



Deira International School

Higher Education Handbook

Welcome to the Deira International School Careers and University Planning Handbook

As a school we assist our students and parents, providing vital information required to ensure “best-fit” pathways.

This handbook is designed to give you basic guidelines on careers and university information. There is much more information than this handbook can contain – this is aimed at being a starter kit only. Use it as such and remember that every individual's university pathway is a unique one, and that college and university admissions requirements and courses evolve on a regular basis. Stay up to date by staying online and by contacting the institutions directly.

We provide:

- Individual advice on the process of choosing and applying for higher education courses, in the UK, EU, USA, or elsewhere in the world
 - Tailored guidance for Oxbridge, Russell Group, and Ivy League applications from a former Ivy League admissions officer
- Guidance with completing online applications and crafting the best possible personal statements, extracurricular activity list, and university-specific supplemental essays
- Mock interviews for university admission (when applicable)
- Strategy regarding subject specific entry tests to the top universities, for example, Law and Medicine (UCAT, BMAT, LNAT etc), as well as a strategy for a more generalized standardized assessment like the SAT, ACT, TOEFL, and IELTS
- University prospectuses and the latest reading materials on university admissions
- University Information Evenings geared towards Year 12 parents and students
- Access to admissions representatives from a range of universities to explain the admissions procedure and what they are looking for during visits to DIS
- Sessions from university lecturers on specific subject areas, including creating and developing a portfolio for students interested in arts-based courses and portfolios
- Support in the preparation of C.V.s to gain work experience

Key Staff

There are several key staff members that can support students in Years 12 and 13 with discussions on options beyond the IB.

Helen Wallis	Head of IB	hwallis@disdubai.ae
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Introduction and Philosophy

Much of the information in this booklet serves as a resource or reference for the questions usually asked about the process of a university application. It is our belief that two principles prevail throughout:

1. Each student's best interests are served through good communication among the four parties involved—the student, the school, the parents, and the colleges/universities.
2. Colleges and universities make their decisions on the overall picture of the applicant—the student's total secondary school record (academic), personal academic and professional aspirations, extracurricular and super-curricular pursuits, recommendations (counsellor, teacher, and supplementary), personal essays, demonstrated interest (campus visits, virtual open days and interviews), and standardised test scores, if required (SAT and ACT Reasoning Tests, IELTS, TOEFL etc.).

We help students in discovering colleges and universities that will allow him or her to attain the best education to achieve the greatest success, and to emerge from the experience as well-prepared as possible to lead a productive, constructive, and satisfying life. With thousands of colleges and universities available, we are certain that many would qualify as good matches.

Our function is to guide the student and family in making the best decisions relative to applications and choice.

We believe the more one knows about something, the better one can make decisions; therefore, we consider researching colleges and universities essential to finding the best match for the student. The research process requires the following elements:

1. Reading about various colleges and universities
2. Talking with people personally knowledgeable about the institution, such as current and former students, professors, attending university visits to school, e-visits, virtual events and online taster lectures
3. Visiting each institution and interviewing, if possible. If visiting is not an option, virtual visits would be key in finding your match. Useful websites for virtual visits: <https://www.campusreel.org/> and <https://www.youvisit.com/collegesearch/>

How do I find the best course for me?

The only real way to find out if you are suited to a course is to read the university website pages carefully. Having narrowed down your choice a little, it is indispensable to attend as many university visits as possible either in school or across Dubai. If possible, try to visit universities during school holidays as it is a great opportunity to see the university and many offer campus tours throughout the year which are advertised on their websites. Although a campus tour is more of an overview, it still offers that all important flavour which helps in the decision-making process.

Many universities also offer self-guided walking tours and if you contact the department to which you want to make an application, they can often arrange for you to meet a member of

staff or students when you visit. After all, universities are businesses, and they need to do all they can to attract the best students! Additionally, you all know by now that demonstrated is key and oftentimes universities have specific criteria and tools to evaluate demonstrated interest.

For parents –visits are important for you and even though your son or daughter might prefer to go alone, it is good for you to see where they might be spending several years of their life. Many universities provide sessions which caters for parents' questions and although the ultimate choice must lie with your son or daughter, it can only be good for the family to have all the information at their disposal. More and more universities are holding virtual open days at the weekend to enable parents to attend.

Talk about it!

Have discussions with friends, relatives, teachers and the careers and university guidance counsellors to develop ideas and information. Although, be careful because what might suit one person may not be for you, take on board what you hear but always refer to guidance counsellors and the universities for up to date and appropriate advice.

How can the Careers and University/College Guidance team help you?

The Guidance team will endeavour to:

- Establish and maintain a reference base of up-to-date information about educational opportunities around the globe via Unifrog
- Communicate with parents via the school website, Managebac and emails
- Provide guidance on subject choices in Year 9 for I/GCSE options and Year 11 for IB, in consultation with the IB Coordinator and Year Leaders
- Lead Careers Exploration Sessions in Year 11 and the College Readiness Sessions in Year 12
- Arrange country-specific workshops with parents & students in Year 12 and 13 to introduce the college and university application process per country
- Arrange individual interviews in Years 12 and 13 to support university planning

Applying to colleges/universities

Getting into college/university is up to the you, as the student. If you are serious about pursuing a college/university degree, you should always strive to do your best. Institutions want to see your IGCSE and IB Grades, while reviewing them critically. These grades are listed on your **school transcript** from Year 10-13 and are evaluated as a four-year reflection of high school. If you did not perform as well as you would have liked in one course or year, please do not be dismayed, an upward improvement is always positive!

