BELVEDERE
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

CAREER UNIVERSITY GUIDANCE POLICY

2026-2027

Policy No.	**POL-CG-003**
Revision No.	**002**
Issue Date	**18 September 2026**
Effective Date	**22 September 2026**
Review Date:	**14 September 2026**
Next Review Date:	**14 September 2027**

Approvals:			
Principal	**Mr. Ismat Daou**		
Signature		*Date:*	15/9/26
BIS Board of Governors	**Dr. Naim Alradi**		
Signature		*Date:*	17/9/26

Vision:

At Belvedere International School (BIS), our vision is to empower every student for successful transitions into postsecondary destinations. We provide comprehensive guidance, fostering proactive career exploration and informed decision-making through collaboration, consistency, and quality practices. We prepare our students for their future. Our policy outlines clear requirements, responsibilities, and standards, ensuring personalized support for each student's academic and career goals. Additionally, our policy includes clear standards for implementing this vision, with comprehensive roles for those responsible for executing the policy and the necessary requirements to achieve the desired goals. Together, we create an inclusive and supportive environment where every student thrives.

Aims:

At Belvedere International School (BIS), we aim to:

- Ensure the provision of a high-quality Career and University (CU) guidance program throughout the school, supporting students in making informed decisions about their postsecondary pathways

- Define clear and comprehensive institutional, qualification, and functional standards for CU Guidance Counselors to effectively guide students in their career and university exploration

- Implement annual evaluations of program effectiveness to facilitate continuous improvement and accountability, ensuring alignment with ADEK reporting requirements

- Enhance students' awareness of a wide range of global career and academic opportunities, encouraging them to think forward and explore emerging and innovative career paths that align with the evolving demands of the job market.

These aims outline the objectives of the Career and University Guidance Policy, focusing on quality assurance, counselor standards, regular program assessments, and expanding students' career horizons.

1. Definitions

Additional LearningNeeds	Individual requirements for additional support, modifications, or accommodations within a school setting on a permanent or temporarybasis in response to a specific context. This applies to any support required by students of determination and those who have special educational needs and/or additional barriers to learning, access, or interaction in that specific context (e.g., dyslexic, hearing or visually impaired, twice exceptional, or gifted and/or talented). For example, a student with restricted mobility may require lesson accommodations to participate in Physical Education and building accommodations to access facilities but may not require any accommodations in assessments. Equally, a student with hearing impairment may require adaptive and assistive technology to access content in class and may also require physical accommodations (e.g., sit in the front of the class to be able to lip read) to access learning.
Career	The learning and work journey an individual will undertake in their professional lifetime.
Career and University (CU) Guidance	The process of guiding students in exploring the world of work, making informed decisions about their careers, discovering alternative learningpathways, and providing support in preparing applications for postsecondary education and careers.
Career and University (CU) Guidance Counselor	An individual who implements the school's CU guidance program by providing advisory and administrative CU guidance counseling servicesto students.
Core Subjects	The subjects' students must take during their last four academic years/Cycle 3 (Upper-Secondary/High School). These subjects include English, Math, and Science.
Continuing Professional Development	All activities undertaken by staff to improve their knowledge, skills, competencies, and performance on a regular basis. CPD includes in- person training, online training (synchronous or asynchronous), coursework, short certificate and degree programs, mentorship programs, peer/ collaborative learning, academic conferences, research projects, observational visits, and community programs to share teaching best practices. CPD excludes planning hours and general staff meetings.

