



 **UWC** ISAK JAPAN

Karuizawa, Japan

Head of Learning
Start Date: August 2025

UWC Shared Mission

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

UWC ISAK Japan Mission

At UWC ISAK Japan we empower each other to be transformational leaders who explore new frontiers and make a positive impact today and in the future.

OVERVIEW

In the mountains above Tokyo, a bold and innovative boarding school exists to educate change-makers who will make their mark in the world. Grounded in the belief that their students will be catalysts for positive change, United World College ISAK Japan strives to educate transformative future leaders who will use their leadership and entrepreneurial skills as a positive force to impact their communities and the planet.

The school seeks a visionary leader who believes passionately that educational approaches must evolve to adequately prepare and equip future generations to adapt, inspire, and lead.

UWC ISAK Japan is Japan's only full-boarding international high school and one of the newest members of the global network of UWC. To fulfill their mission, the school invests tremendous energy into exposing its students to social issues, allowing them space and time to explore their passions, and consistently encouraging them to venture to their learning edge.

At a Glance

Maximum enrollment: 204

Student nationalities represented: More than 80

Japanese students: Approximately 30%

International students: Approximately 70%

Students who board: 100%

Students receiving financial aid (full or partial):
70%

Total teaching faculty: 29

Total non-teaching faculty: 8

Total staff (including part-time): 24

Faculty and staff nationalities represented: 21

Faculty who reside on campus: More than 50%



UWC ISAK, as a full residential secondary school, aims to create a warm, welcoming community for all students, and supports them fully throughout their education — intellectually, emotionally, and socially. Additionally, students, faculty, staff, of this tight school community who support each other with respect and dignity to prepare future generations to be effective trailblazers. Student confidence is nurtured daily in a community setting so that students feel empowered to be creative and authentically themselves. This strong culture is deeply appreciated by parents who say they value the independence, confidence and agency their children develop through their time at the school.

Of course, exceptional teachers make all of this possible. UWC ISAK faculty not only represent the best in their fields, they are also fully committed to helping students understand they have one life to realize their potential and to become catalysts for positive change. Many live on campus and also play an integral role in the school's residential life, functioning as mentors and coaches, and getting to know how best to support each student's academic and social well-being. Faculty and staff understand that some students may have unconventional perspectives and unique ideas, and are willing to pursue dreams and passions that many are not yet used to seeing.



Faculty speak gratefully about both the flexibility of the academic program and the autonomy they are afforded in their teaching practice.

UWC ISAK Japan is accredited through the Japanese Ministry of Education (MEXT), and graduates receive a Japanese high school diploma. UWC ISAK Japan is also an Official IB World School, authorized by the International Baccalaureate Organization to teach the two-year International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP). Over 90% of the students graduate also with an IB Diploma.

THE SCHOOL

Part of UWC ISAK Japan's identity also hinges on its being in the UWC movement. The group of UWCs (United World Colleges) comprise secondary schools in 18 countries and regions, with national committees and admission selection contacts in more than 160 countries. The UWC movement also consists of more than 60,000 alumni and other members in virtually every country in the world. UWC International is governed by the International Board and UWC Council. Thus, UWC ISAK's development as a school is in itself an example of both making change in the world and cross-cultural collaboration.



To know UWC ISAK Japan is to know that, on any given day, much of what takes place at school is meant to cultivate and refine skills of leadership. No matter a student's background or course schedule, UWC ISAK Japan offers a human-centered environment where its students can discover their unique strengths and capacity for leadership.

The school honors its mission by aspiring to be a place where students realize their potential to become change-makers by practicing leadership in and out of the classroom, every day. The school's ambition is very much to be a courageous global leader in progressive education, continually innovating to serve its own students and to positively impact teaching and learning more broadly.

Strengths of this young school include its strong sense of community, the intentional cultural and socioeconomic diversity of its student body, its openness to change and innovation (by both students and faculty), and the high level of engagement and learning ownership of its students.

Leadership Program

The Grade 10 Leadership program plays a central role in students' experience at UWC ISAK Japan. Each student has the opportunity to develop and run their own project or to join another student project. Through the experience of running a project, students learn leadership and teamwork skills such as communication, project management, conflict resolution, and resilience. Successful projects are ones which are both ambitious enough to challenge the student to grow and impactful enough to have positive outcomes for others.