Your **IB Diploma Predicted Grades/Current Grades/IGCSE Grades** are vital - as these are what your admission decisions are based upon (alongside country, region, institution or subject specific entrance tests). Also, remember that acceptances in the UK, Europe, and Australia are often conditional until your final IB results are published in July.

Universities and Colleges are also interested in the information listed below when deciding whether to admit an applicant. Individual colleges and universities will differ in how they evaluate this information.

- SAT/ACT scores (mostly for American institutions, but also used by other countries)
- Other entrance test scores such as BMAT/UKCAT/LNAT/TSA/IELTS/TOEFL
- Teacher & University Counsellor recommendations
- Co-curricular activity involvement/awards
- Super-curricular activity involvement to show dedication towards a specific course such as Medicine or Law
- Academic awards
- Personal essays/ personal statements/university-specific supplemental essays
- Portfolio (for art and design major applications)
- Interviews (if any)

Applying electronically via Online Application Portals

Colleges and universities require high school students to apply via the online application portals or directly to the institution. Applicants complete and submit the application online and recommendation requests are sent automatically via UniFrog to the relevant applications, as are student report cards. Test scores can be sent directly by the testing institution upon request at time of testing from the exams board, at the responsibility of the student. Application fees are also paid online via the application portals.

When applying for the UK most university applications are completed via UCAS, www.UCAS.com, a one stop destination for researching, applying and tracking applications. For the US, it is a similar process through Common App, <http://www.commonapp.org/>. Please note that many universities may accept direct applications, hence, you need to check with admissions officers and on the college/university website regarding the application procedure.

What should I consider when researching colleges?

- **Location:** Europe, UK, USA, Canada, Japan, Hong Kong, India, South Africa, Australia, UAE, and others
- **Type:** campus, city, rural, urban, private, public
- **Size:** large (30,000 + students), medium (5-10,000 students) or small (<1000 students)
- **Costs:** tuition fees, accommodation fees, books & stationary, food, leisure activities, travel, trips, special events, scholarships, grants, loans, financial aid
- **Housing:** dormitory, apartments, lodgings
- **Sports:** facilities, teams, affiliations, programs
- **Course requirements:** SATs, ACTs, TOEFLs, IELTSs, entrance tests, IB Diploma HL subject requirements, specialist activities
- **Departmental and program reputation:** department staff & department excellence
- **Faculty:** professor to student ratio, class sizes for freshmen,
- **Special programs:** double majors, interdisciplinary majors, specialization abroad, work study programs, liberal arts programs
- Summer job opportunities or internships or study abroad options

- Postgraduate opportunities such as OPT, CPT, postgraduate research or work visa

Questions to help you choose wisely

- Do I want a three-year or a four-year course?
- Do I want a course that gives me practical work experience along with study?
- Would I be happier in a culturally diverse student body?
- How far away from my family am I comfortable with?
- What lifestyle do I want?
- Do I need financial aid, grants, scholarships, loans?
- What sports/arts activities does the university have?
- What religious affiliations do they have?
- What cultural activities do they offer?
- Are there part-time job opportunities or any internship opportunities such as co-op programs?

Selecting your colleges/universities

- Attend college fairs, college visits, make sure to take part in e-visits and virtual college fairs
- Visit colleges/universities during your vacations or attend online open days
- Consult college/university websites
- Check the information displayed on the university noticeboards
- Read online college/university brochures
- Research entrance requirements, application procedures and deadlines
- Contact the institutions of your choice

Prepare for application procedures in IB1

- Check the information on the institution's website
- Check the deadlines in this booklet
- Ask your teachers/ University Guidance Counsellor/Diploma Coordinator for references/recommendations
- Request subject references via Unifrog
- Draft your personal statement and college essay to receive feedback before Y13
- Start drafting your shortlist and share with your university counsellor
- Sign up for SATs, ACTs, TOEFLs, IELTS, entrance tests, completing them before the end of Y12, if applicable
- Complete your UCAS and Common App details
- Meet with the College/University Guidance Counsellor at least once per term

Personal Essays, Personal Statements, College Essays and Letters of Motivation

Most applications require a **personal statement, college essay, or letter of motivation**. This is a chance for you to showcase who you are as an individual to anyone that is reading your application. You will write a draft of one or more of these before the end of Year 12 and your final copy will be due Year 13, Term 1. The websites on College Board, Common Application

and UCAS and EU portals highlight ideas on how to write these. Further guidance will be provided, and templates uploaded onto our Teams University Counselling Channel.

