one-stop information platform, which provides further helpful data, advice and information for Member Countries, HEIs and Students. You can view the latest stats, Programme news, and download publications via the website. Following the 7th Review Meeting 8-9 May 2014, Manila, Philippines, SEAMEO RIHED was requested to

take lead and proceed with developing the AIMS Website in order to provide the latest information to stakeholders whilst enhancing the Programme's visibility.

Member HEIs are given user ID and password. By logging-in, HEIs can:

- Electronically fill-in and generate an AIMS Completion Certificate for students
- Share news and upcoming events with the AIMS community
- Review up-to-the-minute Government and HEI Focal Point details in order to ask questions or to seek out new and potential partnerships on the Programme, and;
- Input key information on their institution, including updating:
  - Their institutional profile
  - Details of AIMS courses
  - Academic calendar
  - Accommodation, on-campus facilities, and other relevant information for students
- And more...

Visit the Website at [www.aims-rihed.net](http://www.aims-rihed.net)

## **3.0 COUNTRY PARTICIPATION**

## 3.0 COUNTRY PARTICIPATION

### 3.1 Steps for New Members to Undertake



*Please note that the decision to join AIMS must come from the relevant national authority or ministry responsible for higher education in that Member Country.*



No	Step	Description
1.	Submit Letter of Interest	Government Ministry submits a Letter of Interest to SEAMEO RIHED of their interest to join AIMS
2.	Assign Government Focal Point	Government Ministry assigns a government country-level AIMS Focal Point to facilitate communications
3.	Observe the AIMS Steering Committee Meeting and/or the AIMS Review Meeting	Government Ministry observes the next scheduled Steering Committee Meeting and/or Review Meeting on a self-funded basis, where they may wish to present a country-plan for their participation in AIMS
4.	Nominate HEIs to take part in AIMS	The new Member Country nominates HEIs to participate in AIMS, selecting which of the 10 study fields their HEIs will participate in. It submits a list of nominated HEIs and the study fields they will participate in to SEAMEO RIHED
5.	Assign HEI Focal Points	Each nominated HEI assigns an AIMS Focal Point to facilitate communication on behalf of their institution. The Member Country submits a list of these focal points to SEAMEO RIHED

No	Step	Description
6.	Consult on Student Visa	Consult with authorities responsible for immigration to support visa for inbound students
7.	Schedule (Regular) In-Country Meetings Between the Ministry and Participating HEIs	The new member should hold regular internal meetings to share programme information with key stakeholders and set national procedures
8.	Allocate a Budget	The new member internally allocates a budget for: (i) covering the cost of its own outgoing students, (ii) attending the annual Steering Committee and annual Review Meeting, (iii) hosting the above meetings (once every eight years).
9.	Sign the Addendum to the Letter of Intent	The new member signs to officially join AIMS
10.	Attend the next AIMS Review Meeting	The new member attends the upcoming AIMS Review Meeting where it is officially welcomed to AIMS
11.	Nominate Representatives to Serve on the AIMS Steering Committee	The new member nominates one representative from the government, and one representative for HEIs to serve on the AIMS Steering Committee

*Note: National internal management and funding arrangement are flexible depending on Member Country.*

### 3.2 Selection of HEIs

The Country's national authority responsible for higher education is responsible for selecting HEIs to participate in the Programme.

It is recommended for selected HEIs to be visited to ensure that they fulfil the following criteria:

- Be public or private and/or accredited or recognised by that member country's government
- Provide English programmes/ courses for students, with at least 5 international programmes or 10 international courses per semester
- Be ready to provide international student services
- Be committed to implementing the AIMS Programme, with the sufficiency of financial resources to support its operation and attend AIMS-related meetings
- In addition, the 3rd AIMS Steering Committee Meeting held on 5-6 July 2018 in Incheon, Republic of Korea, agreed to apply following criteria for both existing and new Member Countries to maintain the balanced mobility: 1) Maximum 250 students per the calendar year; 2) Compliance to the maximum number of students is reviewed every year; 3) This criterion is effective from 2019 to 2023

### 3.3 Selection of Study Fields

When the national authority nominates participating HEIs, it also assigns one or more study fields that the institution will take part in based on their institutional expertise. There are currently 10 study fields for participation (See Section 2.6 The Study Fields).

