Education & Training

Sector Snapshot

The Government aims to develop Hong Kong into a regional education hub through “internationalisation” and “diversification” to promote learning and offer more courses with high variety.

Hong Kong’s education and training sector has boomed over recent years. Many local and foreign organisations establish private academic institutes, vocational and learning centres, training companies, and schools targeting different age groups from all walks of life.

Existing courses offering formal education in Hong Kong include qualification-conferring programmes, and other course types that enhance learning for leisure and self-development, language, soft skills, and corporate training.

Schools in the Private Sector

Overview

In Hong Kong, a “school” provides formal education under the Education Ordinance for 20 or more persons during any one day OR 8 or more persons at any one time. Schools must complete “School Registration” with the Education Bureau (EDB). There are different school types in the private sector, including but not limited to:

- Preschools/kindergartens
- Early education centres
- Adult education centres
- Academic schools that offer formal education and grant qualifications at certificate, diploma, and degree levels
- Distance learning centres

Note:
1. Childcare centres, which refer to education centres handling very young children, unaccompanied by adults, must be registered with the Social Welfare Department.
2. Non-academic Institutes that offer practical, hands-on learning experiences such as cooking, sports-training courses, etc. are not considered “schools”.

International Schools

There are 50 international schools in Hong Kong featuring alternative curriculums (see Table 1 below), offering about 41,000 places, which face strong demand with long waiting queues, especially at the primary levels.

Table 1  Current Curriculum Offered by International Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum</th>
<th>Examples of International Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American</td>
<td>American International School, Hong Kong International School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>Australian International School Hong Kong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British</td>
<td>Discovery Bay International School, English Schools Foundation (Secondary Schools), French International School (International Stream), German Swiss International School (English Stream), Harrow International School Hong Kong, International College Hong Kong, Kellett School, Kiangsu &amp; Chekiang Primary School and Kiangsu-Chekiang College (International Section), Korean International School (International Section), Nord Anglia International School Hong Kong, Singapore International School (Hong Kong), Yew Chung International School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian</td>
<td>Canadian International School, Christian Alliance PC. Lau Memorial International School, Delia School of Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>French International School (French Stream)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>German International School (German Stream)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>Hong Kong Japanese School, Japanese International School (Japanese Section)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>Korean International School (Korean Section)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singaporean</td>
<td>Singapore International School (Hong Kong)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montessori</td>
<td>The International Montessori School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Baccalaureate</td>
<td>Canadian International School, Carmel School, Chinese International School, English Schools Foundation (Primary &amp; Secondary Schools), French International School (International Stream), German Swiss International School (English Stream), Hong Kong Academy, International College Hong Kong, Japanese International School (International Section), Kiangsu &amp; Chekiang Primary School and Kiangsu-Chekiang College (International Section), Singapore International School (Hong Kong)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Higher and Continuing Education

Foreign higher education institutions can set up functional operations in Hong Kong without necessarily offering education programmes locally, attracting young or career individuals to apply for foreign accredited programmes to upgrade academic qualifications, improve career prospects and pursue life-long learning.

Courses conferring overseas academic or professional recognition are delivered in Hong Kong by more than 200 overseas institutions (over 470 registered courses) or through collaboration with the 11 publicly-funded local higher education institutions (exceeding 724 courses).

For quality assurance, programmes offered by non-Hong Kong institutions must register with (unless exempted) the Education Bureau as non-local programmes, and may voluntarily benchmark with the Qualification Framework administered by the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation for Academic & Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ).

Training

The Hong Kong community holds a strong appetite for new skills and knowledge, and emphasises language proficiency and work-life balance.

Today, local and international enterprises of various sizes are ready to invest in employee training and development to enhance staff loyalty and achieve higher competitiveness. Trainings in leadership development, team building, communication and presentation skills, stress management, etc, are well received.

