



Chantemerle International School

University Foundation Programme
(UFP)
Course Curriculum



www.chantemerle.ch

Our University Foundation Programme

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Our UFP focuses on bridging the gap between secondary education and university study by developing students' academic skills, critical thinking, independent research abilities, and subject-specific knowledge. The programme is flexible enough to support students from A-Level, IB, American High School, Chinese High School, and other international curricula.

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Programme Overview

The University Foundation Programme prepares students for successful entry into undergraduate study at UK universities. The course develops:

- ✓ Academic writing skills
- ✓ Critical thinking and analysis
- ✓ Research methodologies
- ✓ Referencing and academic integrity
- ✓ Presentation and communication skills
- ✓ Independent learning
- ✓ Subject-specific knowledge aligned to intended degree pathways

Delivery Options

☐ Option 1: Full Academic Year

- ★ September — June
- ★ Suitable for international students requiring comprehensive preparation during their final year of high school or equivalent

☐ Option 2: January Entry

- ★ January — August
- ★ Accelerated pathway for mid-year entrants

☐ Option 3: Intensive Summer Foundation

- ★ June/July — August
- ★ Supports students awaiting results or considering Clearing opportunities
- ★ Intensive preparation before university entry in September

Core Academic Skills Modules

(Compulsory for all students regardless of intended degree)

Module 1: Academic Writing and Communication

Topics

Introduction to Academic Writing

- Characteristics of academic writing
- Formal academic style
- Writing objectively
- Academic vocabulary development

Essay Writing

- Essay structure
- Developing arguments
- Paragraph construction
- Topic sentences and coherence
- Introductions and conclusions

Critical Writing

- Moving beyond description
- Evaluating evidence
- Comparing perspectives
- Building balanced arguments
- Synthesising multiple viewpoints

Report Writing

- Structure of academic reports
- Executive summaries
- Findings and recommendations
- Data presentation

Reflective Writing

- Reflective models
- Academic reflection
- Personal development planning

Assessments

- Academic essay
- Critical review
- Research report

Module 2: Critical Thinking and Analysis

Topics

Understanding Critical Thinking

- Questioning assumptions
- Identifying bias
- Evaluating sources
- Recognising logical fallacies

Analytical Skills

- Comparing theories
- Evaluating evidence
- Constructing arguments
- Problem-solving techniques

Decision Making

- Evidence-based reasoning
- Drawing conclusions
- Making recommendations

Assessments

- Critical analysis paper
- Debate presentation
- Case study evaluation

Module 3: Research Methods and Information Literacy**Topics****Academic
Research Skills**

- Finding reliable sources
- Academic databases
- Literature searching
- Source evaluation

**Secondary Source
Research**

- Literature reviews
- Academic journals
- Books and scholarly publications
- Government and industry reports

Data Interpretation

- Reading academic research
- Understanding statistics
- Analysing findings

Assessments

- Literature review
- Annotated bibliography
- Research proposal

Module 4: Referencing and Academic Integrity

Topics

Academic Integrity

- Plagiarism awareness
- Ethical scholarship
- Responsible use of AI tools

Referencing Systems

- Harvard Referencing
- APA Referencing
- In-text citations
- Reference lists

Source Integration

- Quoting
- Paraphrasing
- Summarising
- Synthesising sources

Assessments

- Referencing portfolio
- Academic integrity test

Module 5: Presentation and Professional Communication

Topics

Presentation Skills

- Academic research presentations
- Presentation design and delivery
- Visual communication and non-verbal communication skills
- Audience engagement

Professional Communication

- Academic emails
- Meeting participation
- Professional etiquette

Assessments

- Individual presentations on course related topics
- Viva-style discussion to defend research

Module 6: Dissertation and Project

A dissertation is a substantial piece of independent research completed as part of the UFP. It allows students to investigate a specific topic in depth, analyse evidence or data, and present their findings in a structured academic format. The dissertation demonstrates a student's ability to conduct research, think critically, and contribute to knowledge within their field of study.

Topics

A student generally has some freedom to choose their dissertation topic, but it must be relevant to their university degree, approved by their Chantemerle tutor and academically appropriate.

A business student might write a dissertation on international student housing challenges, while a psychology student could study the impact of social media on wellbeing.

