



FCBESCOLA  
HONG KONG  
香港巴塞足球學校

**THE PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALLER  
PREPARATORY PROGRAM**

**at the**

**YAN CHAI HOSPITAL  
TUNG CHI YING MEMORIAL SECONDARY SCHOOL**

**“GREATNESS ISN’T BORN. IT’S GROWN.”**  
*- The Talent Code by Daniel Coyle*

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*Note: PDF files of both the English and Chinese versions of this document may be downloaded from [www.ychtcy.edu.hk](http://www.ychtcy.edu.hk) after 10 May, 2010.*



## 1. Introduction

This is a program developed jointly by Kitchee (Sports Management) Ltd. (“Kitchee”) and Yan Chai Hospital Tung Chi Ying Memorial Secondary School (“TCY”) for the establishment and operation of the Professional Footballer Preparatory Program (the “PFP Program”) with the purpose of implementing an educational infrastructure for developing professional football players for Hong Kong.

Following the gold medal performance by the Hong Kong East Asian Football Team (with 5 TCY graduates) and the recent release of the consultancy paper on the future development of Hong Kong Football by the Home Affairs Bureau, there is a ground swell of public interests for Hong Kong football to succeed.

Our Program is based on the principle that “expert performance requires 10,000 hours of *deep practice*”<sup>1</sup>, where “*deep practice*” is defined to be a level of training operating at the edges of one’s abilities, a critical point at which mistakes are made and corrected in continuous training cycles.

While TCY’s football training has been very successful in producing the excellent results in the inter-school Jing Ying football tournament year-after-year, our “football graduates” such as Au Yeung Yiu Chung (歐陽耀冲), Ip Chun Long (葉頌朗) and others required intermediate programs such as HK08 or reserve team training before they reached first-division standard in Hong Kong. The reason is that the football training delivered to our TCY footballers is based on extra-curricular programs, providing only about 1,200 to 1,500 hours of *deep practice* through the six years of secondary school. Even with the combination of current youth programs from the Hong Kong Football Association (“HKFA”), the “*deep practice hours*” are far below the optimum target. The quality of training is also uncertain as almost all football programs do not use any structured training curriculum or methodology in Hong Kong at this time.

## 2. The Incompatibility between Academic Studies and Talents Development in Sports

One of the major reasons why Hong Kong has not enjoyed sporting success in major team sports is that the education curriculum in secondary schools caters to the needs of the students preparing for higher education, without any consideration for students with special talents in sports who aspire to have professional sporting careers. In football, it is almost impossible for a talented student to have profession-oriented training during the school years.

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<sup>1</sup> (1) Ericsson, K. A., Charness, N., Feltovich, P., & Hoffman, R. (2006). *Cambridge handbook of expertise and expert performance*. New York: Cambridge University Press. (2) Ericsson, K. A., & Charness, N. (1994). Expert performance: Its structure and acquisition. *American Psychologist*, 49(8), 725-47. (3) Howe, M., Davidson, J., & Sloboda, J. (1998). Innate talents: Reality or myth. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 21, 399-407. (4) Ericsson, K. A. (1996). *The road to excellence: The acquisition of expert performance in the arts and sciences, sports, and games*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.



The PFP Program removes the competition for the talented students' time between academic studies and professional football development. It is equally important to note that the PFP Program will balance the goals of studying and professional football development, NOT by forcing a choice of one goal over the other by the students or their parents. Indeed, it creates for the first time a compatibility of these two objectives concurrently in a secondary school program.

### 3. The PFP Program Details

As part of Kitchee, FCBEscola Hong Kong (香港巴塞足球學校) currently provides free-of-charge elite football training for over 200 selected boys starting from age 6. TCY has reached an agreement with Kitchee that the two parties will jointly establish and operate a special-purpose career-oriented program at the TCY School to link up with the existing Kitchee youth development programs to deliver the 10,000 hours of deep practice for aspiring football stars, together with the world-class curriculum from FC Barcelona by technical director(s) accredited from FC Barcelona as well.

