

Partnership Throughout the Process

The post-secondary planning process is a structured, multi-year partnership between the University and Careers Counselling Department (UCCD), students, and families to ensure a successful transition to post-secondary life. Each has its own role in the ‘triad relationship’:

UCCD:

Provides the expertise, external connections, and structured mapping.

Parents/Guardians:

Collaborate closely with counsellors to support the student’s transition and decision-making.



The goal is to ensure every graduate leaves with a refined search, a personalised pathway, and a confident plan for their future. This is achieved through our ‘best fit philosophy’ which prioritises a personal experience and student-post secondary match over generic prestige. This is accomplished through:

- **Self-Reflection & Exploration:** Through joint exploration with counsellors and parents/guardians, students uncover their core priorities.
- **Holistic Criteria:** ‘Fit’ is determined by a combination of factors, including academic programmes, extracurricular passions, and personal connections.
- **Individualised Timelines:** The process supports both quick discovery and long-term seeking, acknowledging that every student’s journey is unique.



Grades 8 & 9: Foundation Phase

- **Life Skills Collaboration:** Students work with Life Skills teachers to identify personal strengths, interests, and potential career paths.
- **Senior School Transition:** Initial one-on-one meetings are held with Grade 9 families to introduce the UCCD and begin the shift into the Senior School mindset.
- **Goal Setting:** Early identification of student ambitions to inform upcoming academic choices.

Grades 10 & 11: Strategic Planning Phase

- **Career Exploration:** Early-stage career mapping to align secondary school efforts with long-term professional goals.
- **Personalised Mapping:** University counsellors meet with each student to map out a detailed pathway tailored to their specific post-secondary ambitions.
- **Course Selection Guidance:** Counselling expands to include expert advice on course selection, ensuring that academic loads align with the requirements of the student’s ‘university of choice’.
- **Path Refinement:** Continuous refinement of the university search based on evolving interests and academic performance.

Grade 12: Application and Decision-Making Phase

- **Admissions Mastery:** Guidance on specific requirements, document submission, and navigating admission/deferral decisions.
- **Writing & Review:** Comprehensive support for university essay writing and refinement.
- **Interview & Tour Prep:** Professional coaching for university interviews and support for campus tours.
- **Scholarship Strategy:** Assistance with major scholarship applications, including prestigious awards such as the Loran Award and Schulich Leaders.

Additionally, the UCCD will guide enrichment and portfolio building.

- **Extracurricular Guidance:** Advice on activities spanning arts and culture, athletics, sciences, service, and leadership.
- **Work & Volunteerism:** Identifying internal and external work experience and volunteer opportunities.
- **Summer Programming:** Support in applying to national and international summer academic or experiential programmes.

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Should we hire a university consultant (outside Mulgrave)?
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A: While we understand the stakes feel high, we typically do not recommend hiring a private university consultant. Staying within the support offered at Mulgrave ensures your child’s applications are supported by counsellors who:

- can provide universities with contextual information about Mulgrave that is not accessible to external consultants
- work closely with Mulgrave’s faculty to ensure students are well supported and guidance is consistent and intentional
- are knowledgeable about the history of Mulgrave applicants to universities
- have the depth of relationship with your child to guide them towards their genuine interests and write authentic reference letters
- have established, positive relationships with admissions officers at many universities around the world and have the resources and connections to stay up to date on global admissions trends
- help students balance application processes with what they know about the school context - assessment deadlines, extra-curricular commitments, etc - while connecting students with wellbeing resources as needed
- support students holistically, intentionally, and realistically to find the best fit school where they will thrive

Private consulting can cost many thousands of dollars while complicating the support received and not yielding better results.

Exceptions to this approach may apply to students navigating the recruitment process as Recruited Athletes (NCAA Clearinghouse) or applying to hyper-specialised programmes (visual & performing arts), as the admissions process is significantly different from the standard application cycle.

These paths involve unique technical requirements, pre-screens, auditions, or recruitment-specific timelines. Because of this complexity, it is critical that students with external support discuss their plans directly with their Mulgrave counsellor to ensure all requirements are met.