Cycle	A cycle is a stage in the primary and secondary educational process and is classified in Abu Dhabi as the following: Kindergarten (Pre-KG/FS1-KG2/Year1), Cycle 1 (G1/Y2-G5/Y6), Cycle 2 (G6/Y7-G8/Y9) and Cycle 3 (G9/Y10-G12/Y13). Private schools teaching Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum may follow MoE cycles: KG, Cycle 1 (G1-G4),Cycle 2 (G5-G8) and Cycle 3 (G9-G12).
Equivalency	The process by which the UAE Ministry of Education officially endorses a secondary school certificate and declares it to be equivalent to the UAE General Education Certificate (Al Thanawiya), as per relevant ministerial decrees and their amendments.
Full-time Equivalent (FTE)	Total workload equivalent to that of a full-time workload for a position.For example, 1 FTE for a single position may be filled by 1 staff membertaking on the entirety of the full-time workload or 2 staff members taking on half of a full-time workload each.
Gap year	A period prior to joining a university where a student may choose to focus on skill building (e.g., enhancing English proficiency, gaining work experience, or volunteering to develop industry experience)
Gifted and Talented	Gifted students demonstrate exceptional ability in one or more domains. Talented students are those who can transform their giftedness into exceptional performance.
Higher Education	A type of postsecondary education based on academic learning, leading to a degree/ certification issued by a higher education institution (e.g., university, colleges, academies, etc.).
Non-Core Subjects	Also referred to as elective subjects or optional subjects, these are not compulsory (unlike core subjects). Depending on the school and relevant curriculum, a list of options will be available within a student's study plan. Examples include Humanities, Arts, Foreign Languages, PE, Social Sciences, and ICT
Pre-Requisites	A specific course or subject that students must complete before they can take another course or subject at the next grade level.
Postsecondary	Describes the period that takes place following the completion of secondary school (Cycle 3). Postsecondary options include postsecondary education, employment, sabbaticals, etc.
Postsecondary Education	All educational pathways (higher and TVET education) following the completion of secondary school (Cycle 3).
STEAM University Majors	University courses that focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math

Student Application Portal (SAP)	A digital interface (digital platform/website/app) that allows students to apply to single or multiple HE and TVET institutions all in one place. Services often include uploading transcripts and recommendation letters (where applicable) and paying application fees. SAP's can be relevant to specific countries, regions or, in many cases, institutions.
Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)	A type of postsecondary education based on occupational/ technical learning, leading to an award/ certification issued by a TVET institution (e.g., technical colleges, polytechnics, etc.).

2. Career and University Guidance Philosophy

At Belvedere International School, we believe that career and university guidance is a fundamental component of holistic student development. Our philosophy is based on fostering early ambition, encouraging lifelong learning, and assisting students in exploring their future paths in a thoughtful and informed manner.

2.1 Guidance Vision

Our aim is to provide students with a supportive environment that helps them recognize their unique abilities and skills, while considering individual differences in their academic and career decision-making processes. We believe that effective guidance is not limited to choosing a university major; rather, it extends to personal development, confidence-building, and encouraging students to take responsibility for their future decisions.

2.2 Guidance Approach

Our philosophy is built on several key pillars:

2.2.1 Exploration and Self-Development

We strive to empower students to discover their potentials and interests through personalized guidance, scientific assessments, and reflective activities that enhance self-awareness, contributing to more informed and clear decision-making.

2.2.2 Building Confidence and Decision-Making Skills

We recognize that choosing a university and career path is a complex process requiring psychological maturity and self-confidence. Therefore, we focus on:

- Encouraging independence in decision-making by providing students with the necessary tools and resources
- Creating a supportive environment where students can benefit from individual counselling and career coaching
- Enhancing awareness of available opportunities without imposing specific paths but rather helping students analyses their options based on their abilities and aspirations

2.2.3 Comprehensive and Multifaceted Support

We believe that guidance is not limited to students alone but extends to strong communication between the school, parents, and the academic and professional community to support students in making confident and informed decisions.

2.2.4 Developing Future Skills

- Focusing on essential life skills needed for professional success, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication skills, and adaptability to change
- Encouraging learning through experience and practice via workshops, field activities, and interactions with experts

2.3 **Commitment to Future Success**

We are committed to providing comprehensive career guidance that helps students achieve their goals with confidence and equips them with the necessary tools to navigate university and professional challenges. Our goal is to create a generation of ambitious leaders and independent thinkers capable of thriving in diverse and evolving environments.

