

Foundation IB overview

Dover Campus





Students joining in Grade 10 undertake our one-year Foundation IB (FIB) programme, which offers a challenging and varied mixture of prescribed and free choice subjects in addition to access to the full UWCSEA learning programme. The holistic nature of the course ensures that students are extremely well prepared for the IB Diploma Programme (IBDP), which is undertaken in Grade 11 and 12.

The breadth of study is a key factor in the FIB course, as it is designed to help the student make informed choices as they move into the final two years of schooling. The course culminates in year-end internal examinations, for which our planned programme and experienced teaching faculty offer the necessary support and preparation to ensure success in the next stage of schooling.

Of equal value to the academics in a UWCSEA education is the extensive learning that takes place beyond the classroom. Students are offered a vast array of opportunities through the College's Activities, Outdoor Education, Personal and Social Education and Service programmes. All FIB students participate in a Service and Outdoor Education trip which allows them to further develop the skills and qualities embodied in the UWCSEA profile and are offered personal guidance and support to integrate with the existing Grade 10 cohort enrolled in the (I)GCSE programme.

At all levels of the school, we provide exceptional opportunities for students to develop independence and leadership skills. At the heart of our educational philosophy is the belief that we prepare students not just for university, but for life, and that it is the skills and qualities that our students develop, as much as the knowledge and understanding they gain, that will define the quality of the life they live. In the High School, this is evident in the high level of independence that our students have, in their relationships with teachers and peers and in the expectation that they will take the lead on issues that matter to them and work through barriers to find success. It would be hard to find a more constructive, energetic and focused community than our High School student body.

Students who value themselves and others and who are willing to commit to the ideals of the UWC movement will gain enormously from our High School FIB programme.

High School enrolment

Course	Grade	Age of students*	Number of students
(I)GCSE	9	14–15 years	298
	10	15–16 years	276
Foundation IB	10	15–16 years	45
IB Diploma	11	16–17 years	347
	12	17–18 years	326
Total			1,292

*Students must be born on or between 1 September and 31 August. Refer to the age-grade boundary chart on our website for guidance, or contact Admissions.

Note: The Foundation IB is offered for students joining the College in Grade 10. (I)GCSE and IB Diploma are two-year courses, and no enrolment is offered in the second year of these courses.

About the UWCSEA curriculum

Developed from our mission, the concept-based curriculum at UWCSEA enables students to embrace challenge and take responsibility for shaping a better world. This is achieved through all five elements of our holistic learning programme—academics, activities, outdoor education, personal and social education and service.

Our concept-based curriculum organises learning around the development of transferable ideas, which may be disciplinary or interdisciplinary. Knowledge and skill acquisition is vital, but not the end goal in a concept-based curriculum. Using their knowledge and skill learning, students construct and express conceptual understandings, which transfer to new contexts. This allows our students to apply critical thought in any situation, now or in the future.

The curriculum model also takes into account the reality of our international school community. Students who spend only a few of their overall schooling at the College, due to the relocation of their family, are equipped by our focus on transferable concepts rather than specific content. This ensures a smooth transition from one school system to another, if a family must leave the College.

Standards

Standards are the significant concepts from each learning area, articulated into 'conceptual statements'. These apply to all grade levels from K1 to the IB Diploma Programme (IBDP). This ensures that these concepts are revisited in developmentally appropriate ways as students transition from grade to grade. Because the standards are conceptual in nature, students who join us from different countries can transfer access the curriculum regardless of their educational background.

Conceptual Understandings

Under each standard are conceptual understandings, which are conceptual statements written for specific developmental stages. These may be grade-specific. This allows students to access the broader concepts in the standard, while simultaneously developing an understanding of specific concepts appropriate to the grade-level.

Benchmarks

Benchmarks are attached to each conceptual understanding in each grade. These describe what a student should know or be able to do at each stage of their learning in order to develop understanding in each subject.

In the High School, the standards, conceptual understandings and benchmarks specifically take into account the requirements of the external examining bodies that set the IBDP examinations that students sit at the end of these two-year courses in Grade 12.



Academics

Our FIB course gives students exposure to a wide range of subjects that lead to IBDP courses in Grade 11 and 12. It provides the appropriate depth so that students can select subjects from a firm foundation of skill and understanding.

