The four-year (normative) curriculum implemented in 2012–13 is built on a credit-unit system, with flexibility and choices both in the selection of courses and in the sequence and pace of electives. The credit-unit system, however, has no provision for ‘promotion’. For the sake of administrative convenience, students are categorised into year-levels based on their year of attendance at the University. Hence a student’s ‘year’ does not indicate the actual stage of completion of his/her studies. Students may, based on individual circumstances and interest, tailor the progress of their studies. Those who complete the required number of course units, and satisfy the graduation requirements of the Major Programme and the University, will be considered for the award of a Bachelor’s degree.

Bachelor’s degrees are classified as follows: First Class Honours, Second Class Honours Upper Division, Second Class Honours Lower Division, Third Class Honours and Pass. Degree classification is based on the students’ grade point averages for Major courses and for all other courses. Classification for the Bachelor of Chinese Medicine degree is based also on the results of clinical studies, while that for the MBChB degree is based on the results of all professional examinations.

Curriculum Design

A common University Core develops generic competencies in and through Chinese, English, General Education, Information Technology, and Physical Education. The Major Programme provides depth and where applicable training in a profession.

Within the Major Programme, there is a Faculty Package requirement for all students within a Faculty to share a largely common experience and gain broad exposure to related disciplines. Appropriate to a curriculum that is informed and led by research, a feature of the Major Programme is a Capstone course or experience, in the form of research, internship or other learning activity that helps students synthesise their learning. Students may elect one or more Minor Programme, or even take a Double Major. There is also the opportunity to pursue a Double Degree.

With the exception of a few special programmes, the normative period of study is four years, and students have to complete 123 units and satisfy requirements under separate categories. The following shows the overall curriculum structure of a four-year programme:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major (including Faculty Package)</td>
<td>51 – 72*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor (optional)</td>
<td>18 – 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese language</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English language</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Education</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free electives</td>
<td>remaining units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* For some professional programmes and programmes of more than 4 years’ normative period of study, the maximum exceeds 72.
First-Year Experience

The first year is a crucial time for students to build a good foundation for university learning, a year when expectations are communicated, standards set and raised. A successful first-year experience helps students set goals for themselves, develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning, and build a sense of belonging to the University as a community of learners. Students become self-directed learners who take full advantage of learning opportunities the University provides.

The first-year experience at CUHK takes an integrated approach to student learning and development through curriculum design, student support programmes and extracurricular activities.

Major Programme

Through the Major Programme in the subject of choice, each student gains specialised knowledge in a chosen discipline, to a level that enables the graduate to pursue relevant careers or postgraduate studies. The depth and focus of study is also an opportunity to develop high-level academic skills. The four-year curriculum allows the systematic inclusion of a capstone course in every Major Programme that provides the opportunity for research and/or internship, or final-year project that can lead to a dissertation.

Faculty Packages

To encourage students to gain exposure to knowledge outside their Major discipline, each Faculty, except the Faculty of Law which offers only one Major Programme, provides a Faculty Package: this allows students to take courses normally worth up to 9 credit units outside their Major but within the Faculty, thus broadening their knowledge beyond their chosen fields of specialisation. Credit units thus earned will count towards students’ Major Requirements.

Minor Programme

In the four-year curriculum, a coherent collection of 18 to 30 units in a discipline can constitute a Minor, and students can take one or more Minor according to their interest and orientation.

University Core

At CUHK there is a long-established tradition for students to pursue not only a specialised or professional discipline, but also to gain an educational experience that will serve to enhance their capacity for life-long learning and competitiveness in the working life. These core skills, comprising numeracy, critical thinking skills and IT literacy, as well as a high level of proficiency in Chinese and English, are developed through courses under the headings of Languages, Information Technology, General Education and Physical Education.

Languages

To ensure that students graduate with a high level of bilingual proficiency, students are required to fulfil the language requirements of 6 credit units in Chinese and 9 credit units in English.

General Education

The General Education programme, applicable to students in all programmes, comprises three components: two General Education Foundation Courses totalling 6 units, 9 units under University General Education and 6 units under College General Education.

Information Technology

Students are required to complete a one-unit IT Foundation course which provides students with basic knowledge of information technology and develops their capability in handling and using digital information.

Physical Education

The Physical Education programme equips students with sports skills and enhances students’ physical fitness, and cultivates students’ generic skills and desirable personal attributes, so that they can attain a whole-person development. The 2-unit Physical Education requirement is to be satisfied by choosing two different term courses from a comprehensive offering of sports items.

Recognition of Qualifications

Students with recognised post-secondary qualifications may, according to the prescribed procedure, apply for admission with Advanced Standing and/or course exemption. Graduation is still subject to the fulfilment of relevant requirements.

For details of the four-year undergraduate curriculum, please refer to the University’s website at www.cuhk.edu.hk/334/english/index.html.