

Chapter 91: Vietnam



The International School Ho Chi Minh City

[The International School of Ho Chi Minh City](#) was founded in 1993. It is non-denominational, co-educational and multicultural. The school serves the expatriate and local business community. It is accredited by the Council of International Schools. ISHCMC is an IB World School.

The student population is approximately 850; 60% of those do not speak English as their first language. 34 nationalities are represented in the student body. The largest blocks of students come from Korea, Vietnam, the USA, Australia, and Taiwan. Class sizes vary from 20-24 students. There are 79 expatriate teachers on the staff; the majorities are from Australia and the United Kingdom. The average length of stay is 3-4 years.

Mission

The mission of ISHCMC is to provide an education that centers around developing the whole child and nurturing each child's abilities.

Facilities

The school is located in a purpose built campus in a suburb of Ho Chi Minh City. The facilities include: a library with internet connections for the computers there, a 25 meter swimming pool, a court that can be used for basketball and volleyball, a soccer field, 6 computer rooms with networked computers, 4 science labs, 4 art rooms, a drama studio, music rooms, an adventure playground, an indoor multi-purpose room, a canteen, a medical clinic.

Curriculum

As an IB World School using the IB program at all levels, the curriculum has the trademarks of the program such as an integrated approach that features an inquiry-based education. Language development is emphasized and there is a community service emphasis in the school. ISHCMC has a five-year curriculum review cycle. The school uses specialist teachers for art, music, IT, library skills and PE.

Extra Curricular Activities

Additionally the school supports a variety of extracurricular activities such as sports, drama, and field trips as part of their belief in developing the whole child. Teachers are expected to fully participate in these activities.

Technology

There are six labs and a teachers' workroom. All computers are PCs and are wireless ready. Computers are also found in the library and in individual classrooms. The art rooms have computers, scanners, and color printers.



Professional Development

ISHCMC emphasizes professional development especially as it relates to IB requirements. There are extensive in-house development activities. A stipend of up to \$800 is available to each teacher for approved professional development activities.

Employment

If you want to find a school that really makes their expectations of teachers clear, you should check out the

school [website](#). They have five pages on recruitment. I am only summarizing what is available on the website.

While ISHCMC is an IB World School, and they would prefer teachers with experience in IB, it is not essential. Candidates need to be certified in their home countries and have a minimum of two-years teaching experience. Candidates should also be in agreement with the school's philosophy of educating the whole child. This includes using the IB teaching methodology of inquiry.

Housing is provided in within walking distance of the school in serviced apartments. Access to satellite television and Internet is available. The housing complex that most teachers live in has a pool, laundry, supermarket, gym and tennis court.

The school website notes that the school is looking for teachers with these qualities:

- *have a child centered approach to teaching and learning*
- *want to work in a stimulating professional environment*
- *expect high academic standards*
- *are excited by learning and implementing new ideas in their classrooms*
- *have a deep knowledge of their subject and area of instruction*
- *motivate students*
- *employ a wide range of assessment strategies*
- *are IT literate and proficient in curriculum integration.*
- *differentiate for learning needs and a high % of EAL students in class*
- *value the importance of clear and regular communication with parents*
- *are happy to accept the challenges that a developing Asian city presents*
- *have a tolerance of frustration, as things do not always go smoothly*
- *are flexible and willing to change what they were comfortable with in the past*
- *are happy to live closely with the people they work with*
- *are able to accept constructive feedback and high levels of accountability*
- *can work collaboratively to achieve common goals*
- *are life-long learners themselves*
- *embrace the philosophy and mission of the International Baccalaureate.*

Benefits: Competitive tax paid salary, flight, freight, housing, and health insurance.

The school attends ISS, Search and CIS recruitment fairs. Interested candidates should send a letter of interest along with a resume to the Headmaster. Replies to shortlist candidates only.

About Vietnam

Vietnam has a tropical climate with two monsoon seasons. The temperatures in HCMC are generally in the 25-31 degrees range.

Ho Chi Minh City is a relatively safe city. It has interesting architecture and is a great place to wander around in. There are various bars and restaurants that are popular with the expatriate crowd. This is a great city to wander around in although the traffic can be quite daunting. I'd love to live here for a few years.

Saigon South International School

[Saigon South International School](#) is another option for those folks who want to live and work in Saigon. SSIS is accredited by WASC and is a member of EARCOS and MRISA (Mekong River International School Association).

SSIS is a college preparatory Pre-school to Grade 12 private school that uses an American style curriculum. Students work in an inquiry, project based environment and teachers use a variety of instructional techniques to help students achieve.

SSIS has a 10:1 student-teacher ratio.

Mission

The mission of SSIS is to prepare students intellectually and personally to live a good life as a global citizen.

Facilities

SSIS is located in the new city center of Ho Chi Minh City – Saigon South. The campus is a new, state of the art facility with large classrooms, art rooms, a media center, 3 computer labs, a cafeteria, a music center, a library, science labs, a dance studio, a double size gym, and an Olympic sized swimming pool. Additionally there are playgrounds and sports fields outside the classrooms.

Curriculum

SSIS use an American style curriculum with is standards based and is a fusion of American and international standards for the content areas. SSIS believes that the use of benchmarks and standards ensures that students will study an integrated, sequenced curriculum.

