

GLENDALE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, DUBAI

Academic and Career Guidance Policy

Secondary: the Year 9 IGCSE Pathway

Policy details	
Applies to	Secondary students, with a focus on Year 9 as they prepare for the IGCSE pathway
Policy owner	Head of Secondary (Uzma Akram)
Approved by	Jasmit Kang (Principal)
Effective from	September 2026
Next review	September 2027
Aligned to	KHDA FutuReady Standards; UAE School Inspection Framework
Linked policies	Curriculum; Assessment, Marking and Feedback; Inclusion; Safeguarding; Wellbeing

1. Purpose

This policy sets out how Glendale International School provides academic and career guidance in Secondary, so that every student makes informed, confident choices about their IGCSE subjects and future pathways.

In 2026–27, our first cohort of Year 9 students is preparing for the IGCSE pathway. Year 9 is a pivotal year: the subjects students choose will shape their options for further study and future careers. Guidance at Glendale therefore helps each student understand their strengths, interests and potential, and connect them to realistic and ambitious pathways.

Our approach reflects Glendale's vision *to positively impact the interconnected world by creating competent and compassionate leaders*, and the Leader in Me habit of Begin with the End in Mind.

2. Regulatory framework and alignment

This policy is aligned to:

- The KHDA FutuReady Framework (2026): The Dubai Standards for Academic Guidance and Career Readiness in Educational Institutions (Administrative Resolution No. (95) of 2025), which applies to all private schools from FS to Year 13. Dubai private schools have three years to implement its nine standards (see Section 8).
- Dubai's Economic Agenda (D33) and Education 33 (E33) Strategy, which focus on developing the skills and adaptability needed for emerging sectors.
- The UAE School Inspection Framework, including Standard 4.2 (curriculum adaptation and choice) and Standard 5.2 (care and support, including academic and career guidance).
- Executive Council Resolution No. (2) of 2017 regulating private schools in Dubai, and KHDA inclusion requirements for students of determination.

3. Core principles

In line with the FutuReady Framework, guidance at Glendale is built on three core principles:

Principle	What it means at Glendale
Inclusive and student-centred	Guidance reflects Emirati culture and values while embracing our diverse community. Every student has equal access to quality guidance, tailored to their strengths, interests and aspirations.

Principle	What it means at Glendale
Career readiness and future skills	Guidance prepares students for high-growth sectors in Dubai's economy, develops digital literacy and adaptability, and encourages lifelong learning.
High quality and continuous improvement	Guidance helps students move smoothly from school to university, vocational training or work, is delivered by skilled staff, and uses technology, mentorship and workplace experiences.

4. Aims

- Provide every Year 9 student with structured, personalised guidance on IGCSE subject choices
- Help students understand their strengths, interests and learning profile through CAT4 and psychometric testing
- Connect IGCSE choices to university, TVET and career pathways, including Dubai's high-growth sectors
- Develop future skills such as adaptability, communication, digital literacy and critical thinking
- Involve parents as partners in every stage of decision-making
- Ensure guidance is inclusive, impartial and accessible to every student

5. Guidance across Secondary

Career readiness begins before Year 9. In Years 7 and 8, students build the foundations through:

- the Leader in Me programme, which develops goal-setting, leadership and personal responsibility
- business studies from Year 7, Entrepreneurship Day and cross-curricular enterprise projects
- Model United Nations and other opportunities that build voice, research and global awareness
- CAT4 target stickers in every subject, helping students understand their potential and set ambitious targets

In Year 9, guidance becomes structured and personalised through the IGCSE Pathway Guidance Programme.

6. The Year 9 IGCSE Pathway Guidance Programme

Term	Key guidance activities
Term 1	CAT4 reports and IGCSE predictions shared with students and parents • CAT4 target stickers introduced in every subject • Introduction to the IGCSE pathway, including the modular pathway in Mathematics and the three sciences • Parent information evening • Psychometric assessment completed by all Year 9 students
Term 2	Individual psychometric profiles shared with students and parents • One-to-one guidance meetings with every student • IGCSE-style mock assessments inform subject decisions • Careers talks and guest speakers from a range of sectors • Draft IGCSE subject choices discussed with parents
Term 3	IGCSE subject choices confirmed • Individual Pathway Plan agreed and signed by the student, parents and the school • Transition support into Year 10 • Review of the programme using student and parent feedback

Psychometric assessment

All Year 9 students complete an age-appropriate psychometric assessment of their interests, strengths, aptitudes and working preferences, delivered through Global Schools Group. This helps students focus on their skills and consider the career trajectories that suit them.

- Results are one source of evidence among several. They inform choices but never limit them.
- Results are explained to students in a supportive way and shared with parents.
- Parents are informed in advance, and results are stored securely and shared only with staff involved in guidance.
- Reasonable adjustments are made for students of determination and EAL learners.

One-to-one guidance meetings

Every Year 9 student has at least one individual guidance meeting with the Head of Secondary or a trained guidance lead, with parents invited to attend or to a follow-up meeting. Each meeting considers:

- the student's CAT4 profile and IGCSE predictions
- current attainment from internal assessments (Sonar), GL Progress Tests, NGRT and mock assessments
- the student's psychometric profile, interests and aspirations

- teacher recommendations for each subject
- subject requirements for university, TVET and other pathways in the UAE and internationally
- possible career pathways, including emerging sectors in Dubai and the UAE

The outcomes are recorded on each student's Individual Pathway Plan (Appendix A), which is stored securely and reviewed at the start of Year 10.

