



Akademeia High School University and Career Guidance Policy

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INTRODUCTION

The Akademeia High School University and Career Guidance Policy plays a crucial role in helping our students make informed decisions about their future academic and career paths. We want to empower students with the skills, knowledge, and tools to align their academic and professional choices with their individual interests, strengths, and goals. In addition, we aim to support students in transitioning from school to higher education and employment, fostering lifelong learning and adaptability.

The policy is based on Gatsby's Benchmarks, which are¹:

1. **A stable careers programme** - every school and college should have an embedded programme of career education and guidance that is known and understood by pupils, parents, teachers and employers.
2. **Learning from labour market information** - every pupil, and their parents, should have access to good-quality information about future study options and labour market opportunities. They will need the support of an informed adviser to make best use of available information.

¹ The Gatsby Benchmarks, source: <https://www.goodcareerguidance.org.uk/benchmarks-and-background>



3. **Addressing the needs of each pupil** - pupils have different career guidance needs at different stages. Opportunities for advice and support need to be tailored to the needs of each pupil. A school's careers programme should embed equality and diversity considerations throughout.
4. **Linking curriculum learning to careers** - all teachers should link curriculum learning with careers. For example, STEM subject teachers should highlight the relevance of STEM subjects for a wide range of future career paths.
5. **Encounters with employers and employees** - every pupil should have multiple opportunities to learn from employers about work, employment and the skills that are valued in the workplace. This can be through a range of enrichment activities including visiting speakers, mentoring and enterprise schemes.
6. **Experiences of workplaces** - every pupil should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities, and expand their networks
7. **Encounters with further and higher education** - all pupils should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them.
8. **Personal guidance** - every pupil should have opportunities for guidance interviews with a career's adviser. These should be available whenever significant study or career choices are being made. They should be expected for all pupils but should be timed to meet their individual needs.

THE AIMS OF AHS UNIVERSITY AND CAREER GUIDANCE POLICY

1. **To identify interests, strengths, and values:** By encouraging self-assessment and reflection, we help students understand their unique qualities, skills, and aspirations, forming a foundation for intentional decision-making about their future.
2. **To explore educational and career pathways:** Through access to information on various careers, university programs and alternative pathways, students gain a comprehensive understanding of the options available to them, including the skills and qualifications needed to pursue them.
3. **To develop lifelong skills:** Beyond academic and career exploration, we are dedicated to equipping students with essential skills such as critical thinking, adaptability, communication, and resilience, which are valuable for success in an evolving global workforce.
4. **To receive personalized guidance:** Our policy emphasizes individualized support, providing students with opportunities for one-on-one counselling sessions, career assessments, and mentorship to aid in their personal journey.
5. **To prepare for a smooth transition:** We aim to support students as they transition from high school to post-secondary education or the workforce, ensuring they have the knowledge, tools, and confidence to succeed.



Y9 OVERVIEW

For Year 9 students, career guidance focuses on early self-discovery, helping them start to understand their unique strengths, interests, and values. At this stage, the objective is to build a strong foundation of self-awareness, which can guide them in setting personal goals, exploring potential careers, and making thoughtful academic choices in the years ahead.

Objectives of Year 9 Career Guidance:

1. **Understanding personal interests and strengths**

Year 9 is an ideal time for students to start exploring their interests—both in and outside of school. Through activities self-reflective exercises, Personal Development Scheme workshops, RSHE activities, extra curricular activities, additional workshops and clubs, as well as initiatives organized by various departments students can begin to identify areas where they feel motivated, confident, and curious.

2. **Recognizing core values and motivations**

Career guidance at this stage also emphasizes discovering and exploring our own values. Students are encouraged to think about what is important to them, such as helping others, working in teams, or engaging in creative problem-solving. Knowing what motivates them can help students envision career paths that would bring them fulfillment and align with their personal values. Both school and personal values are discussed in the assemblies and mentor's hour throughout the academic year.

