

# Foundation IB overview

*East Campus*





Students joining us in Grade 10 enrol in our Foundation IB (FIB) programme, which encompasses a challenging and varied mixture of prescribed and free choice subjects. The holistic nature of the FIB learning programme 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, and although examinations are challenging, 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 an outdoor education trip which allows them to further develop the skills and qualities embodied in the UWCSEA profile. Students are also offered personal guidance and support to integrate with the existing Grade 10 cohort who are undertaking the (I)GCSE programme.

At all levels of the school, we provide exceptional opportunity 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 it is the skills and qualities 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 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	218
	10	15–16 years	209
Foundation IB	10	15–16 years	24
IB Diploma Programme	11	16–17 years	249
	12	17–18 years	247
<b>Total</b>			<b>947</b>

\*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. The (I)GCSE and the IB Diploma Programme 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 the IB Diploma Programme (IBDP) courses offered in Grade 11 and 12. It provides the appropriate depth so that students can select subjects from a firm foundation of skill and understanding. We have deliberately structured both our academic and PSE programmes to offer students the individual support and preparation they need to help them to prepare for the next stage of schooling.

All FIB students study the following programme of seven core subjects and two elective options:

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 Language and Literature <i>or</i> English as an Additional Language	6
	Critical Perspectives	4
	Integrated Humanities (History, Geography, Economics and Psychology)	4
	Physical Education	2
	Digital Perspectives	2
Language other than English option	First (advanced) Language Chinese; French; Japanese; School Supported Self-Taught Language	4
	Foreign (continuation) Language Chinese; French; Spanish	
Arts option	Music, Theatre, Visual Arts	4
<b>Total</b>		<b>40</b>

### Languages other than English

Students select a language based on their level of attainment. If none of the offered languages are suitable, or students have no previous experience studying another language, an option can be discussed.

The School Supported Self-Taught Language option is intended to prepare students who intend to pursue studies in their home language (mother tongue) in the IBDP but for whom there is no taught course offered at UWCSEA. There is a small additional charge. These classes are available subject to demand. See our Languages factsheet for more information.

### Assessment and progression into Grade 11

Internal examinations at the end of the FIB year provide students with grounding in study and examination practice. After these examinations, individualised guidance is provided by academic subject staff and mentors in order to prepare students for the requirements of the IB Diploma.

All Grade 10 students who display a commitment to the learning programme and 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, leadership and special interests 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.

### Dragons Sports and Wellness for Life

The strong sports programme includes opportunities to compete against other schools in Singapore and around the region in representative sports teams in athletics, badminton, basketball, cross country, football, golf, gymnastics, netball (girls), rugby (boys), sailing, softball, swimming, tennis, touch rugby (girls) and volleyball. A number of other sports, such as martial arts and rock climbing, are offered on a recreational basis.

### Arts and Performance

Students have the opportunity to participate in a number of musical and vocal ensembles and to perform in several concerts per year, even if they are not taking music as an elective subject. Some of the ensembles include High School Chamber Ensemble, Jazz Band, Jazz Combo and Orchestra and Symphonic Band, the Pamberi All Stars African music ensemble, and several percussion groups focusing on drumming, marimba, mbira and more.

Our instrumental teaching programme offers music lessons outside of the academic programme, on a wide variety of instruments. Instrument hire is available.

Dance performance opportunities include the annual CultuRama production in Term 1 which celebrates the 'panorama of cultures' on campus, and a Dance Showcase featuring genres such as Contemporary, Hip Hop, Jazz, Rock and Roll and Asian dance.

Students are invited to audition for a number of drama productions throughout the year. Students do not need to be taking drama as an elective subject to be involved—nor do they need to be on stage, as there are opportunities backstage in areas such as costume and set design. These performances are supported by teachers from the Drama Department.

### Learn and Lead, Mind Matters, Create and Innovate

Students have many opportunities to develop leadership skills through participation in groups such as Student Council, Arts Council, Sports Council, the Service Executive Committee and Model United Nations (MUN) via the organising committee for the annual MUN@UWCSEA East conference. Other leadership activities include coaching sports teams and leading College service activities for Junior School students.

Students with diverse interests and talents will find a plethora of clubs and special interests on offer. These include debating; groups exploring subjects such as economics, history, mathematics and philosophy; creative writing, journalism and student publications; digital arts, music technology; photography; cooking; robotics and more.

