



ARCADIA
BRITISH
SCHOOL

UNIVERSITY & CAREERS



FORWARD THINKING MENTORING

Forward Thinking is a mentoring service that supports students throughout their high school journey. We offer a unique and straightforward approach to university counselling.

Our methodology revolves around two fundamental questions:

- **Are you ok?**
- **How can we make your life easier?**



1. ARE YOU OK?

Throughout your journey, our dedicated team at Arcadia places a strong emphasis on your well-being. We prioritize students' mental health by regularly checking in with you. These three simple yet impactful words serve as a reassurance that we are always here for you. Through our collaborative approach, we will work together to alleviate any anxiety and provide a meticulously planned and nurturing experience throughout the entire journey to university.

2. HOW CAN WE MAKE YOUR LIFE EASIER?

The Arcadia Way aims to alleviate the stress associated with the university application process by providing unwavering support. As students navigate the highs and lows of their high school years, you remain our top priority. Our counselling team will be your constant source of inspiration and encouragement, always offering guidance and support.

STUDENT HOURS

In Years 12 and 13, students will meet with the university counsellor independently once per term. Students are encouraged to schedule additional meetings with the counsellor to review application materials and seek advice on subject selection or any other relevant areas.

A LEVEL GUIDANCE

We support students in identifying the subject selection that best suits their future ambitions. Students will need to consider a number of factors during this selection, including:

- **Previous academic results, e.g. GCSE examinations**
- **Intended degree of study at university**
- **Country of application for university**
- **University ambitions**

Following a meeting with their university counsellor, students will be able to select those subjects that will prepare them for their academics beyond high school. These discussions are critical as students need to familiarise themselves with university entry requirements. For example, those students applying to the UK for Architecture will be required to take Physics and Math at A-Level if they are aiming for the top 20 universities.

RESPONSIBILITIES

In the first term of Year 12, students will receive a responsibility form that will outline their responsibilities throughout the application process. This agreement will also be signed by parents and the university counsellor.

The responsibilities outlined in this form include:

- **Communication expectations**
- **Regular updation of Unifrog**
- **Timely submission of applications and required materials**
- **Research on university entry requirements**
- **Maintaining academics and behaviour in school, and the impact any changes may have on applications**

Parent responsibilities during this period, include the following:

- **Encouragement of exploration and responsibility**
- **Remain informed from both the school and universities**
- **Discuss financial requirements with students to inform university lists and scholarships**
- **Ask guiding questions**
- **Remain involved in the application process to support with any required documentation**

The university counsellor will support the student in compiling application materials and developing a strategy that aligns with their ambitions. Their responsibilities include:

- **Introduce the student to key application material such as resumes, essays and activity lists. Provide feedback on these materials throughout the academic year**
- **Introduction to opportunities to explore careers and university options**
- **Organisation of information sessions for both parents and student**
- **Encourage students to reflect on their priorities and choices**
- **Provide guidance throughout the university decision making process**

For a student to have a stress-free and successful application process, we believe that it is essential for each of these responsibilities be met. Our priority remains the student's happiness and wellbeing, and we will consistently check-in with students during this period to ensure they are comfortable with their progress.





TIMELINE

Year 12 (2025-26)

Term 1:

New student form Deadline	8th September
First Draft of Resume	13th October
Winter Plan deadline	19th November

Term 2:

Provisional University List	19th January
Second Draft of Resume	9th February
First Draft of Personal Statement (UK & UAE Applicants)	16th February
First Draft of Letter of Motivation (Europe)	23rd February
Cover Letter (Interview workshop)	2nd March
First Draft of Common App Essay (US)	9th March
Brag Sheet	16th March
Interview Event	8th April
Subject & Country Form	13th April

Term 3:

UK Early Application (Medicine & Oxbridge) - Final draft of Personal Statement	15th June
US Early Application - Final Draft of Common App Essay	15th June
Second Draft of University List	18th June

Year 13 (2025-26)

All Applicants:

Review of University List and Agreement of Applications	5th September
Final Draft of Resume	8th September

UK Applicants:

Application deadline for UK medicine & Oxbridge applicants	1st October
Final draft of personal statement	5th November
Application deadline for all other UK Applicants	5th December

US Applicants:

Final draft of activity list	14th September
Final draft of Early Decision/Early Action essays	10th October
Application deadline for Early Decision/Early Action applicants	26th October
Final draft of Early Decision 2/Regular essays	18th November
Application deadline for Early Decision 2/Regular applications	8th December

Europe, Canada Australia & UAE Applicants:

Final Draft of Europe Letter of Motivation	1st October
Application deadline for most Canada applicants	8th December
Application deadline for all Australia applicants	1st March
Applications completed for most Europe applicants	1st March
Applications completed for most UAE applicants	31st March

PREDICTED GRADES

Predicted grades are determined by subject teachers and reviewed by academic leadership to ensure fairness and consistency. The Careers Department does not influence how grades are assigned but works closely with Heads of Year and the Sixth Form team to identify students who require early mock exams in September/October, such as those applying for Medicine, Oxbridge, or US universities. These students will be notified directly.

Predicted grades are evidence-based, reflecting student performance across key assessments including Year 12 data, AS results (where applicable), and Year 13 mock exams. For BTEC students, predictions are calculated using completed unit grades, practical work, assessment data, and engagement levels. Grades cannot exceed more than one grade above a student's demonstrated performance, ensuring that all predictions are a fair and accurate reflection of current attainment.

The detailed predicted grades policy is [available here](#).

DO'S & DON'TS

A LEVEL AND BTEC SELECTION

DO'S

- Help your child choose subjects aligned with their interests and potential degree options.
- Research university subject requirements early (e.g., Engineering requires Maths; Psychology may require a science).
- Encourage a balanced combination, academic challenge plus enjoyment.
- Keep career flexibility in mind; many degrees accept a range of subjects.

DON'TS

- Choose subjects based purely on perceived ease or friend choices.
- Push your child into subjects they dislike; this often leads to underperformance.
- Assume BTECs are less valuable, many universities highly value them.
- Forget that some competitive universities prefer at least three traditional A Levels.



UNIVERSITY & CAREERS PROGRAMME

DO'S

- Encourage engagement with the school's careers classes, guest talks, and work experience opportunities.
- Ask your child what they've been learning in their careers lessons, regular conversations help reinforce their understanding.
- Help them research topics that come up in class, such as different pathways
- Encourage your child to explore different industries and roles before narrowing down choices.
- Encourage them to use what they learn in class to make informed decisions about subject choices and work experience placements.
- Use tools like Unifrog (or similar) to track interests, skills, and goals

DON'TS

- Treat careers lessons as less important than academic subjects, they play a vital role in preparing students for life after school.
- Focus only on one career path; encourage them to stay open-minded when exploring options in class.
- Ignore school communications about follow-up tasks or online platforms linked to careers lessons.
- Ignore the value of transferable skills gained through part-time jobs, volunteering, or hobbies.

APPLICATIONS

DO'S

- Encourage your child to take ownership of their application and deadlines.
- Help them research universities and courses early.
- Support them in drafting their personal statement but let their voice shine through.
- Attend the school workshop about the process.
- Remind them to check entry requirements carefully (including English proficiency, if relevant)

DON'TS

- Apply to universities on their behalf without consulting the school counselor.
- Focus solely on prestige, look at course content, location, and student support too.
- Wait until the final term of Year 13 to think about back-up options.
- Assume all universities have identical requirements or deadlines.
- Miss internal deadlines without talking to the school counselor first

UNIVERSITY VISITS AND EVENTS

DO'S

- Let your child lead the questions during tours and fairs.
- Discuss impressions together afterwards, facilities, student life, support, and atmosphere.
- Take note of accommodation, travel, and cost of living factors.
- Encourage them to attend virtual events if travel isn't possible.

