

UNIVERSITY GUIDANCE AND CAREERS POLICY

CATEGORY	Education
POLICY OWNER	Vice Principal Academics
DATE & VERSION	14-09-2022 - Version 4
APPROVED BY	Principal
REVIEW FREQUENCY	Annual

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1. Policy Purpose

The aim of the Guidance and University Counselling Department at UWC Atlantic (the College) is to

- facilitate university applications worldwide
- advise students about making their applications appropriate to their interests, ability and financial circumstances.
- provide guidance to students regarding alternative options to university study, including gap year opportunities, apprenticeships and other career pathways.
- encourage students to be responsible for their applications and to have direct contact with universities where appropriate.
- foster relationships with representatives from a broad range of institutions (academically and geographically) so that the College has direct contacts to use for guidance.

2. Policy Statement

We maintain the network of UWC Guidance Counsellors via email, in person where possible and virtually, thus sharing expertise and best practice. Students are permitted to apply to a maximum of 10 universities worldwide with a lifetime limit of 12 applications. The United Kingdom's UCAS application system and the University of California application system each count as one application even though students can apply to more than one institution on each of these systems. Students may not apply to more than eight of the Shelby Davis US partner institutions. Access to information is maintained through the University Resources Room, electronic files on the College intranet, internal presentations and visiting speakers.

We also aim to expose all students to individuals who have had varied educational and career paths. Students may opt for a work experience/internship during the summer break at the end of Year 1 or in their gap year.

3. Policy Implementation

3.1 University Guidance

First year

All students have access to a Guidance and University Counsellor (GUC) as they make their subject choices in late August/early September, during a short Academic consultation. The

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College has two full-time GUCs. Each student is assigned to a GUC at the start of their studies at the College. There can then be on-going communication throughout Term 1, directly from the student or initiated by their Tutor. Otherwise, Term 1 should be a time for students to get adjusted to life at UWC Atlantic.

In Term 2 the GUCs make a series of presentations aimed at giving interested students an overview of the type of higher education offered in the UK and the US in particular, also with reference to Canada, Europe, Australia, Hong Kong and country systems where students will apply for that application cycle. This covers the financial implications, nature of teaching and learning and application process. Particular attention is paid to Medicine and Law because of the particular requirements of these applications regarding extra testing, etc.

From February to June all students meet individually with the GUCs to discuss career/university options and further steps. The GUCs make an electronic record of these meetings.

The College Board SAT examinations are offered at the College which is a Test Centre. The GUCs are also the Centre Test Coordinator and the College Board Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) supervisor and can request testing accommodation for ALN students taking the SAT. We do not offer the ACT standardized test.

Generally, US, UK, Canadian, Spanish, Australian, Dutch and other European universities representatives visit the campus throughout the year with country specific fairs being held on campus or virtually. These include presentations explaining what is offered with particular reference to the application process, opportunities and finances in the respective regions. Large numbers of students apply to the US, UK, Canada and Netherlands, and systems are in place to allow these applications to be processed. These processes are made clear to students through presentations and email. They are encouraged to speak to parents openly about their options and finances. A parental consent form and an overview of the application processes for the main countries of choice are sent to the parents/guardians of the IB1 students in February. This ensures that parents/guardians are aware of their children's applications and for the College to release information to universities. An application timeline is communicated to parents and students in the second semester for IB1 students.

Students will complete by May, the Student Testimonial Questionnaire (STQ) which will be utilised by the Tutor and the GUCs to complete their testimonial and Counselor reference.

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US College Essay, UCAS personal statement and Dutch Motivational Statement writing workshops are held for students from March to June. These workshops inform the students about the process and methodology required for the essay/personal statement. Students submit drafts for review by the GUCs and complete the essays by the application submission date in the second year.

Students' accounts are created on Maialearning (an online platform for university applications). Students will update their personal information, search possible universities and add the universities they will be applying to as well as invite their referees. The GUCs will add relevant documents including transcripts and recommendations for submission to their universities of choice.

Possible sources of financial aid and merit scholarships at various institutions are discussed with students. For those scholarships which the GUCs can nominate students from UWC Atlantic, students submit an essay regarding why they should be considered. Based on the information presented in the essay, scholarship requirements and financial need, students can be nominated for specific scholarships at various global universities.

Second Year

Immediately on arrival back at the College there is a presentation which reviews the process for the term. The timeline for the second year is also communicated to students again.

UCAS Personal Statement and Common Application Essays support and review is provided by the GUCs. Over 100 university representatives visit the College throughout September/October/November. Their visits usually take the form of an evening presentation at a time which is organised not to clash with usual service or activities. As well as discussing their particular institution, representatives also discuss and answer questions on the application process at the respective institutions, Standardised Testing, application essays, choosing referees, finances and any other queries or concerns students have. The GUCs have built relationships with a range of stakeholders to create and develop opportunities for students in the university entrance process, including establishing personal links with selected admissions officers at UK, US and other overseas universities.

There are University fairs held on off timetable days or the weekend, where large groups of Colleges / Universities come together (usually US and Canadian), which provides students with a good chance to compare and contrast and to meet with universities they had not previously considered. During these fairs specific sessions on US Financial Aid and Common

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Application essays are held. Some of the university representatives use this opportunity to interview prospective applicants in person.