HEIs from each country are not required to participate in all study fields in order to avoid unintentional contention for inbound students of any participating study field within the country.

When selecting study fields, the respective national authority responsible for higher education may wish to select areas that:

- Contribute to the Country's national agenda and priorities
- Strengthen collaboration in areas that may be considered a focus for future development in its own Country and in the Southeast Asian region
- Are considered to be important in bridging further understanding between nations towards the strengthening of an ASEAN Community
- Link with the expertise or development plans of the HEIs they are seeking to nominate



- Provide students with a clean, safe and convenient accommodation close to a campus

### **3.4 Duration of Study**

The duration of study is minimum 1 semester with the arrangement and agreement of credit transfer.

### **3.5 Allocating a Budget**

In keeping with the principle of self-sufficiency, each participating member country supports its own participation in the programme. The programme is operated on a cost-sharing basis. The Country's national authority allocates a budget, which includes:

- The mobility of its own outbound students (recommended to include roundtrip air tickets, international health insurance for the student, accommodation expenses during the mobility and a monthly living allowance for the student);
- Country participation in the AIMS Annual Review Meeting and Steering Committee Meeting; and
- Hosting the AIMS Annual Review Meeting and Steering Committee Meeting once every cycle (8-10 years).

### **3.6 Deciding on the Number of Students to Send**

The Country's national authority responsible for higher education will decide on the total number of students to participate in the Programme.

Member Countries can decide on any number of students to send under each study field in the Programme. However, in keeping with Programme principles of balanced mobility and reciprocity, it is expected that HEIs will receive the same number of inbound students as sent under each study field.

In addition, the 3rd AIMS Steering Committee Meeting held on 5-6 July 2018 in Incheon, Republic of Korea, agreed to apply following criteria for

both existing and new Member Countries to maintain the balanced mobility: 1) Maximum 250 students per the calendar year; 2) Compliance to the maximum number of students is reviewed every year; 3) This criterion is effective for 5 years.

### 3.7 Language Requirements

All courses for students participating in the AIMS Programme are conducted in English. The governments should ensure that HEIs provide courses in **English** and that those courses are taught by instructors proficient in English.

Member Country governments also have the flexibility to set procedures with member HEIs for assessing language competency and student eligibility internally or in mutual recognition or agreement as required. As an exception, specialised language courses may be taken as part of studies, but as a supplement to the student's main course of study.

### 3.8 Credit Recognition and Transfer

Member Countries should ensure that students receive credits for courses completed at their host HEIs.

Transfer of credits and acknowledgement of the studies should be mutually agreed between the home and host HEIs.

### 3.9 Reporting

During the AIMS Annual Review Meeting and Steering Committee Meeting, Member Countries are expected to provide SEAMEO RIHED and other Member Countries with updated country reports that include a number of mobilised students (inbound and outbound), details of the national implementation plan, changes to criteria, monitoring and evaluation, challenges and future direction.



## Checklist for Participating Member Countries

- Submit letter of interest to join the Programme (as stipulated in Section 3.1)
- Assign a government Focal Point for the AIMS Programme
- Observe at the AIMS Steering Committee Meeting and/or AIMS Annual Review Meeting
- Nominate HEIs and select which of the 10 study fields the HEIs will participate in the Programme (as per recommended criteria in Section 3.2 and 3.3)
- Assign HEI Focal Points and provide details to SEAMEO RIHED
- Decide on the number of students that will participate in each study field (see Section 3.6)
- Consult with authorities responsible for immigration to support visa for inbound students
- Set (regular) internal in-country meetings to agree on internal arrangements on programme implementation
- Ensure balanced number of inbound and outbound students across its HEIs
- Discuss allocation of funds with HEIs for country participation in the Programme (funding for outgoing students, tuition fee waivers for inbound students, hosting Annual Review and Steering Committee Meetings)
- Ensure curriculum / available courses are taught in English (see Section 3.7)
- Ensure its nominated HEI's readiness to receive students (i.e. with accommodation and support systems in place)
- Allocate a budget for national participation (see Section 3.5)
- Sign the Addendum to the Letter of Intent
- Attend the next AIMS Annual Review Meeting where the new member country will be officially welcomed to the Programme
- Nominate one government representative and one HEI representative to serve on the AIMS Steering Committee Meeting

