

Overview

COUNTRY: HONG KONG

Country Specific Guide

THE HEADMASTER

DREAM HIGHER

Exclusively
available on
The Headmaster



WARNING

This content is made available exclusively to the members of The Headmaster. Any attempt to steal, copy, duplicate or share this information could lead to severe legal consequences.

THANK YOU





Table of Contents

Hong Kong	4
Hong Kong Educational System	4
Understand your options for higher education in Hong Kong	5
Find the best college for you	6
How to find universities in Hong Kong	6
Understanding a College's Academic Reputation	8
Factors to consider when choosing a university in Hong Kong	9
Questions for Undergraduate Students	10
Applying to Colleges	10
Applying to colleges in Hong Kong	10

The Headmaster

Hong Kong

Hong Kong Educational System

Hong Kong's education system is based on the British model and is divided into three main parts:

- **Primary education** - Primary education is compulsory and lasts for six years. Every child in Hong Kong, without any reasonable excuse, is required by law to attend a primary school after the child has attained the age of 6. There are three modes of operation in primary schools, namely AM, PM, and whole-day. Encouraged by the Government, most primary schools are adopting a whole-day operation. Chinese is the language of instruction in most schools with English being the second teaching language..
- **Secondary education** - They are also required to attend a secondary school after primary education which is completed before he/she attains the age of 18. Secondary education lasts for six years and is divided into two parts: junior secondary (3 years) and senior secondary (3 years). There are three main types of local secondary schools – government schools which are operated by the Government; aided schools which are fully subvented by the Government but run by voluntary bodies; and private schools, some of which receive financial assistance from the Government. Government and aided schools deliver a curriculum recommended by the Government. They offer free and secondary education.
- **Post-Secondary Education** - The Government strives to provide multiple study pathways for secondary school leavers, with multiple entry and exit points. Some of them will study bachelor's degree programs direct after completing HKDSE, whereas some will choose to study sub-degree programs. For those who study sub-degree programs, upon graduation, they can pursue study in top-up degree programs (i.e. "2 + 2" arrangement) and obtain their undergraduate qualifications. Apart from undergraduate programs offered, students can also choose a wide diversity of sub-degree programs as well as various continuing and vocational programs that best suit their interests and ability.

Vocational and Professional Education and Training

Vocational and professional education and training (VPET) plays a pivotal role in broadening the learning opportunities for school leavers and in-service personnel as well as nurturing the requisite human capital in support of Hong Kong's development. It provides multiple and flexible pathways for young people with diverse interests and aspirations.

International Schools

Apart from local schools, the Government aims to develop a vibrant international school sector in order to meet the demand for school places from overseas families living in Hong Kong and overseas families coming to Hong Kong for work or investment.

Understand your options for higher education in Hong Kong

Hong Kong is a blend of Eastern and Western cultures and a globally connected cosmopolitan administrative region of China. Over the course of time, it has emerged as a study-abroad destination for students worldwide.

The renowned academic institutions providing top-notch education and exposure attract many students to study in Hong Kong. Also, Hong Kong's proximity to the dominant Asian market makes it an incredible place for your career. Hong Kong government lays special emphasis on the education sector. There are numerous renowned colleges and universities in Hong Kong, offering a wide range of courses to their students. The types of degrees that Hong Kong higher education institutes offer are:

- **Undergraduate Degree:** It is a full-time degree pursued after competition of class 12th in Hong Kong. The duration of the undergraduate programs in Hong Kong is 3 - 4 years, depending upon the course you choose.
- **Associate Degree:** An associate degree in Hong Kong is of 2 years that aims to equip students with a strong educational base in the selected field.
- **Graduate Degree:** A Master of Arts or Master of Science is known as a graduate degree, one that typically takes two years to complete.
- **Ph.D. Degree:** The Doctorate or Ph.D. degree is a specialized post-graduate degree that can take anywhere from 3-4 years to complete.