3. **Building confidence in self-expression**

Helping students learn to express their thoughts, goals, and aspirations is essential. Through activities assembly presentations and mentor's group work, Year 9 students can become more comfortable talking about their interests and aspirations, building the confidence to articulate who they are and what they hope to achieve.

4. **Exploring potential career paths through interests**

With a growing sense of their strengths and values, students can begin to connect these qualities to potential careers. Mentors and teachers can introduce them to a broad range of fields, using resources such as career videos, job profiles, or guest speakers. This way, students can see how their personal interests and strengths might align with specific jobs.

5. **Setting small, realistic Goals**

Early goal-setting exercises, like creating short-term academic and personal goals, teach students that progress comes from consistent effort. Students work on their goals at the beginning of every academic year and they review them termly (after the exam sessions). By achieving these small milestones, they begin to develop a sense of responsibility and accomplishment that will be valuable for future career planning.

The objectives are implemented through:

- **Interests and strengths surveys:** Simple, accessible assessments to help students identify personal strengths and areas of interest.



- **My strengths and motivations:** Mentor’s hour sessions where students explore their strengths and reflect on what motivates them.
- **Career Exploration Day:** Introduction to a wide variety of career fields through virtual tours, guest speakers, or job-shadowing opportunities.
- **Goal-Setting Mentor’s hours:** Individual meetings and mentor’s hours dedicated to help students set academic and personal goals and track their progress throughout the school year.
- Throughout the school year, students are encouraged to discuss individually their plans for the future with their mentors and subject teachers to further reflect on their plans for the future.

Y9 curriculum overview:

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Setting goals for the academic year - International Week, promoting the importance of modern languages (also in professional choices) - Integrational trips - ‘Passion for learning’, ‘Respect’ – the values discussed in the assemblies and mentor’s hour, linking it to professional life - Creative arts and its importance in creativity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Academic performance review, setting goals for the second term, reviewing - PDS projects and creativity - Meeting with the Deputy Head (Academic) - Importance of interests and passions in choosing potential career paths: Interest surveys - ‘My dream job’ – what should 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Goal setting and reviewing - Professional and personal values – mentor’s hour - Career Exploration Day - Additional workshops on creative iGCSEs, that are available to them in Y10 and Y11

By the end of Year 9, students should have a foundational understanding of themselves, increased awareness of various career fields, and a better sense of direction for setting meaningful academic and personal goals in the future.

Y10 OVERVIEW

For Year 10 students, career guidance focuses on helping them understand their unique strengths and make informed decisions about their Academic Pathway in Y11. At this stage, students are encouraged to connect their personal abilities and interests with academic choices that align with potential career directions.



Objectives of Year 10 University and Career Guidance:

1. **Using their individual strengths and skills**

By Year 10, students have developed a clearer sense of their academic and extracurricular strengths. Career guidance at this stage emphasizes understanding these abilities in greater depth and implement them in various initiatives, such as external and internal competitions, clubs, PDS projects.

2. **Connecting Strengths to Career Interests**

Career guidance in Y10 shows students how specific strengths (e.g., analytical thinking, creativity, communication) align with real-world roles. For example, a student with strong analytical and problem-solving skills might be encouraged to explore STEM fields, while a student with creativity and empathy might be drawn to the arts or social sciences. This happens mostly in individual consultations with subject teachers and mentors.

3. **Understanding Academic Pathways and Course Options**

As students prepare to select subjects for Year 11, they benefit from guidance on how various academic pathways can support their career aspirations. They receive insights into the prerequisites and recommended subjects for various fields, helping students make informed choices that align their further university plans.

4. **Setting Personalized Academic and Career Goals**

Goal-setting is essential at this stage, as students start to set specific academic and career-related goals. Students who have received the guidance in this regard in Y9, can help their peers with understanding the importance of goal-setting and With guidance, they can identify short-term goals (e.g., achieving specific grades, participating in relevant extracurricular activities) that support their long-term aspirations. This approach empowers students to take ownership of their learning journey and develop a sense of purpose in their studies.