7. Principles for IGCSE subject choices

- Informed: choices are based on a range of evidence, not a single test or grade.
- Student-centred: the student's interests and aspirations are at the heart of every decision.
- Ambitious and realistic: students are encouraged to aim high, with clear advice on the demands of each subject.
- Open: choices keep future options open, and advice considers university, vocational and UAE equivalency requirements.
- Impartial: guidance is fair and free from bias, including gender or cultural stereotypes.

8. Meeting the nine FutuReady Standards

The table below shows how Glendale's Secondary provision meets each of the nine FutuReady Standards.

FutuReady Standard	How Glendale meets the standard
1. Formal Academic Guidance and Career Readiness Programme	The structured Year 9 IGCSE Pathway Guidance Programme (Section 6) helps every student explore career paths, set goals and agree an Individual Pathway Plan. The programme is reviewed each year to reflect job market trends and Dubai's economic priorities.
2. Universal Future Skills and Competencies	Leader in Me, business studies, enterprise projects and Model United Nations develop problem-solving, communication, teamwork, leadership and adaptability alongside academic learning. Digital literacy is built across the curriculum.
3. Transformative Leadership and Skilled Professionals	Guidance is led by the Head of Secondary with oversight from the Principal and governors, and delivered by trained staff rather than added informally to existing roles. Staff receive ongoing professional development, including KHDA FutuReady workshops and training from Global Schools Group.

FutuReady Standard	How Glendale meets the standard
4. University, TVET and Career Pathways	Students receive accurate information on all post-school routes: university, technical and vocational education and training (TVET), apprenticeships and employment. IGCSE choices are linked to the entry requirements of these pathways in the UAE and internationally.
5. Robust Engagement and Experiential Learning	Careers talks, guest speakers, workplace visits, mentoring and, as the programme develops, job shadowing and internships give students real-world experience. Entrepreneurship Day and industry-linked project work let students apply their skills.
6. Essential Labour Market Insights	Students learn about Dubai's growth sectors, emerging careers and the skills employers seek, so they can align IGCSE choices with future opportunities.
7. Active Family and Community Collaboration	Parents attend information evenings and one-to-one meetings and sign the Individual Pathway Plan. Parents and community partners share their careers with students, and alumni will be involved as the school grows.
8. Digital Future-Ready Guidance	The psychometric assessment and digital careers platforms, including AI-enabled tools used with staff guidance, help students understand their strengths and personal traits and explore pathways safely.
9. Youth-Centred and Inclusive Guidance	Every student has an Individual Pathway Plan tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations. Students of determination receive adapted assessments, extra meeting time and support from the Head of Inclusion, with IEP targets reflected in their plan. Gifted and talented and EAL students receive tailored support.

9. Roles and responsibilities

Who	Responsibilities
Principal	Ensure the school meets the FutuReady Standards; approve the policy and resources.
Head of Secondary	Lead the guidance programme; oversee psychometric testing and one-to-one meetings; approve IGCSE pathways; report on impact.
Guidance lead or counsellor	Support one-to-one meetings, interpret psychometric profiles and support student wellbeing during decision-making.
Subject leaders and teachers	Provide subject information and recommendations; promote careers links in lessons.

Who	Responsibilities
Form tutors	Support students through the choices process and monitor wellbeing.
Head of Inclusion	Ensure guidance and testing are accessible for students of determination.
Parents	Attend information evenings and meetings; support their child's informed decision-making.
Industry and community partners	Offer talks, mentoring, visits and, where possible, work experience to help students prepare for work.
Students	Engage fully in guidance activities, reflect on their strengths and take ownership of their choices.

10. Monitoring and evaluation

The Head of Secondary monitors the impact of guidance each year and reports to SLT and the Board of Governors. Measures include:

- 100% of Year 9 students completing the psychometric assessment and a one-to-one guidance meeting
- 100% of Year 9 students with an agreed Individual Pathway Plan
- student and parent feedback on the quality of guidance
- the number of changes to subject choices after the start of Year 10
- progress of students in their chosen IGCSE subjects

11. Implementation plan

Year	Focus
2026–27	Launch the Year 9 IGCSE Pathway Guidance Programme, psychometric testing, one-to-one meetings and Individual Pathway Plans. Attend KHDA FutuReady workshops and audit current provision against the indicators in the KHDA handbook for schools.
2027–28	Extend guidance into Year 10 and strengthen Years 7 and 8 careers education. Develop employer and community partnerships and staff training.
2028–29	Secure full implementation of the FutuReady Standards across Secondary, with guidance embedded from Year 7 onwards, and age-appropriate careers awareness developed with Primary and EYFS colleagues so that guidance starts early.

Appendix A: Individual Pathway Plan (Year 9)

Student name		Class	
Meeting date		Guidance lead	

My profile

CAT4 profile and IGCSE predictions	
Strengths from my psychometric profile	
My interests and aspirations	
Career areas I would like to explore	

My IGCSE choices

Subject	Target grade	Reason for choice / teacher recommendation

Next steps

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Role	Name and signature	Date
Student		

Parent / guardian		
Head of Secondary		