



# Hong Kong International School



World-class learning  
in a world-class city



## Our Mission

Dedicating our minds to inquiry, our hearts to compassion,  
and our lives to service and global understanding

An American-style education, grounded in the Christian faith  
and respecting the spiritual lives of all

## Our Vision

HKIS will be a leading place of learning  
that inspires a socially engaged community  
of collaborative, creative and resilient learners  
dedicated to realizing their full potential.

# Contents

1	<b>About Our School</b>
3	<b>Core Values</b>
3	<b>Student Learning Results</b>
4	<b>Learning Principles and Practices</b>
5	<b>Our Program</b>
9	<b>Our Faculty</b>
11	<b>Religious Education at HKIS</b>
13	<b>Performance Appraisal</b>
15	<b>Living in Hong Kong</b>



# About Our School



Lower Primary School in Repulse Bay



Upper Primary School in Repulse Bay



Middle School in Tai Tam



High School in Tai Tam

A co-educational private day school grounded in the Christian faith, Hong Kong International School (HKIS) serves Reception 1 through Grade 12 students from around the world seeking an American college-preparatory education. HKIS is accredited by the United States' Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and is a member of the East Asia Regional Council of Overseas Schools (EARCOS).

Serving over 2,900 students, HKIS has two campuses on the south side of Hong Kong Island: the Lower and Upper Primary Schools are located in Repulse Bay, while the Middle and High Schools are in Tai Tam.

Founded in 1966 by a partnership between the American community and the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, HKIS seeks to develop an educational community that lives out the words of its mission statement, while striving towards its vision:

## **MISSION**

**Dedicating our minds to inquiry, our hearts to compassion,  
and our lives to service and global understanding**

**An American-style education, grounded in the Christian faith  
and respecting the spiritual lives of all**

## **VISION**

**HKIS will be a leading place of learning  
that inspires a socially engaged community  
of collaborative, creative and resilient learners  
dedicated to realizing their full potential.**

More precisely, our strategic objectives are for students to:

- Use a variety of methods within diverse environments to communicate and respectfully work together to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others (collaboration).
- Be imaginative thinkers, exploring passions and challenges using novel and innovative strategies (creativity).
- Demonstrate courage and confidence in response to challenges and show the ability to adapt and thrive (resiliency).

HKIS provides educational excellence with a difference. We focus on developing the whole child and are committed to nurturing each child to achieve his or her full potential. HKIS is dedicated to offering the best in academic and co-curricular excellence while supporting the socio-emotional needs of the students, to ensure a solid foundation for a university education and a well-rounded life.

Admissions qualifications are selective rather than competitive. Students must demonstrate English language competency and an academic record to succeed in a rigorous college-preparatory environment. HKIS also aims to continually expand the cultural diversity of the school; our students come from over 40 nations.



## Student Activity Center and High School Renovations

Renovations to enhance student spaces continue on the Tai Tam campus in 2022. This follows the recent opening of brand new Middle School classrooms, a High School student lounge, and new counseling offices in 2021. The newest space will be a state-of-the-art science wing on the top floor of the High School, opening in August 2023. In August 2021, work began on the Student Activity Center, slated to open in August 2024. This new building will be located across the sports field and be home to the Middle and High School Physical Education and Athletics Programs. It will also serve the broader Hong Kong community and provide a venue for local and overseas sporting competitions. Go Dragons!

The developments in the Tai Tam campus began after re-opening a brand new Lower Primary school in August 2017 and a reimagined Upper Primary building in August 2018. These state of the art educational facilities for our youngest learners were designed specifically with play in mind. The buildings feature innovation labs, community spaces, a Chinese Culture Center, a Chapel, customized playgrounds for different grade levels, and an indoor swimming pool; all of which create settings that engage children in experiential learning that is developmentally appropriate and inspires playful exploration. The dynamic learning environments are designed to let students thrive and guide them in the transition from Lower and Upper Primary School to Middle School.



# Core Values



We believe that:

- Diversity enriches community and strengthens society.
- Life-long learning is vital for individuals to thrive in and contribute to a changing society.
- Society progresses when individuals strive for excellence and seek challenges.
- Learning thrives in the presence of shared high expectations and mutually respectful relationships.
- Integrity is essential to trust and credibility.
- Each human life has value and purpose.
- Dialogue about Christianity and other religions is valuable for personal growth and development of spiritual identity.
- Together, parents, faculty, staff and students create the conditions for children's success and a healthy lifestyle.