The learning is student-led. This means that we expect students to drive their own learning, take initiative, ask questions, and take action to move their projects forward.

The underlying methodology is two-fold:

- *Personalised* - Each student can choose their own project based on the intersection of their interests and where there is a genuine need in the world. Instructors and coaches will guide students in learning the skills and knowledge needed to complete their projects.
- *Project-based* - Projects form the core of the curriculum and connect learning with real-life experience. Reflection and coaching are key instructional strategies to help students uncover their strengths and areas for improvement in a relevant and practical way.

ACADEMICS

Grade 10: Pre-IB Academics & Leadership Training

The Grade 10 program provides a pre-IB foundation year to encourage students to develop leadership and design-innovation skills, while preparing for the IB Diploma Programme. In the Pre-IB program, students enjoy studying in small classes with peers from a variety of cultures and backgrounds. Small discussion-based classes offer exposure to many different perspectives, helping them develop critical thinking habits and the opportunity to express original views.



Group projects and individual presentations are also a common part of the UWC ISAK educational experience, helping to nurture collaboration, leadership, and communication skills. Similar to students in the IBDP, Grade 10 students participate in community service activities and also develop their own projects for Project Week.

Grades 11-12 (IBDP)

All Grade 11 and 12 students at UWC ISAK Japan enroll in the world recognized IB Diploma Programme. With the support of an advisor, students select six courses (three standard level and three higher level) from six subject groups that include foreign language, science, mathematics, the arts, and history. One subject must be chosen from the first five groups, and the sixth subject can be chosen from Group 6, or a second subject can be chosen from Groups 1, 2, 3 or 4. Since the IBDP is a two-year program, students in Grade 12 continue studying the subjects started in Grade 11. IB examinations are held near the end of Grade 12.

Two full-time university advisors support UWC ISAK Japan's fundamental mission to help students develop into transformational leaders by thoughtfully exploring all post-secondary options. These advisors expose students to many different types of universities so that they can make informed choices about what schools will be the best fit — academically, geographically, personally, and financially. Graduates of UWC Japan have matriculated to colleges and universities in 13 countries. Each year, a few graduates choose to take a gap year to volunteer, travel, or pursue a passion or interest including choosing to develop a start-up.



SCHOOL LIFE

Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS)

All Grade 10 students participate in CAS on Friday afternoons. Grade 10 students serve the Karuizawa community in various ways, such as helping local students and adults improve their English or organizing activities for elderly people and people with disabilities. Every Grade 10 student is also committed to a number of on-campus services within the UWC ISAK Japan community. In Grades 11 and 12, students work together in small teams on human-centered, collaborative, action-based leadership projects. Each project lasts a minimum of 16 months. Leadership projects are student-initiated and student-led and are intended to be personally meaningful. While the mission and goals of projects are important, the success of a project is not solely determined by goals achieved. UWC ISAK Japan's aim is to empower students to become change-makers, so the program is meant to cultivate skills of resilience and critical thought.

Clubs

Optional student-led clubs enable students to follow their passions by joining, starting, and/or leading their own co-curricular activities. Student-led clubs and committees are sustained from year to year by students who choose to become activity leaders. All student leaders must participate in a group leader training program before leading any activity and will have additional responsibilities such as managing the club's budget and meeting bi-weekly with a faculty member for support. Current clubs explore topics such as astronomy, cooking culture, chess, robotics, tennis, and many more.



Residential Life

At UWC ISAK Japan, students share a two-person or four-person bedroom in a dormitory for 12 to 18 students. Each housing unit includes a spacious living room/lounge area, as well as a small kitchenette and laundry facilities. In nearly all cases, students are assigned roommates from different countries and backgrounds. Additionally, students and their housemates take ownership for developing and implementing systems for house management, providing yet another opportunity to develop leadership, problem-solving, and conflict-resolution skills. To manage residential life, Residential Advisors (RAs) — students elected by their peers to keep the house operating smoothly and resolve minor issues — work in conjunction with House Mentors, faculty members whose role is to support all students in their residential dimension of school life.