## 4.0 HEI PARTICIPATION

## 4.0 HEI PARTICIPATION

### 4.1 Steps for New Members to Undertake

Once officially nominated by the government to participate in the Programme, the HEIs should undertake the following steps.

No.	Step	Description
1.	Assign HEI Focal Point	Select HEI Focal Point and notify government
2.	Prepare List of English Courses/Programme Package for Peer HEIs	Discuss with faculty staff and select appropriate courses/programmes under each study fields that the HEI will participate in.
3.	Communicate with Peer HEIs	HEIs communicate with Peer HEIs, ensuring that courses and/or learning outcomes are matched based on student requirements and mutually agreement is reached on a system for recognising credits earned.
4.	Attend In-country Internal Meetings	The new member should attend regular internal meetings set by the member country government.
5.	Set timeline for the mobility	For inbound students: HEIs set the timelines for mobility, including notification of acceptance and cancellations, and notify the partner HEIs.
6.	Arrange scholarships	For inbound students: HEIs ensure tuition fee waivers for inbound students. For outbound students: HEIs ensure timely release of scholarship payments for outbound students.

No.	Step	Description
7	Select participating students	For outbound students: HEIs promote the Programme and recruit students based on the students' interest and requirements in mutual agreement with the Peer HEIs.
8	Ensure the availability of student services	For inbound students: Ensure the provision of student services to support mobility of inbound students, which may include acceptance process, stay permit, accommodation, arrangement of airport pickup, on-arrival orientation and AIMS information package, activities to facilitate cultural exposure and student interaction (e.g. Buddy System), and issue certificate of completion and transcript (if applicable).  For outbound students: Ensure the provision of student services to support mobility of outbound students, which may include student recruitment, visa, notification to the host university, pre-departure orientation, medical examination, insurance and English proficiency.
9	Issue AIMS Certificate of Completion and student transcript	HEIs issue an AIMS Certificate of Completion generated from the AIMS Website ( <a href="http://www.aims-rihed.net">www.aims-rihed.net</a> ) and student's transcript of study. Preferably within one month after the completion of the exchange.
10	Connect students to the AIMS Alumni Network	HEIs facilitate student involvement in the alumni network

No.	Step	Description
11	Report to the government	HEIs provide updated reports which include number of mobilised students (inbound and outbound), challenges and issues regarding programme implementation to the country government
12	Attend the next AIMS Review Meeting	HEIs participate in the upcoming AIMS Review Meeting



*HEIs interested to participate in the Programme should contact their respective governments for further information. Please note that only a member country government or the relevant national authority for higher education in that Country can initiate involvement in the Programme.*



## 4.2 Communicating Peer HEIs of the Common Study Field and Selecting Suitable Courses

Courses should be matched based on student requirements and mutually arranged between home and host HEIs. Courses may be (i) complementary to the student's programme at the home HEI, and/ or (ii) aligned with learning outcomes of that student's programme, or (iii) intended as a supplement to the student's programme of study.

## 4.3 Credit Transfer Arrangement

The student should receive credit for each subject they complete during the exchange. Credit transfer procedure and arrangement under AIMS are flexible and depend upon mutual agreement between member HEIs within each consortium of study field (prior to student departure).

## 4.4 Accommodation

Host HEIs should recommend students a clean, safe and convenient accommodation close to a campus. The information to assist student's

choices should be publicly accessible.

