



# PHILLIPS CAREER SCHOOL INTERNATIONAL

Providing a more experiential and student-centered education system

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## **Welcome to Phillips Career School International**

Dear students, parents, teachers, members of our board and partners,

What a tremendously and exciting and gratifying year 2018 was. I graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Agricultural Engineering from EARTH University - Costa Rica, at God loves Kids in Uganda, we inaugurated special needs program – New Generation Care Center, Community

Development Initiative to help widows and New Generation Church to minister to people in Lutembe which makes a year of history with GLK alumni, students, donors and friends of our school, a dream all of you have been part of.

In preparation for the inauguration of Phillips Career School International (PCSI) next year 2020 in Uganda, through the programs already going on at our campus we are able to confirm that the hard work done through your support and community transformation by our team in Uganda, PCSI has earned the respect and admiration of the Lutembe (Wakiso), Entebbe and Kampala community and media.

We are glad to setup PCSI a not-for-profit, international school dedicated to education in practical and student-centered skills like business, agricultural practices and natural resource management in order to contribute to the development of skilled personnel and employment opportunities in Uganda. We have a vision to make our children confident, creative and innovative builders of their future. Our focus is on providing a student-centered education system that addresses student's unique learning styles. We work toward an integrated curriculum that reaches across multi-disciplinary educational programs; the students are encouraged to meet academic, economic and social challenges with openness, enthusiasm, and a willingness to solve problems. We strive to have our parents, teachers, and community members actively involved on our students' learning.

Bringing together PCSI, alumni and other friends of the school, is very important in finding possible solutions to Uganda and global problems. More than ever, PCSI will work to preserve our natural resources, finding ways to feed an ever-growing population and working together to solve problems in a peaceful manner. We hope the students that will pass through our classes will be able to generate this transformation.

It is my honor to be the principal of PCSI and I want to thank you for giving me this life opportunity to guide PCSI's work starting this year. I am very certain that PCSI will be an instrument in solving challenges that face humankind and fulfilling its mission of promoting a more experiential and student-centered education system that will produce innovative, flexible and socially committed citizens.

Best regards

**Alex Kyeyune**, Principal

PHILLIPS CAREER SCHOOL INTERNATIONAL

# Introduction



This document is prepared in order to communicate openly to our school leaders, partners, teachers, students and parents what sits in the soul of PCSI.

**We prepare our students for life, helping them develop an informed curiosity and a lasting passion for learning.**

We have an integrated curriculum that focuses on our students' **learning**, with a wide choice of subjects and flexible ways to offer them. PCSI inspires students to love self-learning, helping them **find** new abilities and a wider world. And we help students develop the skills they need for life, and **achieve** at the school, University and work.

Our work is informed by research and implemented by a practical experience working team with schools, business and governments worldwide. We are the only school that is skeptical about the future of our alumni that is why we offer our life, time, money and available resources to walk with students in their **career preparation**.

Our global community and network of both private and government institutions benefits our students to connect global to universities, and employers worldwide.



We are a not-for-profit International school, so we devote our resources to unlock students' potential, and contribute to their communities and countries through the pursuit of education, learning, research, and entrepreneurship at the highest level.

## An aligned education system

We believe education works best when **curriculum, teaching, learning** and **assessment** are closely aligned. That belief inspired to design each aspect of PCSI.

Alignment stems from knowing what we want students to learn, understanding how we will know that learning has happened, and encouraging teaching and learning approaches that support it.



# International Curriculum

We are committed to providing a highly personalized curriculum, rigorous academics, and co-curricular activities that provide the foundation for our students' advancement.

For many students, practical classes are a time when their interests evolve and they begin to define themselves, discover their passions, and learn new concepts that shape the young adults they become. Phillips Career School International understands the impact of a well-designed academic experience that encompasses a foundation in experiential learning and soft skills, provides opportunities for students to get involved before and after school, and creates a positive environment that supports students learning.

We have therefore laid out three crucial things we want our student to develop; Deep subject knowledge, conceptual understanding and higher order of thinking.

## **Deep subject knowledge, conceptual understanding and higher order of thinking skills**

We believe in the intrinsic value of studying a subject in depth. Andreas Schleicher (2017), Director for Education and Skills, OECD

mentioned that 'In top performing education systems the curriculum is not mile-wide and inch-deep, but tends to be rigorous – that is, provides a high level of cognitive demand. It's also more focused – with a few things that are taught well and in great depth and in a way that is coherent.'