# Student Learning Results



## Academic Excellence

Students will achieve their intellectual potential by striving for and attaining the highest standards of academic excellence.



## Spirituality

Students will understand and respect Christianity and other religions and will identify and develop their own spiritual identity.



## Character Development

Students will demonstrate respectful and caring attitudes at school and in the community, as well as the courage to stand up for what is right.



## Self-Motivated Learning

Students willingly apply a variety of learning and motivation strategies throughout their learning process.



## Contributing to Society

Students will develop the skills they need to form genuine relationships in our diverse society and to make contributions to our community.



## Chinese Culture

Students will gain an understanding of China and an appreciation of the Chinese culture.



# Learning Principles and Practices

At HKIS we believe that learning is most effective when:

1. Learning is nurtured in a **safe** and **supportive environment**.

Therefore, we will:

- Build positive relationships.
- Seek ways to foster students' enjoyment of learning.
- Build strong learning communities that promote a culture of respect.
- Promote students' self-confidence, ability to see other perspectives, and willingness to take risks with their learning.
- Recognize mistakes as learning opportunities.
- Provide spaces and resources conducive to learning.

2. Learning is **purposeful** for life beyond school.

Therefore, we will:

- Connect with, challenge, and extend students' present knowledge, skills, and understanding.
- Help students build skills in inquiry: Asking probing questions and maintaining curiosity.
- Seek to connect students' learning and the world at large.
- Focus on teaching for enduring understanding guided by essential questions.

3. Learning results in the **transfer** of knowledge and skills to a variety of contexts.

Therefore, we will:

- Provide opportunities for students to raise questions, solve problems, and reason.
- Use instruction and assessment strategies that support the transfer of learning.
- Provide opportunities for students to demonstrate understanding by applying prior knowledge and skills to new challenges and experiences.

4. Learning is **personalized**.

Therefore, we will:

- Use a range of strategies to identify and respond to students' different learning and social needs, and cultural perspectives.
- Provide a variety of learning opportunities which enable students to build on personal strengths and interests.
- Empower students to advocate for their own learning as appropriate.

5. Learning is generated through **interactions** and integrated by the **individual learner**.

Therefore, we will:

- Plan experiences that build and develop skills for learning through both collaboration and individual reflection.
- Structure opportunities for students to learn with others inside and outside of the classroom.

6. Learning is enhanced by student engagement in **metacognition**.

Therefore we will:

- Explicitly teach and model how to self-reflect, self-assess, and use feedback.
- Empower students to communicate about their own process of learning.

7. Learning is informed by **effective assessments** that address **clear expectations**.

Therefore, we will:

- Share and construct learning goals with students.
- Use formative and summative assessment as an ongoing part of the teaching and learning process.
- Assess understanding in various ways, including authentic, performance-based tasks.
- Use assessment data for teachers and students to guide future instruction and learning.

# Our Program



HKIS uses a comprehensive standards-referenced curriculum in which we teach for understanding. Students understand when they acquire important new knowledge and skills, make meaning of big ideas related to the knowledge and skills, and transfer this learning to new and authentic situations.

The **Understanding by Design (UbD) model**, which seeks to structure teaching for understanding, guides us in the formulation of our written curriculum. We align curriculum, instruction, and assessment to allow students to demonstrate understanding by developing enduring understandings and building on previous learning experiences and previously learned knowledge and skills. HKIS teachers regularly update and revise curricula to reflect current best practices and research.



At HKIS, we believe that the purpose of **assessment** is to promote learning. A robust system of assessment is:

- Tied directly to and accurately measures attainment of the learning goals of the course.
- Ongoing and built into the teaching and learning cycle.
- Timely and informs strategies for student growth.
- Understood by students.



Multiple forms of assessment are used to allow students to demonstrate their understanding; formative assessments are used to guide instruction and student goal-setting. Summative assessments summarize the mastery of content, knowledge or skills at a particular point in time.

A **diverse co-curricular program** supports a holistic approach to learning at HKIS. Younger children may participate in programs such as arts and crafts, dance, gymnastics, music, and sports. Our older secondary students also have opportunities in programs from community service and Model United Nations, to performing arts and competitive sports.