DON'TS

- Over-schedule visits; too many in one day can be overwhelming.
- Dominate conversations with admissions staff, it's your child's turn to engage.
- Assume one perfect university exists, focus on finding a good fit.
- Skip post-visit reflection; impressions fade quickly.

INTERNSHIP SUPPORT

The careers and university department are able to support students in finding internships that align with their interests; however these cannot be guaranteed. We recommend that students consider taking part in work experience opportunities during the winter or summer break as this will have limited impact on their academics.

Previous students have been placed in companies including the Marriott Hotel, Transcorp, Mumzworld, Galadari and King's College Hospital.

Within the academic year, the careers and university department organise multiple guest speakers to introduce students to a range of careers. Students will also have the opportunity to attend "day in the life" events at companies across Dubai and engage with business professionals through virtual events.

APPLICATION MATERIALS

Most universities may require the following application materials, with changes based on the individual university entry requirements:

- **Academic transcripts**
- **Recommendation letters**
- **Essays**
- **Resume**
- **Activity list**
- **Standardised testing**
- **Entrance exams**
- **Portfolio**

The university counsellor supports students in preparing each of the materials to ensure they have the best chance at success in their applications. Students will be provided with a list of deadlines for first, second and final drafts of these materials to help them organise their schedule throughout Years 12 and 13.

The careers and university department will provide rounds of feedback on students' essays, resumes and activity lists. They will also support students in researching entry requirements to identify when preparation for standardised testing or entrance exams should begin as well as information on how to register.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

Parents are encouraged to contact the university counsellor with any questions regarding the application process. The counsellor can advise on where to find accurate information on university websites and how to contact admissions departments for further guidance to support students in making informed university choices.

Throughout the school year, parents will be invited to attend coffee mornings, webinars, and individual feedback sessions. Parents are also copied into emails following every student meeting, ensuring they are informed about the advice and next steps discussed.

All university and career updates are shared on the Google Classroom platform, including online session opportunities, class presentation materials, and key deadlines.

The counsellor will contact parents if a student is behind on required tasks, has missed deadlines, or needs additional support completing documentation.

During Year 12, parents are invited to book a one-to-one meeting with the university counsellor during the May exam period. This meeting provides an overview of the student's progress, personalised summer recommendations, and planning guidance for Year 13.

In Year 13, parents continue to be included in relevant email communication throughout the application process and may request a meeting with the counsellor at any time if further discussion or clarification is needed.



ARCADIAN PATH

The Arcadian Path is Arcadia British School's bespoke Sixth Form enrichment programme, designed to cultivate well-rounded, proactive, and globally aware individuals. It challenges students through a diverse range of creative, active, and service-oriented experiences.

Each half term, students undertake unique challenges that foster essential skills in critical thinking, collaboration, initiative, and ethical responsibility through independent inquiry and real-world application.

This structured journey empowers students to discover their passions, develop resilience, and make meaningful contributions both within our school and the wider community. Ultimately, the Arcadian Path equips students with a reflective understanding of themselves and their world, preparing them for future success at university and beyond.

As part of the Arcadian Path, students participate in dedicated career and university guidance lessons in Years 12 and 13, led by the University Counsellor. The university process begins within the first few weeks of Year 12 and continues throughout both years, ensuring consistent support and preparation.

These classes cover:

- **Introduction to Unifrog for Post-16 students**
- **Resume writing and presentation**
- **Individual Values & Identity Project**
- **University list research and course comparison**
- **Guidance on winter and summer plans (internships, experiences, and enrichment)**
- **Application workshops for UK, Europe, US, and UAE universities**
- **Brag sheet and personal statement preparation**
- **Portfolio workshops for creative and design-based courses**
- **Interview preparation, including four workshops and a mock interview event**
- **Ready for Life Programme, covering:**
 - Budgeting and financial literacy
 - Setting up in a new city
 - Health and wellbeing
 - Living independently
 - Accommodation guidance