**Deep subject knowledge** is important in order to develop the ability to solve problems, to apply understanding to new situations and to enable learners to progress to the next stage. It's especially important at PCSI secondary level because most students aspire to go to university, where deep subject understanding is so vital.

Regular consultation with leading higher education institutions (including EARTH University, Makerere University Business School, Wageningen University and Research, CATIE, Colorado State University, and University of Colorado, Watson institute, Educate! Uganda, Asheshi, Africa Leadership Academy, St. Vrain Valley Schools) has informed our work to make sure our syllabuses and encourage learners to develop their conceptual understanding and developing the skills they need to succeed before and after school.

We see key concepts as essential ideas that help learners develop a deep understanding of their subject and make links between different aspects. Key concepts can often transform a student's comprehension of their subject, and open new ways of thinking about, understanding or interpreting the important things to be learned. Good teaching and learning incorporate and reinforce a subject's key concepts to help learners gain:

- greater depth and breadth of subject knowledge
- confidence, especially in applying knowledge and skills in new situations
- fluency to talk about their subject conceptually and show how different aspects link together
- a level of mastery of their subject to help them enter higher education.

As well as encouraging students to develop **higher order thinking skills** within subject disciplines – problem solving, critical thinking, independent research, collaboration, presenting arguments – we believe students need to work effectively across disciplines. This ability is important not only for getting into university but for getting on in life. And the transferable skills students develop in perspectives reinforce their understanding and skills within subject disciplines.

## Progression

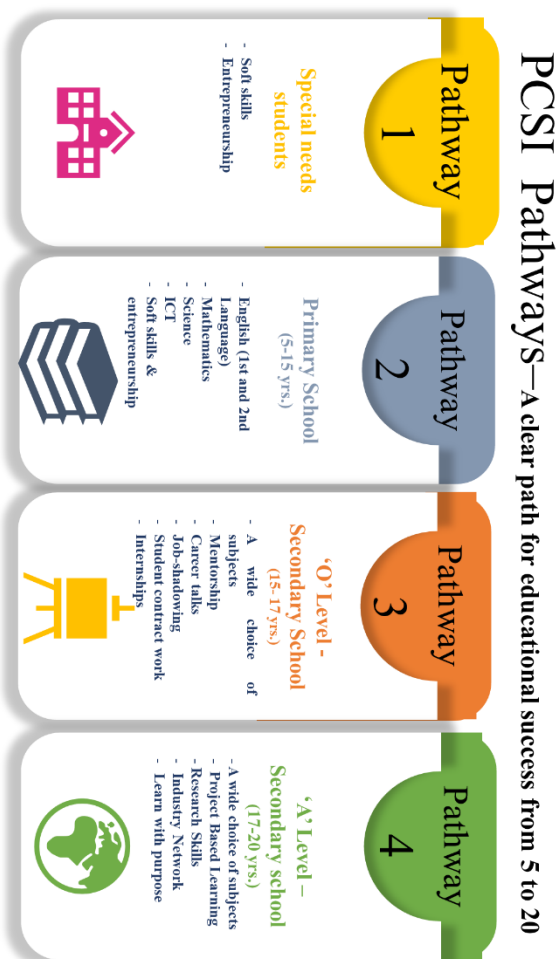
We offer a coherent curriculum with clear progression at each stage, for students aged 5 to 20. We identify clearly what we want students to learn at each stage.

At each stage, students build on their previous learning – a spiral approach that reinforce what students have learned, while at the same time taking them forward. We design each syllabus with this spiral approach in mind.

## Multilingual education

We value multilingualism and believe that there are many benefits to being bilingual or multilingual – for students, society and schools.

We see every learner as a language learner. Language plays an important role in the school curriculum, either as a subject or as a medium of teaching and learning. Similarly, every teacher is a language teacher, and helps students learn the language they need to succeed in their non-language subjects.



