



# Curriculum Review

2013-2014

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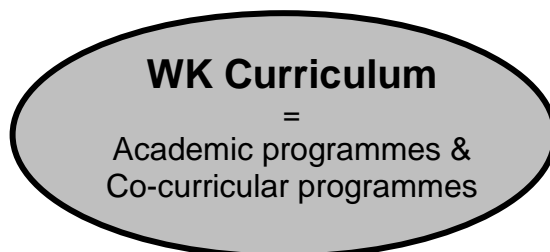
## Introduction

The purpose of this document is to present an outline for the review and development of UWC Waterford Kamhlaba (WK)'s curriculum at the three schools levels: the junior (Forms 1-3), middle (Forms 4-5) and senior (Forms 6-7) school. This document offers a framework to support this process, by articulating the key principles and structure of the WK curriculum and by suggesting a number of future developments which will hopefully trigger school wide discussion and enthusiasm. WK's curriculum review and development is meant to take place throughout 2013 and 2014, with final implementation during the year 2015. This process will include various rounds of consultation, giving teachers, parents and students the opportunity to be actively involved in the sharing of ideas to further shape the WK curriculum.

A decision to review the WK curriculum and engage in a process of development was taken by the WK Governing Council, which showed a desire to strengthen WK's "culture of learning" within the school and to promote the "unboxing" of the curriculum, "by investigating and where appropriate piloting multidisciplinary approaches to teaching and learning both in- and outside of the classroom." The overall aim of this process is to "identify and implement ways of integrating the mission of UWC and WK within the academic framework of the school at all levels." A systematic deliberation of the whole school curriculum is not unique to WK; other UWC's are currently engaging in similar processes. UWC Atlantic College is for instance piloting an ambitious Atlantic College Diploma, which embraces the IB Diploma with a thoroughly devised co-curricular programme. UWC Mahindra College has adopted additional routes towards a UWC Diploma, allowing students to tailor-make their educational programmes through a selection of IB courses, the Cambridge Pre-U Global Perspectives component and a number of school-devised academic seminars and community service involvements.

## Curriculum

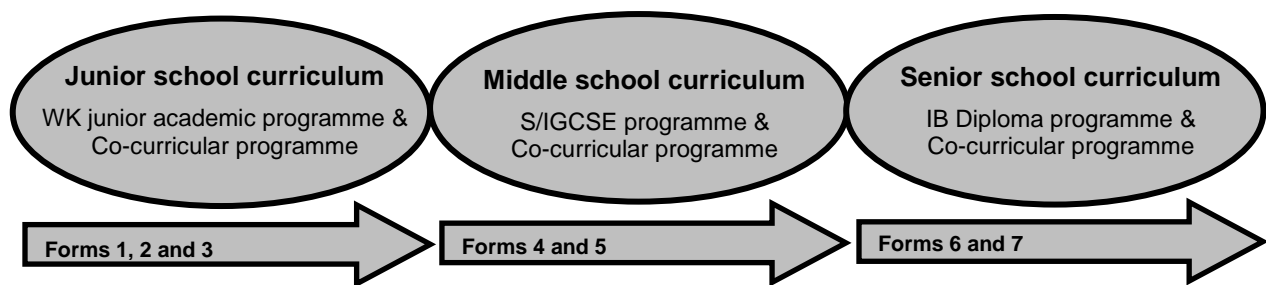
*Curriculum* can be defined in many ways. Following current thinking in education, the term curriculum will refer to all students' learning for which WK takes responsibility. In other words, the WK curriculum refers to all planned learning experiences our students will have while under our care and jurisdiction. This includes both the learning that takes place within the classrooms (subject taught within the formal academic programme) and all learning outside the classroom, during sports and social activities, on school-organized trips and events, on special days and during assemblies, in tutor groups and (for boarding students) in the hostels. For the purpose of clarity, the formal academic part of the curriculum will be referred to as the *academic programme* while the non-academic aspect of the curriculum will be referred to as the *co-curricular programme*.



The WK curriculum builds up as students progress through the three junior school years (Forms 1-3), and continues to develop as they move into the middle school (Forms 4-5) and senior school (Forms 6-7). The academic programmes in each of these school levels are well-defined: the Waterford junior academic programme in Forms 1-3, the S/IGCSE programme in Forms 4-5 and the IB Diploma programme in Forms 6-7. WK’s IB Diploma programme is so well-known that we often refer to the two pre-university years simply as “the IB”, overlooking the fact that the IB Diploma programme is just one aspect (but a very important one indeed) of the larger senior school curriculum.