As you might well expect, the core courses are mathematics, science, social studies and language arts. Specialist subjects are art, music, PE, host country studies, library, computer integration, and swimming. An education at SSIS will prepare students for entrance into universities around the world. SSIS offers AP courses for High School Students.



Extra Curricular Activities

SSIS has Balance in Life as one of their core values. Their extra curricular activities are a manifestation of that belief. Activities are offered throughout the year and include sports such as basketball, softball, volleyball, swimming, soccer and cross-country. SSIS is a member of MRISA and they take part in international competitions sponsored by that organization. In addition to sports, students can also take part in activities such as

cooking, dance, martial arts, music, movie club, book club, debate, and more.

Technology

SSIS is a school that believes in integrating technology throughout the school in order to enhance students' educational experiences. The school has 170-networked computers that are connected to the internet. SSIS adds new computers and new technologies to its supply every year. There are three IT labs. The Media Center, the Science Labs and the library all have computers as well as all classrooms. The school provides technology training for staff and students so that all of them are current with the most recent trends in technology and education.

Professional Development

SSIS is committed to lifelong learning in both staff and students. To this end, they strongly support professional development. PD at SSIS may take the form of local and international workshops, EARCOS conferences, university coursework, AP workshops, and outside consultants. Additionally, the school has a program called Teachers Teaching Teachers Professional Development where faculty shares their skills and knowledge with their colleagues.

Employment

SSIS is looking for candidates with:

- Two years teaching experience
- A passion for excellence
- A positive personality
- A collaborative team player approach
- A flexible attitude
- A commitment to the mission and values of the school

Openings are listed [online](#). Starting salaries run from \$32,500 to \$41,000. Benefits include: housing, travel allowance, relocation allowance, medical insurance, sick leave, personal leave, disability insurance and a professional development allowance. This sounds pretty good.

United Nations International School of Hanoi

[United Nations International School of Hanoi](#) is a non-profit, co-educational day school for students from Discovery (3 year olds) to Grade 12. The school was founded in 1988. UNIS is accredited by the European Council of International Schools and the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. It is an IB World School and is authorized to use all three IB programs.

UNIS has almost 900 students in the school representing 61 nationalities, the largest single group around from Australia. UNIS has 100 full time teachers from 17 countries, the largest group is from Vietnam followed by Korea and the United States.

Mission

The UNIS mission is to inspire students to become lifelong learners who value diversity, work towards excellence and are responsible global citizens.

Facilities

UNIS has a purpose-built campus on 9.2 hectares that was completed in 2004. There are 11 buildings on the campus. The school website has a detailed description of each building. Facilities include: Media and Technology Center, art and music rooms, a playground, sports fields, a 25 meter swimming pool, a library, a nurse's room, a gym, science labs, computer labs, teacher work areas and an amphitheatre.

Curriculum

UNIS follows a traditional organization of Elementary, Middle and High Schools. It is an IB World School so you can read the article in Chapter 2 on the IB for more information. All high school students receive the UNIS High School Diploma, but they may also opt to receive the IB Diploma as well. The curriculum is geared towards international students within the IB framework. UNIS has a curriculum cycle and all areas are reviewed in a five year cycle.

Extra Curricular Activities

UNIS has a full range of extra-curricular activities. These include clubs, sports, art and crafts, and academics. Some examples are: Wolf Cubs, silk screening, drama, ballet, computing, calligraphy, batik, Model United Nations, and gymnastics. Sports and cultural exchanges take place with other international schools in the general region. Sports include: volleyball, soccer, basketball, tennis and swimming.

Technology

Faculty members and students in Grades 10 and 11 are involved in a new 1:1 tablet program. UNIS has plans to expand this to all students in the Middle School and the High School. There are multiple computer labs around the campus; all computers have internet access.



Professional Development

No information is available on the website about professional development.

Employment

The school lists vacancies on its [website](#) along with qualifications necessary. You can also find a new teacher's [manual](#) online as well as a [video](#) about what teaching is like in the school. You can

find out about benefits in the teacher's manual; so definitely read it. The benefits sound really good. You can receive more information at:

Human Resources
United Nations International School of Hanoi
GPO Box 313
Hanoi, Vietnam
Email: jobs@unishanoi.org
Fax: (84 4) 3758 1542

About Hanoi

Hanoi has a population of 4 million. The city has a good infrastructure and development continues as new supermarkets, shopping malls, and telecommunication facilities are being built. The city is a mix of the old and the new.

Hanoi is hot and humid in the summer and cold and damp in the winter. July and August are the hottest months of the year and humidity can be as high as 95%.

You will have more things to do than time to do them in when you live in Hanoi. There are health clubs, sporting facilities, cultural activities, and restaurants and bars. The Vietnamese are very friendly and will welcome your attempts to learn Vietnamese which is a much harder language to learn than it looks like at first as it is a tonal language. My attempts at learning Vietnamese were somewhat frustrating but also quite humorous.

If you have lived in Southeast Asia before, you will feel quite comfortable in Hanoi as many of the little difficulties in life will already be familiar to you. If you haven't lived in Southeast Asia before, just be patient and enjoy the learning experience.