The American-style curriculum at HKIS is challenging and invigorating with both international and multicultural elements. By aspiring to the highest standards of excellence, our students consistently test in the 90-95th percentile on standardized tests. At the High School level, 29 Advanced Placement courses are available and many of students who take AP exams qualify for university credit. Nearly 82% of students earned a 4 or 5. Nearly 100% of our students enroll in college with more than 80% attending American universities.



Each academic year, all middle and high school students participate in a **week-long experiential learning program overseas or in Hong Kong**. The activities are designed to enrich the curriculum with hands-on experiences, and to enhance students' interpersonal and leadership skills. These unique learning opportunities support students' growth in our Student Learning Results with a focus on areas such as service, cultural understanding, and physical challenges complemented with a spiritual element.

We believe that the central goal of **language learning** is communicating and exchanging ideas. The goal of the HKIS Chinese program is to develop communicatively competent and culturally enriched students of Mandarin. At HKIS, our Chinese Program focuses on proficiency of communication, and literacy is built upon a foundation of a student's spoken language competence. Students are assigned to either a Mandarin as a Second Language stream or Mandarin for Near-Native speakers stream, and then the appropriate level within that stream to best fit and improve their proficiency and confidence. Eligible High School students are able to take the AP Chinese Language exam.







Throughout the school, we are blessed with dedicated and caring international educators. Combined with the tremendous parent and community support, outstanding facilities and resources, we aim to ensure that each student is able to follow their passions and fully realize their potential. We strive to develop confident, caring young people who are passionate about meeting the needs of the larger global community.

We believe that learning is a journey, not a race. We fully understand that different children have different learning styles, and develop at varying rates. Our program design ensures that each child develops concepts, skills, learning strategies, and positive attitudes in intellectual, social, physical, and spiritual areas.

## Primary School

### Lower Primary

Our Lower Primary School is home to children in Reception One (pre-kindergarten) through Grade 2 (4-7 year olds).

At every stage we provide engaging experiences within a stimulating environment that taps into the natural curiosity that exists in young inquisitive minds. Children learn best in a 'hands-on' environment, where they are actively involved in exploring, experimenting, and talking, and collaborating as they work and play in a variety of activities. Play is essential to the wellbeing of our youngest learners and nurtures their creativity and imagination. Purposeful learning through play helps to develop a child's social and cognitive skills, sense of self and others, and also develops higher order thinking skills (e.g. comprehending, reasoning, evaluation, and application).

Emphasis is on literacy and math, and children learn about Christianity through Bible stories, chapels, songs and prayers. They also learn about other world religions by sharing holiday celebrations, visiting temples, shrines and mosques, hearing various guest speakers, studying religious and cultural books and traditional artifacts.

To complement learning at this early stage of development, our program incorporates time for using the playgrounds, gym, pool, and the Wonder Lab, as well as the comprehensive resources in our library.

### Upper Primary

The Upper Primary School serves our children in Grades 3 through 5 (8-10 year olds).

Our curriculum includes literacy (the integration of reading, writing, speaking and listening), mathematics, religious education, science and social studies. Supporting our academic subjects are physical education, art, science, general music, Chinese studies (Mandarin and Chinese culture), and digital literacy as a tool for learning. After school band and strings classes are also available to interested students.

The newly renovated building includes a maker space, an extensive library, a full-size gym, art and music studios, and, of course, wonderful indoor and outdoor playgrounds.

The Upper Primary overnight camp experience fosters independence and provides opportunities to an enhanced learning outside the classroom.



## Secondary School

### Middle School

Our Middle School is set in the gorgeous hillside overlooking the beautiful Tai Tam Tuk village and bay. The purpose built facilities are home to our students in Grades 6 through 8 (11-14 year olds).

Here, students extend and challenge themselves within a wide range of academic subjects including math, science, language arts, social studies, religion, modern languages and Mandarin.

In addition, our Middle School students are pushed out of their comfort zones through a rich array of opportunities including performing arts, culinary arts, robotics, athletics, and service learning. Students also engage in a Self-Motivated Learning project, in which they pursue a personal passion, such as Arabic, ultimate frisbee, movie-making, and more. Our goal is to provide every student with the opportunity for personal success through exploration and self-reflection.