There are also opportunities to participate in the National Youth Achievement Award (NYAA, similar to the Duke of Edinburgh Award) and in Round Square through leadership 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 and resilience through unexpected challenges. Students get great enjoyment and satisfaction out of these experiences and many are 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 expedition with the rest of the FIB cohort, accompanied by our specialist Outdoor Education staff and a UWCSEA mentor teacher. The trips vary from year to year, but generally involve both adventure and service components—this year, the FIB expedition saw students undertake a six-day adventure trip in the Endau River wilderness in Malaysia. The FIB expedition is compulsory for all students, and is designed to help the group bond and to prepare them for the challenges of Project Week in Grade 11.

All our expeditions are planned, managed and led by our experienced Outdoor Education staff in cooperation with ground arrangements 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

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

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

- cultural immersion tours to China, Taiwan, France or Spain for students of Chinese, French or Spanish language
- an economics trip to Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia
- a history trip to Vietnam

East Campus also has a number of service-linked trips to visit NGO partners in the region and further afield. Previous trips have visited Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia and Vietnam.

Our membership of the Round Square movement also provides students with opportunities to travel to conferences, undertake short-term student exchanges and to participate on international service projects, including the annual Round Square International Conference.

We also provides options to participate in the National Youth Achievement Award (NYAA, similar to the Duke of Edinburgh Award) at Silver Level while in Grade 10. A separate Gold Award trip is then offered during one of the holiday breaks in Grade 11 or 12.

## Personal and Social Education

Our personal and social education (PSE) programme 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 equip students to deal with growing peer pressures. It endeavours to build resilience and self-confidence to empower them to make the right decisions.

Students joining the FIB course are assigned a mentor teacher at the beginning of the year, and join a group of (I)GCSE Grade 10 students in order to help them to settle in and make friends in their peer group. The PSE programme is delivered through daily meetings with this mentor group and via regular assemblies. 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, Head of Grade and mentors work with subject teachers to provide support for all students in their care.

The PSE programme provides guidance and support that helps students to find their place within and beyond the school, by encouraging 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. Professional guidance from the College counsellors is also available for students and families.

Students are encouraged to maintain an eportfolio that reflects their learning throughout their time in the High School.

## 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. This aims to provide students with the skills and knowledge to become responsible, independent, organised digital citizens. We also use 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 and career guidance programme commences in Grade 10. Students are provided with access to tools that assist them to gauge potential for future studies and possible career paths that will best suit them, and these are explored as part of the PSE programme in mentor time and during grade-level assemblies. Our university advisors also provide advice on subject selection in preparation for the IBDP in Grade 11.

In addition to individual advising, our University Advisors run workshops and presentations for students and parents, to help in planning and making decisions around university choice.

Numerous universities from around the world visit our campus each year to speak with our students.



## Service

Our tiered model of service provides opportunities for all students to become involved in the uniquely-structured programme, based on three tiers of involvement: College service, local service and Global Concerns. All students are expected to commit fully to their service and show initiative by planning and leading activities.

### College Service

Within the College, there are opportunities to take active leadership roles in the Primary and Middle Schools. Students are involved in working with younger students on a year-long basis, supporting the service activities of the younger students, providing leadership in environment-based services or coaching 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 projects linked with our partners in the Singapore community.

We have long standing partnerships with many Singapore-based community organisations such as MINDS and Happy Lodge. Some students travel off campus to the client organisations; others welcome guests to the campus to make use of our facilities.

### Global Concerns

The third tier of our service programme involves initiatives outside of Singapore, which we call Global Concerns (GC). This dynamic programme enables students to put their ideals into action by establishing project groups which actively address specific development and environmental issues about which they care deeply. This usually involves students joining an existing group to support ongoing efforts, but can also involve students 'pitching' to the student-led Service Executive Committee to approve a new GC initiative.

Many GCs are linked with grassroots NGOs in developing countries, and provide students with the opportunity to gain unique insight into the challenges faced by these organisations. Opportunities to visit a number of our NGO partners are offered via optional trips each year and also during Project Week in Grade 11.



## Results

Our FIB programme supports students in making realistic subject choices for the IBDP, 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 IBDP and its assessment process.

### For more information, please contact Admissions

A detailed academic curriculum guide is available on our website.

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