Outdoor Education

At UWC ISAK Japan, all students participate in outdoor education. The focus of the outdoor education programming is access, with an emphasis on physical challenge, resilience, sustainability, real-time teamwork, and leadership. The wide range of activities each year include hiking, snowshoeing, cycling, climbing, skiing, canyoning, and overnight camping. Enjoying the outdoors at UWC ISAK is easy as the campus is situated in a wooded, semi-rural environment, at the edge of the Joshin-Etsu national park and Mount Asama.



Student Circle

Seito-NoWa (Japanese translation of Student Circle) — aka SNOW — at UWC ISAK Japan is, perhaps, one of the strongest examples of the school’s pedagogy in practice. When the idea of creating a student council arose, students were passionate about building an inclusive style of government, so that every student could be empowered to work for positive change. The result was the SNOW.

Unlike a traditional student council with a president and other council members making decisions on behalf of the students, the SNOW serves to facilitate “grassroots” efforts by any student who wants to implement a new idea or modify existing school rules. A core group of 6-8 students, trained in community organizing, accept the responsibility to help build leadership in students as they advocate for and create positive change in the community. The Head of Learning works closely with SNOW.

CAMPUS

UWC ISAK Japan is located in Nagano Prefecture, just outside the beautiful mountain resort town of Karuizawa in an area first settled by Canadian missionaries who were drawn by the area’s higher (and cooler) elevation, evergreens, streams and rivers, and rugged topography (John Lennon and Yoko Ono spent many enjoyable summers there owing to her family’s roots in the area).

The hillside campus is located in Asama Terrace, part of the Sengataki resort area but just 20 minutes by car from the Karuizawa Shinkansen (bullet train) station.



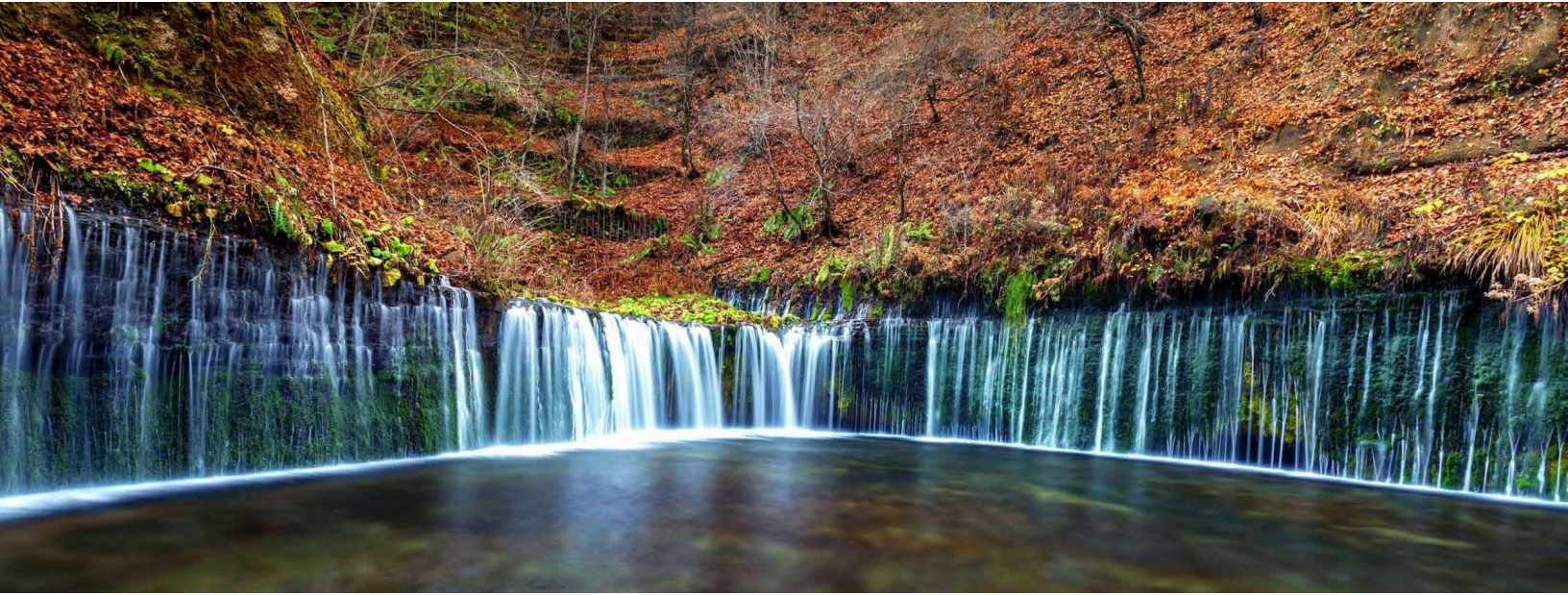
Following Japanese architectural principles, the school's facilities have been constructed to create a sense of harmony with the beautiful, forested environment that makes Karuizawa so special.