Enhancing these learning experiences are pastoral care, community-building house programs, and PEAK, our weeklong program of extended activities where students reach new heights during challenging experiential learning experiences.

### High School

Our High School is adjacent to the Middle School, high on the hill above Tai Tam Tuk, and serves our young adults in Grades 9 through 12 (15-18 year olds).

Through academics, co-curricular activities, special interest clubs, leadership and service, each student develops his or her intellect, imagination, independence, and inherent sense of responsibility.

Our challenging curriculum encourages students to grow intellectually by engaging them in collaborative work, interdisciplinary studies, and the use of technology in learning. In addition, HKIS offers 29 Advanced Placement courses. The overall emphasis is on academic excellence through self-motivated and interactive learning.

Together with their academic studies, our students are able to immerse themselves in a wide range of sporting and artistic activities, where teamwork and leadership are actively encouraged.

Our students also participate in an Interim program throughout all four years of High School. Interim is a weeklong, off-campus learning experience featuring a range of courses that weave the Student Learning Results into the course experience. The diverse program offerings include community service, outdoor adventure, and cross-cultural learning experiences.

Service to the community is an important aspect of High School activity, and students are able to give back to the local and global community, taking part in projects that make positive and lasting contributions to people all over the world.





# Our Faculty



HKIS is committed to hiring the best teachers and invests in their professional development. Teaching excellence stems from a strong motivation to serve students, an in-depth knowledge of subject areas, and an ability to engage students. Over the years, HKIS has identified characteristics held in common by accomplished teachers at our school. Prospective teachers should evaluate how well they “fit” the following profile:

**Life-long learner:** Passionate about professional and personal growth and continuously improving one’s teaching practices.

**Spiritually centered:** Committed to understanding and respecting Christianity and other religions.

**Collaborative and relational:** Enthusiastic about sharing professional practices and teamwork.

**Focused:** Committed to the HKIS Student Learning Results.

**Community builder:** Willingness to participate in HKIS community events.

**Global minded:** Understands, respects and appreciates diverse cultures, a sense of global stewardship and responsibility.

The school strives to maintain an ethnically and culturally diverse staff to complement both its mission and character. Teachers embody the spirit of care, celebration and service. Teachers should be conversant about their faith, supportive of the school’s Christian values, and interested in joining the religious conversation of the community.

HKIS fosters a collegial atmosphere among faculty to encourage their involvement in decisions about the educational program. North Americans comprise 60% of the HKIS faculty while the remaining are from private and public schools around the world. Teachers recruited in the U.S., who are members of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, are appointed through their Board of Mission Services.









# Religious Education at HKIS



## Explanation of Religious Aspects of our Mission Statement

**“...grounded in the Christian faith and respecting the spiritual lives of all”**

We believe that the Christian faith is a response to the redemptive grace and love found in Jesus Christ for all people and we see each student as a precious child of God. We recognize that all people are spiritual beings with a connection to something greater than oneself and we seek to encourage all in their spiritual journey.

We further believe that respect and understanding of diverse religious beliefs is vital for harmonious living in our local and global communities. In alignment with our Mission, students learn about the Christian faith as well as various world religions.

### ***Grounded in the Christian faith means:***

Students see, hear and experience Christianity in curriculum, surroundings, school events and Christian worship and can articulate their understanding of the Christian faith.

### ***Respecting the spiritual lives of all means:***

We recognize and honor that each individual has her or his beliefs; students see, hear and experience different religions. We engage in dialogue and share personal perspectives and viewpoints and seek to understand others' spiritual lives. We are mindful of how we express our spirituality and respond to the expressions of others; being grounded in the Christian faith does not mean Christian exclusiveness.

**This then helps to describe us:** A diverse group of people on spiritual journeys who explore the meaning of life and connections with God, other people, and the world.



## Religious Education Approach

HKIS offers a strong academic program on Christianity and different religions in which teachers may share their own worldviews and spiritual/religious understandings. Religious education here endeavors to merge the best aspects of the definitions of religious studies and faith education. Our approach combines the mind and the spirit/heart in developing academic understanding as well as a stronger sense of one's own spiritual identity, highlighting ongoing explorations of the “big questions” of life.

