

The Careers service at NCBIS



Welcome to our International Careers Service. We like to think that our Careers support is all-encompassing here at NCBIS, as it goes way beyond helping with University applications and possible career routes. Education for Employability starts in Year 7, and it is our job to make sure that the curriculum provides the “hard” and “soft” skills required by Universities as well as the world of work; so that our graduates not only access the top world universities, but are both successful and happy, and gain a head start in the job market and their future careers.

Rebecca Gardner, Graham Hurrell

The important soft skills of team work, communication, problem resolution, critical thinking, entrepreneurship, leadership and adaptability are a fundamental part of our curriculum and are emphasized in our “Super learning Days”, “Learning for Life” and PSHE programmes. Challenges week (experiential learning) is the jewel in the crown of this programme, and offers opportunities at home and abroad to push oneself to the limit. A well rounded student hoping to gain scholarships at the world’s leading universities needs more than these skills though, and careers education would not be very logical without first having the curricular and extra curricular opportunities available to discover hidden talents and “risk take” in new academic directions. In this sense, Student Council, Model United Nations, new sports, or “going for gold” in the prestigious International Award are equally important, and a requisite for many North American universities. Further information on these programmes can be found elsewhere on our webpage, with photographs and explanations.

Our Careers service therefore permeates all aspects of school life, as it should, and treats every student as an individual offering personalized guidance to every family, at the times most suited. Our aim is to help all our students model the important attributes of the IB Learner Profile, help them choose the correct courses following academic strengths, personality traits and recognized interests; monitor their progress socially, academically (CEM data) as well as extra curricular interests; help guide them to sound university destinations across the globe, supporting them in a pastoral sense along that journey, and finally keep in touch with their career successes as Alumni.

As a Careers Department, we would like to outline:

1. Use of CEM Data and academic monitoring of students
2. Careers Information at Key Stage 3 and 4, and the Importance of “Education of the whole child”
3. The Rationale for Challenges’ Week and its importance in “Education for Employability”
4. Work Experience Programmes
5. The role of outside speakers

6. University Visitors to NCBIS
7. Visiting Universities at home and abroad
8. North American SAT exam and UK entrance testing (UKCAT, BMAT, PAT)
9. Information on Summer Schools
10. Our Careers Library
11. Applications, UCAS, Naviance, documents available
12. Financial planning and preparation for university

1. Use of CEM Data

Every student at NCBIS sits an on-line examination testing English, Maths and non-verbal reasoning and this information is then analysed at the Centre for Educational Monitoring at the University of Durham, UK. Durham sends us predictions of each child's achievement at the end of every key stage, and this allows us to set academic targets, monitor that all students are on track to meet targets, and so help them choose courses wisely and apply to appropriate universities. This data is crucial to checking optimal learning and so provides the first step in the Career guidance path.

2. Careers Information in key stages 3 and 4



3d design in both Computing and art classes, using iMacs and Macbooks.

During Key stage 3, students are introduced to future employment areas through the normal curriculum, in the sense that each subject area and topic will highlight career areas linked to that subject. In the main Secondary Teaching Block, "Maths TV" also highlights all career areas based on Mathematics, and many of the Mathematics topics have a "real world slant". As we follow the National Curriculum of England and Wales, Education for Employability" has great importance, as seen by the recent changes in computing, Design and Science, all promoting the skills needed in our wealth-generation industries.

Further guidance is provided by the PSHE programme (Personal, Social, and Health Education) and our NCBIS "Learning for Life" Programme.

Our philosophy is simple: "Learn to learn, learn to do, learn to be and learn to live together." As such, "doing" is represented by an annual science Fair, "super learning days", musical presentations, band evenings, House leadership events, rockfests, shows and Musicals. It is important to point out that we employ a "Director of Performance", as well as Heads of Art, Music and Drama, and this leads to "Musical Mondays" and the opportunity for many students to both hone and perform their creative talents.



Great focus on the Arts: Drama (educational and productions), Art and Digital Design. Part of our Key Stage 3 and GCSE Art exposition, June 2015 (right).



Perhaps a surprising photograph for a careers Page, but if we do not allow students to “risk take”, communicate creatively and find their talents, then we could be following stereotypical patterns and pushing our students down the wrong career path. Yes Engineering, but perhaps a link to sound, acoustics and the music industry, or even lighting as this was also organized by students.



Our House system also has an important role to play in development of personality, integrity, communication and leadership, and this can't be divorced from the overall careers programme. We need to give our students every opportunity to develop their skills and talents, or else a traditional careers orientation is worthless. It's an organic, evolving process

throughout a student's career, not a one off decision making process of a university to fit the skills that a student has managed to develop. No "one size fits all" at NCBIS, on the contrary, a personalized service linked to Personality traits, interviews, modified Myers-Briggs tests and more traditional vocational tracking. The photo shows one of our four houses competing for "The Battle of Broadway", a student favourite of live music and choreography which takes place annually at Easter, led by the older students.