Classrooms designed with large windows and high ceilings emphasize the beauty of the changing seasons, while brightening the interior with natural sunlight. Many students say they feel more creative, inspired, and energized by the natural light. Thoughtfully, each building serves a variety of purposes, minimizing the campus's overall footprint. Buildings also feature solar panels and eco-friendly bamboo flooring.

The gymnasium includes a full basketball court and provides indoor space where students can enjoy sports and other physical activity throughout the year.

The Kamiyama Academic Center (KAC), was completed in July 2016, a light-filled building with classrooms, a library/information center, study areas, meeting rooms, and the main school office. KAC is one of the most popular places to study on campus. The two-story Asama Building houses the cafeteria, school lounge, and several classrooms. It is a hub of activity during the day and during warm weather, the beautiful deck is a popular place to eat, relax, study, and hang out.

The Accord Center (TAC), can seat the entire community (around 250 people). We are thrilled with the recent and imminent opening of the Koshiha Innovation and Creative Center (KICC) and Taniya Lodge (TC). The KICC is designed to host all creative activities ranging from music and art rooms to maker space. The Taniya Lodge will offer a tatami zen room in addition to a health center, fitness room, and counseling rooms.



KARUIZAWA, NAGANO

Karuizawa is an upmarket mountain resort town of approximately 20,000 residents — with a relatively casual, relaxed energy — at the foot of the active volcano, Mount Asama. Located at an altitude of roughly 1,000 meters, the town provides much to do and see in all seasons. Within a short traveling distance one can find a range of outdoor activities including hiking, skiing, skating, and golf (14 local courses), as well as museums, parks, temples and shrines, and hot springs.

Karuizawa remains the only town in the world to have hosted both Summer and Winter Olympic events: equestrian in Tokyo 1964 as well as curling in Nagano 1998. The town is served by one of the most reliable railway systems in the world that includes the high-speed line (also providing easy access to Tokyo's two international airports).

Generations of Japanese artists have come to the area to paint and draw and find inspiration. From the area's natural beauty. Yet in addition to a bounty of recreational and cultural opportunities and natural beauty, Karuizawa is home to one of the largest shopping malls in the country, the Karuizawa Prince Shopping Plaza, which contains over 200 stores that offer a range of fashion items, accessories, and interior design items. The outlet boasts excellent restaurants and is appreciated as a pet-friendly facility.

For school expat employees and the 400 plus foreigners residing in Karuizawa, local public daycare centers (ages 0-6), elementary schools (ages 7-12), and junior high (ages 13-15) are complimentary. Almost all faculty regardless of nationality have their children in the local daycare. The area offers a wide array of good dining options — from Japanese, French, to Italian, and the local cost of living can be fairly minimal. Nagano Prefecture is also one of the largest producers of vegetables and fruits in Japan, and grocery shopping can be very affordable, as well.



LIVING IN JAPAN AS AN EXPAT

Those who live in Japan as an ex-pat find the quality of life to be extremely high. Beyond Japan's omotenashi (hospitality) culture, the sense of welcome from the local community of ex-pats is both warm and supportive, and helpful to both adjusting to and living in Japan. Aside from the natural beauty and history of the country, cities and towns are extremely well kept, very safe, and public services are functional, efficient and abundant. Things just work; people are courteous and orderly.