## 4.5 Student Orientations

### 4.5.1 Pre-Departure Orientation

Home HEIs should provide sufficient information about the AIMS Programme, including the programme objectives and student's expectations. Both home and host HEIs should also provide information relevant to the preparation of student exchange such as the information about host HEI, airport transfer information, accommodation details, contact persons, Do's and Dont's, etc.

### 4.5.2 On-Arrival Orientation

Host HEIs should provide on-arrival orientation for inbound students, which includes information about the country and HEI, service and facilities available for international students, campus tour, activities for cultural exposure to support students' interaction with local and international students, safety and security briefings, stay permit procedures, in-campus medical service, etc.

## 4.6 Duration of Study

The duration of study is minimum 1 semester with the arrangement and agreement of credit transfer.

## 4.7 Language of Instruction

HEIs are responsible for ensuring that curriculum and all courses are offered in **English**.

Home HEIs are responsible for ensuring that participating students meet the necessary English requirements to undertake the study programme. Please note that some Host HEIs may ask students to provide evidence of English language ability, such as TOEFL or IELTS.



Host HEIs should inform students of these requirements before they enrol in the study programme, or make the necessary information available through their website. Students must be allowed to take any language tests at their home institution.

#### **4.8 AIMS Certificate**

Upon the completion of student's course of study, HEIs can issue the AIMS Certificate of Completion to students through the AIMS website ([www.aims-rihed.net](http://www.aims-rihed.net)).

#### **4.9 AIMS Alumni**

HEIs also play a role in linking their students with alumni networks following the completion of course of study, which may include their own existing network and SEAMEO RIHED AIMS alumni Facebook ([facebook.com/RIHEDAIMSProgramme](https://facebook.com/RIHEDAIMSProgramme)).