In the process, the PFP Program will meet all the requirements of the Education Bureau concerning the teaching hours of all major subjects. The subjects and number of lessons for each level are as follows:

Subject	Number of lesson		
	F.1	F.2	F.3
Chinese	7	6	6
English	7	8	8
Mathematics	5	5	5
Liberal Studies	4	4	4
Integrated Science	4	4	4
Computer Literacy	2	2	2
Putonghua	1	1	1
Spanish	2	2	-
P.A.T.H./Music	-	-	1
Design Fundamentals	-	-	2
Physical Education	-	-	2
Enhancement Class	1	1	1
Total (hours)	33(22)	33(22)	36(24)

Subject	Number of lesson		
	F.4	F.5	F.6
Chinese	8	8	8
English	8	8	8
Mathematics	6	6	6
Liberal Studies	6	6	6
Integrated Subjects (1)	5	5	5
Integrated Subjects (2): P.E.	3	3	3



Total (hours)	36(24)	36(24)	36(24)
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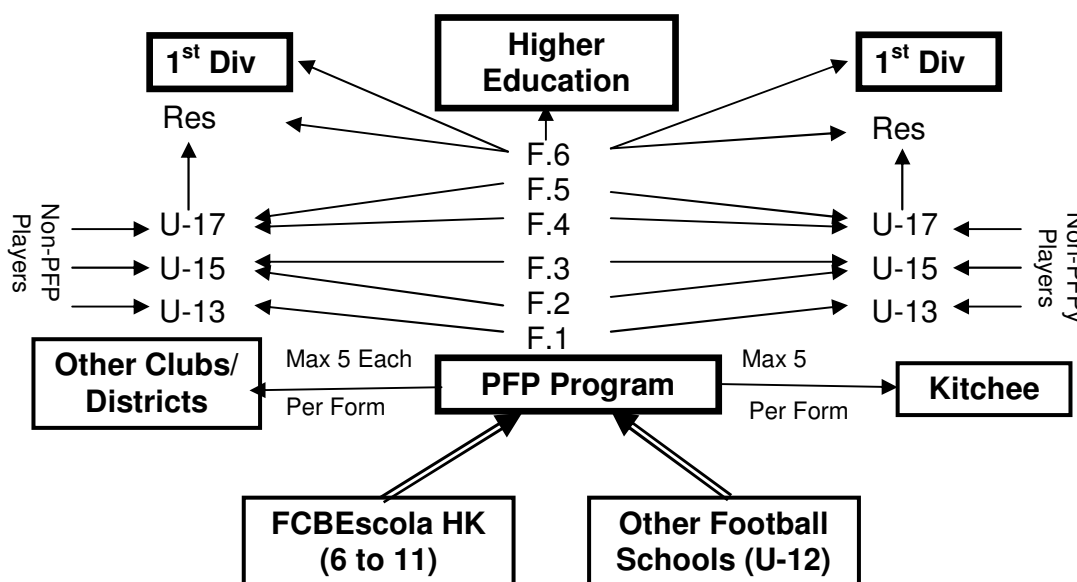
The proposed program provides the following number of hours of in-school football training per week:

	School-hour Football Training	Extracurricular Football Training	Total In-school Football Training
F.1 – F.2	8 Hours/Week	4 Hours/Week	12 Hours/Week
F.3 – F.4	6 Hours/Week	6 Hours/Week	12 Hours/Week
F.5 – F.6	6 Hours/Week	6 Hours/Week	12 Hours/Week

Given that the TCY school schedule runs for 30 hours a week, the students enrolled in the PFP Program will undergo 22 hours of grammar school education in F.1 and F.2, and 24 hours from F.3 to F.6.

The PFP Program aims to enrol 25 to 30 students in F.1, and 20 for each of F.2 to F.6. A co-op Apprenticeship Program will be implemented to assign students from the TCY PFP Program to leading Clubs and District football teams on an annual basis. In order to maximize the intensity of the football competitions, each participating Club and District team (including Kitchee) may only take on a maximum of 5 players from each Form of the Program.