Many people choose to travel about the country and its many islands where among the activities one can find world-class food, skiing, entertainment, and public transportation. Many ex-pats who have lived in other Asian locations say that they appreciate the quality of life in Japan most of all.

Faculty and staff are covered on the Japanese national insurance for all private school employees and their families, that covers most doctor appointments and medications (and surgeries) in country.

HEAD OF LEARNING ROLE DESCRIPTION

UWC ISAK is seeking a new Head of Learning. The new Head of Learning will maintain the tremendous momentum and exceptionally entrepreneurial atmosphere the school has created in the several years since it began. UWC ISAK's approach and program are unique in Japan, distinct in the network of UWC schools, and notable among international schools in Asia. Strong candidates for this leadership role will be enthusiastically committed to positioning students and faculty to positively impact the world.

Overview

The Head of Learning is responsible for enhancing and sustaining an effective learning and teaching culture across the school, as well as ensuring that the school environment, ethos, scheduling and professional development program underpin the highest standards of teaching and learning within each classroom and for each student. The Head of Learning works closely with the International Baccalaureate Diploma Coordinator, Heads of Department and other senior faculty and staff to ensure the effective development and delivery of the academic curriculum and the efficient management of academic departments. The Head of Learning is also responsible for the academic progress and safeguarding of our students.

The Head of Learning reports directly to the Head of School and serves as a key member of the School Leadership Team (SLT). The SLT meets regularly to discuss matters of routine and general school policy, in an atmosphere of confidentiality and collective responsibility. Members of the SLT are expected to have a knowledge of relevant issues affecting schools globally, and to contribute to discussions relating to planning and the development of policy and policy implementation.

As a Deputy Head, the Head of Learning may be called on to deputize for the Head of School during term time, or during school holidays (as arranged with the Head of School). Furthermore, the Head of Learning may be asked to advise on and to inform the Head of significant developments, problems or opinions on any matter from any relevant source. In this role, the Head of Learning has broad operational and strategic responsibility for the management of the School, and for its development. The Head of Learning has overall responsibility for the development and implementation of all academic procedures and their impactful implementation.

This Job Description should be seen as enabling rather than restrictive, and will be subject to regular review. The key areas of responsibility are detailed below. This list is not intended to be exhaustive and the Head of Learning may be expected to assume additional responsibilities as reasonably requested by the Head of School.

Key Areas of Responsibility

Strategic Development

- Contribute to and implement the School's vision, aims, and objectives.
- Oversee the School's academic strategy, in line with agreed educational priorities, and where appropriate, in liaison with senior faculty and staff in all sections of the School.
- Keep abreast of curriculum developments and update the Head of School and the other members of the School Leadership Team on enhancements and adjustments that need to be made to the school curriculum.
- Recommend to the Head future academic priorities in order to ensure that the curriculum fully caters to the diverse needs of our students.
- Work closely with the IB-DP Coordinator.
- Work with others who possess the relevant skills and experience to ensure that the strategic direction of the School's digital strategy is current and in line with changing best practices.

Leadership

- Serve as a core member of the School Leadership Team, representing the interests of the academic life of the School.
- Work with members of the School Leadership Team and, where appropriate, other colleagues, to develop, refine and implement the School's procedures (particularly those with an academic focus).
- Lead all academic areas of the School's development planning.
- Have line management responsibilities for the following: all faculty, Subject Area Coordinators, Leadership Program Director, and Student Academic Support team.
- Work with the Heads of Department in setting and meeting agreed academic targets.
- Serve as an excellent role model, in the classroom and beyond and in the role as a senior leader within the School.
- Take a lead responsibility in promoting the ethos of academic rigor, engagement and perseverance in the pursuit of academic success in alignment with the school's mission statements.

Teaching and Learning

- Ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently excellent, in line with the school's definitions of high quality learning and teaching as well as global citizenship
- Have oversight of academic line management and the continual improvement of academic departments.
- Chair any working groups on aspects of teaching and learning.
- Oversee the teacher review process within the School, linking this to Professional Development opportunities.
- Lead the School's Academic Support strategy and oversee and enhance the initiatives already in place.
- Inform the Leadership Team and faculty of current research, trends and issues relevant to the academic life of the School to facilitate future planning.