## Religious Education Philosophy

Aligned with our Mission and approach, each teacher fosters an atmosphere supportive of active conversations about spiritual and religious concepts. HKIS includes study of five major religions of the world in its religious education curriculum: Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism and Islam. HKIS also teaches about Chinese traditions as these are important for understanding the religious context of Hong Kong.



Students also examine and articulate their own spiritual journey by exploring the meaning of life and their connections with God, other people, and the world. HKIS embraces a cross-disciplinary educational climate that nurtures individual spiritual growth and development. School leaders are committed to support faculty with



training, resources and an open, accepting community spirit. We believe this happens best in an atmosphere of active role-modeling, conversation and discussion about spiritual matters, world views, personal understandings of God, and personal life experiences. The purpose of these conversations is to learn about and openly discuss Christianity and other beliefs rather than to require a particular belief.

## Working Definition of Spirituality at HKIS

A journey of reverence, which explores the meaning of our lives and connections with God, other people, and the world.

## Teachers as Religious Educators at HKIS

- Acquaint themselves with the religiously diverse nature of the HKIS community (students, parents, teachers and staff) and demonstrate an interest in and respect for these religious traditions and worldviews.
- Support the religious education program among colleagues and students through curricular and co-curricular programs.
- Participate in HKIS spiritual growth opportunities, including dialogue and service experiences.
- Acquaint themselves with religious festivals and incorporate them into classroom instruction and discussions.

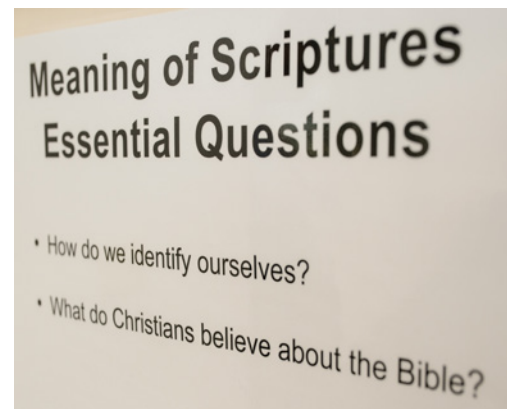
## Religion Curriculum Overview

At HKIS, all students participate in an academic study of religion with regular chapels and community gatherings held throughout the school year. The Religious Education standards at HKIS are:

- **Standard 1:** Students recognize, define and articulate their own spiritual identity and demonstrate how it guides their personal decisions.
- **Standard 2:** Students demonstrate an understanding of the Christian story and the centrality of Jesus in the Bible.
- **Standard 3:** Students understand both the common and unique beliefs, practices and influence of the major religions of the world.

The religious education curriculum is aligned from Reception 1 through Grade 12 with developmentally appropriate units of study.

- **Lower and Upper Primary:** Students explore topics and ideas relating to faith. These studies begin with exploring a topic from a Christian perspective. Students then look at how people of other faiths view that same topic, helping them to understand how others see the world. Reflection is a key component of religious education, helping students to develop their own spiritual identity.
- **Middle School:** In Grade 6, students study the Old Testament, which introduces students to stories that form the foundation of the Jewish, Christian and Islamic faiths. Grades 7 and 8 are in mixed classes which explore individuals' spirituality and also study the New Testament & World Religions alternating each year.
- **High School:** Each year, High School students engage in a "Spiritual Explorations" course where they extend their learning about Christianity and other World Religions. Through these courses, students also have opportunities to develop their own sense of spiritual identity and find meaningful ways to express it.



# Performance Appraisal



Faculty, administrators and staff come to HKIS first and foremost because of who we are, our educational program, and the attraction of working with exceptional colleagues and students. Our vibrant school community and the dynamic city of Hong Kong are great places to work and live.

We aim to attract globally-minded educators who are life-long learners committed to the highest standards of excellence. To honor them, we provide a total compensation package that is globally competitive, rewards excellence, is commensurate with HKIS's high expectation of its teachers, and delivers exceptional professional development opportunities.



## Our Philosophy

At Hong Kong International School, we strive to provide a dynamic learning-based culture where all educators can experience significant professional and career growth. We are committed to equip teachers with the knowledge and skills required in today's rapidly changing educational landscape by aligning professional development with individual needs. We believe this targeted approach to professional growth will lead to improved teacher effectiveness and student learning.



