BLOOM WORLD ACADEMY

Reference Number
BWA-19

Careers and Guidance Policy	
Audience and coverage	School Community
Published where	School Website
First release date	August 2023
Last reviewed	August 2026
Next review	August 2027
Owner	Nishi Saran, Principal – Senior School and Nexus
Reviewer	John Bell, Executive Principal

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1. Vision

At BWA, our vision for career guidance is centered on empowering all students to prepare for meaningful choices that transcend traditional paths and embrace individuality.

2. Mission

We strive to help develop resilient, independent learners who are equipped to create their own unique journeys based on their talents, passions and interests. Our commitment goes beyond setting high expectations; we emphasise the importance of choice, encouraging students to explore traditional and alternative pathways to life after compulsory education through to higher education (if possible or wanted) and beyond; plus uncover skills relevant to different lifestyles and livelihoods that may not yet exist.

By exposing our students to a diverse range of opportunities and encouraging innovative thinking, we aim to support them with the tools necessary to navigate an ever-evolving landscape, enabling them to forge their own paths, make a lasting impact in their chosen fields and commit to being life-long learners.

3. Scope

Bloom World Academy (BWA) considers this policy to be:

- an essential part of the school;
- supportive to staff and students in managing certain situations;
- an important framework that will ensure consistency in applying values and principles throughout the establishment;
- a roadmap for day-to-day operations;
- compliant with laws and regulations, gives guidance for decision-making, and streamlining internal processes;
- designed to influence and determine all major decisions, actions and all activities taking place within the boundaries set by them;
- aligned to the school's guiding statements and identified goals which are formed in strategic leadership meetings.
- This policy applies to all stakeholders.

4. Statement of intent

BWA believes this policy to be a working document that is fit for purpose, represents the school ethos, mission and vision, enables consistency and quality across the school and is related to the relevant UAE legislation.

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This policy outlines BWA's approach to providing customised effective careers guidance to all students, ensuring they are well-prepared for future education, training, and employment. The aim is to support students in making informed decisions about their future career paths while ensuring equal access to guidance for all students, including those with special educational needs. (SToD)

5. Unique definitions

A shared understanding of the following definitions are integral to the implementation of this policy, and as such staff should endeavour to use the correct terminology at all times.

CEIAG: Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Counsellor

6. Processing and practice

At BWA, it is important for our students to graduate with key career-related skills that prepare them for the future. These include a strong understanding of various career pathways and the ability to make informed decisions about their professional journeys. We emphasise employability skills such as teamwork, communication, and professionalism, alongside adaptability and resilience in changing work environments. Students will develop practical competencies like CV writing, interview techniques, and networking, coupled with digital literacy and entrepreneurial thinking. Additionally, we aim to equip them with work experience and a foundation in financial literacy, ensuring they are confident and prepared to thrive in their chosen careers.

We model our career guidance on the UK eight Gatsby benchmarks

1. A stable careers programme
2. Learning from career and labour market information
3. Addressing the needs of each student
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers
5. Encounters with employers and employees
6. Experiences of workplaces
7. Encounters with further and higher education
8. Personal guidance

The core principles guiding this are that careers education, information, advice, and guidance should be:

- **Customised**: Tailored to the individual, providing opportunities to address unique needs while building on prior learning and experiences.

- **Inclusive**: Promoting equality, embracing diversity, and challenging stereotypes, while being sensitive to each student's faith, culture, and background.
- **Transparent and Impartial**: Offering clear, unbiased guidance and maintaining confidentiality where needed.
- **Collaborative**: Strengthened by strong networks and partnerships among teaching staff, pastoral teams, and external organisations.
- **Aspirational and Supportive**: Contributing to increased participation, retention, and achievement by raising aspirations, helping students make informed decisions, and developing their career management skills.

To achieve this, BWA will:

Ensure that students receive personal, comprehensive careers education and guidance through a variety of activities. These activities will be organised through our Guidance and careers counsellor (CEIAG), curriculum teaching staff, and supported by the pastoral team, including our Senior counsellor.

