



GEMS Winchester School Dubai



WSD Academic & Careers Guidance Policy

Person(s) Responsible: Executive Head of Primary; Executive Head of Secondary

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1. Introduction

GEMS Winchester School Dubai (WSD) is committed to providing high-quality, impartial academic and career guidance that supports all students to make well-informed decisions about their education, training and future careers.

- Our approach ensures that every student is supported to:
- Understand their strengths, interests and aspirations
- Make ambitious but realistic academic and career choices
- Prepare successfully for further education, employment or training
- Develop employability, resilience and lifelong learning skills

This policy reflects the school's commitment to the GEMS Education core values of Care, Excellence, One Team, and Always Learning.

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2. Aims & Objectives

The aims of Academic and Career Guidance at WSD are to:

- Raise aspirations and promote equality of opportunity for all students
- Provide structured, progressive careers education from Foundation Stage to Year 13
- Support informed academic pathway decisions at key transition points
- Ensure students understand local, regional and global labour markets
- Prepare students for university, employment, apprenticeships and vocational pathways
- Equip students with the skills to manage future career transitions confidently

This policy applies to all:

- All students from FS1 to Year 13
- All staff involved in teaching, tutoring, leadership and guidance
- Parents, carers and external partners involved in supporting student pathways

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3. Leadership & Responsibility

The Senior Leadership Team ensures that:

- Academic and career guidance is a strategic priority
- Provision meets KHDA and GEMS Education expectations
- Staff are trained and supported to deliver effective guidance

The Careers Lead (supported by Heads of Year, Heads of Sixth Form and Curriculum Leaders) is responsible for:

- Coordinating the whole-school careers programme
- Monitoring delivery through My Compass and Unifrog
- Organising events such as careers fairs, university fairs and employer talks
- Ensuring impartiality and quality assurance

Tutors and teachers:

- Embed careers learning within curriculum delivery
- Support students with academic decision-making
- Reinforce links between subjects, skills and future pathways

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4. Careers Education & Curriculum

WSD aims to deliver a spiral careers curriculum that develops progressively across phases. What follows below is a summary of the types of careers education we provide in each phase of the curriculum.

Early Years Foundation Stage & Key Stage 1

- Role play and storytelling linked to community roles
- Discussion of jobs, aspirations and the world of work
- Visits and talks from community helpers

Key Stage 2

- Introduction to Unifrog platform
- Self-awareness: interests, strengths and values
- Early exposure to diverse careers and sectors

Key Stage 3

- Further exploration of the Unifrog platform
- Exploration of career pathways, skills and learning routes
- Preparation for Key Stage 4 subject choices

Key Stage 4

- Use of Unifrog psychometric tools
- GCSE/BTEC subject guidance
- Work experience preparation and placements
- Employer encounters and careers events

Key Stage 5

- University, vocational and employment guidance
- Personal statements, CVs and interview preparation
- International university systems and applications
- Work experience, internships and alumni engagement

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5. Academic Pathway Guidance

Academic guidance at WSD supports students at all key transition points, including:

- Year 9: Options guidance for KS4 (iGCSE and BTEC)
- Year 11: Post-16 pathways (A Levels and BTEC)
- Year 12–13: Post-18 pathways (UAE and international universities, apprenticeships, employment)

Guidance includes:

- One-to-one discussions
- Parent information sessions
- Pathway assemblies and workshops
- University careers fairs
- Data-informed advice using attainment, progress and aptitude indicators

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6. Impartiality & Inclusion

GEMS Winchester School Dubai ensures that:

- Guidance is impartial, unbiased and student-centred
- All pathways are presented equally (academic, vocational, employment)
- SEND, EAL and vulnerable students receive additional tailored support
- No student is directed towards a pathway based on background or stereotype

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7. Parental Engagement

Parents are partners in academic and career guidance. The school supports this through:

- Information evenings and workshops
- Regular communication about deadlines and opportunities
- Access to Unifrog and careers platforms
- Individual meetings where required

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8. External Partnerships

The school works with a wide range of partners to enhance guidance, including:

- Universities and international providers
- Employers and industry professionals
- Careers fairs and education expos
- Alumni and workplace mentors

These partnerships help students understand real-world expectations and opportunities.

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9. Monitoring & Evaluation

The effectiveness of academic and career guidance is evaluated through:

- Student voice and feedback
- Destination data (post-16 and post-18 outcomes)
- Engagement with Unifrog
- Parent feedback
- SLT review and annual reporting

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure continuous improvement.

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