

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## General Questions

- **Roughly how many Singaporeans go to CMU every year?**  
Around 20-30, excluding grad students.
- **Are there any summer meetings with current students in Singapore before school starts?**  
There will be 2 summer contacts, one in early June (first two weeks) and one in late July/early Aug. We will start arranging a time and date for it once we know (as many of) the Singaporean freshmen (as we can find). For these two meet-ups, it'll mostly be chatting with us (current students).
- **Do I need a Social Security Number (SSN)?**  
You only need an SSN if you are employed either off-campus (e.g. an internship) or on-campus (e.g. as a TA or research assistant).

## Academics and Placement Tests

- **What placement tests should I be aware of?**
  - Programming Placement Test (For those who want to place out of 15-110 or 15-112 and wish to take 15-122)
  - Calculus Placement Test (A-Levels credit should be able to place you out of 21-120 and 21-122)
  - Language Placement Test (if applicable)
- **Can I transfer my A-Level/IB credit?**  
Yes, refer [here](#) for which courses count for transfer credit. In order for A-Level/IB credit to be transferred, CMU needs to have your transcript sent to the registrar's office. Your school may have already sent your transcript to CMU (it varies), check with your higher education office first. To be safe, you may choose to bring your transcript and see your advisor to place out/reflect A-Level grades on SIO.

## School Facilities

- **Will people staying in residence halls get chased out during the holidays? Are there spaces provided for storage on-campus, like a big temporary locker of sorts?**  
Yes, you will most likely be chased out during winter and summer breaks. However, for the mid-semester breaks such as spring break or thanksgiving, you will still be allowed to stay in your hall. For winter and summer breaks, you will have to shift your belongings into storage (if you want to continue living on campus).

Most Singaporeans choose to move out after freshman year because it is much cheaper to rent so you can shift your stuff to your new house. If not, there are always seniors around who will be more than happy to help with storage over summer.

- **Any meal plan advice?**

We recommend that you get the cheapest plan with the fewest blocks and the most DINEX (most likely, this is the Red Plan 9: 22 meals per 2 weeks, \$720 DINEX). Most of us don't run out of food before the semester ends, even on the Red Plan. If that's really too little you can explore food around campus. Try not to get PLAIDCASH if you can avoid it.

- **How/Where do you mail items to CMU?**

If you're living on campus, you are assigned an SMC mailbox for your use. You may view it at SIO > My Info > View and Update My Info (Look under Campus Address), and you can use that as your address for receiving letters and packages while you are on campus. The postal office will generally keep your packages for 10 days upon receipt.

- **I understand that proof of vaccinations is required for move-in. Will photocopies of health booklets (vaccinations) suffice?**

There is no need to show physical documentation, photocopies uploaded to the CMU health portal should be more than sufficient.

Regarding vaccinations, army vaccinations are in ns.sg under eServices > eHealth > eMedInfo. The 3 taken in BMT are Polio, Tetanus, Typhoid. Other immunizations can be found in healthhub.sg under health e-services as well as the National Immunisation Registry (<https://www.nir.hpb.gov.sg/>).

- **Opinions of Housing?**

[Here.](#)

## Flight

- **How should we buy plane tickets for our first trip to the US?**

Consider buying a one way ticket and then buying 2 way tickets from the States for subsequent trips. Common routes are direct from SIN to JFK (New York) then to Pittsburgh, or taking Qatar (stop at Doha) or stopping at Japan.

## Finance

- **How to pay for fall invoices when it is due when you're not there yet and you don't have a US banking account?**

You will need to pay your invoices by the end of August or there will be a late fee. Use flywire to pay for your fees, or wire a transfer from Singapore into a new bank account which you can set up upon arrival. Or bring a bank draft for the new bank account (Do declare it when going on the flight, it will be fine.)

- **How do you set up a bank account?**

It's recommended to use PNC bank because there's a lot of PNC ATMs around school. Go to a PNC branch (there's one at Craig Street) and they will guide you through to make a student bank account.

- **How long does PNC process bank drafts/send you your debit card?**

3-6 business days to process bank drafts and 1 week to send you your debit card. Transfers from POSB/DBS take 2-4 business days.

## Life in Pittsburgh

- **How do I sign up for a mobile plan?**

For mobile data, we recommend either Mint Mobile or Cricket. You can check with seniors if they have referral codes too. For Mint Mobile, they will mail a SIM card to your address (in the US). You probably wouldn't need too much data for your time living on-campus, since campus WiFi is good enough.

- **Where can I purchase Asian products in Pittsburgh?**

Lotus Mart (<https://www.lotusfoodonline.com/#/home>) or Panda Mart (in Squirrel Hill) or Seoul Mart (across from Residence on 5th).

- **How is it like to learn driving in Pittsburgh?**

It will be better to learn in Singapore because you will not really have time to learn here nor are the facilities here as good/convenient as in Singapore. (Ex. No circuits, no brakes on the instructor side) That said, it is cheaper to learn over here. It's also pretty convenient for trips and stuff to have a driving license already. In the US, anyone who is over 21 with a valid license can teach you how to drive on any car. A US driver's license will be really convenient.

For more info about getting a car, you can refer to this [document](#) (although we don't know how up to date it is).