Curriculum-based activities include:

- Engaging with inspiring speakers who introduce students to careers and industries beyond their immediate communities.
- Participating in visits to workplaces, skills shows, and higher education institutions.
- Providing opportunities for work experience, community projects, and volunteering.
- Raising awareness of these opportunities to enhance students' career prospects.
- Pathway options, such as community service and Duke of Edinburgh that develop skills and support students in understanding their civic responsibility.
- BTEC Artificial intelligence course for Grades 9 and 10 equipping students with both theoretical and practical skills in AI to use in their learning and beyond.

Pastoral activities (delivered through Positive Education and the tutor programme) include:

- Four Learner Achievement Passport meetings a year, target setting and tracking students personal aspirations and ambitions
- Positive education curriculum, developing key competencies such as self-knowledge, goal orientation, curiosity and interest, resilience and decision making.
- Offering advice on post-school options, including apprenticeships, vocational pathways, gap years, higher education, and employment.
- Use of Unifrog (Grades 9-11) to help students identify their skills, knowledge, and interests, and align them with career opportunities
- Developing employability skills such as CV writing and job application techniques.
- Attending job fair, university fairs, and other career-related events.

- Understanding local and broader labour market trends and the skills needed for employability.
- Offering advice on post-school options, including apprenticeships, vocational pathways, gap years, higher education, and employment.
- Conducting mock interviews and group interview simulations.
- Collaborating with external partners to increase awareness of career opportunities.
- Social and emotional support through 1:1 counselling where required, workshops, assemblies and specialist days, including psychologist support sessions for managing exam stress and anxiety.

Resources to support these activities are available digitally through Unifrog, which includes links to a wide range of additional information. Information about upcoming events are communicated to staff and students through briefing notices, student forums, social media, and the weekly newsletter.

Student Voice and Feedback

BWA values student perspectives in shaping the careers programme. Students will have opportunities to provide both feedback and influence the programme through surveys, focus groups, and student leadership input. This feedback will inform programme design, activities, and resources to ensure the careers guidance remains relevant, engaging, and responsive to student needs.

Partnerships: University Guidance and Application support.

The school builds strong partnerships with universities and local employers to address the needs of the economy, education, and the community.

- Ensuring students are equipped to research university courses in their preferred destination countries.
- Providing access to accurate, current, and impartial information, advice, and guidance on university applications and course availability.
- Offering personalised support to Grade 11 and 12 students throughout the university and college application process, with equal assistance regardless of their chosen destination.
- Hosting information sessions for students and their parents to explain the university application process in detail.
- Preparing and providing all necessary documentation, including transcripts and letters of recommendation, for all students.
- Coordinating entrance exams or tests when necessary or guiding students to appropriate external providers.
- Assisting with applications for standardised tests such as SAT, TOEFL, ACT, UCAT, MBAT, IELTS, and others

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7. Roles and responsibilities

With regard to implementation of this policy roles and responsibilities are clearly stated below:

Role of the Governors

It is the responsibility of the Governors to:

- **Maintain Strategic Oversight:** ensuring that the school's careers programme aligns with national UAE frameworks and policies and meets the needs of all students.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation**: Regularly review the effectiveness of the careers education, guidance, and advice provided to students, including monitoring student outcomes and destinations.
- **Resource Allocation**: Ensuring that sufficient resources, including staff and budget, are dedicated to delivering a high-quality, inclusive careers programme that supports students' future aspirations and success.

Role of the Executive Principal

It is the responsibility of the Executive Principal to:

- **Leadership and Implementation**: Oversee the development and implementation of a robust careers programme that aligns with the school's vision and meets the needs of all students, ensuring it is integrated across the curriculum.
- **Staff Support and Development**: Ensure that staff involved in delivering careers guidance receive appropriate training and resources, and that teaching and pastoral teams collaborate effectively to support students' career education.
- **External Partnerships**: Build and maintain strong relationships with external stakeholders, such as universities, employers, and career service providers, to enhance the quality and reach of the careers guidance offered to students.