Through this philosophy, we foster a spirit of exploration and self-development, empowering our students to map their future paths in alignment with their unique interests and personal aspirations.

3. Future Pathways Program

3.1 *The Belvedere Edge – Discover. Develop. Decide*

Alignment with ADEK five-step development approach: Our philosophy is operationalized through ADEK's structure: **Assessment** → **Exploration** → **Preparation** → **Implementation** → **Decision-Making,** with differentiated actions for **Cycle 2 (G6–G8/Y7–Y9)** and **Cycle 3 (G9 –G12/Y10 – Y13)** and inclusive provision for **students with additional learning needs** and **gifted and/or talented** students.

3.1.1 Assessment (C2 & C3)

- Facilitate early self-discovery using **career-interest and self-awareness tools** (e.g., Unifrog or equivalent), and review **academic level/skills**
- Monitor family/social/emotional factors that may influence choices; **identify early** students with **additional learning needs** and **gifted/talented** profiles to tailor support
- For C2, check alignment of current subjects with likely **Cycle 3 course selections**; create/update a **student profile/baseline**

3.1.2 Exploration (C2 & C3)

- Build awareness of **unexplored career options**, **HE & TVET pathways**, **eligibility requirements**, and local/international opportunities
- Deliver **career & post-secondary concepts** in lessons; highlight the role of technology and STEAM trends
- Run **career talks**, **industry speakers**, **institution visits/field trips**, and **research projects** on roles/departments

- Use UAE media/technology/arts channels to help students **envision future possibilities**

3.1.3 **Preparation (C2 focus; continues into early C3)**

- Teach students to **brainstorm and turn ideas into action plans**; maintain a **school calendar** of CU highlights (talks/panels)
- With subject teachers, **embed interdisciplinary links** from lessons to careers
- **Advise at end of C2** on elective options for C3 aligned with aspirations and performance; guide **subject levels** to meet **pre-requisites** for upper-secondary and competitive **STEAM majors**
- Recommend a **balanced subject menu** (core + non-core + extra-curricular) that is realistic and supports wellbeing

3.1.4 **Implementation (C3 focus)**

- Develop **individual action plans** to navigate choices and deadlines
- Publish and regularly update a **calendar of University Applications & Entrance Exam Deadlines** (shared with students/parents and on school channels)
- Coordinate **in-school university talks/fairs**; collaborate with ADEK partners (e.g., **Rize UPCG**)
- Support G12/Y13 students to submit **at least one application** (university/TVET/job/internship/military/gap year), including help with **scholarship/financial-aid profiles**
- **Manage a Student Application Portal (SAP)** and provide administrative support (transcripts, fee payments, etc.)
- Establish a **teacher network** to review **personal statements/college essays** and provide **personalized letters of recommendation** where required
- Ensure each student meets **graduation requirements** (school curriculum) and, where applicable, **MoE equivalency** requirements

- Monitor program effectiveness and gather stakeholder feedback

3.1.5 **Decision-Making (C3 focus)**

- Equip students with tools to make confident, informed choices that fit their interests and long-term goals
- Guide on meeting pre-requisites and selecting best-fit destinations and pathways (HE/TVET), based on Cycle 2 & 3 academic and extra-curricular profiles
- Hold student – family review sessions to compare options, clarify supports, and plan transitions
- Prepare students for interviews, entrance exams, recommendations, and alternative pathways where appropriate

3.2 **Personalized Guidance & Stakeholder Engagement**

- One-to-one guidance and mentorship for all students, with targeted plans for ALN and gifted/talented
- Parent consultations at key milestones; alumni/peer mentoring to share real-world insights
- Industry & HE partnerships: shadowing, internships, university visits, mock interviews, and entrepreneurship/innovation challenges (when feasible), aligned to ADEK guidance

4. **CU Guidance Counsellor**

At Belvedere International School (BIS), we are committed to providing students with dedicated and qualified guidance through the appointment of a full-time equivalent (FTE) CU Guidance Counselor. The selection and appointment of the CU Guidance Counselor adhere to the guidelines set forth by the Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK).