Recommendations

Recommendations are also very important. Approach your teachers no later than June of Year 12 as there may be teachers leaving. Give your teachers a copy of your CV/bragsheet – this will help them to compile ideas for your recommendation. IB Subject Teachers will upload their subject references onto Unifrog by end of Year 12; hence all students are required to add their subject teachers on their Unifrog accounts. The University Counsellor will host a session targeting how this will be done via Unifrog. These subject references will be collated by your counsellor for the reference letters required to support your UK applications. For other country letters, teachers will send their recommendation letters directly to the University in support of your applications.

Transcripts and Predicted Grades

Your transcripts are very important, in fact they are technically the most important part of your application. Schools produce these for you to be uploaded online or to be sent officially as a soft copy to universities via email. The transcript will include Year 10 end of year grades, IGCSE results for Year 11, Year 12 end of year grades (predictions) and the first data capture of Term 1, Year 13 which will be your year 13 predictions. These predictions will be ready by October for Early applicants and by end of November for regular application deadlines. It is the students' responsibility to inform the counsellor their deadlines for transcript preparation and submission. Please see below our transcripts template generated for university applications.



Name:
Gender:
Date of Birth:
Nationality:
Curriculum:
Graduation Date:
Transcript Issued:

High School Transcript

General Certificate of Secondary Education (I/GCSE) Years 10-11			
Subject	Level of course	Year 10	Year 11

International Baccalaureate Programme Years 12-13			
Subject	Level of course	Year 12	Year 13 Predictions
TOTAL			

Applicants applying to North America will also receive a Mid-Year Report which will be submitted to their institutions the first week of February of their senior year. The midyear report will include Year 12 end of year grades, year 13 updated predictions, and current year 13 grades. This is a mandatory step to complete for all North American university applications.

What entrance tests do I need to take to enter college?

This depends on the institution, the country where you wish to study and the subject you are applying for. Students will need to check their application requirements in order to plan for entrance tests.

SAT I, SAT II, ACT, EMSAT or Test Optional Policy

Some US colleges and universities (and other countries) require a SAT or ACT (often with writing) tests. These can be taken as many times as you want, but it is recommended that you sit them two or three times each to achieve your best score. Check the websites to locate your test centre and dates. You can check international test dates for the SAT exam via College Board: <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/register/international>

Please note that students must keep track of international dates and register accordingly. From 2020 onward, many institutions in the USA have announced that they are accepting students with a test-optional policy. For further information please check college websites and the website below:

<https://www.fairtest.org/university/optional>

EmSAT exams are for students who would like to study university in the UAE and are mandatory exams for ALL Emirati students. The university counsellor will register all students who plan to study in the UAE early October for the EMSAT exams via the MOE registration portal. Once student is registered it will be their responsibility to book exams and attend. Students need to check with prospective universities regarding EmSAT exam requirements.

PSAT/NMSQ (The Preliminary Scholastic Assessment test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test)

Administered every year in October, this is a good practice exercise for the SAT I. This test is not essential for entrance into college, but it is a valuable assessment tool for college/university planning for all high school students. It is the only way American students can qualify to compete in the National Merit Scholarship Achievement Award.

IELTS, TOEFL, Duolingo Test (some U.S. universities only)

Take one of these if you need to prove your English proficiency level. You can sit them online or through the British Council, details can be found at <https://www.britishcouncil.org/exam/uk-boards-overseas>

BMAT & UCAT & MCAT & UMAT

BMAT & UKCAT are required for entry into undergraduate medical courses in the UK. UMAT is for Australian undergraduate medical courses. MCAT is for Australian, Canadian & US Graduate Medical courses.

You will need to register online for all tests.

Always remember, it is your responsibility to make sure that you register for these exams in a timely manner and your test scores reach the institutions to which you plan to apply. Delayed test scores will hold up the application process and may also result in a denial of admission.

How do I finance my education?

Costs are a very important factor when considering your choices.

Higher education abroad can be very expensive, once you total the cost of living and tuition fees. However, there are opportunities for financial aid and scholarships. Several options exist in financing your education, but the process requires some research on your part and that of your parents. ***It is your responsibility to apply for financial aid, grants, scholarships & loans. Research it early in the application process!***

There are many available resources for help with finances:

- Check out individual colleges/universities' websites
- Check out the websites in this handbook
- Ask your embassies/consulates what information they have
- Ask your parents to check with their companies to see what they have available
- Speak to your university counsellor about possible full rides

Remember, you can sometimes get up to your full tuition paid, so investigate all options and be open-minded!!

If you are a US citizen, you must have a social security number to file for financial aid. If you wish to apply for financial assistance to attend college, you need to inform the college of this need and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The information you give is confidential (see Appendix 1 for website)

For international students looking for need based aid, it is best to investigate university websites to collect accurate information. Some universities in the USA will provide need based financial aid to foreign passport holders (international students). There are also numerous opportunities for international students to receive merit scholarships based on their academic standing. Some good websites to help you with your search would be:

***Financial aid offers:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1GBSUqSHXoMINMgUIAcD7czG_UlR9jkpc78EvRiOKxww/edit#gid=0

***Scholarship offers via EducationUSA Search Tool:

<https://educationusa.state.gov/find-financial-aid>

If you are a UK citizen and wish to apply for home status, then you will need to complete several application forms. The universities have individual forms that can be completed, a good place to research home or international fee status for the UK is at:

<http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Fees-and-Money/Home-or-Overseas-fees-the-basics>

***Emirati students can receive full funding for UAE government institutions and universities located abroad. Emirati students need to check the below website for fully funded universities. Students will use the NAPO application portal to apply for scholarships and the DIS University Counsellor will help create their application in January of senior year. It is mandatory for ALL Emirati students to take the EmSAT exams and complete the NAPO application regardless of their intentions after high school graduation.