Assessment

The dissertation is marked against criteria such as the quality of the research, critical analysis, use of evidence, structure and organisation, originality, and academic writing.

Dissertation Requirements

Students must:



- ☒ Identify a research question
- ☒ Conduct secondary source research
- ☒ Review academic literature
- ☒ Critically evaluate sources
- ☒ Produce a referenced academic report
- ☒ Deliver a presentation/viva to defend your research

Outputs:



- ☒ 3,000—5,000 word research paper
- ☒ Academic poster
- ☒ Presentation and defence

Subject-Specific Pathways

Students select a pathway aligned with their intended university degree. See examples below of some pathways:

Business and Management Pathway

Topics

- Introduction to Economics
- Global Business Environment
- Marketing Principles
- Entrepreneurship
- Financial Literacy
- Business Ethics

Assessments

- Market research project
- Business presentation
- Industry case study

Engineering and Technology Pathway

Topics

- Engineering Principles
- Applied Mathematics
- Technology and Innovation
- Computer Systems
- Programming Fundamentals
- Sustainability in Engineering

Assessments

- Research project
- Technical presentation
- Problem-solving assignment

Sciences Pathway

Topics

- Human Biology
- Medical Ethics
- Public Health
- Scientific Research
- Healthcare Systems

Assessments

- Situational judgement case studies
- Scientific research paper
- Public health presentation

Social Sciences and Psychology Pathway

Topics

- Foundations of Psychology
- Sociology and Society
- Research Methods
- Contemporary Social Issues
- Human Behaviour

Assessments

- Research paper
- Case study
- Group or individual presentation

Law, International Relations, and Politics Pathway

Topics

- Legal Systems
- Human Rights and Humanitarian Law
- International Environmental Law
- Political Systems
- Current Global Affairs

Assessments

- Hypothetical Problem Questions
- Policy Recommendations and Presentations
- Research paper

Humanities, Languages, and Arts Pathway

Topics

- Cultural Studies
- Language and Linguistics
- Literature and Society
- Historical Perspectives
- Art history and Media

Assessments

- Critical review
- Research paper and presentation
- Portfolio project

University Preparation Module

Topics

Transition to University

- Independent study skills
- Time management
- Academic expectations

UCAS and Admissions Support

- Personal statement development
- Interview preparation
- Admissions testing guidance

Student Life and Wellbeing

- Living independently
- Budgeting
- Wellbeing and resilience

Clearing and Results Support

- Understanding Clearing
- University decision-making
- Enrolment preparation

Assessment Framework

Assessment Type	Weighting
Academic Essays	25%
Research Projects	25%
Presentations	20%
Literature Reviews	15%
Critical Analysis Tasks	10%
Participation & Professional Skills	5%

Expected Learning Outcomes

By the end of the programme, students will be able to:

- ✓ Write academic essays and reports to first-year university standards.
- ✓ Demonstrate critical thinking and analytical reasoning.
- ✓ Conduct independent secondary-source research.
- ✓ Use Harvard and APA referencing accurately.
- ✓ Deliver professional academic presentations.
- ✓ Evaluate and synthesise academic literature.
- ✓ Demonstrate subject-specific knowledge relevant to their chosen degree.
- ✓ Transition confidently into undergraduate study at UK universities.

This structure allows the UFP to be delivered as **a full-year programme**, a **January accelerated intake**, or **an 8–10 week intensive summer foundation programme** while maintaining the same academic outcomes and university readiness standards.

Expected Programme Success

The University Foundation Programme is delivered through small-group teaching and one-to-one support, allowing tutors to provide personalised guidance and regular feedback.

Success on the programme is closely linked to attendance, engagement, and the time invested in academic development. Students who actively participate, complete assignments to a high standard, respond positively to feedback, and dedicate additional time to their studies are more likely to achieve Merit or Distinction grades.

Tutors continuously monitor progress and will challenge and support students in order to reach their target grade. Where students are not on track to achieve their target grades, focused intervention and guidance will be provided.

As at university, academic success is ultimately determined by effort and commitment. Students who engage fully with the programme, embrace feedback, and take responsibility for their learning can expect to make significant academic progress and maximise their chances of achieving the highest possible outcomes.