

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Art/Music Elective Programmes (AEP/MEP) Centres

#### About AEP/MEP Centres

##### **1 What does the AEP/MEP curriculum offer?**

The AEP/MEP offers a rigorous, broad and in-depth curriculum in the practical, theoretical and historical aspects of art/music through formal lessons and a range of enrichment programmes. In the formal lessons, students are exposed to a wide range of local and international traditional and contemporary art and musical forms beyond the standard Secondary art/music curriculum. Students are also engaged in critical and creative thinking and processes that sharpen their mind, develop character and build dispositions. These include the nurturing of perseverance, innovation, seeing things from different perspectives, and striving for excellence.

In addition to this, AEP/MEP students will also participate in combined enrichment programmes, such as learning journeys, master-classes and workshops where they will learn and collaborate with peers across other AEP/MEP schools. The enriched learning experiences will build students' abilities to engage with aspects of art/music in depth, and learn about Singapore and international arts, culture and creative industries by connecting students with arts institutions, practitioners and practices.

##### **2 How many hours in a week do the AEP/MEP lessons take?**

The weekly lessons span 2 (MEP) to 3 (AEP) hours at the Lower Secondary level. For MEP students, the 2-hour lesson is on top of the general music programme lesson that the student also undertakes in his/her own school. For AEP students, the 3-hour lesson will replace the student's art lesson in his/her own school. At the Upper Secondary level, AEP/MEP lessons span 3 hours each week.

##### **3 Why are there so few AEP/MEP centres?**

As the AEP/MEP centres are new initiatives which began only in 2016, MOE will need to monitor the intake, students' learning and other operations for a start. More AEP/MEP centres may be considered in future should the need arise.

##### **4 How many students can offer the AEP/MEP at each centre?**

Each AEP/MEP centre can take up to 25 students (from other schools) per level for their programme from Secondary 1 onwards.

##### **5 What are the benefits of being in AEP/MEP?**

The AEP/MEP enables students with passion and abilities in art/music to learn and excel within an enriched arts environment with other like-minded youths. Students enjoy additional curriculum time in art/music and specialised art/music facilities, equipment, resources and instruction. At the end of the Secondary programme,

students sit for O-Level Higher Art/Music, which can be used in lieu of a Humanities subject, for admission to Junior College.

Since the inception of AEP/MEP more than 30 years ago, the programmes have produced numerous leaders in arts and other fields globally. AEP/MEP alumni have credited the programmes for building a strong foundation in the arts, and developing critical and creative competencies that had added value to whatever fields they are in.

## **Requirements and Distinctiveness of AEP/MEP Curriculum**

### **6 How do I know if a student has the talent or is suitable for the AEP/MEP?**

The student must have passion for art/music, and should also be motivated in, and keen to learn art/music practical skills, history and theory with other students in a 4-year programme. He/she will have demonstrated potential in art/music if they display talent in some or all of the following:

- recognise and differentiate fine details in visuals (art) and sound (music),
- use art tools and materials, or musical instruments/voice competently to create art/music,
- able to come up with unique art/music ideas
- analyse, talk about and present ideas about art/music works fluently, and/or
- able to engage in and persist in art/music activities over longer periods of time.

### **7 Why is AEP/MEP only open to students in the Express course?**

This is to ensure that the students can manage an in-depth study of an additional subject outside of curriculum time at a designated centre outside their school. The demands of the curriculum, such as the requirement to offer Higher Art and Music at the GCE O-Level, are also more suited for Express students.

### **8 Can students be in both AEP/MEP and Third Language concurrently?**

Students should check if their schools have policies on signing up for external programmes. Before deciding which and how many programmes to take up, students should consider the workload of the programmes, their own school commitments and schedules, and their aspirations for the future. AEP/MEP and Third Language are rigorous programmes that students need to attend outside normal school hours that are additional to the students' school workload and Co-Curricular commitments. AEP and MEP also require a 4-year commitment. Students will need to consider their ability to cope with the requirements and demands of their own schools' and other programmes, and how these will support their future goals.

### **9 What is the difference between AEP/MEP and art/music programmes in other Secondary schools?**

In most secondary schools, students undergo the Lower Secondary art/music curriculum, with the option to offer O-Level Art/Music at the Upper Secondary level. The AEP/MEP is designed as a 4-year programme to provide a broader exposure and deeper engagement in art/music to develop well-rounded leaders who are supportive of the arts.

Students in the AEP/MEP enjoy additional curriculum time and specialised facilities,

equipment, resources and instruction, compared to art/music programmes in other Secondary schools. For instance, AEP/MEP students at the Lower Secondary level enjoy 2 - 3 hours of art/music per week, which is almost triple that in most schools. With these additional resources, AEP/MEP is able to offer a more rigorous and in-depth curriculum that provides students with a wider exposure in the practical, theoretical and historical aspects of art/music.

**10 Will the student be shortchanged in any way if he/she is exempted from Design and Technology (D&T) and Food and Consumer Education (FCE) when he/she is enrolled in the AEP/MEP centre?**

Students will not be shortchanged for being exempted from D&T and FCE. In opting to join the AEP/MEP, students are making a conscious choice to commit to rigorous and in-depth study in specific areas of Art or Music over four years. At the lower secondary level, AEP/MEP students are exempted from D&T and FCE so that they can have the extended curriculum time in art/music as part of the requisite of the respective programme. At the upper secondary level, Higher Art/Music, D&T and F&N are all coursework subjects. AEP/MEP students would also not be shortchanged at upper secondary in terms of subject combinations as they would offer Higher Art/Music as their elective subject instead of D&T and FCE. The workload for one coursework subject is more manageable for students in helping them to balance the requirements of other subjects as well as their participation in other school-based enrichment programmes.