MOE Scholarships for Emirati students:

<https://www.moe.gov.ae/En/EServices/ServiceCard/Scholarships/Pages/Subjects.aspx>

Visa Requirements

Obtaining a student visa to study abroad is dependent on your personal circumstances, and the specific requirements of the country, but in most cases, it will be reasonably straightforward, provided you meet certain conditions like:

- For the UK: You produce a letter of admission from the accredited college or university with a **CAS (Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies)** reference number: http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Visas-and-Immigration/Tier-4-eligibility-and-requirements#RL?rl_playlist=playlist3004&rl_id=0
- For the USA you will need for an F1 Visa one you receive your I-20 document. This can only be received after submitting bank statements to prove you can finance at least one year of your studies: <https://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/study-exchange.html>
- You are enrolled as a full-time student for a degree course.
- You can prove that financing the cost of your course can be met by yourself and/or in combination with financial awards
- The consulates of the respective countries are best placed to assist you with advice on securing a student visa. It is advised that you contact them once you decide on which country you plan to study in.

What about a gap year or National Service?

Not everyone goes to college or university straight from school. Many students decide to take a gap year or are required to attend National Service. If this is your situation, you can either; apply now and ask for a deferred place at university or you can apply during your gap year/National Service year. Hence, it is important to reach out to universities and ask if deferral is a possible before completing the university application. It is recommended to always apply to university while still in Year 13, to utilize the support of the University Counsellor.

What should you do during a Gap Year? Use this to your advantage; colleges, universities and workplaces are very keen to know what you did during your year off. Look at volunteer work, internships, work-shadowing and some travelling. There are plenty of companies who arrange gap year placements; check out the websites in the appendix section.

Apprenticeships

Many students also opt for apprenticeships. Check out the opportunities for these within your home countries, although increasingly there are opportunities of work and internships across the UAE.

College Planning Calendar

Application Deadlines per Country/Region

Deadline (Year 13)	Country
October 15	Oxford & Cambridge, all UK Medical/Veterinary/Dentistry
November	US Early Action/Decision (November 1). Canada early applications, University of California system (30 th)
December	USA, CAN and some EU institutions that have Numerous Fixus (limited enrollment capacity)
January 1 st /2 nd	USA
January 15 th	UK & some EU institutions and some CAN institutions
January/Feb/March	Canada, EU countries
March/April/May/June	EU countries and some Australia early applications
July/August/September	Australia, New Zealand & other southern hemisphere countries

ALL APPLICATIONS must be completed by the following internal deadlines:

October 7th	Oxford, Cambridge, UK Medical/Veterinary courses & some USA
October 24th	USA Early Decision candidates

November 15th	All University of California applications and All Canadian early applications
December 2nd	All USA and All UK regular applications+ EU and Canadian early applications
January 15th	Late US & Canada and EU applications

It is very important to make a note of deadlines and use the university application tracking spreadsheet!

Considerations through KS4 and KS5

Year 10

It is time to get serious about your learning in school. All subjects and grades count, especially at selective colleges, where even the IGCSE grades are carefully reviewed. Take advantage of the various opportunities to learn outside the classroom. Get involved within and outside your school community. Sign up for sporting activities, community service, drama, concerts, and expand your co-curricular activities. During your summer holidays take up a job, online course or research, language courses, or anything that interests you that would enrich your summer experience.

Year 11

Keep up the good grades and extra-curricular activities. Start thinking about your choice of subjects for later studies, whether you want to study IB, IB Courses, IBCP and start talking to current Year 12 and 13 students about course content and expectations. Take the career surveys on Unifrog and start looking into the careers library. Work on your transferrable skills development and investigate work experience opportunities. Attend the college exploration session with your university counsellor and make sure to start your CV. Start compiling your portfolio if you plan to study art at college. Also make sure to investigate summer precollege programs around the world to gain experience in your future field of study! Your university counsellor is here to support you with all applications that you may be pursuing.