WK is well aware that many students do not complete the full seven years from Form 1 until graduation in Form 7. This means that the curriculum at each of the three school levels should offer a “full” education. A student going through the three junior school years should have had a comprehensive WK education at the end of Form 3, even if he or she for one or another reason does not return in Form 4. Similarly, students who join us for the two senior school years (such as the many UWC National Committee students) should have experienced a complete WK education by the time they graduate at the end of the two year period.

This means that the WK curriculum should be divided in three separate curricula, one for each school level. Each curriculum should be made up of a coherent academic programme which is deemed appropriate for the school level *and* a coherent co-curricular programme which includes all aspects that are deemed necessary when speaking of a complete and full curriculum.



### **The UWC mission and educational principles**

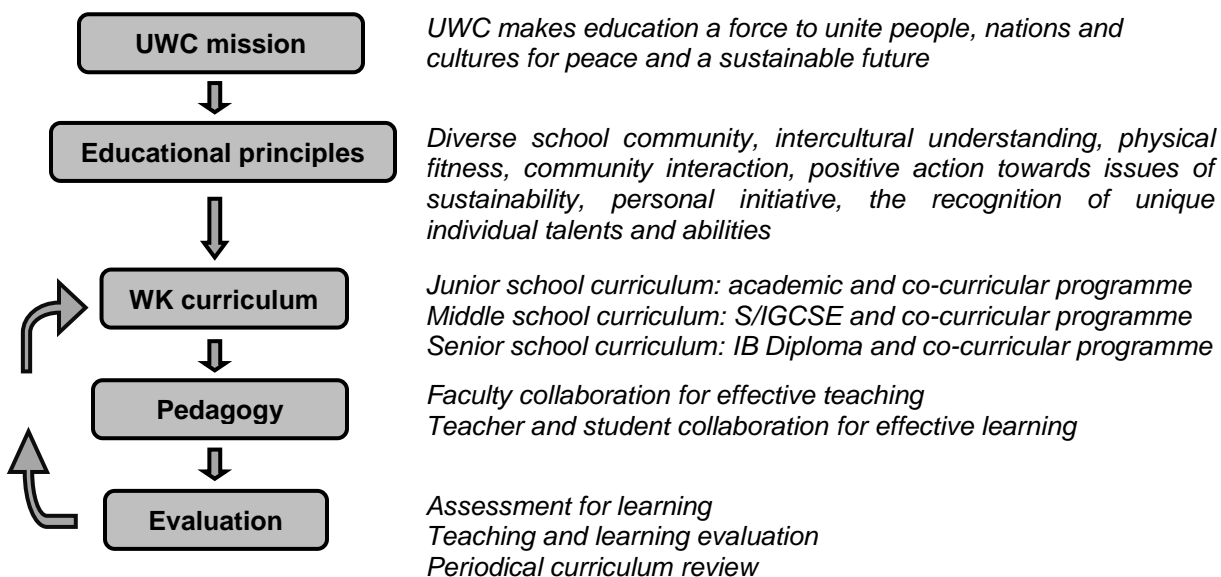
How does one decide on a curriculum’s content? How do we decide which subjects, activities, trips and special days are worthwhile; which ones students must experience in order to call their education a genuine UWC Waterford Kamhlaba education? The basic principles for our education been enshrined in a mission statement that determines the nature of the academic and co-curricular programmes throughout the UWC family of schools and colleges:

*UWC makes education a force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future.*

UWC schools and colleges offer life defining experiences for young people, enabling them to discover the possibility of change through personal example and leadership. A UWC education enshrines a commitment to the balanced development of the whole person and encourages an integrated development of human potential across a range of different dimensions, including the intellectual, moral, aesthetic, emotional, social, spiritual and physical. These educational foundations have led to the formulation of the following seven principles:

- (1) That a UWC education should take place within a ***diverse school community***. The selection of students should ensure representation from regions and social groups that reflect the wide range of tensions among and between peoples.
- (2) That a UWC education requires active promotion of ***intercultural understanding*** and the development of genuine concern for others founded on shared life experiences, and cooperative and collaborative living. This includes reflective dialogue on global issues and critical and courageous engagement in the pursuit of peace.
- (3) That ***physical fitness*** and a healthy lifestyle are integral to the balanced development of the whole person.
- (4) That ***community interaction*** is placed at the heart of school life. This requires the full and active participation of all members of the school.
- (5) That students are able to engage in continuing, ***positive action towards issues of sustainability***, on both an institutional and individual level.
- (6) That opportunities for students to practice ***personal initiative***, self-discipline and responsibility, to manage risk and embrace challenge must be provided.
- (7) That recognition is given to the fact that ***each individual possesses unique talents and abilities***. Programmes should exist in each UWC to enable all selected students to fulfill their potential.