Role of School Personnel

It is the responsibility of the *teachers* to:

- **Curriculum Integration**: Embed career-related learning into subject teaching by connecting curriculum content to real-world careers and industries, helping students see the relevance of their studies to future pathways.
- **Career Awareness**: Actively promote career opportunities within their subject areas and encourage students to explore various career options, creating aspiration and informed decision-making.

- **Student Support**: Provide guidance and support during career-related activities, such as preparing students for work experience, assist with CV writing, and participate in mock interviews, ensuring that students are well-prepared for their future careers.

Role of the Parents

It is the responsibility of the parents to:

- **Encourage and Support**: Actively encourage their children to explore various career options and supporting them in their aspirations, helping them understand the importance of education and skills in achieving their goals.
- **Engage in the Process**: Participate in school-organised career events, workshops, and information sessions to stay informed about the opportunities available to their children and the resources offered by the school.
- **Open Communication**: Maintain open lines of communication with teachers and career guidance staff to discuss their child's interests, strengths, and concerns, ensuring a collaborative approach to their career development.

Role of the Students

It is the responsibility of the students to:

- **Active Participation**: Engage fully in career-related activities, workshops, and discussions, taking advantage of the resources and opportunities provided by the school to explore various career pathways.
- **Self-Reflection and Goal Setting**: Reflect on their skills, interests, and values to set realistic career goals, actively seeking information about potential pathways, and taking ownership of their career development.
- **Seeking Guidance**: Proactively seeking advice and support from teachers, career counselors, and mentors when needed, and utilising available resources to make informed decisions about their future education and career options.

8. Associated documentation

When implementing a policy consideration must be given to how it aligns and supports other policies. To ensure consistency this policy is fully aligned with the following key policies:

- Safeguarding policy
- Health and Safety policy
- Inclusion policy
- Wellbeing Policy

- Counselling Policy

The policy is also guided by the following documentation:

- KHDA Guidance and Guidelines for Private Schools
- MOE United Arab Emirates School Inspection Framework
- DSIB School Inspection Supplement

Training implications

This policy will be shared with all BWA academic and administrative staff in the staff handbook.

Staff will be trained and /or refreshed at the start of each academic year – during the annual BWA induction week. For new joiners they will be walked through the policy by the Principal during their induction period.

9. Safeguarding

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children as the safety and protection of children is of paramount importance to everyone in this school. We work hard to create a culture of vigilance and at all times we will ensure what is best in the interests of all children.

We believe that all children have the right to be safe in our society. We recognise that we have a duty to ensure arrangements are in place for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children by creating a positive school atmosphere through our teaching and learning, pastoral support and care for both students and school personnel, training for school personnel and with working with parents. We teach all our children about safeguarding.

We work hard to ensure that everyone keeps careful watch throughout the school and in everything we do for possible dangers or difficulties. We want all children to feel safe at all times. We want to hear their views of how we can improve all aspects of safeguarding and from the evidence gained we put into place all necessary improvements.

10. Equity Impact Assessment

We have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any member of staff or student and it helps to promote equality at this school.

11. Student Confidentiality

All information shared by students during counseling sessions is kept confidential between the student, counselor and parent. Our careers counselors will not disclose any personal details or sensitive information about students to universities, third party providers, or any other third parties without the explicit consent of the student. Protecting our student's privacy and safeguarding at BWA is a key priority.

12. Ethical Standards and Guidelines

This section of the policy further establishes ethical standards and guidelines for career counsellors to ensure that career guidance is provided with professionalism, integrity, and respect for all students. BWA is committed to upholding principles of confidentiality, professional integrity, and respect for diversity in all aspects of career counselling services.

