

Local unis' overseas student programmes to resume in Oct

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Overseas student programmes by local universities will resume as early as next month but only for those who are fully vaccinated.

In response to queries from *The Straits Times*, Singapore universities said on Friday that students will soon be able to travel to coun-

tries including Sweden, China, Australia and Britain.

This comes more than a year after outbound overseas exchange programmes and internships were suspended by the Ministry of Education (MOE) in March last year due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The first students to travel will be from the National University of Singapore (NUS), which has around 80 students who have signed up to go

abroad between October this year and January next year under its NUS Overseas College programme.

The programme allows students to work with start-up or high-growth companies overseas and study at partner universities in countries such as Germany and the United States.

NUS students travelling abroad under the university's overseas programmes will need to complete a

"compulsory travel preparedness module" and will also be covered under the university's insurance policy that covers expenses of Covid-19 medical treatment.

Meanwhile, student exchange programmes are slated to begin next year.

NUS and the Singapore Management University (SMU) are currently processing applications for student exchange programmes that begin in January next year.

At NUS, about 1,600 students have signed up for student exchange programmes and the university has also started accepting applications from international students from overseas.

Meanwhile, students at SMU can apply to more than 80 per cent of partner universities in 45 coun-

tries. These include Tsinghua University, the University of Melbourne and the University of Copenhagen.

An SMU spokesman said students aged below 18 will need to obtain parental consent before they are allowed to embark on an overseas programme or visit, in line with guidance from MOE, given the risks involved. For all students aged 18 and above, parental acknowledgement will be required.

Both universities require students to be vaccinated, provide travel insurance coverage, and will work with all students travelling overseas to be able to use the International SOS' global assistance programme.

But institutes of higher learning remain cautious, emphasising that

these programmes are subject to health and border control measures.

A Singapore University of Social Sciences spokesman said the school is still in talks to restart programmes in June next year. He attributed this to many partner universities in the Asia-Pacific remaining cautious on student mobility programmes.

Similarly, a Nanyang Technological University spokesman said the university is looking to resume overseas programmes in January next year while it monitors the global situation.

Meanwhile, universities will continue virtual overseas programmes for their students.

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