Type of Bachelor's Degrees

- **BA** – Bachelor of Arts, for liberal arts majors in humanities and social sciences
- **BFA** – Bachelor of Fine Arts, for creative arts, such as music or dance
- **BS** – Bachelor of Science, for business, engineering, health sciences, math, sciences, and other tech fields

Types of Master's Degrees

- **MA** – Master of Arts
- **MBA** – Master of Business Administration
- **MEd** – Master of Education
- **MSc** – Master of Science
- **MPhil** - Master of Philosophy

Types of Doctorate Degrees

- **EdD** – Doctor of Education
- **MD** – Doctor of Medicine
- **Ph.D.** – Doctor of Philosophy
- **SJD** – Doctor of Juridical Science

Find the best college for you

Getting to understand your options for higher education in Hong Kong is the preliminary step to beginning your search for the perfect college!

There are several factors to consider when deciding which college or university is right for you: rankings and accreditations, academics and courses offered, location, size, and—most importantly—whether it accepts international students.

With the number of colleges and universities in Hong Kong, we recommend taking the time to explore all of your options. You may find that the best choice for you is not the most obvious.

How to find universities in Hong Kong

Identifying colleges and universities that are a good fit for your academic and social needs is crucial to your college application process.

Research Online

Begin your search for colleges online. Give yourself plenty of time for this phase of the process, as there is a lot of information!

Speak to a College Advisor

Speaking to a higher education expert, one who is properly trained and certified by an external organization, is a great way to understand which colleges match your academic interests, personal preferences, and professional goals. This can save time compared to researching online—and can help you quickly focus on the universities and colleges that have what you want.

Attend a College Fair

If there are college or university fairs in your city, town, or school featuring higher education institutions, try to attend so you can meet these representatives of universities in person.

College Websites

One of the most reliable sources of information is the college's website. Almost everything you want to know – from the choice of majors and programs to dormitories to application details – everything can be found on the website. Not just this information, websites are generally illustrative of a school, its students, and its mission.

Web-Based Portal Programs

Many high schools offer online portals that allow students to research, track, and plan their college admissions. These are usually free of charge to students and families. Ask your school if they have any particular online portals that can help you with your research.

Search Tools

College search tools on the internet are an easy and fun way to do your research. These sites offer a large number of databases of comprehensive information on thousands of colleges and universities. Some sites also act as portals with direct links to the home pages of colleges. Other sites also allow students to help identify schools by inputting different criteria, such as location, academic interests, affiliations, GPA, etc., Some of the most widely used sites are:

- The Hong Kong Education Bureau website (www.edb.gov.hk)

- The University Grants Committee website (www.ugc.edu.hk)
- The Hong Kong Association of Accredited Institutions of Higher Learning (HAAIHL) website (www.haihl.edu.hk)
- The Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) website (www.hkcaavq.edu.hk)

Understanding a College's Academic Reputation

Rankings

Many organizations, such as Times Higher Education, QS World University Rankings, and U.S. News & World Report, release annual rankings of colleges and universities in Hong Kong and globally. These rankings take into account factors such as research output, reputation, and student satisfaction.

Accreditation

Hong Kong has several accreditation bodies, such as the University Grants Committee (UGC) and the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) that are responsible for ensuring that colleges and universities meet certain standards of quality and academic reputation.

Reputation Surveys

Surveys are conducted by different organizations and websites such as "The Good Universities Guide" and "Top Universities" asking employers, academics, and students to rate the reputation of different colleges and universities.

Research output

A college or university's research output, such as the number of publications and research grants, is also a good indicator of its academic reputation.

Graduate Employment

The graduate employment rate and the average salary of graduates of a college or university can also be an indicator of the academic reputation of the college or university.

Alumni Network

A college or university's alumni network can also be a good indicator of its academic reputation. Many colleges and universities have active alumni associations and networks, which can provide valuable information about the college or university's academic reputation.

Factors to consider when choosing a university in Hong Kong

When choosing which schools to apply to, look at tests required (academic standardized and English proficiency tests), costs, scholarships, international student services, campus facilities, and internships and job placement rates. Based on your research, you can narrow your application list down to target only the colleges and universities that meet your needs.