Our integrated appraisal system addresses the school and employee needs (i.e. professional development, career planning, and compensation). It is a particular kind of performance pay system known as knowledge and skills-based compensation. Knowledge and skills-based compensation is not merit pay, which typically links teacher pay to student test results. Rather, it specifies the teacher knowledge and skills that are believed to contribute the most to teacher effectiveness and then aligns both professional development and compensation with the identified knowledge and skills. In this manner, the school allocates its resources to what it values most: Teacher effectiveness and growth, with the ultimate goal being enhanced student learning.

There are six Knowledge and Skill areas for classroom teachers:

- Knowledge of Content, Pedagogy and Students
- Instructional Strategies
- Assessment
- Management
- Communication
- Collaboration and Professional Practice





## **Assessment Process**

The assessment system is standards-referenced and aligned with best practices in assessment. It is primarily observation-based and provides evidence sufficient in scope to permit confident conclusions about performance and reduce sources of bias. As such, the Knowledge and Skills rubrics clearly articulate instructional and professional practice at four different levels of performance.

Assessment of each Knowledge and Skill area is based on the experiences of the supervisor and another administrator with the individual teacher through observations, conversations about professional practice, and review of student work samples. The supervisor and second administrator agree on scores in each of the Knowledge and Skill areas, which form the basis of the teacher's Individual Profile. This profile is then used to determine the teacher's compensation.

New teachers have the option to go through the assessment process in their second year at HKIS with their supervisor's approval. Everyone must, however, go through the assessment process by the end of their third year of employment. It is important to note that the system is built upon the premise of collaboration, not competition. In other words, all faculty have the opportunity to reach the highest level in all Knowledge and Skills areas at their own pace.

## **Professional Development**

The underlying philosophy of the Professional Development program at HKIS is lifelong education. We believe that adults and students learn best when education is differentiated, relevant, participatory and applied.

HKIS aims to keep teachers equipped with the latest developments and best practices in curriculum, assessment and other relevant areas. Engaging students in creative ways requires active engagement in professional learning. HKIS commits resources (human, financial and time) towards its professional development program and provides opportunities for professional collaboration among educators in support of schoolwide and individual growth such as:

- Support from on-site instructional coaches.
- In-house lab sites.
- Collaborative time for divisional and schoolwide teams during designated Professional Development days.
- On-site visits by world class educational experts such as Matthew Glover, Kathy Collins, Michael Thompson and Natalie Bolton.

# Living in Hong Kong



Hong Kong became a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1997 after 156 years of British rule. China's Basic Law for Hong Kong allows for a high degree of autonomy, from the rule of law and civil liberties to the free flow of people and information.

With a total area of 1,104 square kilometers, the Hong Kong SAR includes Hong Kong Island, Kowloon Peninsula, and the New Territories bordering mainland China. Hong Kong also includes 262 outlying islands. The population of 7.3 million is predominantly Chinese, although there are large populations of Americans, British, French, Filipinos, Indians, Portuguese and Japanese.

HKIS's campuses are located in the more rural beach and country park area on the south side of Hong Kong Island. However, Hong Kong is very much an urban center, and it is important that teachers and their families have the ability to adjust to living overseas and city life.

Being far from friends and family, and being removed from life in America or other 'western type' countries, requires adaptability and flexibility. Setting up a household requires patience, and family members must work together to make cultural and social adjustments. When families become involved in the culture and life of Hong Kong, their lives will be enriched and their experiences will be more rewarding.

## **Language**

Chinese and English are the official languages of Hong Kong. English is widely used in the government and by the legal, professional and business sectors. There is no shortage of well-educated competent bilingual or even trilingual professionals who speak English, Cantonese and Mandarin in the city. These languages are vital for any enterprise trading in Hong Kong and doing business with mainland China.

## **Climate**

Hong Kong's climate is subtropical, subject to monsoons and typhoons. Winters are cool and dry, while spring and summer are hot and humid. Temperatures range from lows of 50°F (10°C) in January to 95°F (35°C) in summer.





### **Currency**

The currency is the Hong Kong dollar. It is readily convertible and is pegged to the US dollar at a current exchange rate of HK\$7.8 : US\$1. Salaries are paid 100% in Hong Kong Dollars.

### **Visas**

In order to enter Hong Kong for employment, investment, education, training or residence you must obtain an entry visa prior to arrival. HKIS will apply for employment visas and, if applicable, dependent visas for family members. In the case of HKIS teaching couples, only one person needs to apply for an employment visa. The other can legally work on a dependent visa.