4.1 **Appointment:**

BIS have appoint a full-time equivalent (FTE) CU Guidance Counselor in accordance with the standards outlined by ADEK to ensure students receive consistent and effective guidance throughout their academic journey.

4.2 **Qualifications and Experience:**

The CU Guidance Counselor at BIS have possess the requisite qualifications and experience as specified in the ADEK Staff Eligibility Policy. This ensures that students receive guidance from knowledgeable and experienced professionals capable of supporting their academic and career aspirations.

4.3 **Grandfathering Provision:**

Current CU Guidance Counselors employed at BIS shall receive appropriate job training as outlined in Section 2.5 of this policy to ensure compliance with updated standards and practices.

4.4 **Responsibilities:**

The CU Guidance Counselor at BIS is responsible for:

4.4.1 Understanding and documenting the career aspirations of each student in Cycle 3, commencing from Grade 9/Year 10

4.4.2 Guiding each student towards identifying the most suitable or "best-fit" postsecondary options aligned with their interests, abilities, and aspirations.

4.4.3 Ensuring that each student meets all graduation requirements, including academic, extracurricular, and community service obligations

4.4.4 Engaging collaboratively with parents throughout the entire CU guidance process, providing regular updates and opportunities for involvement

4.4.5 Providing comprehensive administrative support to students, including assistance with postsecondary applications, scholarship opportunities,

and career exploration resources

4.5 **Continuous Professional Development:**

BIS is committed to supporting the professional growth and development of CU Guidance Counsellors through continuous professional development opportunities.

This includes:

4.5.1 **Membership in a Professional Organization**: Our school is a member of the International Association for College Admission Counselling (International ACAC), which enables our CU Guidance Counsellors to stay updated on global industry trends, best practices, and professional development opportunities.

4.5.2 **Annual Professional Development Requirement:** A minimum of 25 hours of role-aligned professional development is completed each academic year, encompassing counselling techniques, career development, labor-market insights, admissions and testing updates. All ADEK mandatory sessions are attended (e.g., RISE and any regulator-required training), with additional PD given from International ACAC.

4.5.3 **Access to Peer Support:** Access to peer support is ensured through active participation in professional community groups—particularly AD HS College Counselors and Counselor's Eye—to exchange experiences, seek advice on complex cases, share locally relevant best practices and resources, and stay current with regional admissions updates and opportunities.

This policy affirms BIS's commitment to providing students with personalized and effective guidance through the dedicated support of a qualified CU Guidance Counselor, ensuring that they are well-equipped to make informed decisions about their academic and career pathways.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

5.1. **Continuous Professional Development:**

At Belvedere International School (BIS), we recognize the importance of continuous monitoring and evaluation to ensure the effectiveness and quality of our Career and

University Guidance Program. Through internal monitoring and evaluation processes,

as well as the establishment of program indicators for reporting to ADEK, we aim to maintain high standards of service and support for our students.

5.2. **Internal Monitoring and Evaluation:**

BIS will conduct regular internal monitoring and evaluation of the Career and University Guidance Program to assess its implementation, effectiveness, and impact on student outcomes. This includes ongoing review of program activities, data analysis, and feedback mechanisms to identify areas for improvement and inform decision-making. A comprehensive annual evaluation will be implemented, which will involve collecting qualitative and quantitative data from students, parents, and staff to ensure improvements are based on multi-faceted feedback. This data will also be used to develop targeted strategies to enhance specific aspects of the program and improve its effectiveness in meeting students' needs.

5.3. **Program Indicators for ADEK Reporting:**

In compliance with ADEK reporting requirements, BIS will track the following program indicators:

5.3.1 **Student Coverage:** Monitoring the percentage of students receiving CU guidance services.

