

Student Mobility Scheme (SMS)

I. Overview

The ACUCA Student Mobility Scheme was established in 2002, which aims to foster a better understanding of Asian Communities and culture among the students of the member institutions.

One of the objectives of the Association is to promote and facilitate in the exchange of students. Institutions that have courses taught in English during the regular semesters agreed to waive tuition and other fees from the host institution. Financial assistance from the Association comes in the form of an airfare and living allowance subsidy.

Each member institution is entitled to have a maximum of two (2) slots under the scheme in each semester.

II. Participating Institution

All member institutions are presumed to be a participant of the SMS. For newly accepted members of the Association, they are expected to signify their intent to join in the program by completing the REPLY PROFORMA and GENERAL MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING. These documents shall be sent to the Secretariat.

There are a few members at present opted not to participate in the program anymore, i.e., whether they stop sending outbound or receiving inbound students. In this case, termination of the agreement requires written notification of at least one year prior to the date of termination, and students already admitted to and participating in the exchange program shall be allowed to complete the program.

III. Application Process

There are three steps in nominating the qualified students to the program:

- 1) Eligibility
- 2) Nomination to SMS participating institution
- 3) Application for subsidies

Any participating institution ensures that the students are qualified and has a potential capability of finishing the program as evidenced by their respective academic track records. The selection process is left to the discretion of each sending institution.

The sending institution shall contact the host institution directly for the necessary admission requirements such as application deadline, cumulative grade point average (GPA), level of language competency, and other needed documents such as student visa.

To ensure a successful application, the outbound exchange coordinator shall constantly communicate with the inbound coordinator of the host institution. Upon acceptance of the application, the sending institution shall furnish a copy of the

nomination form to the Secretariat to confirm the number of students sent in the exchange program. In addition, a LETTER of ACCEPTANCE from the host institution must be sought by the sending institution. Normally, the issuance of such document takes time. Hence, the status of the student applicant to the SMS program shall be deemed *conditional*.

Those who are successfully accepted by the host institution are qualified to apply for both travel and living subsidies. The sending institution shall submit a duly accomplished SUBSIDY FORM to the Secretariat.

IV. Subsidy

The participating students in the exchange program is responsible in providing for their personal needs, such as accommodation fee, transportation expenses, books, insurance, and the like while studying abroad. The responsibility of the Association is limited only on the following subsidies:

- 1) Living Expenses
- 2) Travel

Host universities shall endeavor to provide or assist the exchange student in finding appropriate housing accommodation for the period of exchange. Living expenses subsidy is provided up to a maximum period of four (4) months. The amount ranges from USD 300 to USD 500, depending on which category a student comes from and proposed to study.

Countries	Category
Japan	A
Hong Kong, Korea, and Taiwan	B
India, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, Myanmar	C

The base amount to be given is USD 300 if the country falls within the same category or with a lower cost of living. However, an adjustment of USD 100 shall be added if a student goes to a country with higher cost of living than the country of origin, plus another USD 100 if the country of origin crosses 2 categories.

Illustration:

Hong Kong to Korea: USD 300

Japan to Korea: USD 300

Japan to Thailand: USD 300

Hong Kong to Japan: USD 300 + USD 100 (difference of 1 category)

Philippines to Japan : USD 300 + USD 200 (difference of 2 categories)

Travel Subsidy is limited to a maximum amount of USD 750 or the actual airfare, whichever is lower.

a. Deadline of Subsidy Request

Period of Study	Application Deadline	Notification Date
Fall Semester	March 15 of the same year	May of the same year
Spring Semester	August 15 of the preceding year	October of the preceding year

Illustration:

Fall Semester 2020 - Application deadline March 15, 2020 – Notification May 2020
Spring Semester 2020 – Application deadline August 15, 2019 – Notification October 2019

Please note that under the normal circumstance, ExCo meet during April/May and October/November. However, per 2019 revised Constitution and By-Laws, *the Secretariat shall have discretionary authority over projects subject to referendum of the Executive Committee, which shall be sent through e-mail for approval.*

b. Selection Process

Upon receipt of the Nomination Form, Subsidy Application, and Letter of Acceptance, the Secretariat verify all documents. The same shall be collated for ExCo approval. In any case where an applicant lacks any of the 3 documents, the same shall be deemed to be classified as *conditional application*.

The Secretariat shall notify the result of the application to the respective home institutions by email.

c. Method of Payment

As practiced in the last 3 semesters, the approved subsidies were paid as reimbursement to ensure that all the necessary documents were submitted, including the Student Activity Report.

To expedite the subsidy reimbursement, which shall be requested from the Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU) through the Secretariat, the participating / sending institution through its SMS coordinator shall send a digital copy with English translation of the following documents:

1. Letter of Acceptance
2. Receipt and itinerary of flight tickets
3. SMS Student Report

The sending institution shall indicate the bank details to which the total subsidy amount shall be sent by HKBU.