



Career and University Guidance Policy

1. Introduction

At Merryland International School, we are committed to nurturing the holistic development of our students, preparing them not only for academic success but also for their future careers and higher education pursuits. Our Career and University Guidance Policy aims to provide comprehensive support to students, empowering them to make informed decisions about their academic and professional pathways.

2. Objectives

- To assist all students, including Students of Determination/ALN students, in exploring their interests, strengths, abilities, and career aspirations through an inclusive and supportive guidance framework.
- To provide equitable guidance, accommodations, and resources that enable all students to make informed decisions about higher education and career pathways.
- To equip all students with the necessary skills, knowledge, and individualized support required to navigate the university and career application process effectively and confidently.
- To promote inclusive learning practices and equal access to higher education opportunities for students of diverse learning needs, backgrounds, and abilities.
- To foster partnerships with universities, colleges, support services, and industry professionals to facilitate a smooth and inclusive transition of all students into higher education and the workforce.

3. Components of the Policy

a. CU Guidance Counsellor

The school will ensure the continuous availability of 1 fulltime CU Guidance Counsellor and two support staff with the following responsibilities:

- Understanding the career aspirations of each student in Cycle 3, starting in Grade 9, and providing guidance on the planning and alignment of their student portfolios to meet these aspirations (e.g., choice of subjects, academic and extracurricular profile, etc.).
- Guiding each student to the most suitable or “best-fit” local and international postsecondary options and institutions, based on their career aspirations. This includes ensuring that each student has submitted at least one application to a postsecondary destination.



- Ensuring that each student meets all graduation requirements relevant to the student's curriculum and in accordance with the MoE equivalency requirements, if applicable.
- Engaging with parents throughout the entire CU guidance process, all the while emphasizing the importance of student agency in the decision-making process.
- Providing full administrative support to students in preparation for their postsecondary applications and pathways. Examples include writing recommendation letters, reviewing personal statements, and compiling relevant documents (e.g., transcripts, portfolios, attestations, etc.).
- Establishing relationships with local postsecondary education institutions to facilitate local opportunities and support for students (e.g., admissions, visits, admissions, internships, partnerships, etc.).
- Verifying that destination institutions have reasonable accommodations for any gifted students and students with additional learning needs.
- Organizing CU guidance events and disseminating and maintaining an up-to-date CU guidance calendar of key dates and events as per the requirements in the CU Guidance Program Implementation Guide.
- Providing CU guidance support to any Cycle 2 student considering alternative pathways for Cycle 3 (e.g., transferring to TVET)

b. Continuous Professional Development for CU Guidance Counsellors

- The school will help get annual membership in at least one professional organization for CU Guidance Counsellors, with recommended accountability measures to benefit from the membership.
- The school will ensure the completion of at least 25 hours of professional development annually at no cost to staff as per UAE Labour Law, with dedicated days to attend professional development events.
- The school will ensure that all CU Guidance Counsellors undergo specific CPD on the provision of CU guidance for gifted students and students with additional learning needs.



c. Career Exploration and Development

- **Career awareness:** The school will foster awareness of broad career concepts during Cycle 2, and actively support student transitions into Cycle 3, where career pathways/concepts can be explored in detail and integrated into postsecondary preparation.
- **Career Assessments:** The school will offer career assessments and workshops to help students identify their interests, strengths, and potential career paths.
- **Guest Speakers and Workshops:** The school will organize guest speaker sessions and workshops featuring professionals from various fields to expose students to different career opportunities.
- **Career Counselling:** Individualized career counselling sessions will be available to students to address their specific interests, concerns, and goals.
- **Skills development:** The school will help develop workplace-relevant soft skills via in-school activities or external enrichment programs and seminars.

d. University Preparation

- **Academic Advising:** Our academic advisors will work closely with students to ensure they are meeting academic requirements and taking appropriate courses to align with their university goals.
- **Standardized Test Preparation:** The school will offer guidance and resources to help students prepare for standardized tests such as the SAT, ACT, and TOEFL.
- **University Research:** Students will have access to university databases and resources to research potential institutions and programs that match their interests and aspirations.

e. University Application Support

- **Application Workshops:** The school will conduct workshops to guide students through the university application process, including essay writing, resume building, and interview preparation.



- **Application Deadlines and Requirements:** Clear information regarding application deadlines, admission requirements, and procedures for various universities will be provided to students.
- **Letters of Recommendation:** Teachers and counsellors will provide support and guidance to students in securing letters of recommendation for their university applications.

f. Partnerships and Collaboration

- **University Visits and Fairs:** The school will organize university visits and college fairs to give students the opportunity to interact with admissions representatives and learn more about different institutions.
- **Alumni Network:** Our school will leverage its alumni network to connect current students with alumni who can offer insights and advice about their university and career experiences.
- **Industry Partnerships:** The school will collaborate with industry partners to offer internships, apprenticeships, and mentorship opportunities to students, providing real-world exposure and experience.

g. Implementation and Evaluation

- **Implementation:** The Career and University Guidance Policy will be integrated into the school curriculum and extracurricular activities, with dedicated staff members overseeing its implementation.
- **Evaluation:** Regular assessment and feedback mechanisms will be in place to evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and make necessary adjustments to better meet the needs of **students**.

h. Student Coverage:

The school will report the following programme indicators to the ADEK annually:

- The percentage of students in Cycle 3 (and any in Cycle 2) who are receiving CU guidance.
- **Counsellor-Student Ratio:** The number of students being served by each FTE CU Guidance Counsellor.

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- **Graduate Destination:** The percentage of graduates of the current academic year entering higher education, TVET, or employment by the start of the following academic year.
- **Top 3 Destination:** The percentage of graduates of the current academic year accepted to at least one of their top 3 choices of postsecondary institutions or employers.

4. Conclusion

At Merryland International School, we are committed to empowering our students to achieve their full potential and pursue fulfilling careers and higher education opportunities. Through our comprehensive Career and University Guidance Policy, we aim to provide the support, resources, and guidance necessary for their success in the ever-evolving global landscape.

This policy will be reviewed every year.

Official Supporting Documents:

ADEK_School_Career and University Guidance Policy Policy_v.1.1 2024 (January)

Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK), Abu Dhabi

Principal



Reviewed on 25 May 2026.

Merryland International School is an outstanding, ISO 9001-certified, British Curriculum K-12 school located in Abu Dhabi, U.A.E. providing high quality education to pupils of more than 40 nationalities. Merryland has been a pioneer in education for the last four decades remaining true to its motto 'Changing lives...Nations wide'.