Year 12

August/September

- Sign up for PSAT, ACT, SATs, TOEFL, and IELTS throughout this year if applicable. Aim to do the SATs & ACT 2 or 3 times each, completing them before you finish Year 12
- Get involved in co-curricular activities and keep up to date with your CAS file
- Super-curricular involvement is also key in demonstrating a strong interest towards your field of study
- Start developing your Art portfolio online and/or on paper if applicable
- Meet with university counsellor to discuss future, at least once
- Make sure to attend e-visits and take part in virtual university events

October

- PSAT test is this month, if applicable

- ACT test this month, if applicable
- Sign up for December SATs, if applicable

November/December

- Go over PSAT/SAT/ACT results with your University Counsellor
- SATs, if applicable
- Sign up for January SATs, if applicable
- If you get the chance, visit a college campus during the holidays or sign up for virtual open days and attend e-visits

January

- Time to assess your progress. Ask for support if you need it.
- Make sure to book an appointment with the University Counsellor
- Review your CAS hours and credits so far.
- SATs (1st round for Year 12s if applicable)
- Start planning for summer programs
- Polish your CV

February/March

- Meet with the University Counsellor to discuss your schedule
- Begin a list of colleges/universities and add your shortlist on Unifrog
- Sign up for May SATs, if applicable
- Complete applications for summer programs online course, internships

April

- ACT exam (1st round)
- Sign up for June SATs, if applicable
- Talk about financial aid options with your parents and start looking into scholarships/aid
- This is a good time to solidify summer plans. Camps, work experience, college tours. Any of these could help with your college decision and make you a more attractive candidate for college.
- Revise for your Mocks

May/June

- Meet with the University Counsellor to discuss your progress
- Ask teachers who are leaving to write a recommendation (if you need to)
- Start drafting your personal statement and personal essays.
- Mock Exams this month

Summer

- Do something significant: volunteer with a charity, do an internship, get extra language practice, attend a precollege program
- **Study at an IB Summer School online or onsite** in UK, America, Canada, EU (see websites appendix)
- Visit colleges/universities either virtually or physically. Try to schedule interviews with admissions officers and attend virtual events
- Reduce your college/university list to a maximum of 12 institutions with Target Match and Reach options in place
- Research Australian, NZ & southern hemisphere colleges/universities.
- IB Diploma students: Complete your Extended Essay draft
- Keep working on your college essay and personal statement

- Make sure to launch your Common App portal on the 1st of August if you will apply to the USA

**Complete your 2nd draft of your Personal Statement/Essay
and submit the first week back in school.**

Year 13

August/September

- Finalise your college applications list and add your shortlist to Unifrog. You need to narrow your choice down to a maximum of **12 colleges/universities**
- Use the excel spreadsheet provided to track names, addresses, and application deadlines, deadlines for transcripts, test dates, fees, and financial application deadlines

**Complete your Personal Statements/Essays and send
final draft to your counsellor as soon as possible!**

- Provide a list of colleges with "due by" dates for the College Counsellor
- Sign the Early Applications Agreements if you are applying early to universities.
- **October 7th** : Oxford, Cambridge, UK Medical/Veterinary/Dentistry courses applications due for our internal deadline

October

- Meetings continue with your University Counsellor
- SATs, ACT tests this month
- Arrange for test scores to be sent directly to the colleges of your choice from the testing centre, if needed
- Complete early applications for the USA
- **October 24th**: USA Early Decision candidates' applications due

November

- Meetings with your College Counsellor
- **November 15th** : All University of California Application deadlines by 30 NOV, submit as early as possible. All CAN early application to be submitted by 15 November.

December

- **December 2nd**: internal Deadline for all application due in January for ALL countries
- **By December 15th** : ALL US references and transcripts sent through Common App
- US applicants: expect Early Action/Decision replies. Accepted? Congratulations! You may need to send a deposit and withdraw applications from other colleges. Deferred? Stay hopeful as you may be accepted later with regular decision applicants. Denied? Don't lose heart. Complete your Common App forms for other colleges/universities
- UK applicants: if you have already applied you **may** receive replies.
- Revise for your Mock Exams

January

- You may receive offers – **send copies to the University Counsellor**
- **Jan1-15: Regular USA Applications and some EU Applications**
- **January 30th: Late US and Canadian applications completed.**
- Mock exams this month

February

- Follow up on your application status on UCAS TRACK, Common App, EU portals (& other online app forms)
- You may receive offers – **send copies to the University Counsellor**
- Start checking on visa requirements if you are a foreign student going abroad.
- Midyear Reports sent to US colleges first week of Feb.
- Submit your applications for EU universities as most are rolling admissions

March/April

- You will hear from most colleges/universities sometime during these two months.
- Meetings with the University Counsellor to finalise firm and safety choices/apply for **Extra** UK places or additional colleges worldwide
- **If you have been waitlisted, contact the college/university to express your continued interest**
- Submit the Results Distribution form to your IB Coordinator and University Counsellor so that IB can send your results to universities before enrolment

May

- IB examinations
- **1 May** National Deposit Day for North American Universities
- Notify the University Counsellor of final college decisions
- Notify all colleges, to which you applied, of your final college decision
- If you have not found a place yet, talk to your University Counsellor. Many US and UK colleges will have places available in May & June.

June/July

- Apply for housing and complete other steps for enrolment
- Make sure to request your official final transcript from the counsellor
- Complete the exit survey mandatory for all Year 13
- Upon receiving results keep in touch with counsellor regarding clearing and adjustment for UK Universities
- **Make sure to inform your counsellor if any supporting document is needed at least 10 days in advance of any deadline**

Before you leave school remember to check the following with your counsellor and complete the exit survey!