Table 2  International Schools — Status of School Places

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2014/15 School Year</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provision of school places</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>22,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>18,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students enrolled</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>20,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>16,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>36,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fill-up rate</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overseas Programmes in Hong Kong

Organised by Country

- 68.7% UK
- 15.5% Australia
- 4.8% China
- 0.5% Canada
- 8.0% US
- 2.4% Others

Organised by Award Level

- 37.7% Bachelor
- 24.6% Master
- 10.2% Sub-degree (including Higher Diploma)
- 2.4% Professional Courses (including Higher Diploma)
- 2.1% Doctor
- 2.9% Postgraduate Certificate/Diploma

Source: Education Bureau
Government Incentives for Learning and Training

The Continuing Education Fund (CEF)
CEF subsidises adults to pursue continuing education, covering financial/business management, logistics, creative industries, design, tourism, communication skills and languages, etc. Successful applicants are reimbursed 80 percent of fees, subject to a maximum sum of HK$10,000 (or US$1,280).

Student Finance
Student financial assistance is available to students from pre-primary to post-secondary levels to ensure access to education. 12 schemes are applicable to local students (Hong Kong student visa holders are NOT eligible).

Hong Kong’s Advantages

- “Laissez-faire” economic policy
- No entry barrier for overseas education and training institutions to offer programmes in Hong Kong
- Education as the largest expenditure item in the financial budget, representing nearly 17.6 percent of total government recurrent expenditure or 3.6 percent of total GDP
- $2.5 billion Self-financing Post-secondary Education Fund to enhance quality of self-financing post-secondary education.
- Land grant at nominal rent for quality school operators, eg. the Land Grant Scheme
- Registration exemption for distance learning courses and courses conducted in collaboration with local higher education institutions
- Rising demand for formal education and training to meet rising technology trends and globalised knowledge-based economy needs
- Strong demand for quality international school places
- Market preference for alternative curriculums eg. International Baccalaureate (IB)
- English as popular medium-of-instruction
- Hong Kong Professional bodies require members to attend seminars or participate in trainings to maintain qualifications
- Hong Kong as gateway to and from Mainland China, and attracts talent internationally
- Added benefit from establishing presence in Hong Kong under the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangements (CEPA) (see Table 3 below)

Closer Economic Partnership Arrangements (CEPA)

Table 3  Liberalisation Measures under CEPA for Education Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sectors or sub-sectors</th>
<th>Education services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Primary education services (CPC921)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Secondary education services (CPC922)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Adult education services (CPC924)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Other education services (CPC929)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific commitments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. To allow Hong Kong service suppliers from Hong Kong to set up international schools on a wholly-owned basis in Qianhai and Hengqin. Their target students may be expanded to cover children of Chinese nationals residing abroad and of those returnees after studying abroad who are working in Qianhai and Hengqin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To allow Hong Kong service suppliers to set up business-based training bodies in the Mainland on a wholly-owned, equity joint venture or contractual joint venture basis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Trade & Industry Department
Setting up Your Education Business in Hong Kong

- Open an offshore campus/training centre to capture growing demand for quality education in Asia.
- Establish and strengthen partnerships with key education providers.
- Solicit alumni support, marketing and student recruitment.
- Commercialise university research and technology.
- Establish collaborative research projects with the academic and business community.
- Source case studies and education materials for overseas programmes.

Examples of overseas education services operators with presence in Hong Kong

**Universities**
- Bahcesehir University (Turkey)
- Edinburgh Napier University (UK)
- Jiaotong University (China)
- Harvard Business School (US)
- Henley Business School (UK)
- McGill University (Canada)
- Richard Ivey School of Business (Canada)
- Savannah College of Art and Design (US)
- The University of Chicago Booth School of Business (US)
- University of British Columbia (Canada)
- University of New South Wales (Australia)
- University of Southern California (US)
- University of Sunderland (UK)
- University of Warwick (UK)
- Upper Iowa University (US)
- Zurich University of the Arts, Connecting Space Hong Kong (Switzerland)

**School Operators/Consultants**
- Asian School Partners (UK)
- Etonhouse International Education Group (Singapore)
- Harrow International School (UK)
- International Montessori School (US)
- Maple Leaf Educational Systems (China/Canada)
- Nord Anglia Education (UK)

**Learning Centres**
- Global Art (Malaysia)
- Just Education (Singapore)
- The Spanish Academy (Spain)

**Leisure Learning**
- ABC Cooking Studio (Japan)

Useful Reference and Contacts

**Education Bureau (EDB)**
Tel: (852) 2891 0088
Email: edbinfo@edb.gov.hk
www.edb.gov.hk

**School Information in Hong Kong**

**Continuing Education Fund (CEF)**
Tel: (852) 3142 2277
Email: cef_sto@wfsfaa.gov.hk
www.wfsfaa.gov.hk/cef/intro.htm

**Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications**
Tel: (852) 3658 0000
Email: info@hkcaavq.edu.hk
www.hkcaavq.edu.hk

**Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (QF) Secretariat**
Tel: (852) 2836 1700
Email: hkqt@edb.gov.hk
www.hkqt.gov.hk

**Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA), Trade and Industry Department**
Email: cepa@tid.gov.hk

**International Schools in Hong Kong**
edb.hkedcity.net/internationalschools

InvestHK’s advice and support:
- Registration for education businesses
- Government requirements on venue use
- Registration of course contents
- Government funding
- Teaching licensing
- Accreditation for course-conferred qualifications
- Marketing support
... and more

Contact

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Tel: (852) 3107 1091
Fax: (852) 3107 9009
Email: pkung@investhk.gov.hk
www.investhk.gov.hk
Leading ‘Windy City’ Business School Blows into Hong Kong

“...A campus presence in Hong Kong for our Executive MBA programme allows greater access to a broader range of students from Hong Kong, Mainland China and other North Asian markets while maintaining our strong base in southeast Asia, and provides more ready access to corporations for developing partnerships.”

Richard Johnson
Managing Director, Executive MBA Program — Asia
University of Chicago Booth School of Business

The University of Chicago Booth School of Business relocated its Executive MBA programme from Singapore to Hong Kong in July 2013, as part of its strategic plan to deepen its global engagement and influence in Asia.

Chicago Booth has run a successful Executive MBA programme in Singapore for the past decade but decided to relocate it to Hong Kong to show its commitment to strengthening its presence in Asia and ability to meet its strategic goals going forward.

“Our goals are specific,” Richard Johnson, Managing Director, Executive MBA Program — Asia, University of Chicago Booth School of Business, said. “We want to influence and educate current and future business leaders in all major markets — including those from Mainland China. We would also like to deepen the diversity in our classroom, increase awareness of Chicago Booth in the largest and most diverse markets in Asia, and continue to develop strong corporate relationships across Asia. Taking into account these goals, Hong Kong became the clear choice,” Johnson explained.

“We need to expand our footprint in Asia beyond a single location in order to continue to advance our mission. A campus presence in Hong Kong for our Executive MBA programme allows greater access to a broader range of students from Hong Kong, Mainland China and other North Asian markets, and provides more ready access to corporations for developing partnerships, while still maintaining a strong presence in Singapore and Southeast Asia” he added.

Chicago Booth’s Executive MBA programme is a general management programme that provides students with a broad knowledge of business fundamentals, frameworks and strong analytical skills, and vision that extends beyond their current job, region and industry whether they are based in Asia or elsewhere. The approach includes in-depth discussions of different business cases and environments, some of which involve Asia.

Chicago Booth has 14 full time staff and expects to hire a couple more to reach its full complement. In addition to the Executive MBA programme, the school plans to run non-degree short Executive Education programmes in several different disciplines including finance, marketing, strategy, entrepreneurship, leadership and management. It also creates custom executive education and training programmes for companies that want to teach more specific or customised topics to their senior management.

Chicago Booth has had a long relationship with InvestHK, even before it set up in Asia. “The department has provided invaluable information regarding many different aspects of doing business in Hong Kong – including research and trends information. It has also facilitated introductions to various helpful advisors and others who have made our transition into Hong Kong very smooth,” Johnson said.

He has enjoyed his time in Hong Kong so far. “It is a great city from a work perspective - very efficient and with abundant transport options, and we have been able to find very strong staff in Hong Kong. From a personal perspective, I have really enjoyed getting to know Hong Kong which is such a vibrant city, with so much to offer,” he enthused.

The University of Chicago Booth School of Business

- The University of Chicago created the first Executive MBA programme in 1943
- Campuses in Chicago, London, Singapore and Hong Kong

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Cooking as Easy as ABC
A sophisticated cooking school from Japan has won the hearts of its students in the region

On a weekday afternoon, the sounds of clanging pots and eggs being mixed combine with the smells of freshly kneaded dough and baking pastries. In a brightly-lit, stylish store located in a trendy shopping mall, a large crowd of people, scattered around different tables, are busy making bread and cake. In front of a wall of some 30 ovens, chattering and giggling fills the air. The ABC Cooking Studio, located in the art mall K11 in Tsim Sha Tsui, opened in November 2013. In less than half a year, it has attracted over 1,200 members and created more than 40 local jobs. The staff size will double with the planned opening of the second branch later this year, according to Hiroyuki Yokoi, Founder and Director, ABC Cooking Studio International Ltd.

Yokoi explained that the philosophy behind running the cooking studio is to “bring lots of laughs and happiness around the dining table.” “We want every student to bring home not just their cooking skills and the food they made here, but also their happiness to share with their friends and relatives,” he said.

Hong Kong is a preferred destination for many Japanese businesses, and Yokoi’s relocation to Hong Kong speaks for itself. “Hong Kong will be a base for us to expand our overseas business. Everything is very convenient here,” he said. “If you want to develop your Asian business, you need to set up in Hong Kong.”

Innovative and Fun Classes
Unlike Hong Kong where most of the cooking studios are located in commercial buildings, in Japan almost all ABC Cooking Studios are located in shopping malls and feature eye-catching and sleek interior designs. Three different cooking course menus are available for Japanese cuisine, bread and cake, covering Japanese homemade dishes, different kinds of bread making as well as cake baking and decorating techniques. The studios also provide self-developed and branded cooking utensils, in order to create the best customer experience. An online class booking system is also available so that members can reserve their cooking classes in advance.

The company’s recipe for success is to keep its customers happy. “We listen to our customers, respond to their requests and continuously improve our services, environment, course content and products,” Yokoi said.

“The most important thing is to offer fun and enjoyable lessons in a friendly and casual environment,” he added.

Managing the overseas expansion from Hong Kong’s regional headquarters, Yokoi’s plan is to open four more studios with retail business in Hong Kong, as well as regional branches in Thailand, Singapore, Vietnam, Korea, Malaysia and Indonesia. The one in Taipei will open this year.

Like his studios which encourage students to build friendships while learning to cook, Yokoi is looking forward to meeting new friends in Hong Kong. "The Japanese community is very strong and active. With InvestHK’s friendly investor advice and support, I am looking to leverage the most out of it,” he enthused.
"It is easier to expand in Asia with a Hong Kong base compared with a Shanghai base."

Andrew Fitzmaurice, Chief Executive Officer
Nord Anglia Education

British Education Group Relocates Global Headquarters to Hong Kong

Premium education provider Nord Anglia Education finds Hong Kong the best global city in which to expand its school network into Mainland China and Asia

“We thought long and hard about where we would be best located,” Andrew Fitzmaurice, Chief Executive Officer, Nord Anglia Education, said. “We thought about London, Geneva, Abu Dhabi and Shanghai. But taking everything into account – wanting to grow in Mainland China and southeast Asia; good access to banking and legal institutions - we considered Hong Kong the best location.”

