

UGC Teaching and Learning at the Academy – An Independent, Chinese and Global Transition to University

UGC's teaching and learning pedagogy is the interface where the three core values of the Academy – Independent, Chinese and Global – interact. We firmly believe that developing the following qualities in the Academy graduates equip them as individuals to find personal achievement and wellbeing as well as to become future leaders on the societal and global stage.

Bilingualism (Chinese)

The ability to teach and learn in Chinese (Putonghua) and English is a unique feature of the Academy curriculum and aligns with the Academy's purpose in offering students a unique Chinese and English immersion education. Upon entering secondary school, students begin to fully prepare for the transition to the next chapter of their educational career and university by studying the IBMYP and IBDP programmes in English. Outside of the classroom, the UGC Team utilizes bilingual communication in order to provide highly personalized university counseling services to students and their families. Four members of the team are proficient in Chinese and English, enabling them to carry out counseling in a medium that is most appropriate for their assigned students. Furthermore, the UGC team has weaved the ISF Core Values (*Eight Virtues + One*) into its teaching curriculum and has applied them to promoting a university application approach that encourages and challenges each student to self-discover and make 'good-fit' choices. Chinese and English are used in regular communication with parents and during UGC-specific parents' events. These languages are also used when communicating with faculty and staff.

Internationalism (Global)

UGC teaching and learning is international with a focus on 'good-fit' global options for students. In terms of the UGC team, members are all university graduates holding academic qualifications up to postgraduate level from institutions from the United States of America, the United Kingdom, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, the People's Republic of China, Singapore and Taiwan. These territories reflect some of the final university destinations most popular with the Academy graduates. Combined, the

UGC team possesses a formidable knowledge base, personal insight and experience of different university jurisdictions, enabling them to offer students and their families counseling advice to a very high level. To make university applications truly international, the UGC does not impose a restriction on the number of universities a student applies to. Furthermore, it encourages students to participate in the visits it organizes to the school campus by universities from around the world, which are designed to address the keen interest students and their families have in higher education options beyond Hong Kong.

Eight Virtues + One (Independent)

UGC teaching and learning endeavor to harness the best of Chinese culture with a global perspective when delivering the curriculum in the classroom and in its university guidance and counseling practices. Team members enjoy a high level of autonomy in putting in place working systems, online platforms and resources, and implementing good practices informed by The National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC's) *Code of Ethics and Professional Practices*, which ensure that every student can find success in the university application process. Making 'good-fit' choices and decisions for college and beyond, and transitioning well into university studies are key priorities which underpin the work done with students. Independent, critical thinking and inquisitive, the Academy graduates assimilate well in multiple tertiary-level educational settings and, indeed, many go on to occupy leading roles of responsibility at their university and in their career field.

The Academy students and the UGC team members alike are encouraged to be passionate, balanced, caring, inquisitive and principled in their work. Just as students can choose to research and apply to university in their chosen jurisdictions, each counselor can choose sub specialisms to become expert in, and a lead counselor in those areas. Lead counselors are given the responsibility of upskilling their coworkers' knowledge in the current developments happening in the field, and are recognized for their work in enhancing professional development within the team. Current areas of specialty include college entry test assessment, alumni development, online university application platforms, athletic recruitment, US university collaborative programs, and applications to Oxford, Cambridge, medicine, dentistry and veterinary science.