**11 What is the difference between an external student on the AEP/MEP in one of the 3 centres, as compared to students in the AEP/MEP schools?**

There is no difference. Students enrolled in AEP/MEP centres will be able to take part in all of the programmes and activities that are offered to existing students enrolled within the AEP/MEP schools. The curriculum, amount of curriculum time and resources are also similar.

**12 What are the differences between AEP/MEP and SOTA?**

AEP and MEP are art and music special programmes in mainstream schools. Students will have an enriched art/music learning experience alongside the learning of other subjects and regular school programmes with students who are not in the programmes. At the end of the 4-year programme at the AEP/MEP centres, students sit for GCE O-Level Higher Art/Music.

SOTA provides a specialised environment dedicated to various arts forms, where all students are engaged in arts, and the learning of arts is the core of the school curriculum, relative to other subjects. SOTA offers a 6-year integrated programme that leads to the IB Diploma Programme or International Baccalaureate Career-related Programme (<https://www.ibo.org/programmes/>).

**13 Can a student apply to join both AEP and MEP?**

If a student has interests and abilities in both art and music, he/she can apply for both the AEP and MEP centres concurrently. However, to enable students to better manage their school schedules and commitments, students who are successful in their application for both AEP and MEP can only choose one programme to enroll in.

**14 Can existing students in AEP/MEP/EAP/EMP schools apply for these centres?**

Students in AEP/MEP/EAP/EMP schools should apply for the programmes in their own schools. However, students may apply to AEP/MEP centres only if the art form is not offered in their school. For example, students in AEP/EAP schools can only apply for the MEP centres, and vice versa. This is to optimise opportunities for students in schools not hosting these programmes.

**15 Can students in EAP/EMP schools apply to be in AEP/MEP centres at their Lower Secondary and join EAP/EMP in their own schools at the Upper Secondary?**

The AEP and MEP are designed as 4-year programmes leading to the O-Level Higher Art/Music. As the focus of the curriculum in AEP/MEP is different from the EAP/EMP, leaving the programmes halfway will be disruptive to the students' learning. Admission into AEP/MEP entails a 4-year commitment.

**16 Can the students withdraw from AEP/MEP any time?**

Students and their parents should take into consideration the level of commitment for these programmes before enrolling. Students are encouraged to stay in the programmes as there are limited places in these programmes. Withdrawals from the programmes are strictly subjected to MOE's approval on case-by-case basis.

**Resources & Support for AEP/MEP Students**

**17 If the student is enrolled in an independent school, will he/she be given a school fee subsidy if he attends AEP/MEP at the centres?**

No, students from Independent Schools do not qualify for a subsidy of school fees if they are enrolled in an AEP/MEP centre. Only AEP/MEP students who are enrolled in an AEP/MEP school with an independent status are eligible for the subsidy.

**18 Will transport be provided for students attending lessons at the centres?**

No, students will need to make their own way to the centres.

**19 Do students have to pay to be in the AEP/MEP centres?**

No, students need not pay any fees to attend the programmes.

**20 The learning of art and music can be quite costly, in terms of the purchase of art materials/equipment and music instruments/accessories. Will AEP/MEP cover all these other costs? What help is there for needy families?**

AEP/MEP centres would cover the programme fees (e.g. masterclasses, enrichment workshops) but do not cover the costs of personal art materials/equipment, and music instruments, accessories (e.g. strings, reeds) and instrumental lessons.

Students who need financial assistance can apply for the MOE Financial Assistance and Bursary Schemes through their schools. More information can be obtained from

<http://www.moe.gov.sg/initiatives/financial-assistance/>. Students who are on the Financial Assistance Scheme may apply for special funds to defray the cost of materials needed for their studies. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

## **Application Procedures**

### **21 Can I submit a hard copy application for the AEP/MEP centres?**

From 2017, students can apply for the AEP/MEP centres directly online. Students who have difficulties accessing the online application can approach their schools for assistance.

### **22 Why do I need to submit a printout of the e-application?**

Students who apply online need to print their application before they click 'submit' online. As students need to commit to AEP/MEP for 4 years, it is important that the decision is supported by their parents and schools. The printout will enable parents and schools to acknowledge the application.

### **23 Can students who miss the application in the beginning of the year apply for the programme later in the year or when they are in Secondary Two?**

Admission to the AEP/MEP centres is only at Secondary One. Due to the demands of the curriculum, students who join the centre after that may find it challenging to catch up.

Students who are interested to offer Music at the GCE O-Level but have missed the MEP application at the beginning of Secondary One may opt to take the two-year O-Level Music Course at the upper secondary level.

### **24 Can students who are accepted into the AEP/MEP centre join the AEP/MEP schools?**

Students who are accepted into the AEP/MEP centres are still enrolled in their own schools. The selection exercise does not qualify students to enroll as full-time students in the hosting schools or any other AEP/MEP schools.

## **Pathways for AEP/MEP Students**

### **25 Can students from the AEP/MEP centres join these hosting schools after O-Levels?**

Students from the AEP/MEP centres interested to join AEP/MEP IP schools or Junior Colleges after O-Levels can join these schools via the usual admission procedures. Being in the AEP/MEP centres does not automatically qualify the students to join the hosting schools or other AEP/MEP IP schools/Junior Colleges.

### **26 Where can the student go next after AEP/MEP?**

AEP/MEP students can further their interests in art/music at A levels in select AEP/MEP Junior Colleges. Students can also consider post-secondary visual and

performing arts courses available in polytechnics and arts schools such as LASALLE College of the Arts and the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA). Many of the AEP/MEP alumni also go on to pursue art/music or related courses at the university level, e.g. Nanyang Technological University's School of Art, Design and Media (ADM) and National Institute of Education; National University of Singapore's Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, and other universities overseas.