5. **Exploring the Link Between Academic Performance and Career Opportunities**

Career guidance in Y10 can emphasize how dedication to academic success can open doors to scholarships, specialized programs, summer schools and internships, which in turn expand career prospects. Students build their summer plans together with their mentors to ensure that they use the summer months to build on their strengths.

Implementing the Objectives:

To achieve these objectives, the Year 10 program can include a mix of structured activities and resources, such as:

- **Goal-Setting Mentor's hours:** Individual meetings and mentor's hours dedicated to help students set academic and personal goals and track their progress throughout the school year.
- **Visits from College Counsellors and Deputy Head (Academic)** – students will learn about university requirements, preparation for applications and how they should think about their choices.



- **My strengths and motivations:** Mentor’s hour sessions where students explore their strengths and reflect on what motivates them.
- **Career Exploration Day:** Introduction to a wide variety of career fields through virtual tours, guest speakers, or job-shadowing opportunities.
- Throughout the school year, students are encouraged to discuss individually their plans for the future with their mentors and subject teachers to further reflect on their plans for the future.

Curriculum overview:

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Setting goals for the academic year - International Week, promoting the importance of modern languages (also in professional choices) - Integrational trips - ‘Passion for learning’, ‘Respect’ – the values discussed in the assemblies and mentor’s hour, linking it to professional life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Academic performance review, setting goals for the second term, reviewing PDS projects and creativity - Meeting with the Deputy Head (Academic) - Individual consultations with Deputy Head (Academic) - Special assembly dedicated to Academic Pathways - Academic Pathway Fair - University Counsellors visits during mentor’s hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Goal setting and reviewing - Career Exploration Day - Individual consultations with Deputy Head (Academic) regarding Academic Pathways - Final decisions regarding University Counsellors visits during mentor’s hours - Additional activities: professional networking and development

By the end of Year 10, students should appreciate the importance of academic performance in achieving career aspirations, fostering a commitment to success in the years ahead.

Y11 OVERVIEW

For Year 11 students, the career and university guidance curriculum focuses on supporting students as they choose their A-Level subjects—a decision that will significantly impact their higher education and career options. The aim is to guide students in selecting subjects that align with their strengths, interests, and future aspirations, ensuring they make informed choices with confidence.



Objectives for Y11 Career and University Guidance:

1. **To support students in making informed decisions about A-Level subjects based on their strengths, career goals, and university requirements**

The Y11 guidance focuses on helping students assess their strengths and interests through self-reflection exercises, academic performance and their interests. Students are provided with resources on how different A-Level subjects align with university courses and career pathways. The students are presented with the prerequisites for specific fields, such as STEM, business, humanities, or creative industries.

2. **To develop an understanding of labour market trends and skill demands**

Students are offered information sessions or resources on global and local labour market trends during events like Careers Days. They are encouraged to consider labour market data when selecting A-Levels, understanding which fields may offer greater opportunities in the future.

3. **To develop a reflective approach to their own learning**

Students are introduced to the concept of logbook, where they include reflections of their experiences, like their readings, podcasts they listened to and many other aspects. This should prepare them for university applications (e.g. personal statement writing).

4. **To connect academic choices with career opportunities**

Students are presented with internships facilitated by the school. The internships cover various disciplines (e.g. medicine, engineering, journalism, social sciences). Students are applying for the internships, submitting their CVs and cover letters. This way, they learn about the process of job search and job application.

5. **To practice their study skills and academic preparation**

Students prepare for the academic rigor of A-Level studies, equipping them with study techniques and time management skills. These are also useful in their preparation for IGCSE exams, taking place at the end of Y11.

