

The University of Hong Kong
Faculty of Education

Master of Education (MEd)
Guidance and Counselling

Specialism Coordinators:

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The MEd (Guidance and Counselling) is a graduate professional specialism designed for administrators, teachers, student affairs professionals, and guidance personnel concerned with various aspects of educational guidance, career education and counselling in schools and similar settings. The specialism is based upon the belief that personal-social, academic and career development is essential for all school students. This specialism is based on the "systems approach" as a conceptual framework, and addresses approaches that schools may employ in strengthening Domain Three—Student Support and School Ethos. Awareness of the overall framework will assist in school self-evaluation and external school review. The specialism provides not only the theoretical framework but also practical strategies for organising and implementing guidance activities that foster students' whole-person development. This specialism addresses the competencies teachers are required to display in the Dimension "Pastoral Care for Students" as an important aspect of their continuing professional development.

This specialism addresses participants' development of key competencies necessary for implementing comprehensive guidance and career education programmes in educational settings. The participants in this specialism will be encouraged to reflect on their own practices and strategies in guidance and counselling, which in turn can contribute to the building of a comprehensive guidance system. The aim is to develop their ability to find creative solutions to various critical issues in student development in Asian cultural contexts. Attention will be given to designing and implementing a guidance curriculum, the provision of career-related activities, and the development of policy and support related to student guidance, student affairs, career education and counselling. The specialism places emphasis on the delivery of student guidance as a whole-school approach, with strategies and skills pertinent to guidance, counselling, and discipline. It covers: mastery of individual and group counselling skills to support students, parents and teachers; guidance strategies to foster students' personal, social, career and talent development; supporting students in distress; and crisis intervention.

Who would benefit from this specialism?

This specialism is designed for teachers, administrators, student advisors, guidance teachers, career teachers, class-teachers and student affairs professionals who desire to advance their knowledge and skills in guidance and counselling, school discipline, life education, values education, personal-social education for students' whole person development. In particular, this specialism will benefit those who are required to implement student development programmes in schools, tertiary institutions or government departments. The specialism will be appropriate for those with some prior experience in guidance, counselling and careers work, as well as professionals who are beginning to work in 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 specialist courses

Course 1: Career counselling and talent development in schools (6 credits)

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

Course 2: Comprehensive guidance and positive youth development: A whole-school approach (6 credits)

This course will provide an introduction to the theoretical framework of guidance as a whole-school approach, comprehensive guidance, and positive youth development. The whole-school approach will be discussed in the context of school policy formulation, system development, and support measures for preventive, developmental, and responsive services for students. The course will consider theoretical and practical bases for designing and implementing comprehensive guidance and counselling programmes to be used in individual, group, and systemic contexts. Practices and research in using positive youth development approach to guidance will be introduced. Relevant good practice in Hong Kong school settings will be shared. The course can be relevant to all administrators, teachers and guidance personnel. Course participants are expected to work individually and in collaborative learning groups to integrate practices and theories.

Course 3: Practicum in counselling and group guidance (6 credits)

The supervised practicum provides students with the opportunity to practise and receive regular supervision, as well as developing professional competencies in specific contexts. All students are required to complete an individualised practicum in counselling and group guidance in a school or at an approved agency/organisation. Students will receive group and individual supervisions. To pass this course, students must demonstrate competency in counselling within a range of presenting issues, and demonstrate critical reflection on knowledge of theory and issues related to counselling practice and supervision.

Course 4: Theories and practices in counselling and group guidance (6 credits)

This course will examine theories and practices in counselling and group guidance in schools. The content will include the following topics: counselling in a school setting; the helping process and relevant skills; theoretical approaches to counselling; beginning and developing a counselling relationship; career counselling; assessment, measurement and appraisal in counselling; ethical issues in counselling; theories of group guidance and their implementation in schools; group leadership skills; peer counselling; life skills and leadership training; skills in large-group guidance in the classroom and beyond. Selected case studies of counselling and group guidance in local educational settings will be examined. The course can be relevant to all administrators, teachers and guidance personnel who would like to apply counselling skills in their coaching, teaching and guidance activities.

Specialist elective: Counselling process, ethics and skills (6 credits)

This course will introduce students to the basic processes, ethics and skills of counselling applicable in schools or other educational settings. Knowledge and understanding of how a counselling relationship develops over time (process) will be focused on and facilitated within a workshop style delivery. Personal development of

the course participants will be encouraged through many opportunities to observe, practice skills and reflect on personal interaction and process. Topics will include skills for engaging student, assessment, goal setting and action planning, ethics in counselling, skills for developing helping relationship, skills in managing crisis, and skills for ending the counselling relationship. The course is relevant to all teachers and guidance personnel who wish to enhance their counselling competencies. Participants are expected to engage actively in experiential learning activities and reflection.

In addition to the four specialist 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).