The American School in London

Careers (CEIAG) policy

The current version of any policy, procedure, protocol or guideline is the version held on the ASL website. It is the responsibility of all employees to ensure that they are following the most up-to-date version.

Responsible party	Director of Teaching and Learning
Responsible board committee	Educational Experience Committee
Ratified by the Educational Experience Committee:	23 October 2026

1. Introduction and Vision

This Careers Policy outlines ASL's approach to careers education, information, advice, and guidance (CEIAG) for students in Grades 6-12. The policy is designed to ensure that all students receive accurate, impartial, and up-to-date careers guidance that enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career and post-secondary pathways.

Careers education at ASL is part of ASL's commitment to developing well-rounded individuals who understand their strengths, interests, and values, and who can articulate how their learning connects to diverse career opportunities. We recognise that our students are international and will pursue varied pathways, including universities in the United States, the United Kingdom, and across the world, alongside vocational training, apprenticeships, gap years, and direct employment.

2. Aims and Objectives

The careers programme at ASL aims to:

- **Enable informed choice:** Equip every student with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to make informed decisions about their future, grounded in a realistic understanding of the labour market
- **Broaden horizons:** Expose students to a wide range of careers and post-secondary pathways, including further and higher education, apprenticeships, vocational training, and employment.
- **Develop career literacy:** Support students in understanding how their subjects link to careers, and how skills developed in school transfer to the workplace.
- **Foster self-awareness:** Help students recognise their own skills, interests, values, and potential, and articulate these to others.
- **Build resilience and adaptability:** Prepare students for a rapidly changing world where multiple career changes are common and lifelong learning is essential.
- **Ensure equal access:** Guarantee that all students, including those with learning differences or additional needs, and those from diverse backgrounds, receive appropriate careers support tailored to their circumstances.
- **Support the transition to post-secondary life:** Provide comprehensive guidance and practical support to students as they prepare for university applications, gap years, employment, or further training.

3. Statutory and Regulatory Framework

Independent School Standards and ISI Inspection Framework

ASL is an independent school inspected by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI). Our careers provision is assessed against the following standards:

- **Independent School Standards, Part 1, Paragraph 2(2)(e):** This standard requires that 'pupils receive accurate, up-to-date and impartial careers guidance enabling pupils to make informed choices about a broad range of career options.' ASL's careers policy and programme are designed to meet this requirement.
- **ISI Inspection Framework, Section 4 — Pupils' Social and Economic Wellbeing and Contribution to Society:** Inspectors assess the quality of the school's careers provision under this section, including the breadth and impartiality of guidance offered, the integration of careers education into the curriculum, and the availability of individual pupil support.
- **ISI Inspection Framework, Section 2 — Pupils' Education, Training and Recreation:** The framework recognises that careers education supports pupils' personal development and contributes to their understanding of their own potential.

Gatsby Benchmarks

From September 2025, all schools are expected to embed the Gatsby Benchmarks into their careers provision. ASL's programme aligns with all eight benchmarks:

1. **A stable careers programme** - with appropriate leadership and resources
2. **Learning from career and labour market information** - understanding trends and opportunities
3. **Addressing the needs of each young person** - personalised guidance
4. **Linking curriculum learning to careers** - showing relevance across subjects
5. **Encounters with employers and employees** - direct engagement with the world of work
6. **Experiences of workplaces** - work experience and internships
7. **Encounters with further and higher education** - exposure to post-secondary pathways
8. **Personal guidance** - access to trained advisers for individual support

4. Leadership and Management

Policy Ownership and Leadership

The Office of Student Advising holds responsibility for leading, developing, and coordinating ASL's careers programme. This includes:

- Setting the strategic direction for careers education and CEIAG

- Ensuring the programme meets statutory requirements and Gatsby Benchmarks
- Overseeing curriculum integration and co-curricular provision
- Managing employer and external partnerships
- Collecting and analysing destination data
- Evaluating programme effectiveness and student outcomes

Careers Leadership

ASL has appointed a designated Work X Coordinator who is responsible for the day-to-day management of the careers programme, strategic planning, and liaison with senior leadership, parents, employers, and external education providers. The Middle School and High School advisory program and High School Office of Student Advising provide additional lessons and programming related to careers.

Senior Leadership and Accountability

The Head of School and Academic Leadership Team are accountable for ensuring that:

- The careers programme is appropriately resourced and staffed
- Careers education is embedded across the curriculum, particularly in PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education)
- Individual guidance is available to all students
- Equal access and impartiality are maintained
- The programme is monitored and evaluated systematically
- Findings are reported to the Board of Trustees and used to inform school improvement planning

Board Oversight

The Board of Trustees oversees the careers policy and programme as part of their fiduciary and educational responsibility. The designated Senior Leadership Team member reports annually to Trustees on:

- Programme provision and alignment with Gatsby Benchmarks
- Student and parent satisfaction with careers support
- Destination data for graduates
- Any action taken in response to ISI findings
- Resource and staffing needs

5. The Careers Programme - Provision by Year Group

ASL delivers a progressive careers programme across Grades 6-12, aligned with students' developmental needs and increasing complexity of decision-making. The programme combines curriculum-embedded learning, co-curricular activities, and individual guidance.