Implementation Strategy:

- **Mentor's hour on A Level and career choices with guests (e.g. college counsellors):** allowing students to gradually build their understanding of expectations.
- **Parent Engagement:** Host sessions for parents to understand the A-Level selection process and how they can support their children's choices.
- **Special assemblies:** during dedicated assemblies, students learn about various career opportunities, also in the less popular fields (e.g. humanities, modern languages)
- **Individual consultations:** these consultations should help the students to clarify their personal, academic and professional goals,

Curriculum overview:

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Setting goals for the academic year - International Week, promoting the importance of modern languages (also in professional choices) - Special assembly on A Level choices - Insiders Stories – an event during which students can talk to AHS alumni, who are currently in various institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Academic performance review, setting goals for the second term, reviewing - PDS projects and creativity - Individual consultations with Deputy Head (Academic) - Special assemblies dedicated to A Level Choices (presentations from various departments) - Modern Languages promotion – special assembly - Creative Arts promotion – special assembly - A Level Fair - University Counsellors visits during mentor’s hours - Careers Day - Visits of Y12/Y13 students during mentor’s hours - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Goal setting and reviewing - Career Exploration Day - Individual consultations with Deputy Head (Academic) - Final decisions regarding Academic Pathways - University Counsellors visits during mentor’s hours - Additional activities: CV writing, motivational letter writing

Expected Outcomes

By the end of the Year 11 guidance curriculum, students should know the prerequisites for their preferred university programs or career paths and how their A-Level choices impact future opportunities. They should feel prepared for the academic demands of A-Level curricula, having learned effective study techniques and time management skills.

Y12 OVERVIEW

For Year 12 students, career and university guidance focuses on equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and resources to make informed decisions about university courses, understand the labor market, conduct in-depth career research, and prepare thoroughly for the university application process. These objectives are designed to empower students as they approach critical academic and career milestones.

Y12 University and Career Guidance objectives:

- 1. To choose university courses aligned with career goals**



During the process, students are guided in identifying key factors when selecting a university, such as location, program offerings, campus culture, faculty expertise, ranking, and financial considerations ('University spotlights' during assemblies). Students are encouraged to research specific programs, including entrance requirements, course structures, specializations, and potential career outcomes.

2. To understand the entry requirements for each university course

Students are informed how to navigate various tools (such as university browsers, websites of specific universities), which may help them to understand entry requirements of different courses. This should inspire the students to undertake actions to fulfil the entry requirements of their dream university. At the same time, they should consider how different universities support their career goals (e.g., through internships, research opportunities, networking connections).

3. Building academic and personal resilience for academic and professional environments

As a part of assemblies, mentor's hour and RSHE curriculum, students are offered sessions on study skills, time management, and self-discipline to help students prepare for university-level academics. These activities emphasise the importance of self-care, stress management, and building support networks. Students are encouraged to set realistic goals for their university experience, including academic, social, and personal growth objectives.

4. Preparing for University Applications

Throughout the year, various workshops are conducted on the university application process, including timelines, required documents, and specific requirements for local and international applications. Students are offered professional guidance on crafting personal statements or essays, emphasizing how to effectively communicate their academic interests, career goals, and unique experiences. They are also provided with support for preparing additional application elements, such as letters of recommendation, portfolios (for creative fields), and standardized test preparation if required.

5. To conduct in-depth career research

Students are encouraged to research potential careers thoroughly, ensuring they have a well-rounded understanding of different career paths, job roles, and required qualifications. They are provided with opportunities for career exploration through guest speakers (e.g. during Careers Day), and internships facilitated by the school.

Implementation of the objectives:

- **University applications workshops:** Sessions on researching university options, including online research strategies and informational interviews with current students or alumni.

- **University representatives' visits:** during assemblies and in the afternoons, students are participating in meetings with representatives of various universities to find out more about their academic offer.
- **Internships organised by the school:** students are provided with opportunities to apply to various institutions (public and private) to gain professional experience and reflect on their career priorities.
- **Labor Market Trend Seminars:** Presentations on industry trends, with guest speakers from various sectors to provide insights on emerging careers (e.g. during Careers Day)
- **Mock Interviews and Personal Statement Reviews:** Provide students with feedback on personal statements and conduct mock interviews to build confidence and refine their responses.