At PCSI, we support and partner with different organizations to implement bilingual education. Professional development in multilingual education benefits all students not only academically during childhood, but also cognitively, socially, and linguistically across the lifespan. Phil Phillips once commented that *“Increasing the availability and accessibility of multilingual education could be an asset now to Ugandan students, as well as in the long-run as these students enter an increasingly more global society and economy.”*





# Teaching and learning

We design PCSI programs to support the development of learners who are **confident, responsible, reflective, innovative and engaged** – PCSI students' attributes

Both parents in Uganda and PCSI staff are very skeptical about the future of our children. In 2018 during our board meeting in Texas we asked ourselves; what are our goals for students when they leave school? This question was the starting point for development and designing the five students' attributes with the purpose of developing powerful and highly desirable habits that will inspire students to love learning. This will help all our students to achieve success in school, higher education, the workplace and life in general.

Learning habits define how students approach situations, environments and challenges. They consist of a combination of values, attitudes, knowledge, skills and strategies. They also undertake competence, which is the skilled and appropriate application of the attribute. In isolation, these attributes are not new. Most education professionals see developing them as part of their job. But in setting out the PCSI students' attributes, we have created a list of desirable outcomes intended to encourage teachers, parents and mentors to support these habits since they all participate in students' learning.

## Learning to learn

According to Center for Teaching & Learning, UC Berkeley, learning is a process that is:

- 1- **is active** - process of engaging and manipulating objects, experiences, and conversations in order to build mental models of the world. Learners build knowledge as they explore the world around them, observe and interact with experiences, converse and engage with others, and make connections between new ideas and prior understandings.
- 2- **builds on prior knowledge** - and involves enriching, building on, and changing existing understanding, where one's knowledge base is a platform that supports the construction of all future learning."
- 3- **occurs in a complex social environment** - and thus should not be limited to being examined or perceived as something that happens on an individual level. Instead, it is necessary to think of learning as a social activity involving people, the things they use, the



words they speak, the cultural context they're in, and the actions they take, and that knowledge is built by members in the activity.

- 4- **is situated in an authentic context** - provides learners with the opportunity to engage with specific ideas and concepts on a need-to-know or want-to-know basis.
- 5- **requires learners' motivation and cognitive engagement** to be sustained when learning complex ideas, because considerable mental effort and persistence are necessary.

Research shows that engaging students in their own learning for example, via **metacognition** and **active learning** improves outcomes. As the PCSI students' attributes suggest, we encourage students to reflect on their learning, so they can articulate where they are in the learning process, and plan and control their learning strategies. The PCSI students' attributes also provide a

cross-curricular language and set of expectations for all students and teachers to engage with.

**Metacognition** describes the processes involved when learners plan, monitor, evaluate and make changes to their own learning behaviors. The 'meta' refers to higher order cognition about cognition, or 'thinking about thinking'. Metacognition helps students become independent learners. It has a positive impact on learning, over and above the influence of intellectual ability.

For PCSI, **active learning** fosters understanding, rather than memorized learning. Students can apply this understanding to diverse contexts and problems. Active learning fosters students' learning and their autonomy, giving them great involvement and control over their learning and giving them skills for lifelong learning.

## PCSI students' attributes

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### **Confident in working with information and ideas – their own and those of others**

PCSI students are confident, secure in their knowledge, unwilling to take things for granted and ready to take intellectual risks. They are keen to explore and evaluate ideas and arguments in a structured, critical and analytical way. They are able to communicate and defend views and opinions as well as respect those of others.

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### **Responsible for themselves, responsive to and respectful of others**

PCSI students take ownership of their learning, set targets and insist on intellectual integrity. They are collaborative and supportive. They understand that their actions have impacts on others and on the environment.

They appreciate the importance of culture, context and community.

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### **Reflective as learners, developing their ability to learn**

PCSI students understand themselves as learners. They are concerned with the processes as well as the products of their learning and develop the awareness and strategies to be lifelong learners.

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### **Innovative and equipped for new and future challenges**

PCSI students welcome new challenges and meet them resourcefully, creatively and imaginatively. They are capable of applying their knowledge and understanding to solve new and unfamiliar problems. They can adapt flexibly to new situations requiring new ways of thinking.

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### **Engaged intellectually and socially, ready to make a difference**

PCSI students are living with curiosity, express a spirit of enquiry and want to know more deeply. They are keen to learn new skills and are receptive to new ideas. They work well independently but also with others. They are equipped to participate positively in society and the economy – locally, nationally and globally.

## **Helping teachers improve**

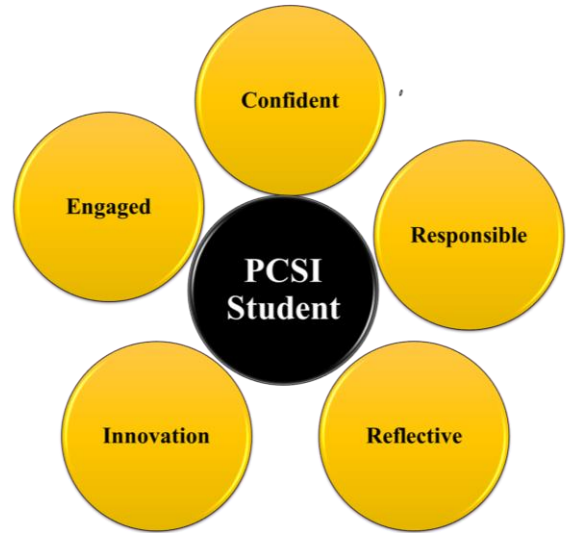
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PCSI supports teachers to become:

- **confident** in teaching their subject and engaging each student in learning
- **responsible** for themselves, responsive to and respectful of others
- **reflective** as learners themselves, developing their practice
- **innovative** and equipped for new and future challenges
- **engaged** intellectually, professionally and socially, ready to make a difference.

Research found out that the most important factor in improving student outcomes is good teaching. Teaching, and matching the teaching approach to the needs of students, is clearly the responsibility of our school. Different schools work in different contexts, and they know what is best for their students and teachers. An important part of our mission, therefore, is to help teachers develop their own classroom practice.

Our professional development is designed to reflect that, so that it can help teachers in a variety of educational contexts improve their performance and practice – and therefore improve student outcomes – throughout their careers. Teachers and school leaders need to develop their professional thinking and practice continuously. That is why we invest heavily in providing a variety of high-quality, affordable routes for professional development.



# Assessment

We recognize that assessment has two important roles: to prove – to prove what students are learning, and to suggest how they can improve their understanding and skills.

Good assessment is at the heart of a good education. When we design our assessment, our starting point is what we want students to develop: deep subject knowledge, conceptual understanding, and higher level thinking skills.

## Fair, valid and reliable

Our assessments enable effective differentiation of student performance, across cohorts and over time. Our assessment program is designed to be fair, valid, reliable and practicable.

- **Fair:** all our students sit exams in the same conditions in a very conducive environment.
- **Valid:** Our assessment assesses what it is intended to assess with the aim of discovering our students' potentials and weaknesses in order to lay grounds for help/improvement.
- **Reliable:** If any student takes the test today, a week from now and a month from now, the results will be the same, if the results are inconsistent, the test is not considered reliable.

- **Practicable:** an exam that our teachers can stage without excessive arrangements; and students can reasonably sit the exam for not long period.

## Assessment of learning

Assessment of learning at the end of a program of study can provide valuable evidence of a student's achievement. It also provides focus, pace, motivation and challenge to learner during their course of study.

This assessment plays an important role both in the student selection for next steps in education, University, and employment and accountability that is why we make sure all our assessments are fair, valid, reliable and practicable.

We have designed a summative assessment program of learning that can strongly influence what happens in the classroom and teachers can maximize their time for teaching creating more time to engage students' interests and support their development through assessment for learning. This will continue to help students to

develop a strong grasp of each subject, which will shape their future professional life.

Students have more time to revisit and understand topics and concepts, so they can go beyond cramming for the exams/ test, and really retain what they have learned. PCSI believes that retaining learning is essential not only for generating new ideas and solutions, but also making connections across subject disciplines.

We put student's learning first and has a significant improvement on students' performance in exams and daily life.

Our curriculum frameworks and syllabuses, with learning and assessment objectives, help teachers at different levels of experience, point students to what they need to focus on. Our programs help students and teachers assess progress and provide feedback on strengths and weakness in all subjects. We support teachers' own learning about via our online course, subject-based training and all other professional development programs available in the country and abroad.

### **WORK IN PROGRESS**

- Construction and renovation of school building
- Installation of water system
- Preparation of playground/ sports center
- Laboratory preparation
- School farm planning