- All your recommendation letters are saved on are filed at school for future reference
- Your final transcripts have been sent/uploaded
- You know when you will receive your results
- You know how to access your results
- You have arranged to have your results sent to your chosen college/university

- You know how to forward your results to your chosen college/university if they don't receive them automatically
- You have decided to meet/Zoom with your counsellor/IB coordinator when your results are announced (if necessary)
- You have finalised arrangements for a student visa
- You have paid your deposit for your accommodation/housing
- You have finalised arrangements for your Gap Year/Apprenticeship/Military Service
- You have passed on a personal email address to your counsellor/IB coordinator for any future correspondence and to be added to DIS alumni

Roles Distribution

Who does what in all of this?

It is important to know who is responsible for each part of this university application process.

University Counsellor's Role:

Your counsellor will provide the following services throughout the university search and application process:

- Introduction to international university admissions processes via online and onsite sessions
- Parent information sessions via the University Information Evening and coffee mornings concerning international university admissions processes and transitioning high school students to university.
- Be available to meet with students and parents to discuss academic concerns, career and higher education options.
- Provide on-going guidance in the use of Unifrog
- Facilitate university exploration.
- Advise in finding a "best fit" for each student.
- Coordinate university admission representative visits to DIS campus and e-visits via Zoom Webinars
- Advise and assist with university application process per country
- Provide the necessary DIS documentation such as transcripts and recommendations that individual universities request.
- Provide guidance in writing essays, personal statements and motivational letters.
- Provide guidance with the university admission interviews
- Assistance with financial aid applications and scholarships search.
- University admissions tests advising.
- Transition to university information for students and parents
- Assistance with GAP year decisions

It is not the role of the Counsellor to:

- Choose universities for the student and apply.
- Complete the college essay or personal statement
- Choose degree programs for the student.
- Meet deadlines that are specific to a university. **It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of university deadlines and communicate with the counselling office.**

- Complete the application on behalf of the student

Appendix 1: Websites

Colleges & Universities

UK

https://www.ucas.com/ (Applications online & search engine)
https://www.timeshighereducation.com/
http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/universityguide
http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/

USA

https://www.collegeboard.org/ (colleges, financial aid forms & info, SAT & PSAT info)
https://www.commonapp.org/ (Applications online & search engine)
http://www.collegeanduniversityguide.com/USA/index.htm
http://www.usnews.com/education
www.collegeview.com
http://www.bestcollegereviews.org/
www.mycollegeguide.org (A cool site, great articles for kids)
www.ncaa.org (Guide for student athletes)
www.petersons.com (a good start for college admissions information)
http://international.collegeboard.org/programs/ap-recognition

Australia

http://www.gooduniguide.com.au/
http://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/

Canada

http://www.univcan.ca/ (start here)
http://www.universitystudy.ca/
http://www.ouac.on.ca/

Europe

Czech Republic: http://www.studyin.cz/
Denmark: http://www.studyindenmark.dk
Denmark: fivu.dk/en
Europe: http://www.studyineurope.eu/
Europe: http://www.euroeducation.net/
Europe: http://www.bachelorsportal.eu/
Europe: www.fulbright.ro/educational-advising-center/experience-the-usa/usa-close-up/u-s-style-programs-in-europe
France: http://www.onisep.fr/
France: http://www.admission-postbac.fr/
France: http://www.studying-in-france.org/
France: www.cnous.fr
Germany: http://www.daad.de/en/index.html
Germany: http://www.uni-assist.de/index_en.html
Hungary: http://www.studyhungary.hu/
Ireland: http://www.iumc.com.my/
Ireland: http://www.nui.ie/
Ireland: http://www.iua.ie/

Ireland: www.universitiesireland.ie/
Ireland: http://www.cao.ie/index.php (application portal)
Italy: http://www.topuniversities.com/where-to-study/europe/italy/guide
Malta: http://www.um.edu.mt/
Netherlands: http://www.studyinholland.nl/
Norway: http://www.samordnaopptak.no/info/english/
Norway: http://www.studyinnorway.no/
Spain: http://universidad.es/universities
Spain: http://universidad.es/qualifications/etp
Sweden: http://studera.nu/startpage/
Sweden: http://www.studyinsweden.se/
Sweden: https://www.universityadmissions.se/intl/start
Switzerland: http://www.swissuniversities.ch/en/higher-education-area/recognised-swiss-higher-education-institutions/
World: http://www.i-studentadvisor.com/ (information on USA, UK, Canada, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand)
World: http://www.justlanded.com/english/ (everything you need to know about studying, living & working in different countries around the world)
World: www.topuniversities.com/
World: http://www.aaicu.org/aaicu/Pages/index.aspx (Global American Universities)
World: www.internationalstudent.com

Rankings:

- World: www.topuniversities.com/worlduniversityrankings/
- USA: www.usnews.com
- UK: www.guardian.co.uk/education/universityguide
- UK League Table Rankings: <https://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/league-tables/rankings>
- CAN: <https://www.macleans.ca/hub/education-rankings/>

Tests:

- www.princetonreviewme.com
- www.act.org <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat?navid=gh2-sat> www.ets.org (TOEFL)
- www.ielts.org
- www.britishcouncil.org
- <http://www.ukcat.ac.uk/>
- <http://www.admissionstesting-service.org/> (BMAT, HAT, TSA, CAT, PAT, MAT etc.)
- <http://umat.acer.edu.au/>
- <https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat/>

Financial Aid/Scholarships/Loans

Take a look at the websites below or check out individual universities/colleges websites:

- www.collegeboard.org
- www.commonapp.com

- www.ucas.co.uk
- www.fafsa.ed.gov (US students for info on a variety of grants & loans)
- www.fastweb.com
- www.finaid.org
- www.internationalscholarships.com
- http://web3.ncaa.org/ECWR2?NCAA_EMS/NCSS_EMS.html# (NCAA Athletic Scholarships)
- www.collegeview.com (includes links to financial aid in USA)
- <https://www.salliemae.com/lets-make-happen03/?oref=&opUser=noncooked> (student loans comparisons & scholarship search engine)
- <http://www.spe.org/scholarships/> (Petroleum Engineers)
- www.fulbright.co.uk/ (UK & US Students)
- www.internationalstudent.com

Gap Year (advice and some examples)

- http://www.prospects.ac.uk/gap_year.htm
- <http://www.cityyear.org.uk>
- <http://www.globalvolunteerprojects.org/>
- <http://www.wwoof.net/> (World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms)

Websites on Career information

- <http://sacu-student.com/>

College Visits & Tours

- www.college-visits.com
- www.campustours.com
- www.osc-ib.com
- www.cois.org/page.cfm?p=1930
- www.topuniversities.com/events/qs-world-university-tour
- www.campusreel.org

Summer Courses (examples)

- www.osc-ib.com (IB Diploma Courses in UK, USA, Belgium, Italy, UAE, Australia)
- www.ibsummerschool.com (IB courses at Stanford University, Calif)
- <https://www.issos.com/> (England, Scotland, USA)
- <http://oxfordcambridgesummeracademy.com/> (UK)
- <https://www.oxford-royale.co.uk/> (UK)
- <http://oxfordsummercourses.com/> (courses developed by Oxford University alumni)
- <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/be-inspired/global-summer-school/> (Imperial College London, UK)
- <http://www.lse.ac.uk/study/summerSchools/summerSchool/Home.aspx> (LSE, UK)
- <http://www.fastweb.com/college-search/articles/summer-programs-for-high-school-students> (Summer programs in USA)
- <http://www.bu.edu/summer/high-school-programs/> (Boston University, USA)
- <http://mitadmissions.org/apply/prepare/summer> (MIT, Boston, USA)
- <http://www.brown.edu/academics/pre-college/> (Rhode Island, USA)

- <http://www.nyu.edu/admissions/high-school-programs.html> (New York, USA)
- <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/summer/pre-university/online-summer-school> (Kings College, London)
- https://www.unibocconi.eu/wps/wcm/connect/Bocconi/SitoPubblico_EN/Navigation+Tree/Home/programs/summer+school/For+High+School+Students/ (Bocconi University, Milan)
- <https://summerschool.uva.nl/programmes/summer-programmes.html?t=pre-university> (University of Amsterdam, NL)

Appendix 2: Books

- The Fiske Guide, 2021: <https://www.amazon.ae/Fiske-Guide-Colleges-2021-Edward/dp/1492664960>
- College Board (US) *The Book of Majors 2016*, *The College Handbook 2016*, (and many more) <https://store.collegeboard.org/sto/enter.do?navid=gh-store>
- *Peterson's Annual Guide to Undergraduate Study* <https://www.petersons.com/>
- *Teens Guide to College & Career Planning* <https://www.petersons.com/>
- *The Best 380 Colleges*, Princeton Review <http://www.princetonreview.com/college-rankings/best-colleges>
- *Colleges that Change Lives* (ed.2006), Penguin Books. Author: Loren Pope
- *Letting Go: A Parents' Guide to Understanding the College Years* (5th ed, 2009) Harper Collins Publishers, Authors: Karen Coburn and Madge Lawrence Tregger.
- *The Price of Privilege: How Parental Pressure and Material Advantage Are Creating a Generation of Disconnected and Unhappy Kids* (2008) Harper Collins Publishers. Author: Madeline Levine, Ph.D.
- *Barron's Profiles of American Colleges 2016* (32nd ed.), <http://barronseduc.com/>
- *Rugg's Recommendations on the Colleges, 2016* (33rd ed.), Author: Frederick Rugg <http://www.ruggsrecommendations.com/rureonco28ed.html>
- *Heap Guide 2016*, UK <http://www.heaponline.co.uk/default.aspx>
- *Good University Guide 2016 - where to go and what to study*. Times Books UK. Author: John O'Leary

