

The University of Hong Kong
Faculty of Education

Master of Education (MEd)
Gifted Education and Talent Development

Specialism Coordinators:

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This is a professional graduate course designed for administrators, teachers, enrichment specialists, student affairs professionals, and guidance personnel concerned with various aspects of gifted education and talent development in schools and similar settings.

The course is based upon the belief that talent development is essential for all school students. The course provides not only the theoretical framework for gifted education but also practical strategies for organising and implementing activities that foster students' creativity, talent development, social and emotional development, and career preparation. The course addresses participants' development of key competencies necessary for implementing school-wide gifted education and talent development programmes. The participants in this specialism will be encouraged to reflect on their own practices and strategies in gifted education and talent development, which in turn can contribute to the building of a school-wide talent development system.

Who would benefit from this specialism?

This specialism is designed for teachers, administrators, enrichment specialists, student advisors, guidance teachers, career teachers, and student affairs professionals who wish to advance their knowledge and skills in gifted education and talent development. In particular, the specialism will benefit those who are required to implement gifted education programmes in schools, tertiary institutions or government departments. It will be appropriate for those with some prior experience in teaching, counselling, talent development and careers work, as well as professionals new to this field.

Mode of study:

The specialism is available in 1-year full-time and 2-year part-time modes of study.

Outline of the four specialist courses

Course 1: Counselling, Career Education and Talent Development in Schools (6 credits)

This course will compare theories and practices of counselling, career education and talent development programmes in schools in Hong Kong and other parts of the world. Topics will include: life career perspective; comprehensive school guidance and counselling programmes; identification of students for talent development programmes; assessment of life career and talent development; individual development planning; student advisory and mentorship schemes; theories of career development; career awareness among children; career exploration with adolescents; career decision making among senior secondary school and college students; career development of talented students and students with special needs; talent development in schools; theories of talent development; curriculum models and instructional strategies for talent development; career counselling of the exceptionally gifted; family influences; multicultural perspective; gender issues; life-wide learning; career-related experiences; services learning;

programme evaluation and enhancement. The course is relevant to all teachers and guidance personnel who wish to enhance students' career and talent development through subject teaching and co-curricular activities. Case studies of good practices in Hong Kong and elsewhere will be introduced. Course participants are expected to work in collaborative learning groups to integrate theories and practices.

Course 2: Nurturing Creativity: Theories and Practices (6 credits)

This course will introduce participants to creativity from both theoretical and practical perspectives. There will be an overview of the key concepts and theories of creativity, as well as discussions on topics such as creativity research, creativity assessment, and the relationship between creativity and other psychological constructs. In addition, participants will explore how creativity can be nurtured in young children and primary and secondary school students. Participants will be equipped with creativity-fostering strategies and techniques to be applied to individuals as well as educational settings. The module is relevant to all teachers and educators who wish to know more about creativity and how it can be nurtured among others. Participants are expected to engage in experiential learning activities and reflection.

Course 3: Psychology and Education of Gifted and Talented Individuals (6 credits)

The course examines gifted education and the psychology of gifted and talented individuals. Topics will include: understanding gifted and talented individuals, gifted education in Hong Kong and other parts of the world, gifted education and education reform, identification of gifted and talented students, multiple intelligences, psychological adjustment, guidance and counselling for gifted students, school-wide enrichment and provisions for talent development, curriculum models and instructional strategies for gifted learners, parenting gifted and talented children, teaching for creativity, programme development and evaluation, gifted underachievers, social development and moral leadership. Selected case studies and critical issues in implementing gifted programmes will be examined.

Course 4: Social and Emotional Needs of Gifted Individuals (6 credits)

This course provides an overview of the theory, research, and practice related to working with gifted children, specifically focusing on their social and emotional needs. It explores the theoretical underpinnings of psychosocial variables of gifted individuals; introduces models of different instructional approaches to facilitate the affective learning for gifted individuals and curriculum development that is essential for talent development; and covers special populations like underachievement and twice-exceptionality. The role of the teacher in empowering parents on advocacy will also be examined. The course focuses on best practices from theories and research as well as application of these theories in authentic settings, using cases and everyday examples.

Specialist elective: Practicum in Gifted Education and Talent Development (6 credits)

All students are required to complete an individualized practicum in gifted education and talent development in a school or at an approved agency/organization. The supervised practicum provides students with the opportunity to develop professional competencies in applying methods and strategies for gifted and talented learners in a real-life setting. Students will receive group and individual supervision and feedback. To pass this course, students must demonstrate competency in supporting gifted and talented learners and also demonstrate critical reflection on their own practices. Evidence of the ability to translate theory into practice will be expected.

In addition to the four specialist core courses and a specialist elective, students will also have to complete:

- The compulsory core course Educational Issues and Research (6 credits);
- Two elective courses (6 credits each); and
- An option of a professional portfolio (12 credits) or a research project (12 credits).