The Program will form a crucial part of the total talent development infrastructure for those aspiring to be future professional footballers as illustrated below:



With the football curriculum and coaching methodology from FC Barcelona, this talent-development infrastructure in its totality will deliver the necessary number of 10,000 hours of *deep practice* with a structured curriculum to the aspiring footballers by the time they reach 21:



Age	FCBE (HK)	Academy (Full-time)	U-13 (Mixed)	U-15 (Mixed)	U-17 (Mixed)	1st Div (Pro)
18 +						720 hrs/yr
17		528 hrs/yr				310 hrs/yr
16		528 hrs/yr			210 hrs/yr	
15		528 hrs/yr			210 hrs/yr	
14		528 hrs/yr		210 hrs/yr		
13		528 hrs/yr		210 hrs/yr		
12		528 hrs/yr	210 hrs/yr			
11	337 hrs/yr					
10	337 hrs/yr					
9	337 hrs/yr					
8	337 hrs/yr					
7	337 hrs/yr					
6	337 hrs/yr					

#### 4. Some Operating Details of the Football PFP Program

The support of the Home Affairs Bureau and the Leisure & Cultural Services Department are important as they are the stakeholders for the facilities required for the Program. One of the benefits of running the bulk of the football training during school hours is to minimise the impact of such a program on pitch usage during the peak-hours after school.

As a part of our preliminary scheduling, we have applied to LCSD for the use of the artificial turf pitch at Ma On Shan in the following manner:

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
10:30 to 12:30	Academy F5/F6	Academy F3/F4		Academy F3/F4	Academy F5/F6	Academy F1/F2
2:30 to 4:30	Academy F1/F2	Academy F1/F2	Academy F3/F4 & F5/F6	Academy F1/F2	Academy F1/F2	Academy F3/F4
4:30 to 6:00	Academy F3/F4	Academy F5/F6	Academy F1/F2	Academy F5/F6	Academy F3/F4	Academy F5/F6

We have also applied for the use of the additional pitch of Tsang Ta Uk on Wednesday afternoons in order to accommodate our school schedule.



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The academic schedules of the school may be demonstrated in the following way:

#### F.4 Sample Class Timetable for TCY Non-PFP Program Students

	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
08:10-08:30	Morning Assembly	Morning Assembly	Morning Assembly	Morning Assembly	Morning Assembly
(1) 08:30-09:10	Integrated Subjects (2)	Liberal Studies 401/406	Liberal Studies 401/406	Chinese 401	Liberal Studies 401/406/A03
(2) 09:10-09:50	Integrated Subjects (2)	Liberal Studies 401/406	Liberal Studies 401/406	Chinese 401	Liberal Studies 401/406/A03
(3) 09:50-10:30	Mathematics 401	Chinese 401	Chinese 401	Mathematics 401	English 401
10:30-10:50	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
(4) 10:50-11:30	Mathematics 401	P.E. PG	Mathematics 401	Art 518	English 401
(5) 11:30-12:10	English 401	P.E. PG	English 401	Integrated Subjects (1)	Chinese 401
(6) 12:10-12:50	Chinese 401	Art 518	English 401	Integrated Subjects (1)	Chinese 401
12:50-13:50	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
(7) 13:50-14:30	Integrated Subjects (1)	Mathematics 401	Life-wide learning	English 401	Integrated Subjects (2)
(8) 14:30-15:10	Integrated Subjects (1)	Chinese 401	Life-wide learning	English 401	Integrated Subjects (2)
(9) 15:10-15:50	Integrated Subjects (1)	English 401	Life-wide learning	Mathematics 401	Integrated Subjects (2)



