

The Policy will be reviewed annually, or more regularly in the light of any significant new developments. The next anticipated review date will be:

December 2026

## Academic and Career Guidance Policy

### Our Aim

To support and prepare students to identify a suitable career choice, advance their understanding of the workforce and develop employability skills.

### Introduction

High-quality career guidance is an essential part of schooling that prepares students for their future. Careers are now increasingly seen as not being ‘chosen’, but as being constructed through a series of choices about learning and work that people make throughout their lives. At GEMS Founders School, Al Mizhar, we want our students to leave school with the confidence to effectively progress from learning to employment. Our programmes will equip our students with all the necessary information and skills required for this progression.

### Objective

The decisions that young people make at school have a big impact on their lives – affecting not just their further education, training or employment, but also their social lives, finances and health outcomes. A key function of secondary schools is to prepare students to transition successfully toward a successful career path. This involves providing them with opportunities to build their general capabilities, support their interests and aspirations, and help them to make informed decisions about their subject choices and pathways. The programme intends to enhance our students’ skill set to attain a tertiary level education and eventually enter the future workforce. The programme will entail the following (but will not be limited to):

### Initiatives

- **Community Service and Volunteering:** Engaging in community service provides students with the opportunity to become active members of their community and have a lasting, positive impact on society at large. Community service or volunteerism enables students to acquire life skills and knowledge, as well as provide a service to those who need it most.
- **Cognitive Ability Testing CAT4:** An online assessment tool to help the students identify their aptitude, learning styles potential strengths and weaknesses.
- **Developing essential soft skills:** Group sessions or presentations on creating their personal statements/essays, developing/enhancing their academic CV, interview skills and presentation skills, etc.

- **Co-Curricular Activities:** Regular exposure and participation at local events such as Model United Nations and TEDx Youth.
- **University campus visits (around the UAE):** In liaison with the various universities in the UAE, faculty-specific campus tours for the GFM students (Years 11, 12 and 13) will be organised throughout the academic year.
- **Course and university selection:** Individual/group sessions and/or presentations on university choices.
- **University applications:** On-going submissions of university application and comprehensive one-to-one career counselling sessions.
- **Internships:** An opportunity for GFM students that will give them information about career options that are available to them even before they become a university/college student. This is an advantage in terms of university acceptance, for students looking at pursuing courses such as Medicine, Law, Accountancy and Finance, IT, etc.

Throughout Secondary School, GFM students are encouraged to develop an understanding of their individual strengths, development areas and personal interests within education and possible career pathways.

### Years 7 and 8

An introduction to careers through the Moral Social Cultural Studies, PSHE and Form Time programmes is designed to develop self-awareness and for students to learn about the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life including career pathway decisions.

### Year 9

Students will be supported throughout the GCSE/IGCSE options process by teachers, leaders and the career counselling team. Students will receive information in a variety of contexts such as GCSE/IGCSE Options Evenings, parent information sessions, career fairs and online resources. **Unifrog** will be used to support students as well as initiatives such as Careers Days and a GCSE Subject Marketplace.

### Years 10 and 12

Throughout Year 10 and 12, students will be offered slightly different support structures. As always, students will continue to have access to online resources, with **Unifrog** being their key tool for subject and university research. Year 10 will focus on the beginning of their GCSE/IGCSE journey, touching base with their Career Counsellor with subject concerns and study support.

### Years 11, 12 and 13

Year 11 will focus on examinations and the selection of their A Level courses. Throughout this process, students will meet with middle leaders within the school to discuss their current grades and the process for entrance to the Sixth Form. Students will also engage in an A Level Subject Marketplace where they will gain invaluable knowledge from staff about Sixth Form and the individual courses they may like to study. Students will have the chance to inform our younger years about the GCSE/IGCSE programme. Year 11, 12 and 13 students will be invited to our many university fairs held at the school, whilst also being informed of all opportunities outside of Dubai.

By the time students reach the Sixth Form, the career guidance is firmly about supporting university application and individual student pathway progression. Comprehensive support documents will be in place that will provide students and parents focused updates and guidance around their A Level course progress, university/career advice and student wellbeing. Throughout these two years, students will have the opportunity to attend many university fairs held at the school, whilst also being informed of the external events taking place in Dubai. There will be presenters that join us throughout the year from different universities around the world to present not only about their university, but key topics being discussed around the world and key points to ensure their success in life after school and higher study. Students will also have the chance to inform our younger years about the Sixth Form/A-Level programme. Students are expected to research and have clear university and pathway goals by Sixth Form so that support can be individualised. We would also expect that these goals have been communicated and agreed on with parents at home. At this stage, we support all students with how to apply to all corners of the globe, including how to complete the required documentation etc. However, we do not apply to the university for the students–this is a family process. The Head of Secondary and Career Counsellor will be available for student and/or parent meetings requested in advance.

**Useful Links for Year 10-13:**

[www.unifrog.org](http://www.unifrog.org) for research and shortlisting of universities and courses worldwide. This tool can also be used for personality tests, career/subject research, logging community service, MOOCs and completing the university application process

[www.mypathstouni.com](http://www.mypathstouni.com) for GEMS partners involved to support your child's EVERY step from school to university. This resource also supports parents in understanding the international student journey. This is a tool to further support our schools' career guidance staff

[www.oxfordaqaexams.org.uk](http://www.oxfordaqaexams.org.uk) for information about Oxford AQA International

[www.cambridgeinternational.org](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org) for information about Cambridge Assessment International Education

[www.careerswales.com](http://www.careerswales.com) click on Tools and Resources, Leaflets and A-Z

[www.brightknowledge.org](http://www.brightknowledge.org) for careers information

[www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/careers](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/careers) for careers research

[www.ucas.ac.uk](http://www.ucas.ac.uk) useful for researching career pathways and suitable higher education courses in the UK

[www.russellgroup.ac.uk/informed-choices/](http://www.russellgroup.ac.uk/informed-choices/) Guide to choosing A Level options

[www.oxbridgeapplications.com](http://www.oxbridgeapplications.com) For students applying to Oxford or Cambridge Universities

[www.prospects.ac.uk/options\\_with\\_your\\_subject.html](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/options_with_your_subject.html) Information on graduate recruitment from a range of degree courses

[www.fulbright.co.uk](http://www.fulbright.co.uk) for students with British qualifications wanting to study in the USA

[www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) to register for the SATs (required for entry to US universities)

[www.educationau-incanada.ca](http://www.educationau-incanada.ca) to research university and college courses in Canada

[www.studyoptions.com](http://www.studyoptions.com) covers Higher Education in Australia and New Zealand

[www.study-in-europe.org](http://www.study-in-europe.org) covers Higher Education options in Europe