Featured above is one of our "Super-Learning Days" to bring real-world skills, problem resolution and team work to the curriculum. In this example, Art, Music and Drama linked in Year 8 to discuss and role play contemporary real world issues and set them to music and creative canvas designs. Others look at video production, mathematical code breaking, marketing, product design and even testing the quantity of sugar in fruit juices; stressing career links and giving an opportunity to explore important real world topics.

Field trips, educational excursions and residential study courses also have a dual purpose, meeting curriculum needs and more fundamental educational benefits. GCSE Geographers travel to Barcelona, for example, to complete controlled coursework on Hydrological studies of the River Tordera, but also examine the Geography and career aspects of national parks, Urban planning, Architecture, Waste Disposal, "smart" concepts to traffic management, energy and sustainable development, as well as tourism. Students also see the urban campuses of Barcelona Universities.





Barcelona Geography Field trip also links to Language, Culture and Architecture

[Challenges' Week, the jewel in the crown of Experiential learning!](#)

The rationale, experiences and images of Challenges' Week can be found elsewhere on the web page, but here we would like to reiterate that it is central to learning, and how the experiences gained can create life-changing decisions. Experiential Learning is about pushing yourself beyond your comfort zone, risk-taking, and finding out your personal strengths and opportunities for improvement. Students are involved in domestic and international travel, community service and where possible "Action".

Not everybody wishes to, or is able to travel, and so NCBIS links studies during this week to creative design skills or in the case of 2015, to cutting edge technology. Younger students designed and built Lego robots and created simple computer games at the local Andromeda labs, before embarking on a 3 day "Dragon's Den" exercise, where they had to research, design and present a new product, "cost it out", consider film and musical marketing and compete for the team's finance and commercial "green light". It was a fascinating exercise which the students gained a lot from.



3d printer (left) and Choi proudly demonstrating the group's first 3d design.

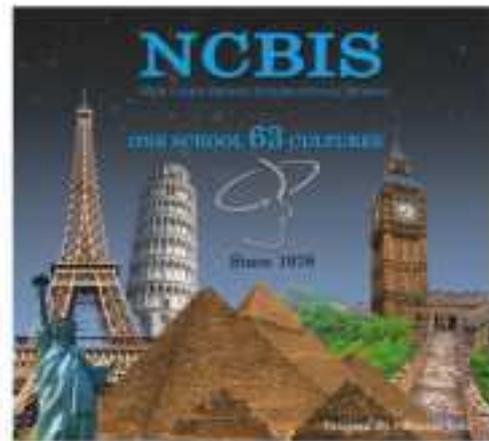
Key Stage 4 students in contrast, worked with Cairo's Sharabassy Built Environment (Architectural studios), in conjunction with Barcelona's IAAC (Institute of Advanced Architecture of Catalunya). They started off with video conferencing and researching Digital Fabrication, before using sophisticated scanning software on our Apple "macbook pros" and a 3D printer to create miniature individual torsos. They also looked at 3d gaming and the programming of Aduinos linked to Smart cities (which many followed up in Barcelona).

Year 11/ 12 Work Experience

Work Experience is far from a "filler" and for many year 11 students it was the ideal opportunity to look into career areas from business to banking, Security to software, tourism and engineering options. For many, it gave the opportunity to link real world work practices to classroom discussions and text book theory, while others gained a real insight into the world of work, and offered new career options. We were very grateful to: Travco (major travel company), Masria cards, Citibank, Haliburton, Coca Cola, Toyota, Sofitel, Rosetta Corporation (solar cells and panels), Andrew Thompson architecture studios, City stars Mall (G4S), Town House Art Gallery, United Nations Cairo branch, Truman Electronics, Majestic Porcelain, Nestle, local Architectural firms and in particular Architect Mrs. Claire de Groot, for the amazing opportunities they offered our students.



Vivian and David, with IT technological support, refurbished 35 redundant computers for donation to orphanages and other educational centres. Work experience is encouraged for all students as it helps provide important detail for the all-important CV, may lead to summer and extension work, and instills a sense of maturity and real-world skills in the market place.



The design, left, was produced on work experience with “Majestic Porcelain” by 15 year old Moussa Gamil, on his final day with the company. It was printed on glass using the only machine capable of this task in the Middle East, and Moussa completed every stage from design to checking copyrite, to printing with supervision by company engineers. It now proudly adorns our Reception, while Moussa has decided his true career

Outside Speakers and Visiting Universities

Where possible, professionals come in to school to discuss their career experiences, often leading to inspirational talks and discussions; and the latest speaker has been Juan Carlos Garrido Fernández, 2014-15 Manager of Al Ahly Football Club, in Zamalek.