### **Tax System**

Hong Kong operates a simple and predictable tax system. Taxes are levied on three types of income – salaries, profits, and property. There is no value-added sales tax or capital gains tax. Only income earned in Hong Kong is taxable.

Everyone with a Hong Kong income is liable to pay salaries tax. The rate of tax after deductions and allowances is applied on a graduated scale, but the total salaries tax charged will not exceed 15% of a person's total assessable income after deductions.

### **Health Care**

High quality, easily accessible health care services are readily available in Hong Kong. The public hospitals and clinics in Hong Kong provide comprehensive medical services and are staffed by English speaking professionals. There are also private hospitals, such as the Adventist, the Matilda, Canossa, and Gleneagles.







## Housing

A wide range of living conditions exist in Hong Kong - from cosmopolitan areas with dense high-rise apartment blocks to low rise apartments neighboring modern alfresco dining outlets or traditional alley markets selling seafood and noodles. It is fortunate that wherever you live and whatever the condition of your dwelling, there are always open green spaces to unwind in, as approximately 75% of Hong Kong land is countryside with 40% designated as country parks.

While there is a wide variety of accommodation, in terms of size and type, one thing to bear in mind is that apartments are considerably smaller than in western countries. For expatriates, the average size of an apartment for a single person is 400-500 square feet, for a couple or couple with a child it is 600-700 square feet, and for a family of four or more it is 900-1,000 square feet. Most apartments come unfurnished. HKIS teachers live in many different neighborhoods from Stanley and Chung Hom Kok to Happy Valley and Mid-Levels. To get some understanding of the housing market in Hong Kong, the website [www.gohome.com.hk](http://www.gohome.com.hk) is a good place to start.



## Transportation

The public transportation system in Hong Kong is excellent and rates among one of the most efficient and reasonably priced in the world. Public transport includes a system of buses, trams, trains, metro and ferries. Taxis are readily available and reasonably priced.

Public transport can be paid for on a cash basis, but most residents use a stored value 'Octopus' card. Value is purchased, stored on the card, and deducted each time it is used for payment. These cards are also accepted at vending machines, convenience stores and car parks.

## Safety

Hong Kong is one of the safest international cities in the world, which makes it great for single people and families alike. The overall crime rate is much lower than in many other metropolitan cities.

## Help at home

It is very common in Hong Kong for individuals and families to employ someone to help with their children and household duties. These employees are sometimes known as amahs or domestic helpers.

There are many avenues to explore when looking to hire a helper such as through an agency or referral from a friend or colleague.



## Supermarkets

Most large chain supermarkets and other specialty stores carry a wide range of western and Asian foods. The main supermarket chains are Park n' Shop, Wellcome, and Jason's Marketplace. These supermarkets have home delivery and on-line ordering. Seasonal fresh vegetables and fruits are also available at the local markets whose products are less expensive than the "western style" markets.





## Shopping

Shopping is a favorite past time in Hong Kong and no matter what you are looking for you should be able to find it. Wandering the streets you will find many little shops offering anything from local clothing to jewelry to electronics. There are also street markets that sell everything from souvenirs to household goods. There are also a number of shopping malls and large department stores that sell a range of items and cater to both local and Western tastes.

## Culture

Western tastes and trends have heavily influenced Hong Kong's culture, although the city is deeply rooted in its eastern culture and traditions. Hence, Hong Kong's reputation as the "city where east meets west". Visitors to the city appreciate the dichotomy between "old and new". It is common throughout the city to see a gleaming new, state-of-the-art skyscraper adjacent to a hundred-year-old temple.

Hong Kong celebrates Chinese festivals as well as significant dates on the western calendar such as Christmas. Most festivals revolve around families getting together and celebrating. These events are exuberant and colorful. Some of the festivals include:

### **Lunar New Year**

Usually falling around the beginning of February, is Chinese (or lunar) New Year. It is an important festival and considered as the time to prepare yourself for the coming year. House cleaning, purchasing new clothes and getting a haircut are all common pursuits as the New Year approaches. People buy flowers from specially arranged flower markets in the city center (especially Victoria Park near Causeway Bay) and visit with their relatives. There are spectacular firework displays, and people give Lai See (lucky money) to children.