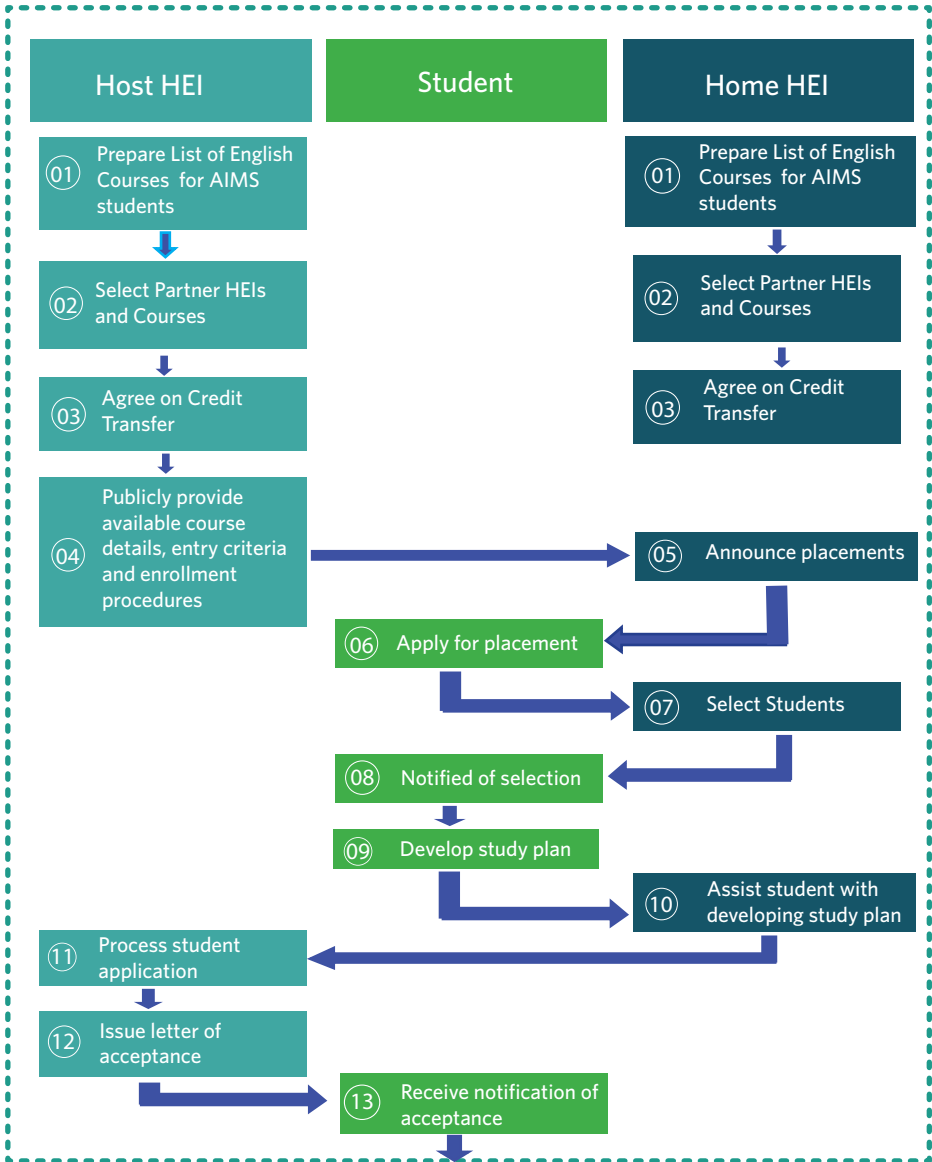
## 4.10 Preparation Checklist

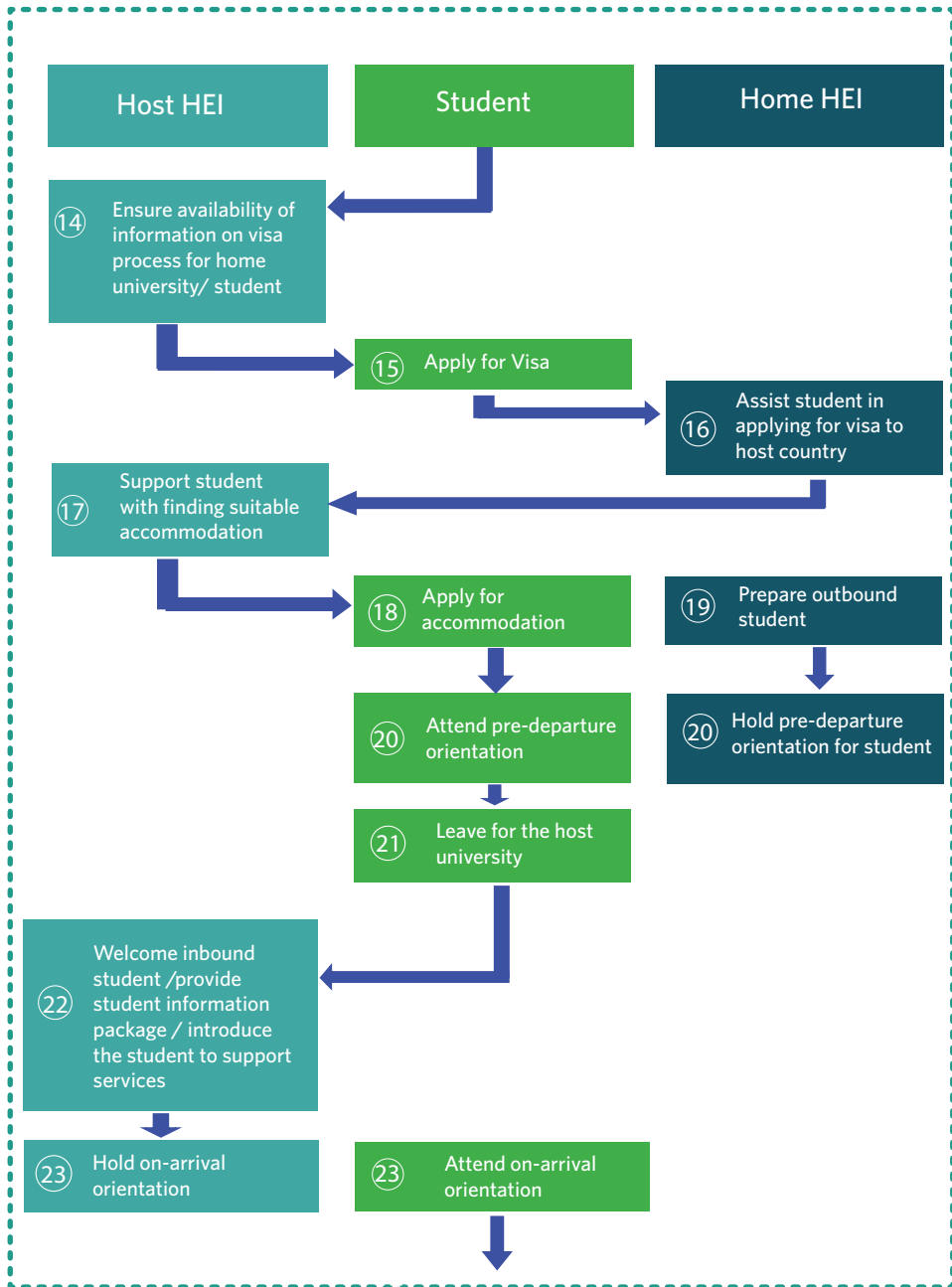


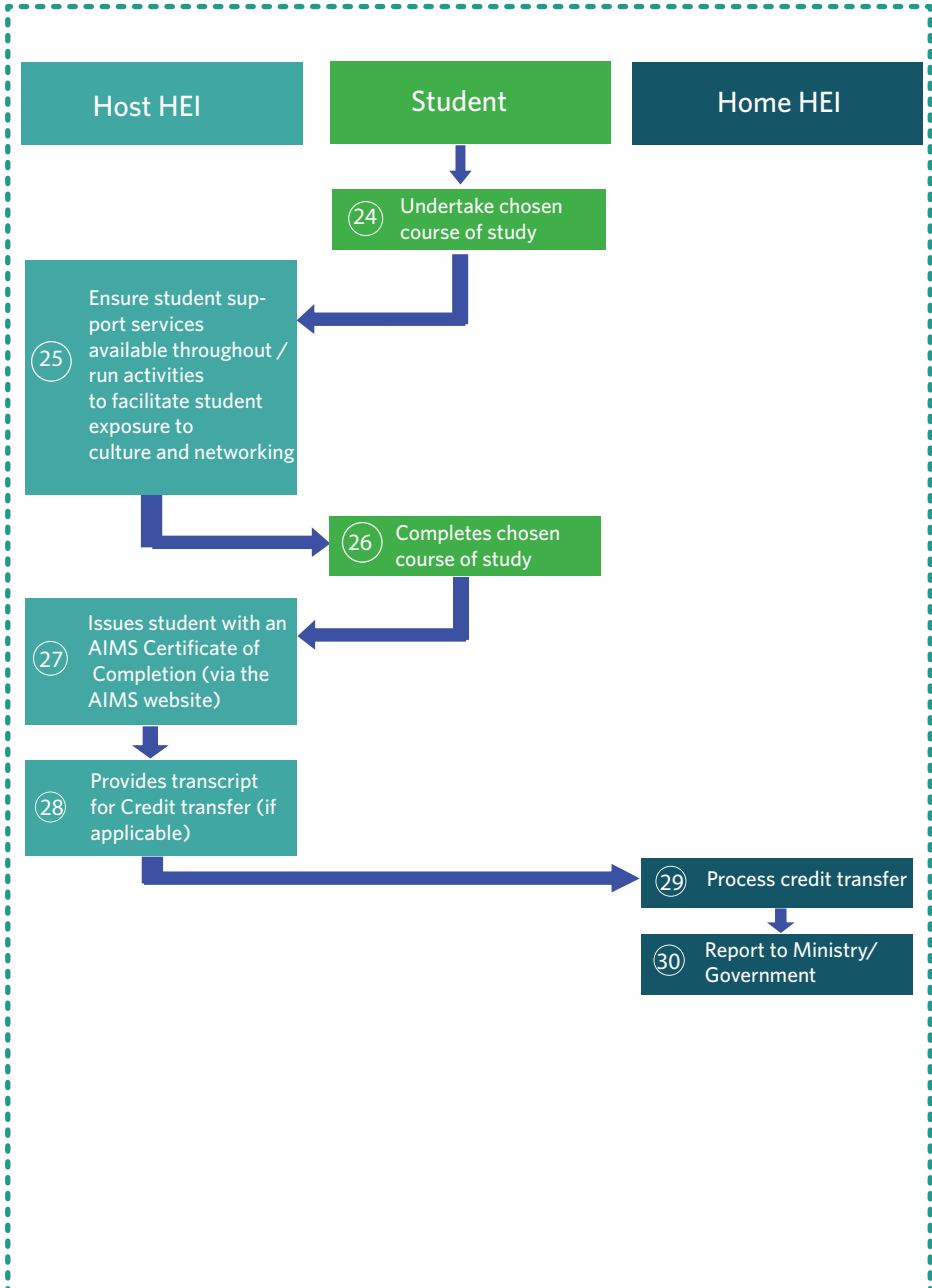
- Assign HEI focal point
- Prepare a list of available English courses for partner HEIs
- Select partner HEIs and identify courses of interest for your students
- Mutually agree on credit transfer arrangements
- Ensure details of available courses are publicly accessible for AIMS students (i.e. via the HEI Website). This may include details such as start/end date, number of credits, curriculum.
- Make any relevant entry requirements and enrolment procedures for
- AIMS students publicly accessible (i.e. via the HEI Website)
- Attend in-country meetings (as set by member country governments)
- Set timelines for mobility, including notification of acceptance and cancellations
- Ensure the availability of student services
- Ensure timely release of scholarship payments for outbound students
- Ensure tuition waiver for inbound students
- Assist inbound students in finding suitable accommodation
- Hold pre-departure orientations for outbound students and on-arrival orientations for inbound students
- Prepare student information package and any relevant safety information for inbound students (HEIs may wish conduct safety briefings)
- Issue students with AIMS Certificates of Completion (via AIMS Website)
- Work with Peer HEI to ensure credits are transferred from the student's chosen course of study
- Assist in connecting students to the AIMS Alumni network and any relevant alumni networks in your HEI
- Report to member country government
- Attend AIMS Annual Review Meetings