12.1 Confidentiality

Our career counsellors are entrusted with sensitive information regarding students' academic performance, personal aspirations, and potential career paths. To safeguard this information:

- All personal and career-related discussions between students and counsellors will be kept confidential unless explicit consent is given by the student or legal guardian.
- Information may only be shared with school staff, parents, or external parties when it is in the student's best interest and with prior consent.
- Exceptions to confidentiality occur when disclosure is required by law, or if the counsellor believes there is a serious risk to the student's health or safety.

12.2 Professional Integrity

BWA requires that all career counsellors maintain the highest level of professional integrity in their work, including:

- Offering impartial, objective advice based on the student's best interests, avoiding personal biases or external influences.
- Continuously updating their own professional knowledge and staying informed about the latest trends in careers and education.
- Disclosing any potential conflicts of interest, particularly when referring students to external programs or institutions.
- Accurately representing their qualifications and expertise, ensuring that they only provide advice within their realm of competence.

12.3 Respect for Diversity

BWA school recognises the diversity of its student body and commits to providing equitable career guidance that values the individuality of each student. Career counsellors will:

- Treat all students with respect, regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic background, or physical and cognitive abilities.
- Tailor guidance to the unique needs, interests, and aspirations of each student, avoiding assumptions based on stereotypes or biases.
- Promote inclusive career opportunities and challenge any practices or advice that limit a student's potential based on discriminatory factors.
- Be sensitive to cultural differences and personal values, ensuring that career advice respects the student's identity and beliefs.

12.4 Accountability and Continuous Improvement

Our career counsellors are accountable for adhering to these ethical guidelines and will regularly review and reflect on their practices. BWA will:

- Provide opportunities for career counsellors to engage in professional development and training in ethical practices.
- Establish a process for addressing any concerns or complaints from students or parents regarding the career counselling service, ensuring that ethical standards are upheld.

By adhering to these ethical guidelines, career counsellors will contribute to a supportive, respectful, and trustworthy environment for students as they explore their future careers.

13. Building Partnerships for Career Guidance and Opportunities

BWA aims to foster meaningful partnerships with local businesses, higher education institutions, and industry professionals to enhance career guidance, internship opportunities, and the future employability of our students.

13.1 Establishing Business and Industry Partnerships

BWA will actively engage with local businesses and industry leaders to create pathways for students to explore potential career fields. These partnerships will include:

- Organizing career talks, mentoring sessions, and industry-specific workshops where professionals share insights and trends.
- Providing opportunities for job shadowing, internships, and apprenticeships to give students real-world experience.
- Facilitating industry-led projects or competitions to allow students to apply their academic skills in practical settings.

13.2 Collaboration with Higher Education Institutions

To broaden students' perspectives on post-secondary education options, BWA will collaborate with universities, technical colleges, and other educational institutions by:

- Hosting university visits and open days where students can learn more about various academic programs.
- Offering joint initiatives such as preparatory courses or summer schools that give students a head start in certain academic disciplines.
- Arranging for academic advisors and admissions officers to meet with students and parents to discuss options for higher education and career planning.

13.3 Industry Professional Involvement in Curriculum Development

BWA recognises the importance of aligning our curriculum with the skills and knowledge required in the modern workplace. Therefore, we will:

- Consult with industry professionals to ensure that our career guidance programs are current and relevant.
- Invite industry professionals to collaborate in designing specific courses or modules that reflect the changing needs of the job market.
- Incorporate real-life case studies and scenarios provided by industry partners into our lessons to enhance learning outcomes.

13.4 Continuous Evaluation and Development

BWA will maintain regular communication with our partners to assess the effectiveness of these programs and adapt them based on feedback. This process will ensure the continuous improvement of career guidance services and foster lasting, mutually beneficial relationships with all stakeholders.

13.5 Promoting Career Pathways to Students and Families

BWA will actively promote the benefits of these partnerships through regular updates to students and parents, ensuring transparency and encouraging student participation. Information on career pathways and opportunities will be shared via:

- Career fairs and networking events.
- Newsletters, the school website, and social media platforms.

By engaging local businesses, higher education institutions, and industry professionals, BWA aims to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary to succeed in their future careers.