Grades 6-8 (Middle School): Awareness and Exploration

Aim: To build career awareness, explore a broad range of careers, and begin developing self-knowledge.

Key components:

- Careers education within PSHE curriculum, introducing diverse career sectors and pathways
- Subject-specific activities linking learning to careers (e.g., maths to finance and engineering; English to publishing and law)
- Visits from speakers featuring professionals from diverse backgrounds and sectors
- Exploration of personal strengths, interests, and learning styles through guided reflection in advisory and health classes
- Explore Week, offering the opportunity to learn new skills and interests in a non-traditional classroom setting

Grades 9-10 (High School): Deeper Exploration and Planning

Aim: To deepen understanding of careers linked to subject choices, develop career planning skills, and begin exploring post-secondary pathways.

Key components:

- Subject choice guidance connecting courses to potential careers
- Work X programme: First opportunities for workplace visits, shadowing, or short-term internships (Grade 10+)
- Guests from higher education institutions (universities in the US, UK, and internationally)
- Guest speakers: Continued exposure to professionals at different career stages through classes, clubs and assemblies
- Individual guidance sessions beginning to support those with specific interests or uncertainties
- Exploration of apprenticeships and vocational pathways alongside academic routes

Grades 11-12 (High School): Application and Transition

Aim: To support applications to universities and post-secondary programmes, and to prepare students for transitions to their chosen pathways.

Key components:

- Intensive individual college and university guidance by the Office of Student Advising, including application support, essay coaching, and interview preparation
- Advisory curriculum with lessons on the transition to university life, gap years, career exploration for non-university pathways, personal finance, and the transition to independence
- Work X programme: Summer placements and professional experience aligned with intended university majors or career interests
- Guest speakers from universities and employers at every stage
- Alumni networking: Opportunities to connect with ASL graduates studying or working in various fields
- Attendance at university fairs and open days (both US and UK universities)
- Individual career guidance for students not pursuing traditional higher education, supporting apprenticeship, vocational, or employment applications
- Preparation for the transition to post-secondary life, including practical skills (university accommodation, budgeting, wellbeing)

Work X Programme
ASL's Work X programme provides structured workplace experience across Grades 10-12. Students engage in internships, work shadowing, and real-world projects with employers, allowing them to apply classroom learning, develop employability skills, and explore career interests. Work X is integrated with curriculum learning and reflected upon critically to deepen student understanding of career pathways.

Guest Speakers
Guest speakers visit ASL through clubs, our Innovator in Residence program, the Bergeron Fellowship and other special programmes. Speakers come from diverse sectors, backgrounds, and career stages to ASL, offering students authentic insights into the working world. Speakers represent a range of industries, educational pathways, and success models, ensuring no career is presented as 'normal' or 'expected' and broadening students' sense of what is possible.

6. Gatsby Benchmark Alignment

The following table demonstrates how ASL's careers provision maps to each Gatsby Benchmark:

Benchmark	ASL Provision
1. A stable careers programme	ASL has an Office of Student Advising with a designated Work X coordinator. The programme has dedicated curriculum time, resources, and partnerships. Leadership commitment and budget allocations ensure stability. Annual evaluation and reporting to Trustees ensure accountability.
2. Learning from career and labour market information	Students access online platforms and tools providing labour market information. Guest speakers share current workplace insights and reflect diverse and emerging careers.
3. Addressing the needs of each young person	Individual student records are maintained of careers conversations and decisions. Students with additional needs or specific interests receive tailored guidance. Regular one-to-one meetings with the Office of Student Advising support personalised planning. Differentiated support is available (e.g., SEND students, English language learners).
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers	All subject departments are encouraged to embed career relevance into their teaching (e.g., maths to finance, science to medicine/engineering, humanities to law/diplomacy, arts to design/media). Subject choice meetings explicitly link subject choices to potential careers. Deans and advisors reinforce links to careers in their pastoral roles.
5. Encounters with employers and employees	Guest speakers through clubs, classes and assemblies bring working professionals into school throughout the year. Work X programme creates direct employer partnerships. Mock interview events connect students with local employers. Employer workshops (e.g., on CVs, interview skills, workplace culture) are offered annually.

6. Experiences of workplaces	Work X programme provides internships, work shadowing, and real-world projects (Grades 10-12). Summer placements and longer-term arrangements are available for advanced students. Students reflect on and document their experiences, connecting them to curriculum learning and future pathways.
7. Encounters with further and higher education	University visits and talks from representatives of US universities, UK universities, and international institutions. Attendance at university fairs. Networking with ASL alumni studying at various universities. Information about alternative post-secondary pathways (vocational colleges, gap year organisations, etc.) is provided.
8. Personal guidance	The Office of Student Advising provides trained university advisors offering one-to-one guidance to all students. Individual development plans are created and updated annually. Guidance is confidential and impartial, supporting each student's unique strengths and aspirations.

7. Impartiality Statement

ASL is committed to providing impartial careers guidance that presents all pathways fairly and equally, without steering students based on their gender, ethnicity, social background, or any other protected characteristic.

