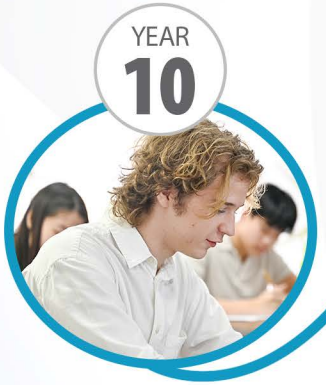
BRITISH SCHOOL MANILA
ESTABLISHED 1976

BSM College Counselling Framework

A four-year journey from discovery to decision.





DISCOVER

- Explore interests and strengths
- Begin exploring careers and pathways
- Start documenting growth



DEVELOP

- Build strong academic routines
- Explore systems, subjects, and fit
- Plan early for testing and readiness



DEFINE

- Clarify priorities and best fit
- Research universities and pathways
- Begin application materials



DECIDE

- Finalise a balanced list
- Complete strong applications
- Prepare for transition beyond BSM

Student
Guided to understand themselves and explore possibilities.

Family
Supported as partners in the journey.

School
Providing expert guidance, resources, and a caring community.

Year 10
DISCOVER

Exploring interests, strengths, values, and future possibilities.



Focus

Year 10 college counselling is guided by the theme of ***Discover***, helping students and families begin the university journey through self-awareness, skill-building, and future planning.

Students are introduced to MaiaLearning and begin to explore personality, interests, Holland Codes, work values, and career possibilities. Students begin to reflect on their interests, strengths, values, learning preferences, family and cultural influences, and the kinds of communities in which they may thrive.

They also strengthen study skills, self-management practices, and academic balance while reflecting on IGCSE performance and preparing for Year 11.

Students will...

Discover interests, careers, and university pathways
by setting up and actively using MaiaLearning.

Develop interests
through extracurricular activities, presentations, and career investigations.

Demonstrate strong academic and personal habits
by focusing on time management skills and maintaining attention to IGCSE performance.

Document growth and achievement early
by drafting a CV and keeping track of activities, service, leadership, and accomplishments.

Determine next steps through Year 10 reflections
by identifying personal values, possible career fields, summer opportunities such as internships or volunteering, and goals for Year 11 and beyond.

Deepen university awareness
by attending university visits, including the Manila World University Fair.

Sample topics and activities

- Introduction to college counselling
- Introduction to MaiaLearning
- Interests profile assessment
- Personality profile assessment
- Investigating a career
- Understanding the transcript
- Constructive summer planning
- Starting a CV

Year 11
DEVELOP

Building awareness, habits, and informed pathway planning.



Focus

In Year 11, our college counselling programme is guided by the theme of ***Development***, helping students and families build on earlier exploration and make more informed academic and career decisions. Students adapt to the demands of IGCSE courses while strengthening study habits, resilience, and a growth mindset. By attending university visits, careers events, and counselling presentations, they deepen their understanding of future pathways.

Family meetings and counselling conversations help students to explore global university systems, consider best-fit aspirations, choose IBDP subjects thoughtfully, and begin planning for standardised testing where appropriate. These also help students consider how their academic choices connect with their values, family priorities, learning profile, possible support needs, and different definitions of success.

Students will...

Develop strong academic routines that support success in IGCSE courses in preparation for the demands of studies in Year 12 and 13.

Deepen career and university awareness through engagement with careers exploration, university representative visits, and international fairs.

Discuss future pathways as a family by exploring global systems, educational goals, and realistic university aspirations together.

Decide on IB subject choices carefully using teacher guidance, counselling perspectives, and personal reflection on strengths and interests.

Design an early testing and readiness plan by considering testing requirements, identifying prospective post-secondary academic and work interests, exploring extracurricular opportunities, and meeting with counsellors to clarify next steps in the transition to Year 12.

Deepen university awareness by attending university visits, including the Manila World University Fair.

Sample topics and activities

- Work values assessment
- AI as a career search tool
- Using the BSM Future Pathways site
- Engaging with universities and colleges
- Identifying subject, college, and career alignments
- Constructive summer planning
- Exploring global university systems
- Developing transferable skills

Year 12
DEFINE

Clarifying fit, priorities, and application direction.



Focus

Year 12 college counselling is shaped by the theme of ***Define***, as students begin to clarify their academic interests, university preferences, and application direction ahead of Year 13. Through university research, fairs, competitive pathway workshops, and three-way conferences with families and counsellors, students research and refine a balanced university long list and better understand global application systems. Students are encouraged to consider academic, personal, financial, cultural, and wellbeing dimensions of fit as they research possible destinations and pathways. They begin drafting key application materials, including essays and personal statements, while formally requesting teacher recommendations.

At the same time, students strengthen their candidacy by organising CAS experiences, planning purposeful summer engagement, advancing the Extended Essay, and preparing seriously for internal exams that inform predicted grades.

Students will...

Define a balanced university list by researching courses, locations, entry requirements, and best-fit options through MaiaLearning, the BSM Future Pathways site, and counselling guidance.

Develop core application materials early by brainstorming and drafting personal statements, college essays, and recommendation requests.

Document experiences and achievements carefully by recording CAS involvement, reflections, academic strengths, and summer plans.

Discuss pathways and priorities as a family through university conferences, financial fit research, and conversations about aspirations and affordability.

Demonstrate academic readiness by preparing thoroughly for Year 12 internal exams and completing key Extended Essay milestones before the summer break.

Deepen university awareness by attending university visits, including the Manila World University Fair.

Sample topics and activities

- Researching colleges and universities
- Building a 'considering' list in MaiaLearning
- Workshops for competitive programmes
- Understanding the reference request process
- Writing authentically and reflectively
- Leveraging supercurricular interests
- Understanding aspects of 'fit' for college
- Family and 1:1 meetings

Year 13
DECIDE

Finalising choices, completing applications, and preparing for transition.



Focus

Year 13 is the time to ***Decide***, as students and families move from planning to action in the final stages of the university process. Students refine and finalise a balanced application list, complete personal statements and supplemental essays, request school-produced documentation in a timely manner, and submit early, regular, and international applications in line with deadlines.

Counsellors ensure that transcripts, predicted grades, recommendations, and supporting documents are prepared and uploaded correctly. At the same time, students practise for admissions testing and university interviews, and reflect on admissions decisions while staying focused on IB studies. Families also prepare for post-application decisions, transition planning, and the move by students from school to independent life. Transition planning includes practical, personal, and wellbeing considerations so students can move towards university life with confidence and appropriate support.

Students will...

Decide on a balanced final college list with reach, target, and likely options that reflect academic fit, aspirations, and affordability.

Devote serious attention to academic performance by preparing thoroughly for IB mock examinations and maintaining focus in final school assessments.

Deliver strong, complete applications by finalising essays, submitting required forms on time, and ensuring transcripts, predicted grades, and recommendations are received.

Discuss next steps as a family by reviewing offers, confirming deposit choices, and preparing for the transition to independent life after BSM.

Demonstrate readiness for chosen courses by reflecting on academic learning and extracurricular experiences in preparation for explaining interests clearly in applications and interviews.

Sample topics and activities

- Refining and defining college applications
- Understanding document request procedures
- Managing application timelines and deadlines
- Practising interviews for competitive applications
- Individual and family meetings with college counsellors
- Transition topics for independent living
- Visa processes and requirements
- Understanding cost of attendance and financial considerations