Appendix 3: International Medical Programs

- USA: Pre Med Degree + Graduate Medicine
- (e.g. Ithaca, Syracuse, Penn State, Miami, Mercer, Purdue, Michigan, Worcester Poly, Bard, Connecticut, George Washington, Florida, South Florida, BU, Tufts, Brown)
- Canada: Pre Med Degree + Graduate Medicine (e.g. Calgary, UBC, McGill, Mc Master, Toronto)
- United Kingdom: Medicine (5 or 6 years) (e.g. Sheffield, Manchester, UEA, Brighton & Sussex, Hull & York, Birmingham, St. George's, Keele, Cambridge, Oxford, Aberdeen, Edinburgh, St Andrews, Dundee)
- Ireland: Medicine (5 or 6 years)
- Czech Republic: Medicine (6 years)
- India: Medicine (5 years)
- Australia: Medicine (5 or 6 years)
- Switzerland: C Permit, (6 years)
- Germany: (6 years)

Entry Requirements

- USA: Undergrad degree (Chemistry/Physics/Biology/English) + MCAT
- Canada: Undergrad degree + MCAT
- UK: UKCAT/BMAT + Biology and/or Chemistry and/ or Math HL (some require Physics at MYP/IGCSE/Year 10 level)
- Ireland: HPAT + Chemistry & Biology or Physics (not Math Studies)
- Netherlands: Biology/Chemistry/Physics + Math in IBDP
- Czech Republic: Entrance Exam (summer) + IBDP
- India: Biology/Chemistry/Physics + Math in IBDP
- Australia: MCAT + IB Diploma (GAMSAT for Grad entry)
- Switzerland: Entrance Exam (not Geneva) + IBDP (min 32)
- Germany: Varies, IB Diploma, Entrance Exam

Alternative Routes to Medicine

- Foundation Years/Year 0 in UK (e.g.Keele)
- Medical Sciences degree with Grad entry to Year 2 Medicine
- <http://medipathways.com> (Birkbeck/Buckingham)
- Study abroad in the EU <http://emucas.com/>
- 6 month pre-med courses in the EU

Other Medicine Related Disciplines

- | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| • Biochemistry | • Occupational Therapy | • Psychiatry |
| • BioMedical Eng | • Optometry | • Psychology |
| • Dentistry | • Paramedic | • Psychotherapy |
| • Health Sciences | • Pharmacy | • Radiotherapy |
| • Medical Sciences | • Physician's Assistant | • Speech Therapy |
| • Medical Law | • Physiotherapy | • Sports Medicine |
| • Midwifery | • Podiatry | • Veterinary Science |

Medicine links

- <http://www.i-studentglobal.com/study-programmes/medicine-health-sciences>
- <https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/applying-medical-school-process/deciding-where-apply/medical-school-admission-requirements/>
- <http://www.ifmsa.org/>
- <http://www.medstudentsonline.com.au/>
- <http://emucas.com/> (European Medical & Dentistry schools)
- <http://www.medicalstudyguide.com/2014-03-04-10-11-49.html>
- <http://www.bma.org.uk/developing-your-career/medical-student/how-to-become-a-doctor/applying-to-medical-school>

Appendix 4: A Glossary of terms

Binding Study Advice – a system used in the Netherlands for 1st year students. A binding agreement stating that you will work hard to pass the required courses. If you don't pass you understand that you will not continue to the 2nd year.

Common Application Form – An online application form for US college applications (includes information on financial aid, colleges, courses etc)

Early Action – Early application type to US colleges in which you are informed early on whether you are offered a place, but you are NOT committed to enroll

Early Decision (I and II) - applying early to US colleges. Decisions in early December (I) or February (II). If you are accepted, you are legally bound to enrol - this is a binding admissions decision

Family Connection – A web-based, online, database system for all application information.

GPA (Grade Point Average) - This is an indicator used by US colleges and universities of your overall academic performance

Grants - Awards based on financial need that do not require repayment

Matching – a system used in the Netherlands whereby an admitted student is given a questionnaire to complete to see if the course chosen is the “best-fit” course. Three possible answers: “yes, it's a good fit”, “no, it's not a good fit” you can choose a different course at the university, and it's a “weak fit”, check again that you are happy with your choice.

Numerus Fixus – limited number of places available-limited enrolment capacity

Open Admission - Policy of some colleges to accept all high school graduates, regardless of academic qualifications or test scores

Rolling Admission - Each application is considered as soon as it is completed, and the candidate is informed straightaway. Rolls on until places are filled.

Scholarships – money given to you by a college, company, private institution or benefactor used to pay for your some or all your college tuition & fees. Usually based on academic merit

Transcript - The official record of high school courses and grades (Years 10-13)

UCAS – UK online application website (includes course & college search, finances, personal statement advice etc)

Undergraduate - Refers to someone who completes high school and starts college. You will all be undertaking undergraduate studies when you leave school for college

Waitlist – Places may be full, and you must wait for someone to drop their place

Appendix 5: Codes & Addresses for your school

Codes:

UCAS school code: (UK applications)

CEEB school code: (US applications, SATs & PSAT forms)

IB Diploma school code _____

Applications Codes, IDs and Password clues

Institution/Application portal:		Institution/Application portal:	
Contact person:		Contact person:	
Contact email address:		Contact email address:	
Contact mailing address:		Contact mailing address:	
Application ID:		Application ID:	
Application Student No.: Application password clue:		Application Student No.: Application password clue:	

Notes: