

Education



Foundation for more options

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STUDYING ABOARD IS never just about academic learning. It's also about taking care of yourself, like cooking and doing housework, something your parents usually do for you.

But that might be too much to ask of a foundation-course student who studies around the clock to gain admission into university.

Arch Education brought the University of London's International Foundation Programme to Hong Kong a year ago, which is taught face to face in the city.

The one-year program is now offering two new electives this year – law as well as accounting and finance – to broaden the possibilities for students.

The institute's cofounder, Jennifer Ma, found that many Hong Kong students are interested in these two new subjects. Law is not an elective option in local secondary schools.

Students of the program are required to pick three subjects from economics, international relations, pure mathematics, law and accounting and finance.

Mathematics and statistics is compulsory.

"The level of its accounting course curricu-

lum is much likely the same as the Diploma of Secondary Education. But United Kingdom stresses more on knowledge applications, not just memorization and figuring up. It's more on the problem-solving side," Ma said.

The 600-teaching-hour program targets students who failed to get the minimum requirement in public examinations to get into university and those who slipped up during the tests.

Ma said the program suits those who would like to go to a good university in Britain. She is targeting six to eight students for admission this year.

Three students studied the program in the first year. One completed with distinction and another with merit.

The merit student, Timothy Yeung, is going to read arts in sociology at the University of York.

After his DSE results came out, Yeung said he knew he would not be able to get into the university but did not want to study an associate degree or retake the examination.



"Even if I gained one or two marks more, my examination result still couldn't have met the university's requirement," said Yeung, who got 16 marks in the DSE for his best five subjects. But rather than start working at such an early age, he gave himself a second chance.

"We had three people in our class, so teachers adjust the teaching progress based on our abilities to do exercises, in which the learning progress was faster," Yeung said. "Here, the relationship with teachers was more like with friends so I dared to ask questions whenever I didn't understand, while secondary school teachers seemed to keep a distance so I didn't dare reach out."

Upon passing the foundation program, students can go on to undergraduate studies with the University of London's International Programme in Hong Kong or

study abroad by applying to other universities in the United Kingdom through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service platform. The institute also provides help for students when they are writing their personal statements and advice with strategies when selecting universities for their UCAS application.

Students who are more than 17 years old with an overall 5.5 score in the International English Language Testing System and have at least one level 3 and two level 2s in DSE are eligible to enroll. All applicants have to take the Arch Education aptitude test.

The program will begin in September for the coming academic year. The tuition fee is HK\$150,000. Applications are still open.

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