Curriculum overview:

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Setting goals for the academic year - Workshops: A Level Survival skills, University Applications - Visits from the representatives of various universities during assemblies and in the afternoon - Workshops on portfolio building (for students applying to creative degrees) - Insiders Stories - Selecting individual PDS tasks - Individual consultations with the Headmaster, Director of Cocurricular and mentor - Where applicable, students attend university preparation classes (e.g. SAT prep) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Academic performance review, setting goals for the second term, reviewing - Completing the first PDS task and submitting reflections - Individual consultations with the Headmaster, Director of Cocurricular and mentor - University Counsellors are assigned to students based on their university plans - Careers Day - Personal Statement workshops - Individual meetings with university counsellors - Where applicable, students attend university preparation classes (e.g. SAT prep) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Goal setting and reviewing - University preparation workshops (e.g. UCAS account setting, individual meetings with advisors) - Preparation for the aptitude tests - Summer plans with mentors (e.g. summer schools, internships, reading lists) - Where applicable, students attend university preparation classes (e.g. SAT prep)



By the end of Year 12, students should have identified a shortlist of universities and programs that align with their academic interests and goals. They should also have a solid understanding of the university application process, equipped with a well-crafted personal statement, refined interview skills, and a strategic approach to each application.

Y13 OVERVIEW

In Year 13, career and university guidance centres on finalizing university applications, preparing for the transition to university life, and laying the groundwork for students' future careers. This guidance aims to ensure students are fully prepared for their post-secondary pathways, with confidence in their applications, practical skills for university, and a clear vision for their career goals.

Objectives for Y13 University and Careers Guidance:

1. **To finalise university applications and prepare for admissions processes**

Throughout the year, university advisors help students complete and submit strong, competitive university applications, meeting all requirements and deadlines. They provide detailed guidance on personal statements and essays, ensuring they communicate their academic interests, achievements, and career goals effectively.

2. **To gain skills for university life and independent living**

In order to equip students with the skills necessary for university life, including managing academics, finances, and personal well-being, teachers and mentors discuss with the students study skills and time management, strategies for handling university coursework, exams, and research projects. Where necessary, university advisors provide sessions on applying for scholarships and grants.

3. **To plan for transition from secondary to higher education and professional career**

During mentor's hour and assemblies, students are provided with support in managing the academic, social, and emotional transition from secondary school to university and future careers. These activities address common challenges such as homesickness, stress management, and time balancing, helping students develop coping strategies.

The implementation of the objectives:

- **Personal Statement and Personal Essay Refinement:** Provide one-on-one feedback sessions for students to polish their personal statements and application essays. This happens during University Bootcamp at the beginning of Term 1.



- **Mock Interview Sessions:** Conduct mock interviews to prepare students for admissions interviews, offering constructive feedback to improve responses.
- **Individual meetings with university advisors:** through these meetings, students can discuss any doubts and concerns related to their application process.
- **University Preparation Workshops:** Cover topics like time management, study techniques, and self-care practices to help students succeed at university.
- **Special assemblies and mentors hour, dedicated to the next stage of students' lives**

Term 1	Term 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Setting goals for the academic year - University Bootcamp to finalise applications - Completing the second PDS task and submitting reflections - Visits from the representatives of various universities during assemblies and in the afternoon - Insiders Stories - Individual consultations University advisors - Where applicable, students attend university preparation classes (e.g. SAT prep, mock interviews, aptitude tests) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Academic performance review, setting goals for the second term, reviewing - Careers Day - Individual meetings with university counsellors

By the end of Year 13, students should have completed and submitted well-prepared university applications. They should also feel prepared for the transition to university life, with an understanding of how to adapt to new academic, social, and personal environments.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMMES THAT COMPLIMENT AHS UNIVERSITY AND CAREER GUIDANCE CURRICULUM

1. Teaching and Learning Policy
2. Mentoring Policy and Curriculum
3. Personal Development Scheme
4. RSHE Curriculum
5. Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy



POLICY EVALUATION AND REVIEW

The effectiveness of AHS University and Career Guidance Policy will be annually reviewed and updated, if necessary, based on its effectiveness and feedback from students, staff members and parents, as well as to reflect changes in emerging trends, and best practices.

Policy owner	Dr Katarzyna Borzym-Grzesik, Deputy Head (Academic)
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