Recruitment of Staff

- Assess academic staffing requirements and manage the recruitment process in conjunction with the Head of School and Head of Human Resources.
- Oversee excused faculty absences, and coverage when appropriate.
- Monitor new faculty as they settle into the School.

Professional Development

- Foster a positive culture of professional reflection and the sharing of good practice.
- Have oversight of Teacher Review and Professional Development for faculty.
- Be responsible with the Head of HR for new faculty orientation.

Calendar Planning

- Work with Deputy Head of Operations, Governance and Academic Affairs to establish annual school master calendar.
- Be responsible for Student Orientation planning and execution.
- Be responsible with the Registrar for academic calendar planning.

Student Performance

- Further develop effective systems for monitoring and evaluating the progress of students together with appropriate strategies to support progress, and report this to the Head of School and to the Board of Directors when requested.
- Oversee the reporting of student progress.
- Work with the IT team to ensure proper use of the ManageBac system for all attendance, reporting and curriculum.

Joint Areas of Responsibility

With the Deputy Head - Pastoral:

- Contingency planning, planning for inspection and regulatory compliance.
- Attend major school events including UWC Day, celebrations and school assemblies.
- Take emergency on call duty on a 4-week rotation with the Head, DHP and DRL.

As a member of the School Leadership Team:

- With the Head of Operations and the Deputy Head of Operations, Governance and Academic Affairs, to lead and ensure that the MEXT requirements and needs are met within the curriculum planning and execution.
- School Development Planning.
- Leadership/membership of working groups as directed by the Head of School.
- Support for School routines and events, including speaking at assemblies and parents' evenings.

- Contribute to the annual budgeting process related to academics and learning, and monitor expenditures, financial efficiency and value-for-money in all school activities related to this job description, and consistent with the fulfillment of the School's broader mission statements and strategic priorities..

Budgets

The Head of Learning will be responsible for setting, in conjunction with the Head of School and Head of Operations, the budgets assigned to academic departments, leadership and other areas listed above.

General Responsibilities

- Be part of the interview team for new members of the teaching faculty, and, as required, new members of other areas, such as staff.
- Contribute to the Admissions process, including Open House days, student applicant interviews, Prospective Parent meetings, Onboarding events and Orientation.
- Manage and/or investigate processes under relevant school policies, at the direction of the Head.
- Attend school events as much as possible (including concerts, plays, recitals, assemblies).
- Support the work of the Admissions and Development & Alumni Relations offices, as required, including through attendance at relevant events.
- Oversee the maintenance of school policies as directed by the Head and as specified in the Schedule of Policies.
- Provide relevant contributions for the School's Strategic Plan, annual Development Plan and inspection documentation.

Safeguarding

The Head of Learning must adhere to and ensure compliance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy at all times. If, in the course of carrying out the duties of the post, the Head of Learning becomes aware of any actual or potential risks to the safety or welfare of children in the School, they must report those concerns to the Designated Safeguard Lead or to the Head immediately.

The Head of Learning is one of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs). Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Working with the Safeguarding team to keep the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (and other related policies) up-to-date and compliant; ensuring implementation of policies in school practice and procedure; training staff (and other relevant parties) and ensuring that relevant staff attend external training, as appropriate; monitoring safeguarding trends, with the support of relevant software; liaising with external agencies, as required.
- Ensuring that the School's procedures in relation to safeguarding are followed by all staff, and working with the Head of Operations in relation to support staff.
- Ensuring that all student files are detailed, accurate and safely stored.

REQUIREMENTS

- Bachelor's Degree
- Teaching Certification
- 3+ years experience in a school leadership position

TO APPLY

Interested and qualified candidates should submit electronically as a single PDF the following materials:

- A cover letter expressing their interest in this particular position;
- A current and thorough résumé of no more than two pages;
- A one-page statement of educational philosophy and leadership practice;
- A list of three to five professional references with the name, phone number, and email address of each (references will not be contacted without the candidate's permission.)