High School FIB programme (refer to the curriculum guide on our website for detailed information)		Number of periods per week
Core subjects	Coordinated Science	8
	Mathematics	6
	English <i>or</i> English as an Additional Language	6
	Integrated Humanities (History, Geography, Economics)	4
	Global Perspectives	4
	Information Technology	2
	Physical Education	2
Language other than English option	First Language	Chinese; French; German; Japanese; Korean; School Supported Self-Taught Language; Spanish
	Foreign Language	
Arts option	Music, Theatre, Visual Arts	4
Total		40

Languages other than English

Students select one additional language, based on their level of attainment. The School Supported Self-Taught Language option is for students who wish to pursue studies in their mother tongue in the IB Diploma, but for whom there is no taught course available. Please refer to our Languages at UWCSEA factsheet for more information. Some home languages are offered as small-group, after school classes at an additional charge.

If none of the offered languages are suitable please contact Admissions to discuss options that may be available.

Assessment and progression into Grade 11

Internal examinations are held at the end of the FIB year to provide students with grounding in study and examination practice. Individualised guidance is provided to all students by academic subject staff as well as their tutors after these examinations in order to prepare students for the requirements of the IB Diploma.

All Grade 10 students who display a commitment to the values of the College are welcome to join Grade 11. The transition process is both open and inclusive and relies upon a partnership between students, parents and the school, in which the best educational interests of the students are of paramount importance.

Activities

Our comprehensive Activities programme presents students with opportunities to try new things, discover new talents and further develop their passions, as well as make new friends through the sharing of common interests.

A wide range of activities in the arts, sports and service is offered each week in four 'activity seasons' throughout the year, providing our students with many opportunities to develop new skills and explore their passions. All students are expected to participate in activities, usually about three to four hours per week during lunchtime and after school.

Sports

The strong sports programme includes representative opportunities in swimming, softball, sailing, rugby (boys), badminton, basketball, netball (girls), volleyball, hockey, football, gymnastics (girls), golf, cross country, tennis, climbing and touch football (girls). A number of other sports are offered on a recreational basis.

Arts

Student musicians have the opportunity to participate in a number of music ensembles and perform in five or six concerts per year, including the annual OPUS at the Esplanade Theatre. The instrumental teaching programme offers access to music lessons on a wide range of instruments. Instrument hire is also available.

Performance opportunities begin with the annual United Nations Evening in Term 1 and continue as students are invited to audition for a number of drama and dance productions throughout the year. Students do not need to be taking the FIB Theatre option to be involved in these performances—nor do they need to be on stage, as there are opportunities for costume and set design. These performances are supported by teachers from the Drama and Theatre Department.

Leadership, clubs and special interests

Many other activities are designed to appeal to students with other talents and interests, including several inter-school debating competitions, Model United Nations, mathematics competitions, and special interests such as audio engineering, lion dance, creative writing and journalism, short film-making, photography and more.

There are opportunities to participate in activities such as Model United Nations conferences (in Singapore and overseas), undertake the Silver Level award in the National Youth Achievement Award (NYAA, similar to the Duke of Edinburgh Award) and Round Square through committees, conferences and exchange programmes.



Outdoor Education

Our Outdoor Education programme encourages students to push the boundaries of their experience and helps them to develop leadership skills and resilience by overcoming unexpected challenges. Students get great enjoyment and satisfaction out of these experiences and many are often surprised to find that they possess the determination, adaptability and sense of teamwork to rise to the challenges presented.

All FIB students participate in an outdoor education expedition with their cohort, accompanied by our specialist Outdoor Education staff and teachers. The trips vary from year to year, but generally involve both adventure and service components—previously, the students have undertaken a seven day service and adventure trip to Northern Thailand. The FIB expedition is compulsory for all students, and is designed to help the cohort bond and to prepare them for the challenges of Project Week in Grade 11.

If places are available, FIB students are also able to join an additional trip with the Grade 9 adventure programme.

Our expeditions planned and managed by our experienced Outdoor Education staff in cooperation with service providers who have been selected following an extensive risk assessment process. All staff accompanying a trip are required to undertake trip management training, including holding first aid qualifications.

