



Connecting Lives, Sharing Cultures

## Hong Kong Host School FAQ

### **When does the school year begin and end?**

School runs from the beginning of September through either end of May or mid-July depending on which grade you are placed in.

### **What is a typical school day? How many classes per day?**

School starts at 8:00 am, until 3:30pm usually (still depends on the practice of individual school).

### **In what type of school will I be enrolled?**

Although you may be placed in an International school, it is more likely that you will attend a public Cantonese school.

### **In what grade level will I be enrolled?**

AFS students will be placed in Secondary 3 or Secondary 4 which corresponds to Year 9 or Year 10 in other school systems. There will be no Form 6 (year 12) placements as this is the second year of the curriculum and is totally dedicated to preparing for the examination. Because of this, 17-year-old AFS students who have completed year 11 or year 12 in their home country may find students in Form 4 a bit immature and the curriculum may repeat some of their prior studies, although, Hong Kong curriculum tends to be quite challenging.

### **Will I be able to choose my classes? What classes are available?**

AFS students will have a set of core and a set of elective classes.

Core subjects will include Chinese Language, English Language, mathematics, and liberal studies.

Elective subjects may include Chinese literature, English literature, Chinese history, economics, geography, history, tourism and hospitality, biology, chemistry, physics, business, accounting, financial studies, design and applied technology, health management and social care, technology and living, or information technology.

### **How will I get to school (walking, bus, train, etc.)?**

With public transportation or walking, depending on the distance.



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### **In what language will classes be taught?**

In Hong Kong schools, there are two kinds of medium of instructions, Chinese (Cantonese) and English. Only 100 of the 400 Hong Kong schools use English as the primary language of instruction but all classrooms have some use of Cantonese. There is no guarantee that all AFS students will be placed in *English as the Medium of Instruction (EMI)* secondary schools. Some students will be placed in *Chinese as the Medium of Instruction (CMI)* schools. However, nearly all of the teachers and all of the students will be native Cantonese speakers, and AFS students should prepare themselves for a great deal of Cantonese spoken at schools especially amongst their schoolmates. Even the few students who may be placed in English speaking schools should anticipate learning Cantonese for successful adjustment at home and in school.

### **Will I need to buy a uniform?**

Almost all Hong Kong schools require students to wear a uniform. Schools in Hong Kong are very conservative, and often require short haircuts and no beards for boys as well as no make-up and no jewelry for girls.

### **Are extra-curricular activities available such as sports, music, or art?**

School trips are not plentiful; however, there are many clubs and social activities offered from within the school. Students are expected to take part in some kind of school activities which usually hold after school and finish at 5:00pm on Fridays. There will be a different training schedule if students belong to school teams, such as sports, choir, orchestra, etc.

### **Can I get an official transcript or a certificate of attendance?**

Transcript of grades cannot be guaranteed and depends on the school. Students who need a transcript should mention it to school early on in the year so that there will not be a mad rush at the end of the year when the teachers are busy marking exam papers.

### **Can I get academic credit for my study abroad?**

The amount and type of credit you receive is determined by your high school in the U.S. so it's important that you talk with your teachers and guidance counselor before you depart. Be sure to keep a copy of any formal grades or transcripts you receive from your host school. It is your responsibility to obtain any written information about your attendance and grades in your host school before you return home. AFS does not have any influence over obtaining academic credit for your studies abroad and cannot assist you with course or grade information for your time on program.