What families applying from overseas need to check for the AEIS exam

Applying for the Admissions Exercise for International Students (AEIS) from another country involves more than just booking a flight to Singapore. Families often discover new requirements only after arriving, which can disrupt school placement plans. A clear checklist helps you prepare in advance and avoid last-minute surprises.

Check your child's eligibility and entry level

The AEIS is not a general test. It assesses whether an international student can fit into the Singapore primary or secondary school system at the correct academic level. Before you fill out any forms, confirm that your child is within the eligible age range for the level you are aiming for. The Singapore Ministry of Education publishes age tables that map a child's age on 1 January of the intake year to the appropriate primary or secondary level. If your child is older or younger than the typical range for that level, they may be required to sit for a different paper or may not be eligible at all for that intake.

Academic assessment also involves checking whether your child's previous schooling matches the curriculum expectations. Singapore schools follow a national syllabus, and the AEIS tests English and Mathematics based on that syllabus. If your child has studied under a different system, review the syllabus outlines for the target level. This will help you identify gaps before the exam, rather than discovering them on test day.

Verify exam dates and application windows

The AEIS is held once a year, typically in September or October, with a supplementary exercise (S-AEIS) in February or March for those who miss the main intake. Application windows open several months before each exam. Missing the registration deadline means waiting another year for the next intake. Families applying from overseas should note that registration is done online through the Ministry of Education's portal. The system requires you to upload scanned documents, so you need access to a scanner and a stable internet connection. Double-check the exact dates for the current year on the official website, as these can shift slightly from year to year.

View the location on Google Maps

Also factor in the time needed to obtain necessary documents such as your child's passport, previous school reports, and any certificates of academic achievement. If these documents are

in a language other than English, they must be accompanied by a certified translation. Sourcing and translating documents can take weeks, so start early.



Understand school placement after the exam

Passing the AEIS does not guarantee a spot in the school of your choice. The exam results determine your child's eligibility for admission, but placement depends on available vacancies in schools near your registered address. International students are typically posted to schools with vacancies, which may not be the most popular or the closest to where you plan to live. Some families are surprised to find their child assigned to a school far from their home or in a less convenient location. If you have a preferred school in mind, it is wise to research its vacancy history and understand that the final decision rests with the Ministry of Education.

United Ceres College is also on YouTube.

For families who plan to live in central Singapore, proximity to schools may be less of an issue, but it is still worth noting that popular schools often fill up quickly. You can also apply directly to private schools that accept international students, which may offer more flexibility in placement. Private institutions often run their own preparatory programmes alongside the AEIS syllabus, giving students a structured path to re-sit the exam if needed.

Prepare for the English and Mathematics test format

The AEIS English paper tests reading comprehension, writing, and grammar. For primary levels, the test is designed to assess a student's ability to cope with the English-medium instruction used in Singapore classrooms. For secondary levels, the test includes an essay component. Students who are not confident in writing under timed conditions should practise organising ideas quickly and using correct sentence structure. Mathematics questions are set in English, so even strong maths students can struggle if they cannot understand the wording of problems. Familiarity with the format and types of questions is essential.

Many families find that enrolling their child in a preparatory course helps bridge the gap between their home curriculum and the Singapore syllabus. A good tuition centre will provide mock tests, targeted worksheets, and feedback on writing. This is where expert guidance through AEIS preparation becomes valuable. A tutor who knows the exam pattern can point out common pitfalls and help your child build exam technique, not just subject knowledge.

Plan for the application timeline and logistics

Applying from overseas means you must coordinate travel, accommodation, and documentation. The AEIS exam is held in Singapore, so your child must be physically present on test day. If you are planning to relocate as a family, consider the timing of your move. Arriving too close to the exam date may leave your child tired from travel and jet lag. Arriving too early means additional costs for accommodation and living expenses before school starts.

Once your child passes the exam, school terms usually begin in January for the main intake or in March for the supplementary intake. You will need to complete school registration within a short window after the results are released. Having a local address and contact number speeds up the process. Some families choose to stay in temporary accommodation near the school they are assigned to, while others look for long-term housing after the placement is confirmed.



Another practical point is to ensure your child's passport has at least six months of validity remaining. The Immigration and Checkpoints Authority of Singapore requires a valid passport for the student's pass application, which is processed after school placement. Delays in passport renewal can push back the entire timeline.

Consider additional support for your child

Moving to a new country and sitting a high-stakes exam can be stressful for a young student. Emotional readiness matters as much as academic preparation. Talk to your child about what to expect, and keep the lines of communication open during the preparation period. Some children respond well to a structured study routine, while others need more breaks and encouragement. A tuition centre that offers both academic coaching and a supportive environment can make a difference. The best centres focus not only on content but also on building confidence and test-day stamina.

When you are researching options, look for a centre that provides **expert guidance through AEIS preparation** as part of a broader programme that includes regular progress checks and personalised feedback. Avoid places that promise guaranteed admission, as no one can control the outcome of the exam or the placement process. A reputable centre will be transparent about what they can and cannot do.

Double-check your documents and fees

The application requires several documents: your child's passport bio-page, birth certificate, previous school reports for the last two years, and any medical reports if applicable. Some families also need to submit a parental consent form. Keep both physical copies and digital scans. The application fee is non-refundable, so make sure you meet all requirements before submitting. If you are applying for the S-AEIS, note that the fee structure is the same, but the intake is smaller and competition may be higher because fewer school places are available mid-year.

After the exam, results are released online. You will need to log in to the portal with your child's application reference number and date of birth. Write these details down and store them somewhere safe. Some families forget their login credentials and struggle to access results on release day.



Finally, keep a checklist of tasks with deadlines. Mark the registration opening date, the document submission deadline, the exam date, and the result release date. Share this timeline with any family members who are helping with the application. A shared calendar reduces the chance of missing a critical step.

United Ceres College, located at 37 Middle Rd, #05-00, Singapore 188946, can be contacted at +65 8699 3609 for enquiries about their preparatory programmes.