5.3.2 **Counsellor-Student Ratio:** Tracking the number of students served by each full-time equivalent (FTE) CU Guidance Counsellor to ensure appropriate support levels.

5.3.3 **Graduate Destination:** Currently Not Applicable for BIS.

5.3.4 **Top 3 Destinations:** Currently Not Applicable for BIS.

5.3.5 **Establishing Relationships with Local Postsecondary Education Institutions:** Currently applicable for BIS through active partnerships and outreach with local institutions—specifically ADVT and the American University of Sharjah (AUS)—to facilitate student transitions. Engagement includes information sessions, campus visit opportunities, and

coordinated referrals. All interactions are logged (date, contact, purpose, outcomes) and reviewed annually.

5.3.6 **Accommodations for Gifted Students and Students with Additional Learning Needs:** Reasonable accommodations are provided to ensure equitable postsecondary planning for gifted students and those with additional learning needs. This includes differentiated counselling approaches, adapted resources, and collaboration with the Inclusion Department to support personalized pathways.

5.3.7 **Organizing CU Guidance Events:** CU Guidance events are organized throughout the year, including workshops on time management, leadership skills, and exam preparation, as well as visits to local universities such as Abu Dhabi University in Al Ain. The school also hosts larger-scale activities, most notably Enterprise Day, where students design and run their own businesses within the school, gaining hands-on experience in entrepreneurship and career skills.

5.3.8 **Providing CU Guidance Support:** Monitoring the provision of CU guidance support services to students and parents throughout the academic year.

5.4. **CU Monitoring Committee (Implementation & Oversight)**

To ensure high-quality implementation of the CU Guidance Program and continuous improvement through structured review and accountability. Composition.

The committee members are:

- CU Guidance Counsellor (Ms. Alaa Alqedra)
- Secondary/Upper School Leader (Mr. Ismail Douma and Ms. Reezana Rahman)
- Inclusion/SEN Lead (Ms. Eman Zaki)
- Teacher: Mr. Hicret Marufoglu
- Data/Assessment Lead [Advisory/Optional attendance as needed]

Meetings & Quorum.

- **Frequency:** At least **once per term** (minimum 3 times per year) plus an **annual review** each September.

- **Quorum: Three** members, including the CU Counsellor and one SLT member
- **Records:** Agenda, minutes, action tracker, and decisions filed in the CU shared drive
- **Core Responsibilities: Approve & monitor** the annual CU plan, calendar, and service map (assemblies, workshops)

Through robust monitoring and evaluation processes and a commitment to continuous professional development, BIS aims to ensure that our Career and University Guidance Program remains responsive to the evolving needs of our students and delivers high-quality support to facilitate their success in postsecondary education and beyond.

6. **Record-Keeping and Follow-Up**

BIS maintains the following records to support monitoring, evaluation, and ADEK reporting:

1. Monthly calendar of students receiving individual guidance.
2. Individual CU guidance tracker per student (profile, assigned counselor, status).
3. Data on career days, university fairs, and attendance.
4. Records of collaboration/partnership opportunities for volunteering and internships.
5. Tracking of student volunteer hours and internship experiences.
6. Enrolment tracking for the ADEK **Rize UPCG** program.
7. Grade 12/13 log of applications, offers, and final destinations (via alumni teams, cloud/CRM, or spreadsheets).

7. **Compliance**

7.1 Effective Date & Timeline.

This policy takes effect on **1 Sept 2023**. BIS achieves full compliance by **AY 2025/26 (Fall)**.

7.2 School Responsibilities.

BIS establishes and maintains internal controls, conducts regular self-assessments/audits, and implements corrective actions. All CU Guidance components align with this policy.

7.3 7.3 External Reporting & Oversight.

BIS reports compliance to **ADEK** and is subject to ADEK audits. Non-compliance may trigger enforcement and penalties under ADEK policies and **Federal Decree-Law No. 31 of 2021** and related laws. ADEK may intervene where obligations are breached.