US College Board SAT examinations are held in October, December, March and June. These will be fully digital from March 2023. Special tuition is not offered but resource material is available in the library, online and at the University Guidance office. Oxbridge/UK entrance exams are offered in an October/November sitting. Special tuition is not offered.

Students have access to GUCs for individual meetings and a short electronic record of these meetings is made. GUCs encourage students based on their qualifications, financial need, course selection, country option, institutional activities and location, as well as student preferences to apply for universities that will be a suitable fit and not just institutions that are highly ranked. Students will be guided to produce a listing that has reach, match and safety schools. Students are encouraged to review each institution with their family and make informed choices. Contact with UWC alumni at institutions is encouraged. Confirmation of universities/gap year options are made and recorded on the student's e-file.

Academic staff enter short comments on all students that they teach in iSAMS (our internal database). Tutors work these comments into coherent testimonials for each student. Guidance and training sessions to teachers and tutors are provided every year both on testimonial and teacher reference writing. During this term the GUCs are also in contact via email and telephone with students on gap years. They follow the same set of deadlines and are informed about these by email when receiving their IB results and information about retakes and remarks. Applications to Canada, Europe and other countries continue through the final term.

Students can attend Open Days or Interviews or University related tests such as TOEFL, IELTS, ACT, LNAT. Absences for these will only be authorised for interviews and tests required for admissions. The Leave of Absence form has to be submitted for authorisation. This absence is authorised through our procedure involving the Tutor, the Head of Year and the Vice Principal - Student Life, Safeguarding (DSP), Wellbeing and Belonging. The GUCs will arrange admissions interview time and space for any university asking to come to the College for interviews with students. A private space can be provided for students doing virtual interviews if required.

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As admissions responses come in the GUCs monitor these so that help can be offered if responses are not favourable or if difficult decisions need to be made. Students also make individual contact via email or by seeing the GUCs during office hours.

Occasionally the GUCs will need to fill out financial aid forms with students who have no family or family who cannot read/write English. Guidance is given for the completion of the required financial aid forms required by the US colleges/universities and for scholarships at non-US institutions.

The format for the student visa application process to many countries is outlined to the students and assistance for the process is given as required.

Release of IB Results

The GUCs review results and admissions requirements and conditions. Students have contact details and the GUCs respond to situations to help as and when needed. This includes advising students on how to respond to a near missed condition of an offer, writing letters of support where appropriate, contacting universities directly and encouraging students to make direct contact with universities if possible. Alternative options and UCAS clearing will be discussed.

Students are asked to let the GUCs know where they finally take up a place through completion of a Google form. The final IB results requests will be transmitted to the students' universities of choice directly from the IBO (International Baccalaureate Organisation).

Students are informed about deadlines for applying to university during a gap year or as transfer students by email when receiving their IB results and information about retakes and remarks.

3.2 Careers Advice

Most students come to the first guidance session with a fair idea of what career path they would like to take. Some students may revise their choices from the initial academic consultation and the GUCs will advise accordingly for the relevant career choices and the subject requirements. Through the STQ and initial guidance session, the GUCs will discuss with the student a list of possibilities for career paths. The student will do further research and make informed decisions with their family. There is the option for the student to perform an online career test which can give them a list of possibilities. The GUCs can then work with the students to help them realise their most suitable pathways. Students are exposed to

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different career paths by their contact with the GUCs, career prospectus books, university prospectuses outlining course options, visiting alumni and university representatives, guest lecturers, link families and other visitors.

University visitors also touch on the way university education can prepare students for a diverse and rapidly changing job market – with the emphasis on flexibility and interdisciplinary thinking. Students can use their holidays for work experience and internships in areas of interest to get a better understanding of the particular career path. These are usually sourced by the student and their family. This is encouraged particularly if they are looking towards a degree in Medicine, Veterinary, Law, Business or Engineering.

Possible summer experiences and gap year opportunities including those that are UWC affiliated are communicated to the students by the GUCs. This is updated on a continuous basis to allow for a diversity of available programs and experiences. The GUCs will review with the student any alternative options that the student may want to consider. The student and their family review the options and inform the GUCs of which option they will consider. The GUCs will support the student with the application providing the required school documents and review of the application. The breadth of the community service and co-curricular activities in which students participate at the College will allow students to learn skills required for many careers and might provide insights into different career fields for some students.

We are aware that occasionally students wish to pursue suitable non-university routes to attain their career of interest usually in a shorter period of time. This includes vocational/technical training, internships and apprenticeships in their respective countries. We appreciate the fact that not all students want a fully academic route and will want the opportunity to pursue a post secondary course which can give them an opportunity for work/hands on experience whilst gaining a qualification or allowing them to consider a specialisation. Once the student has identified their choice, the GUCs will offer full support to the application procedure.

4. Policy Measurement and Reporting

This policy is reviewed annually by the Education Committee of the Board, the Vice Principal Academics, Heads of Faculty and University Guidance Counsellors as part of the curriculum review cycle. Part of this review process will consider to what extent the policy is being used

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as an active working document and, more importantly, whether it is effectively impacting teaching and learning and student progress.

The policy is communicated to the whole school community electronically on **Every** and is available on the UWCA website.

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