The UWC mission statement and educational principles offer clear expectations for the development of a contextualized curriculum in each UWC school or college. It lays out a large number of ideals and ideas without prescribing exactly how WK should implement these in our calendar and timetable, how much time should be decided to the pursuit of these ideals, and what practical programmes should be designed to put the mission and educational principles into practice. These are curriculum decisions to be made by each UWC school community. The design of such a school curriculum triggers a number of pedagogical questions that deal with the nature of teaching and learning in the school. What teaching methods should teachers adopt, how do we want students to learn, and how do we assess and evaluate that students are learning well? Deliberating these pedagogical questions will be an ongoing process, which, as the model below shows, again informs the development of the curriculum.



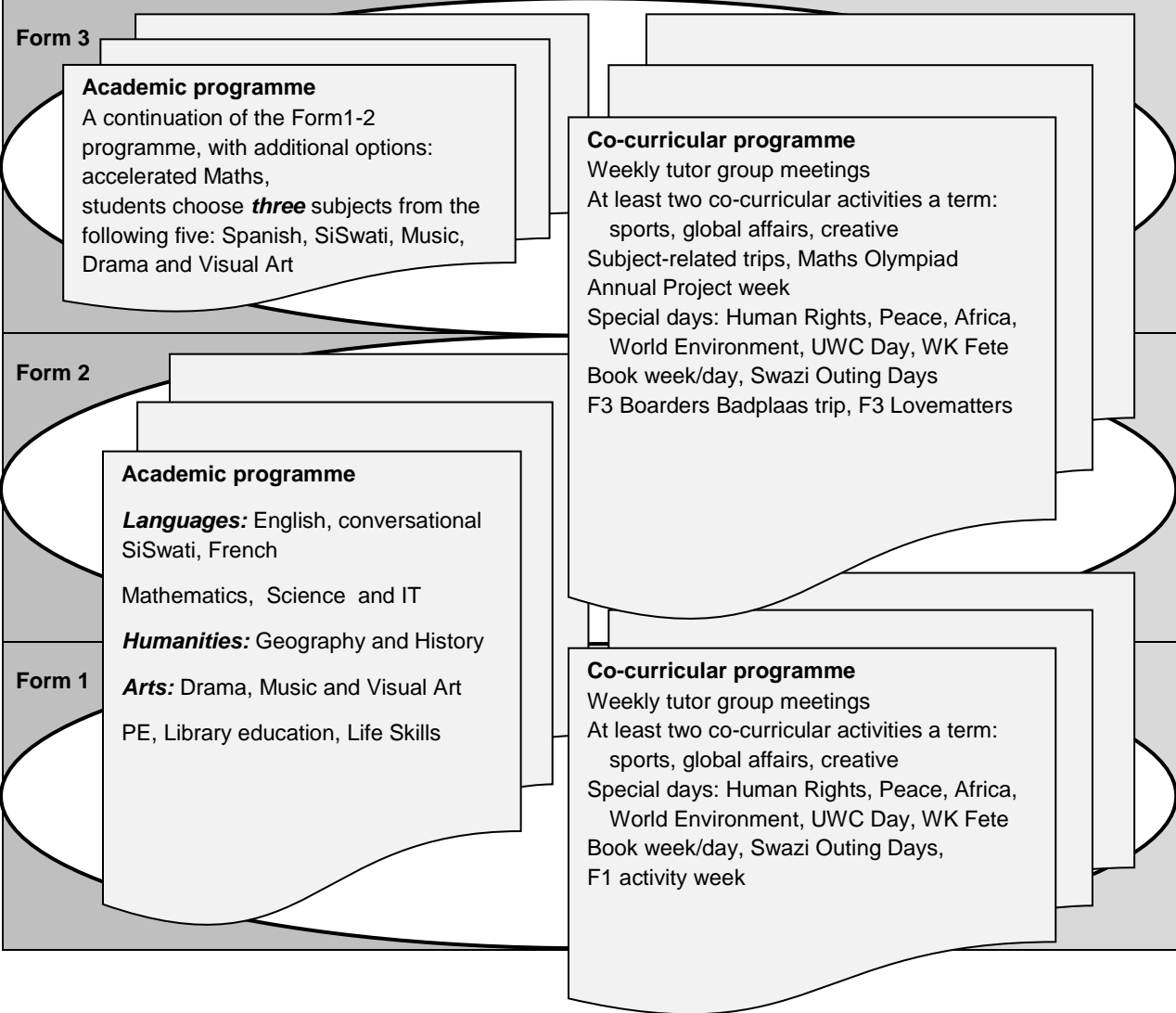
## Curriculum review

As mentioned above, the UWC mission statement and educational principles offer clear expectations for the development of a contextualized curriculum at WK. In order to review how well the school is doing in this regard and how we might be able to continue developing our curriculum, it might be worthwhile to first map our current curricula at each of the three school levels.