If you are an undergraduate, you might look closer at campus amenities, while graduate students—who are living on campus or not—might consider the area's off-campus quality of life, too.

- **Curriculum, courses, and majors:** Which college's academic program appeals to your interests and study style most? Consider whether you want more flexibility in your major or whether you seek an intensive, directed course from the start.
- **Campus environment and climate:** City, suburban, rural, consolidated campus versus distributed campus – the value of warm weather cannot be overestimated for some students!
- **Student Diversity:** Is the college co-educational or single-sex? Are there students from all over the country/world with different backgrounds and experiences?
- **Size of school:** Undergraduates/graduates, student-to-faculty ratio, average class size, and professors versus teaching assistants taking entry-level classes.
- **Opportunities for further studies and employment:** Research, professional schools, internships, and graduate placements.
- **Alumni network:** Domestic, international, strength, and accessibility.
- **Facilities, extracurricular activities, and sports:** Access to laboratories, computing centers, music, theater, athletic facilities, and competitive sports teams.
- **Cost versus prestige:** Financial aid or a brand college? Decide what is more important - lightening your financial burden and being a merit scholar with special status or privileges on campus, or going to a well-known college familiar to your friends and family.

Questions for Undergraduate Students

As an undergraduate, you will likely spend a lot of your time on campus, so the campus experience is a crucial part of your decision. To narrow down the colleges on your application list, answer these questions:

- What do I want to study?
- Do I want to attend a large university or a small college?
- Should I go to a public college or a private college?
- Would I be happier at a college campus that is in the countryside, a small town, or a city?
- Which types of campus activities and student organizations do I want to join?

Colleges list their class size and average student-to-faculty ratio (i.e., how many students are on campus for every faculty member) on their websites so you can easily get a sense of the class sizes at the colleges that interest you. College websites will also list the programs available, as well as activities and student organizations.

Applying to Colleges

Applying to colleges in Hong Kong

At this point, you may have a short list of colleges to which you want to apply—ideally, around five to ten universities in Hong Kong.

To streamline your application process, make sure you have everything you need to complete your applications ahead of time. Beyond filling out the application form, each university or college will have its own required application checklist. You will also need a valid passport, payment for your application fees, and, for some colleges, proof of financing.

Application Form

Most colleges and universities in Hong Kong require applicants to complete an online application form.

Academic Certificates and Transcripts

You will need to provide certified copies of your educational certificates and transcripts from your secondary and post-secondary studies. For undergraduate applicants, that means submitting transcripts from every institution you have previously attended: your complete secondary school academic transcripts, external exams, and (for transfer students) any prior colleges or universities.

English Proficiency Test Scores

As an international student applicant, you will need to take at least one test to determine your English proficiency. You may also need to take other standardized tests to demonstrate academic proficiency. Ask in advance—a growing number of undergraduate colleges and graduate departments are now test-optional when it comes to the SAT/ACT or GRE/GMAT.

- Duolingo
- IELTS
- iTEP
- PTE Academic
- TOEFL

Undergraduate Academic Standardized Tests

- ACT
- SAT

Personal Statement or Statement of Purpose

Colleges and universities in Hong Kong may require you to submit a personal statement or statement of purpose outlining your reasons for applying, your goals, and how your past experiences have prepared you for this program.

Letter of Recommendation

Some selective colleges and universities will require you to submit Letters of Recommendation along with your transcripts and essays. Letters of recommendation should be written by someone who has either taught you in a class and can speak to your academic

abilities, or by an advisor who can provide a more well-rounded perspective on the kind of person you are.

Resume or CV

Some colleges or universities would require you to submit your resume or CV outlining your work experience and achievements.

Interviews

Once you have submitted your application, successful applicants will be shortlisted and sent out interview requests via email. The admissions team will travel to different cities in your home country to conduct these interviews or take remote/virtual interviews.