#### F.4 Sample Class Timetable for PFP Program Students

	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
08:10-08:30	Morning Assembly	Morning Assembly	Morning Assembly	Morning Assembly	Morning Assembly
(1) 08:30-09:10	Integrated Subjects (2)	Liberal Studies 401/406	Liberal Studies 401/406	Chinese 401	Liberal Studies 401/406/A03
(2) 09:10-09:50	Integrated Subjects (2)	Liberal Studies 401/406	Liberal Studies 401/406	Chinese 401	Liberal Studies 401/406/A03
(3) 09:50-10:30	Mathematics 401	Chinese 401	Chinese 401	Mathematics 401	English 401
10:30-10:50	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
(4) 10:50-11:30	Mathematics 401		Mathematics 401		English 401
(5) 11:30-12:10	English 401	FC Barcelona Football Training	English 401	FC Barcelona Football Training	Chinese 401
(6) 12:10-12:50	Chinese 401		English 401		Chinese 401
12:50-13:50	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
(7) 13:50-14:30	Integrated Subjects (1)	Mathematics 401	FC Barcelona Football Training	English 401	Integrated Subjects (2)
(8) 14:30-15:10	Integrated Subjects (1)	Chinese 401		English 401	Integrated Subjects (2)
(9) 15:10-15:50	Integrated Subjects (1)	English 401		Mathematics 401	Integrated Subjects (2)

#### 5. Other Relevant Considerations

##### 5.1 The Overriding Importance of Academic Studies

The values embraced by Kitchee and FC Barcelona include the development of the whole person and personality of our students. Education is not replaced by football training; instead, it is enhanced by using football as a motivating force. Students



who fail to work hard and show improvements in their academic subjects will be urged to devote more time on their studies.

## 5.2 Daily After-School Tutoring

As part of the PFP Program, the School will provide tutors after school until 6 pm in each school day to help every student to complete his homework before leaving School. Those who fail to complete homework will miss their football training in order to complete the task.

## 5.3 Discipline

As stated in Paragraph 4.1, the values embraced by Kitchee and FC Barcelona include the development of the whole person and personality of our students. One of the most important values is “respect”, both for self and for others. The PFP Program will insist upon good discipline of the students, especially the manner they behave towards teachers and fellow students. Once again, the football program will become the motivating force behind improved behaviours.

## 5.4 International Experience

Part of the PFP Program draws from the experience of FCBEscola Hong Kong, in which the top players are given frequent opportunities to compete in European and regional tournaments and matches. Many parents from FCBEscola Hong Kong have expressed the opinion that these international experiences in the formative years of the children added a valuable dimension to their development.

The PFP Program will alternately participate in international tournaments or organize international tournaments in Hong Kong.

## 5.5 Sports Science and Sports Medicine Support

Kitchee’s partner in Sports Science and Sports Medicine is the Hong Kong Jockey Club Sports Medicine and Health Sciences Centre, which was established by the Hong Kong Chinese University. The Centre will provide support for the students of the PFP Program which will help to properly develop their physical development. The Centre’s expertise will help to develop the students’ physical abilities when they are healthy, and to recover properly and expediently when they suffer sports injuries.

## 5.6 Career Opportunities for Professional Players

By introducing a world-class curriculum to Hong Kong, our intention is to develop top-tier, professional football players in Asia. In practical terms, we expect our graduates will accumulate approximately 6,500 hours of deep practice and shall have the ability to hold down playing positions in various top Asian leagues. It is expected that our graduates will accumulate the 10,000 hours of deep practice by the time they reach 20, and the elites will become international football stars produced in Hong Kong.



As we will place a strong emphasis on academic achievement, the students will graduate with a balanced education. The combination of academic achievements with top-level football abilities will undoubtedly enhance their opportunity for university acceptance. The students of the PFP Program will also have the option of transferring to our normal school program classes or to other schools in Hong Kong at any time during their school studies if they subsequently decide not to pursue a career in professional football.

In financial terms, a career in overseas professional football league is a lucrative proposition. According to AFC figures, the average annual salaries for the top Asian Leagues for professional players are the following:

Japan	Korea	China	Australia	Iran	Qatar
HK\$1,732K	HK\$671K	HK\$281K	HK\$580K	HK\$686K	HK\$3,744K

Top players earn significantly more than the above average. The salary for top players in China exceeds HK\$3,000K per annum.