Full Range of Corporate Functions

“Hong Kong is a vibrant city and located at the heart of Asia. It is always full of energy and people have a can-do spirit,” Fitzmaurice said. “We are growing our organisation and we expect to add two schools a year, mainly in Asia. We have our banking arrangements and legal support all based in Hong Kong, which is very convenient from a corporate point of view. It is easier to expand in Asia from a Hong Kong base compared with a Shanghai base.”

Nord Anglia Education’s office in Hong Kong has about 30 staff members responsible for the full range of corporate functions, including finance, human resources, legal, IT, operations, communications and marketing. Five senior members of the Nord Anglia Education team were relocated from Europe and the remaining staff were recruited locally. “The talent to be found in the Hong Kong market is impressive. People also like to work in the education sector and we’ve created a strong team in a very short period of time,” Fitzmaurice enthused.

Mainland China and Asia as Growth Engines

Nord Anglia Education looks forward to eventually setting up a school in Hong Kong itself and will continue to explore opportunities as the situation evolves.

It is also investigating opportunities to acquire schools in Mainland China and southeast Asia and bring Nord Anglia Education schools to more students in the region.

“InvestHK provided many useful contacts to help us get up and running very quickly, and we appreciate the department’s ongoing support and advice for our Hong Kong operations,” Fitzmaurice said.

Nord Anglia Education

• 13 premium schools and 8,300 students worldwide
• Four schools and 4,000 students in Mainland China
• Most schools follow a curriculum based on the National Curriculum of England, adapted country by country to meet local conditions

www.nordanglia.com
Along with Hong Kong’s prime location and super connectivity, the city’s cultural dynamism is essential to EF’s operations. Employees from many different countries work together at its regional headquarters here. “We believe it is important to truly understand the cultural differences of each country that we serve, in order to target markets across different locations more effectively and attentively,” Wong said.

The Hong Kong office was founded with a team of six. It now has 150 staff members, and including EF’s wholly-owned subsidiary, EF English Town, the number is 300. The recent move to a larger office aims to house the expanded operation. Wong said EF is always looking for additional talent to increase the firm’s competitiveness both here and abroad, through both relocation and dedicated management trainee and internship programmes aimed at nurturing the leadership skills of local undergraduates.

“Over the past couple of years, the education and language-learning business has grown exponentially in Asia. Parents are more willing to spend on their kids’ education, and private companies will provide language training to increase their staff’s competitiveness. To capture these untapped opportunities, and to manage our businesses in Asia more efficiently, we need a regional hub right at the centre of Asia — a place with high transparency, strong financial backdrop, a well-established tax regime, a stable economy and an open-minded community. Hong Kong was everything we were looking for,” Henry Wong, Country Manager of EF, Hong Kong, said.

“As of now, we have seen enormous demand for our educational program in an industry that is growing every year. We definitely made the right choice. All our core business functions in Asia — management, finance, accounting, sales and marketing — are based in Hong Kong, a place that never lacks talent,” he said.

EF is one of the world’s largest private education companies, specialising in language training, educational tours and cultural exchange. It has three divisions centred around language learning, education travel and university bridging programmes. EF is also affiliated with an independent, not-for-profit business school, Hult International Business School, and an independent not for profit exchange program, EF Foundation. With more than 500 schools and offices in 53 countries, EF has the scale and reach to achieve internationalisation in its programmes, which include at least 40 nationalities.

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Wong also said that based on his own startup experience, government support is vital for setting up a business, and he appreciated InvestHK’s support and advice on applying for a visa.

Global Education Taps Asian Market

EF Education First, a globally renowned education company, is expanding into Asia’s fast-growing education market from its Hong Kong base

EF Education First (EF), a Swiss-based company founded in Sweden in 1965, was one of the first large-scale, international education businesses to explore the education market in Hong Kong. Since coming here 21 years ago, EF has become deeply rooted in the local education industry, sharing its vision of breaking down barriers in culture, language and geography. Now it’s expanding regionally.

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EF Education First

- Founded in Sweden in 1965, headquartered in Switzerland
- Established in Hong Kong in 1994
- Delivers services in language training, educational travels and cultural exchange

www.ef.com.hk