The next three models present “mappings” of the current WK curricula at the junior, middle and senior school level. The Academic Coordinators will use these mappings to review the three school curricula in the first two terms of 2013. The following question will guide this process:

1. How well do we balance the academic and the co-curricular programmes? Do we dedicate enough time to both? Are we satisfied that both programmes receive enough dedicated time and energy?
2. How does the curriculum relate to the UWC mission and seven principles? Are there any elements missing or only meagerly represented? How can this be improved?
3. Do we have the appropriate staff to teach our curriculum effectively? Are there any obvious knowledge/skills gaps? Do we offer sufficient professional development in this regard? Is the workload evenly distributed among teachers and other staff? Can and should this be improved?
4. What mechanisms does WK have in place to know if we are achieving our objectives? Are these sufficient? Can they be strengthened?

**Current junior school curriculum**



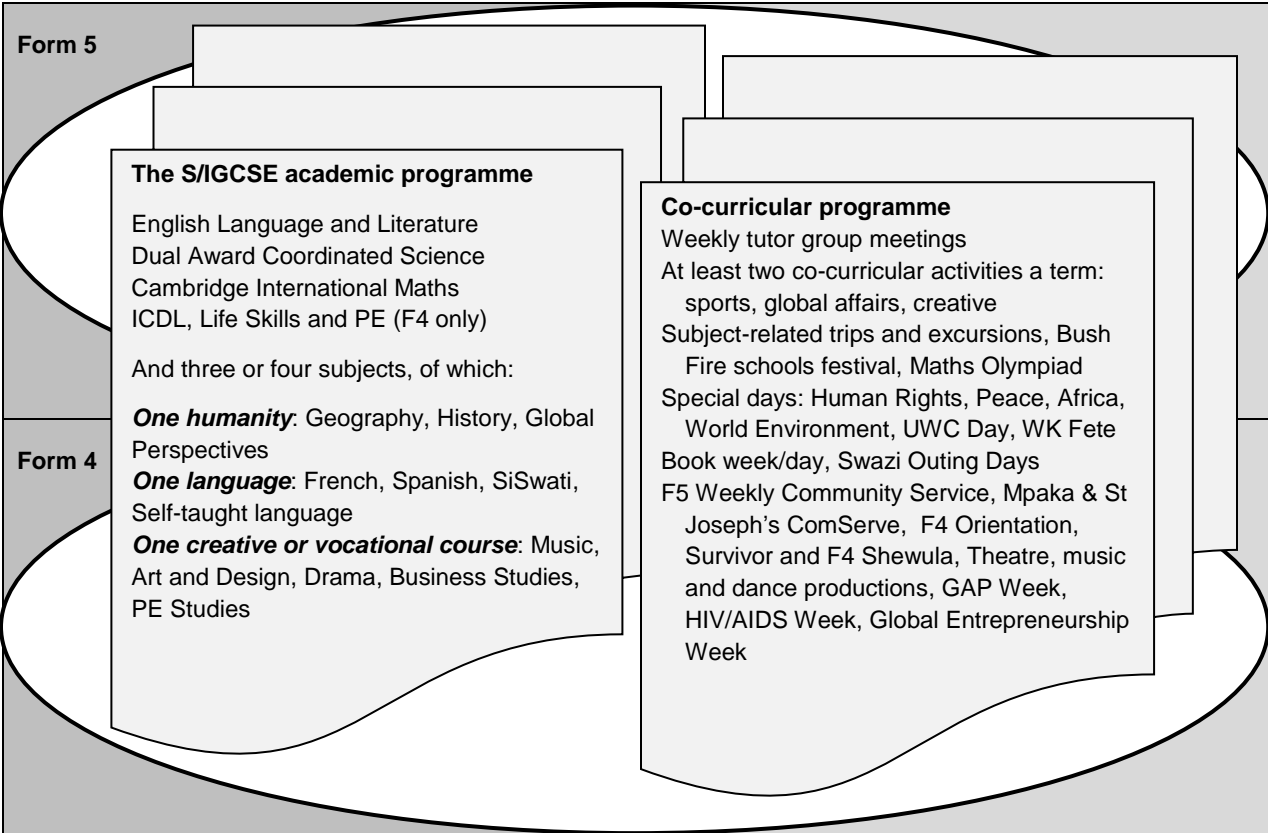
**Strengths and weaknesses**

*(to be reviewed in 2013)*

**Scope for development**

*(to be reviewed in 2013)*

**Current middle school curriculum**



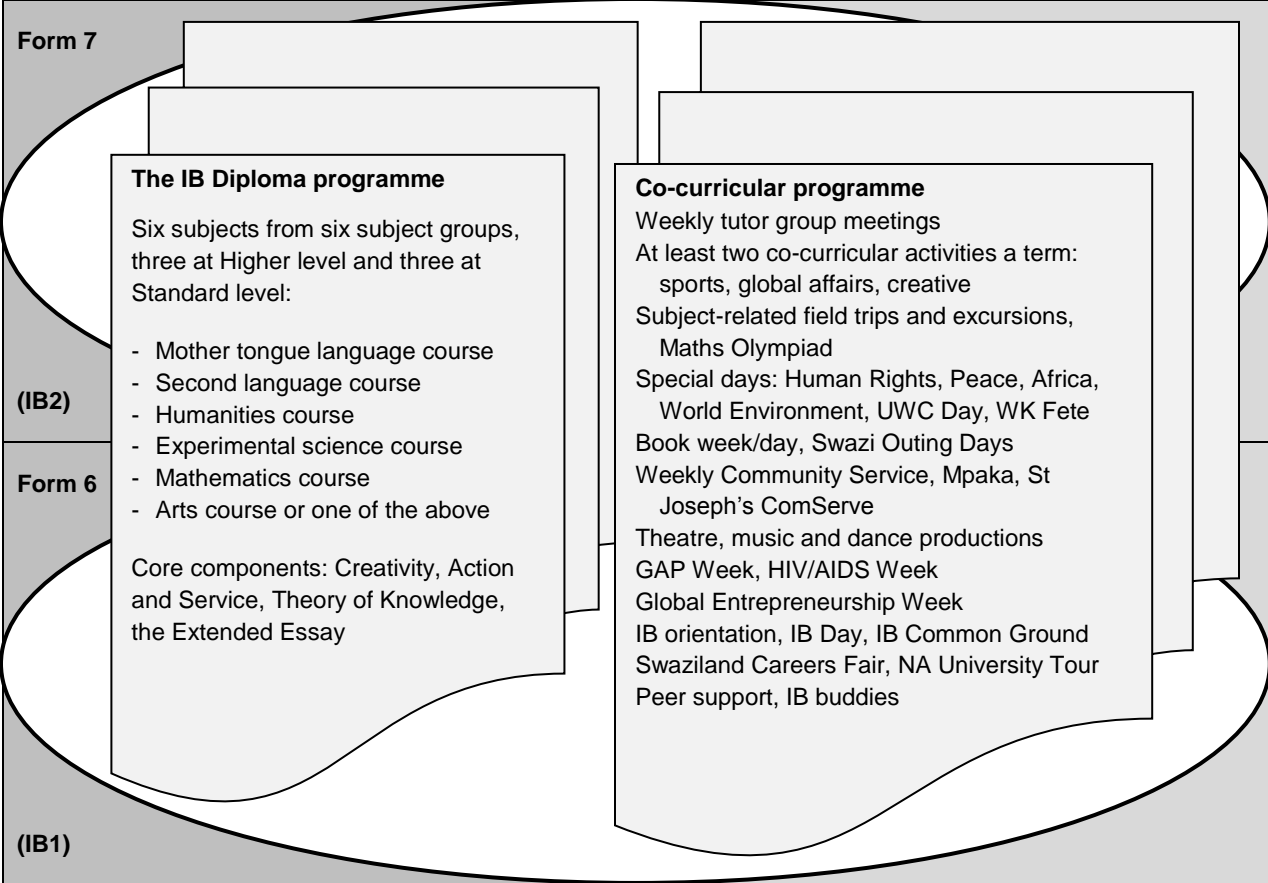
**Strengths and weaknesses**

*(to be reviewed in 2013)*

**Scope for development**

*(to be reviewed in 2013)*

**Current senior school curriculum**



**Strengths and weaknesses**

*(to be reviewed in 2013)*

**Scope for development**

*(to be reviewed in 2013)*