

## TAS College Counseling Policies & Procedures (Class of 2026)

### Overview

- Students begin the college counseling process in 11<sup>th</sup> grade, formally working one-on-one with their college counselor at the beginning of semester 2, a relationship that persists through to graduation.
- In 11<sup>th</sup> grade, we will begin with university research, fit/criteria, preliminary list building, and essay writing. In the first semester of 12<sup>th</sup> grade, counselors support students on finalizing their college lists, reviewing personal essay drafts, and completing university applications. In the second semester of 12<sup>th</sup> grade, as students receive application decisions, counselors will assist with college selection, waitlist offers, transitioning to life after TAS, and other enrollment-related topics.
- Counselors work in close collaboration with students and families to support the application process. It is our philosophy and practice to keep the student at the center of the college process. While the parent/guardian voice should be present, we encourage practices and policies that require the student to assert ownership and accountability.
- We ask that students meet and communicate frequently with their college counselor in order to develop an authentic relationship and to stay on top of the process. For applicants applying to the United States, during the fall semester of 12<sup>th</sup> grade, we recommend a “touch point” *at least* every two weeks.
- We are also committed to and have expertise in supporting students who apply to university systems outside of the United States.
- College counseling classes are also offered on a weekly basis on Thursdays during part of the student’s assigned lunch period. These classes are mandatory, and attendance will be taken.

### University Lists

- Our goal is finding the right school to fit a student’s unique and individual needs to achieve success and happiness in college and beyond.
- In addition to recommending schools based on student’s criteria, we will also provide Likelihood of Admission designations (Likely, Target, Reach, Unlikely) for each university on their list. These are determined by historical data, our professional expertise, and each student’s unique profiles.

- We require that students have at least two “Likely” schools (schools that college counselors assess to have a 75% chance or greater of acceptance) on their final college list.
- We strongly recommend that students submit no more than 10 applications (University of California system and UK system each count as one). This is to encourage higher quality and more successful applications as well as to maintain stress levels and promote well-being for our very busy students. This remains in line with the practice of our peer institutions (IASAS and independent schools worldwide).
- Students will share with counselors which universities they intend to apply to by turning in Final College List forms. These will be signed by both students and parents to confirm that the list accurately reflects every school the student will apply to and that no additional schools can be added after the list is turned in by our internal deadline.

#### Application Procedures & Policies

- Deadlines
  - In addition to external university deadlines, students must meet TAS internal deadlines in order to receive full support from the college counseling office.
  - These include deadlines for essay review, final college lists, assignments, etc. These deadlines are intentional to help students manage their applications and to ensure that counselors have adequate time to provide thoughtful guidance and support. Adherence to these deadlines is of critical importance to have a successful college counseling experience.
- Student Information
  - By enrolling in Taipei American School, parents/guardians and students give unrestricted authorization for the TAS college counseling office to represent any student to all colleges and universities.
  - Information that will be shared with colleges and universities about the student includes, but is not limited to, letters of recommendation, transcripts, report cards, progress reports, SAT, ACT, AP and IB scores (or other testing results), and anything else that the upper school personal and academic counseling office believes to be important for colleges and universities to have when considering a student for admission or enrollment.
  - All letters of recommendation are confidential, and students and parents/guardians are not allowed to read them. Students seeking such

letters of recommendation must read and complete the student-teacher recommendation agreement, which is typically due before the end of their junior year.

- Please note that TAS does not rank our students and thus will not provide this information to colleges.
- Document Submission
  - While students are responsible for submitting their own application and standardized test results, counselors will submit a student's transcript, counselor and teacher letter of recommendations, ED agreements, and other supporting documents.
  - Counselors will only send documents to universities on a student's completed and signed Final College List forms.
  - If a university uses Common Application, college counselors will only submit documents through Common Application.
- Disciplinary Action
  - If disciplinary action is taken after a student has submitted applications to colleges and universities, the student may be required to contact those schools to inform them of the change in their disciplinary status. College Counselors will work closely with students to support them in this communication. Students are expected to provide accurate and timely information in accordance with university's policies and procedures.
  - College Counselors may also be obligated to report such disclosures or changes in enrollment status in response to inquiries from universities.
- Academic Integrity
  - The college counseling office shares Taipei American School's policy on academic integrity, and assumes that the work of all students, including college essays, short responses, and any other information submitted to the colleges or universities, is entirely their own.

## External Support

- External Standardized Testing
  - We do not recommend that TAS students take AP or IB exams at test centers outside of TAS. Exams taken externally may not be accepted for admission review. Universities expect that students complete the actual AP or IB course in addition to the external exam. Counselors will only certify AP or IB courses taken at TAS on university applications.

- Please note that for AP exam scores are not a required component of the US application process and are often not used for admission review.
- External Independent Counseling Support
  - We believe that our work with students and families is strongest due to our unique understanding of both the TAS community and our direct experience and strong relationships with college admissions offices who do not communicate with independent consultants and discourage student engagement with external sources.
  - At best, these companies may employ alumni from “name brand” institutions with little to no direct admissions experience, often providing misguided and outdated advice. At worst, they exploit and perpetuate the uncertainty and fear of this very important and nuanced process during uncertain and constantly changing times.
  - However, we understand that families may still select to seek outside support about the college admissions process for a variety of services. In the spirit of open communication and to provide the best support to our students, we ask that we be informed if this is the case.
  - We would never judge a family (nor disclose to universities) but ask that students still engage with their TAS college counselor. As students often receive conflicting or ill-informed advice from these “consultants,” counselors can help students appropriately navigate and process conflicting recommendations.
  - We also must maintain our own internal TAS College Counseling process and deadlines for submitting transcripts, as well as writing and submitting our letters of recommendation, requiring students to keep in frequent communication with us, even if working with an outside agency.
  - With the exception of Australia, counselors will not send any TAS documents (transcripts, letters of rec., etc.) to third parties (agents, external consultants, etc.).