## **5.0 THE STUDENT PLACEMENT PROCESS**

## 5.0 THE STUDENT PLACEMENT PROCESS







## **6.0 PARTICIPATION CRITERIA**

## 6.0 PARTICIPATION CRITERIA



*Minimum criteria for involvement and operation of the study fields was set during the 2nd Steering Committee Meeting of the AIMS Programme, 6-7 July 2017 in Tokyo, Japan. Minimum criteria were introduced to support member countries of AIMS Programme and to ensure Programme efficiency and effectiveness as follows.*



### 6.1 Inactive Study Fields

- At least 6 students across a minimum of 3 member countries must participate in the study field
- If no students are sent or received in a given study field for 4 consecutive semesters, the Steering Committee may consider reviewing and seeking collective solutions

In case a study field is marked inactive, it will be taken to the Steering Committee the following year for deliberation, where its re-arrangement may be considered.

### 6.2 Inactive HEIs

If no students are sent or received from a selected HEIs across participating study fields for 2 consecutive semesters, member country governments may consider reviewing and replacing these HEIs with new institutions.

### 6.3 New HEIs

AIMS Member Countries may, on their own criteria, assign new HEIs as participating HEIs in the AIMS Programme provided that they are assigned to at least 1 study field. Respective changes must be informed to SEAMEO RIHED through an official letter and reported to the next AIMS Review Meeting. New HEIs are encouraged to approach their prospective partner university for cooperation.



## 6.4 New Study Fields

Interest to add new study field may be expressed, with proper justification, during the Steering Committee Meetings. The final decision will be derived from a consensus among the Steering Committee Members.

## 7.0 ANNEX



















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