We invite visiting universities to discuss their research areas as well as to discuss cutting edge technologies at their faculties, and have enjoyed talks as diverse as the use of DNA in tracking the sale of endangered animal species, linked to CITES, fish migrations and adaptations in the Suez canal area, and the construction of pre-fabricated houses using 3d printers.

NCBIS runs an annual Business Conference, usually in conjunction with one of the major University fairs in the city, and so in 2015 it was held at the Fairmont Hotel and Conference centre, where our students also had the opportunity to meet with over 30 University representatives. The University of Sunderland agreed to provide information on UCAS related issues and university applications, while Sofitel’s Head of Marketing outlined what the World of Commerce looks for in its young trainees.



Business Conference research



Young NCBIS Executives at the Business Conference



CVs and Personal statements



DNA testing and its career applications, Chester University, September 2014.



Discussing Carleton University, Canada, with one of 21 Canadian representatives.



University Visitors

Here at NCBIS, we have been very fortunate to receive visits from representatives from World top 100 universities, and webinar contacts with many more. Our students also have access with global Careers Fairs held locally.

Visitors to NCBIS have included:

- *21 Universities from Canada at a mini NCBIS Fair
- *Leading British Universities
- * Po University, Paris
- * International University, Bremen
- *American Universities with branches in Europe and the Middle East.
- *Leading American Art and Design as well as Business Colleges
- *Dutch Universities and their local representative
- * UCSI Malaysia
- *IAAC, Barcelona, Spain

Visit of UCSI, Malaysia

It is also important for the Careers department to have first hand experience of both local and international universities, and we regularly meet with staff from Nile, AUC and BUE universities, in particular, but have cordial links with many others.





By keeping in touch with, and occasionally visiting alumni, we also gain first hand knowledge of their universities and can “link students” as well as discuss options with actual examples.

Miss Gardner attended a 2014 tour of Swiss campuses specializing in the Hospitality Industry, but other universities visited include:

*Imperial, UCL, St Mary’s, City, Greenwich, Southbank, LSE, London School of Music (London)

*Worcester, Gloucester, Birmingham, Hartpury, Loughborough, Nottingham (Midlands)

*McGill and University of Montreal (Canada)

* Direct knowledge of all Florida Universities, most Boston USA universities and many others

*Direct knowledge of universities in Spain, Ecuador, Argentina, Uruguay, Chile and Brazil

[Entrance Examinations in the UK](#)

A number of UK universities require entrance tests to be completed for a number of their courses. All students thinking of applying for medicine, dentistry and in some cases biomedical sciences must complete either the UK Clinical Aptitude Test (UKCAT) or the BMAT. The test required depends on the Universities the student is applying to, and in some cases students will have to take both entrance tests. The UKCAT focuses on cognitive powers whereas the BMAT tests problem solving, understanding argument and data analysis and inference.

Students wishing to study Law in the UK must take the Law National Aptitude Test (LNAT). The LNAT assesses verbal reasoning, data interpretation, inductive and deductive reasoning and the ability to draw conclusion.

Universities such as Oxford have a number of other entrance tests, such as the Physics Aptitude Test (PAT), which is required for students applying for Engineering, Material Sciences and Physics. The Mathematics Admissions Test (MAT) is required for Computer Sciences and Mathematics courses and the Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA) is required for Humanities based courses, such as Economics and Management, Geography, Human Sciences and Psychology.

NCBIS is able to arrange for a number of these entrances tests to be carried out on the school premises, for example the BMAT and PAT, once the student has registered with the Examination Officer. Unfortunately we are unable to carry out the UKCAT at NCBIS.

[SAT exams](#)

SAT preparation classes are held here at NCBIS and our scores are comparable with any outside tutoring agency. Our top score in 2014 was 2,290 points out of a possible 2,400, including 100% score in English, despite it being the candidate's third language. Many students prefer to study for SAT in the evenings however, and so we also offer an additional tutored course by "Top Choice", who we work with in PSHE lessons, and can fully recommend. Top Choice employs graduates from US and UK universities, and also provide individual careers counseling, additional preparation for Oxbridge and IVY League Universities as well as academic support for GCSE and IB Diploma studies.

The SAT is currently undergoing large changes and the revised SAT will start in Spring 2016. Here in Egypt, there are fewer SAT examination sessions than in some countries, so it is important to continuously check exam dates and final application dates. We would encourage all our students to register for the November 2015 exam, before the current syllabus expires.

Below is information sent to the parents of our current year 11.