Optional trips

A number of fully-supervised optional trips are offered during the school holidays. Previously these have included:

- cultural immersion tours to China, Spain or France for students of these languages
- a history tour to Germany
- an English literature trip to the UK
- an economics trip to Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

UWCSEA's membership of the Round Square movement also provides our students with opportunities to travel to conferences, on student exchanges and to participate on international service projects, including the annual Round Square International Conference.

UWCSEA also provides students options to participate in the National Youth Achievement Award (NYAA, similar to the Duke of Edinburgh Award) at Silver Level in Grade 10, with a separate Gold Award trip planned during one of the holiday breaks in Grade 11 or 12.



Personal and Social Education

Our Personal and Social Education (PSE) programme is integral to our educational programme, and is designed to ensure all students feel valued and confident. It aims to develop self-awareness of the physical and emotional changes during these critical years, as well as equipping students to deal with growing peer pressures. It endeavours to build resilience and self-confidence to empower our young people to make the right decisions.

The PSE programme is delivered through a Personal and Social Philosophy approach which provides guidance to help students find their place within and beyond the school. It encourages them to understand and appreciate the richness of the College's diversity, challenge stereotypes and question generalisations. The programme offers opportunities for our students to become more socially, culturally and politically aware, and appreciative of being part of a global community.

Students are assigned a mentor at the beginning of Grade 9, and the PSE programme is delivered through daily meetings with the mentor group and via regular assemblies involving the entire grade cohort. The mentor is central to the care of students and works with the Head of Grade to help students make the most of their time in High School.

To ensure that the experience is both positive and enjoyable, and that every student has the opportunity to reach their full potential, the Principal, Vice Principal (Pastoral), Head of PSE, Heads of Grade and mentors work with subject teachers to provide support for all students in their care.

Professional guidance from the College's social and emotional counsellors is also available for students and families.

Technology

Appropriate use technology is integrated into each classroom as a tool to facilitate learning. All students have a laptop equipped with College-supplied software, and access to on-campus helpdesk support.

Students are supported in the responsible use of technology through our extensive digital citizenship programme as we aim to provide our students with the skills and knowledge to become responsible, independent digital citizens. We use the Generation Safe tools to provide our teachers with professional development in the areas of prevention, detection, intervention and response to cyber incidents.

University guidance

Our university advising programme commences in Grade 10, with advice on subject selection in preparation for the IB Diploma in Grade 11 and access to tools that assist students to gauge their options for future studies and possible career paths. An individualised university advising programme starts for all students in Grade 11, in some cases continuing after graduation as our advisors support students who have taken gap years or are fulfilling their National Service obligations.

In addition to individual advising, there are a number of workshops and presentations run by our University Advisors for students and parents, to help in planning and making decisions around university choice. We also have over 200 universities and colleges visiting the campus each year to speak with our High School students.



Service

The College's tiered model of service provides opportunities for students to become involved in three areas: College Service, Local Service and Global Concerns. All students commit to a service in their FIB year, and are expected to show initiative by planning and leading activities.

College Service

On campus there are opportunities to take active leadership roles in the Primary and Middle Schools through supporting younger students in their own service projects, providing leadership in environment-based services or by coaching younger sports teams.

Local Service

All FIB students are expected to join a Singapore-based project, participating in the service once a week after school for at least half the academic year. Service takes place after lessons, and students volunteer for one of more than 30 projects linked with our partners in the Singapore community.

UWCSEA has long standing partnerships with many Singapore-based community organisations such as MINDS, Riding for the Disabled, ACRES, Beyond Services and H.O.M.E. Some students travel off campus to the client organisations; others welcome guests to our campus to make use of our facilities.

Global Concerns

The third tier of the Service programme involves initiatives outside of Singapore, which we call Global Concerns (GC). This is a dynamic programme, enabling students to put their ideals into action by establishing project groups which actively address specific development and environmental issues about which the students care deeply. This involves students joining an existing group to support on-going efforts, or pitching to the student-led GC Executive to approve a new GC group. Project Week groups in Grade 11 often visit these NGO partners.

Results

The FIB programme supports students in making realistic subject choices for the IB Diploma, knowing how they are likely to perform in the final IB Diploma examinations.

Past results have demonstrated that the FIB programme is an excellent preparation for the IB Diploma and its assessment process.



**For more information,
please contact
Admissions**

A detailed academic curriculum guide is downloadable from our website.

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