Specifically, we ensure:

- **Breadth of pathways:** We promote universities in the United States, the United Kingdom, and internationally with equal enthusiasm. We also present apprenticeships, vocational training, gap years, entrepreneurship, and direct employment as equally valid pathways.
- **Freedom from stereotyping:** We actively counter gender stereotypes in career choices (e.g., encouraging girls into STEM, boys into humanities and care sectors). We celebrate diverse role models and highlight successful professionals from underrepresented groups.
- **Impartial information:** Our guest speakers represent a range of sectors, industries, genders, ethnicities, and educational backgrounds. We do not promote particular universities or pathways; rather, we help students identify the best fit for their interests and circumstances.

- **Equal access:** All students receive the same quality of guidance, regardless of prior academic attainment or special educational needs. We ensure students with SEND or additional needs receive appropriately adapted support.
- **No preferential treatment:** We do not steer students towards university simply because they are high achievers, nor do we discourage capable students from higher education. Each student's pathway is discussed based on their individual strengths, interests, and aspirations.
- **Confidentiality and privacy:** Individual guidance is confidential. Information about a student's university choices or career plans is not shared without consent.

8. Inclusion and Equal Access

Commitment to Inclusion

ASL is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of their background, ability, or circumstances, have full and equal access to careers education and guidance. This includes students with learning differences, physical disabilities, English language learners, students in care, those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, and any student who may require additional support.

Provision for Students with Additional Needs

The Office of Student Advising works closely with the Student Support Services team to ensure:

- Individualised careers guidance is tailored to the student's strengths, interests, and realistic aspirations
- Advice about post-secondary pathways (including supported university placement, specialist colleges, apprenticeships for disabled students) is comprehensive and up-to-date
- Workplace experiences through Work X are appropriately matched to the student's needs and capabilities
- Reasonable adjustments are made to ensure full participation in careers activities, speakers, and visits
- Parents and outside agencies are involved in planning for transitions post-18

Support for Diverse Learners

We recognise that our student body is diverse and international. We ensure:

- Information and guidance about universities and post-secondary pathways reflect opportunities in the US, UK, and internationally

- Language support is available for English language learners to understand university requirements and applications
- Visa and immigration considerations are addressed for international students considering study abroad
- Students from low-income backgrounds are supported to access university and training, including information about scholarships and bursaries

9. Employer and External Engagement

Work X Programme

The Work X programme is ASL's structured work experience and internship initiative, coordinated by the Office of Student Advising. Through Work X, students in Grades 10-12 engage with employers to:

- Apply knowledge and skills learned in the classroom to real-world challenges
- Develop employability skills (teamwork, communication, problem-solving, professionalism)
- Explore career interests and test suitability of different pathways
- Build professional networks and gain references
- Develop cultural awareness and adaptability working in a diverse London business environment

Format and duration: Work X placements range from short-term shadowing (1-2 weeks) to longer summer internships (4-8 weeks). Students are matched with employers appropriate to their interests and ability level, with support from the Office of Student Advising.

Reflection and integration: Students are required to reflect critically on their work experience, connecting their observations to curriculum learning and career planning. Supervisors provide feedback, and students document their learning and development.

Guest speakers

Guest speakers visit ASL through our high school clubs, Innovator in Residence program and other assemblies and programs such as the Human Rights Symposium. These professionals visit school throughout the academic year, offering students authentic, first-hand insights into the world of work. Speakers are invited from diverse sectors (finance, law, medicine, technology, arts, social enterprise, academia, international development, etc.) and represent diverse backgrounds, career stages, and pathways to success.

Alumni Network

ASL leverages its alumni network to provide current students with mentoring and role models. Alumni who are studying at universities or working in various fields are invited to share their experiences, offer advice, and provide networking opportunities.

University Visits and Open Days

Students in Grades 11-12 are encouraged to attend university open days and campus visits. The Office of Student Advising coordinates group trips to both US and UK universities, ensuring exposure to a range of institutions. Information about international universities is also provided.

Partnerships and Relationships

ASL maintains strong relationships with:

- Employers in London and beyond offering work experience and internship placements
- Universities in the US, UK, and internationally, including those with specific partnerships with ASL
- Vocational and apprenticeship providers
- Education and careers guidance organisations (e.g., university application support services)
- Local community organisations and charities offering volunteering and social enterprise placements

10. Parent and Family Engagement

Parent Communication

ASL recognises that parents and families play a crucial role in supporting students' career development and decision-making. We communicate with families through:

- **Parent information sessions** on careers topics, particularly prior to major decisions (e.g., subject choices, university applications)
- **Digital communications** (newsletters, website resources, email updates) keeping parents informed of speakers, events, and opportunities
- **Individual meetings** arranged upon request to discuss a student's specific career plans or concerns

Parent Workshops and Events

The Office of Student Advising organises termly or annual events for parents, such as:

- University application information sessions (US, UK, Canadian, and European pathways)
- Gap year and alternative pathways workshops
- Panels featuring parents discussing their own careers and how they support their children