Learn the expression "Kung Hei Fat Choi", for everyone will be saying it, and you should return the greeting. It means "be prosperous!"

### **Ching Ming**

Ching Ming is the spring grave-sweeping festival in April in which families head to the cemeteries to spruce up their ancestors' graves and make offerings that will ensure their deceased loved ones have sufficient money and food in the afterlife.

### **Tuen Ng Festival**

Hong Kong celebrates this festival with Dragon Boat races. The tradition began in the third century BC, apparently after fishermen tried to rescue a despondent government official who had thrown himself into a river. Dragon Boat races are an international event for Hong Kong, attracting thousands of spectators.





### **Mid-Autumn Festival**

Falling in September, this festival celebrates the 14th century uprising against the Mongols. Children are especially delighted by this festival as they make lanterns and parade them with their parents while watching the moon rise. Traditional moon cakes are also shared and enjoyed.

### **Chung Yeung Festival**

On the ninth day of the ninth lunar month (usually in October) Hong Kong people climb to the highest point they can find as it is believed to bring good luck. Rooted in a Han dynasty legend, the festival had little early significance until the British took possession of Hong Kong. Since then, it has grown in popularity and hiking trails become very crowded during this festival.

### **Other Activities**

You will not be short of things to do in Hong Kong. If you are interested in sports there are plenty of options. Hiking trails also abound from easy strolls to strenuous uphill treks, and you could top your hike off with a touch of wakeboarding or swimming at one of the many beaches.

There are also a wide variety of cultural opportunities. Numerous galleries hold shows on a regular basis, and other venues such as the Fringe Club showcase a variety of theatre, comedy, music, and art shows. The city is also a popular destination for touring symphonies, ballet companies, dance groups and rock musicians.

## **Useful Websites**

Below you will find a selection of some of the many websites that you may find useful when researching Hong Kong. This is by no means a complete list, however, it should help answer the most frequently asked questions.

### **Hong Kong Government**

The official Hong Kong Government website.  
[www.gov.hk](http://www.gov.hk)

The Inland Revenue Department is the Hong Kong tax department. This website will give you an overview of the Hong Kong tax system.  
[ird.gov.hk/eng/welcome.htm](http://ird.gov.hk/eng/welcome.htm)

The Immigration Department website provides information on obtaining and maintaining a visa in Hong Kong.  
[immd.gov.hk/eng/index.html](http://immd.gov.hk/eng/index.html)

The Hong Kong Observatory website lists local weather as well as warnings about severe weather conditions.  
[www.weather.gov.hk/contente.htm](http://www.weather.gov.hk/contente.htm)

### **Expat Resources**

The American Women's Association  
[www.awa.org.hk](http://www.awa.org.hk)

Hong Kong expat online communities.  
[asiaxpat.com](http://asiaxpat.com) & [geoexpat.com](http://geoexpat.com)

This is a good source of information if you are considering bringing the family pet.  
[afcd.gov.hk/eindex.html](http://afcd.gov.hk/eindex.html)

### **Chambers of Commerce**

The Chamber of Commerce for your home country can be a useful place to meet people and to source information about what is going on at home.

American Chamber of Commerce  
[www.amcham.org.hk](http://www.amcham.org.hk)

Australian Chamber of Commerce  
[www.austcham.com.hk](http://www.austcham.com.hk)

British Chamber of Commerce  
[www.britcham.com](http://www.britcham.com)

Canadian Chamber of Commerce  
[www.cancham.org](http://www.cancham.org)

### **Shopping and Restaurant Food Delivery**

Wellcome Supermarket  
[www.wellcome.com.hk](http://www.wellcome.com.hk)

ParknShop Supermarket  
[www.parknshop.com](http://www.parknshop.com)

Ikea  
[www.ikea.com/hk/en](http://www.ikea.com/hk/en)

Deliveroo  
[deliveroo.hk/en](http://deliveroo.hk/en)

Food Panda  
[www.foodpanda.hk](http://www.foodpanda.hk)







**Join the HKIS team!**

**Hong Kong International School**

**Direct Line: +852 3149 7828 • General Line: +852 3149 7000**

**recruitment@hkis.edu.hk**

**www.hkis.edu.hk**

**1 Red Hill Road, Tai Tam, Hong Kong**