In addition, the players will earn additional bonus money. (In the China Super League, the players will earn additional bonus money of roughly RMB30,000 per match won and RMB10,000 per match drawn.)

It has previously been reported in the press that Hong Kong's only player in the China Super League earns about \$1.5 million per year after tax, plus bonus. The simple arithmetic shows that in a 12-year career, a professional player in such a position may take in an income of HK\$20 million. For a worker with an average monthly salary of \$20,000, it will perhaps take 80 years for him to earn the equivalent amount. The situation will be more dramatic for any players breaking into other top Asian leagues, considering the China league is the lowest paying league in the above table.

Financial freedom and a life pursuing one's dream offer a talented young football lover a real career opportunity.

## 5.7 Alternative Career Opportunities

The PFP Program has equal emphasis on academic achievement. The students' ability to attend university is a stated objective. Hence, if for any reasons, a student eventually does not pursue a career in international professional football, he may choose to continue in higher education, and thus, to create alternative career opportunities for himself.

Furthermore, the PFP Program will help to develop the student's mind, body, and football skills, which will open certain sports- or football-related career opportunities, such as football coaching, physical-fitness coaching, sports administration, etc.



## 6. PFP Program Staff Requirement

Within the PFP Program, we will employ at least one Spanish Technical Director from FC Barcelona, one senior coach from Kitchee, one PE Teacher from TCY, one Teaching Assistant/driver from TCY and one part-time clerical staff from TCY.

This will meet the Education Bureau's requirement of teacher/student ratio during activities away from the School's campus.

## 7. Sources of Funding

The entire football elements of the PFP Program will be delivered without charging additional tuition fees to the students. The tuition fees and the school charges shall be the same as other students at TCY not enrolled in the PFP Program.

To secure the source of funding is Kitchee's responsibility. The annual football budget of the PFP Program is expected to exceed HK\$3 million, and will be covered by Kitchee's commercial sponsorships and possible public and HKJC funding to be applied for in the near future.

## 8. Admission & Recruitments

The geographical catchment area for the PFP Program will be territory-wide.

TCY is a CMI school (using Chinese as the medium of instruction). The PFP Program goals are (1) every student shall maintain the option to continue with higher education, and (2) every student shall develop the sporting abilities for professional football.

For students who are entering F. 1, TCY will accept no more than 30 applicants with excellent general sporting abilities. Football abilities will be highly desirable but not essential.

For students applying for vacancies in F.2 to F.6, TCY will accept no more than 20 applicants in each Form. The essential requirement will again be excellent general sporting abilities. Football abilities will be of increasing importance for the higher Forms.

Application forms for the PFP Program may be downloaded from [www.ychtcy.edu.hk](http://www.ychtcy.edu.hk) from 17 May, 2010. Deadline for application shall be on 15 June, 2010. Applications received after the deadline shall be considered only if a vacancy is available.

All applicants, including returning students, will undergo a merit-based selection process conducted by FC Barcelona and Kitchee youth coaches, tentatively scheduled in the second half of June 2010.

Final registration for the PFP Program for the 2010 school year shall take place on 8 July, 2010.



## 9. Conclusion

The PFP Program addresses an obvious need in the development of elite footballers in Hong Kong. As it has been designed, it is without peers.

The model of a football academy offering elite football training alongside with a quality school education has long been established in the most advanced football countries in the world.

The football curriculum is from FC Barcelona, the winner of the FIFA Club World Cup 2009. Spain is also currently in first place of the FIFA World Ranking.

Kitchee has demonstrated success with the operation of FCBEscola Hong Kong since its establishment in May 2008.

TCY is consistently the best football secondary school in Hong Kong.

Together, these organizations will establish and operate an educational infrastructure under which football, education, discipline, politeness, success, fame and career may be synonymous with each other.

***Give football talents in Hong Kong a real chance!***