[Important Careers Department Information for Key Stage 4 and 5](#)

Dear Families,

Years 10 and 11 are never too early to start thinking about Universities and career options, whatever your nationality; especially if you are thinking about university education in North America.

There are many things to consider from course funding, to academic options, scholarships, visas, career prospects, as well as university application procedures. Here at NCBIS, we can help you with personalized information and we prefer to sit down with families on an individual basis, as all children have specific requirements and there is no "one fit for all".

North American Universities in particular, look at the student profile over "High School", which is considered to be the last 4 years of study. We can help identify strategies to make each student "more rounded" based on course selection, holiday summer courses and Challenges' week activities, and so more likely to gain admission to elite universities, as well as hopefully gain scholarship funding.

One big change coming up is the SAT examination

[Important Information regarding the NEW SAT exam for North American university entrance](#)

The Scholastic Achievement test is taken by over two million students each year and is the most widely used College Admission Test in the USA. The SAT covers core content deemed essential for success in College, namely: Reading, Mathematics, Writing and Language. For NCBIS students thinking of studying at AUC (American University of Cairo), or North American Colleges (though it is not generally required in Canada), we encourage them to take the SAT 1 here in Cairo in May of their 12th year, although a second session does exist in June. The second exam session coincides with our internal exam period though.

In Spring 2016, there will be a redesigned SAT and further information will be found on deliveringopportunity.org/sat/redesign. The biggest change will probably be the style of the

essay, which will be an optional feature, but we still recommend every NCBIS student to take it and show their skills of analysis and reasoning, which they learn in the normal IB Diploma lessons. The basic aim of the redesigned SAT essay is to determine whether students can demonstrate College and career readiness proficiency in reading, writing and analysis by comprehending a high quality unseen source text while producing a cogent and clearly-written analysis of that text, supported by critical reasoning and evidence drawn from the source. There will be 50 minutes allotted for the new essay and it will be marked by two examiners grading reading, analysis and writing.

A summary of the new focus is:

1. Relevant words in context, rather than the previous “obscure vocabulary”
2. Command of Evidence, demonstrating ability to interpret and synthesise
3. Analysis of Essays, rather than creative writing
4. Focus on Maths “that matters most” (Problem solving and Data Analysis)
5. Problems grounded in Real-world contexts
6. Analysis of articles on Science and Social Studies (broader array of contexts than previously)
7. Founding Documents: students will encounter passages from the ongoing global conversation about freedom, justice and human dignity
8. No penalty for wrong answers. Previously, points were taken away in some cases for wrong answers. This will no longer be the case, encouraging students to attempt more questions.

| Existing SAT | | | Redesigned SAT (from March 2016) | | |
|------------------|--------|-----------|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Component | Time | Questions | Component | Time | Questions |
| Critical Reading | 70 min | 67 | Reading | 65 min | 52 |
| Writing | 60 min | 49 | Language | 35 min | 44 |
| Essay | 25 min | 1 | Optional Essay | 50 min | 1 |
| Mathematics | 70 | 54 | Maths | 80 min | 57 |
| Total | 225 | 171 | Total New | 230 with essay | 154 with essay |

By mid June 2016, the Khan Academy will publish resources to support the redesigned SAT for Students, parents and Administrators. Meanwhile further information can be gleaned from collegereadiness.collegeboard.org

Scholarship information

Most families will probably be looking for Scholarship and or Financial Aid support in North America. There are far more sources of finance than you might have thought possible from sporting to academic. The problem is finding the information! While we can certainly help, there are experts in this field and it could be useful to file the following information for the future! Dan Rosenfield and his wife, formerly Professors at the University of Louisiana in Lafayette, have developed a webpage which they encourage schools to disseminate, or indeed for families to contact them directly for advice. http://www.college-scholarships.com/free_scholarship_searches.htm.

The page lists and links to more than 60 no-cost scholarship websites; virtually every such site that exists.

Elsewhere on the site <<http://www.college-scholarships.com>, you'll find additional scholarship information and features of value to all visitors...information which includes an instant GPA calculator, contact information for every college in the United States, a list of colleges which offer comprehensive programs for students with learning disabilities, lists of religious-based and women's colleges, and links to more than 2,500 career schools and colleges.

Tens of thousands of sites now link directly to Dan Rosenfield's website, including those of colleges, universities, libraries, newspapers, U.S. Embassies, Fulbright websites, and educational and professional organizations and associations.

Further support can be gained by contacting Dan Rosenfield at the email address aegc@earthlink.net or by phoning 001 337 296 4000, (which I have done, and managed to get straight through).

We hope this is helpful, but are always available to discuss careers in general, and universities specifically, at any time.
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Summer courses

