



Haileybury Almaty

Parent Partnership Programme University Pathways

10/04/25

Mr Henry Wilkinson, Head of Sixth Form

Mr Steve Stockermans, Head of Futures and College Counselor

Ms Ana Munoz Lopera, College Counselor



Comprehensive support for A-level, university and beyond

Mr Wilkinson

Experienced support



Mr Wilkinson

- 8 years at Haileybury
- 6 years in pastoral support including safeguarding
- MA in Educational Leadership (Manchester)
- Head of 6th Form, focusing on UK admissions
- Responsible for programme of support for students through A-Level, applications and beyond.



Ana Munoz Lopera

- 6 years at Haileybury
- 25 years in Education in Europe, Japan, Canada, Middle East.
- Erasmus Plus programs across Europe connecting universities.
- MA in Education (UCL), College Counselor, focus of choosing international Universities and scholarships.
- Ensuring that all applications are completed correctly.



Mr Stockermans

- 6 years at Haileybury
- Worked University of Toronto, International Admissions
- 15 years as high school admissions in Europe, Japan, and Canada
- MA in Education (UCL), and Political Science (Spain)
- Head of Futures and College Counselor, focus of building a great overall profiles
- Follow up – working with alumni for years after graduation.

Offers for our Year 13s



Quality support, at no extra cost



We offered tailored support to your children. We know them well and we give them all the support and opportunities to succeed. Support includes:

Before Application

- Guidance meeting with parents and students
- University selection advice
- Unifrog platform - personality tests, research library, online courses
- Extra curricular support - EPQ, Enrichment lectures, guest speakers
- Weekend events - such as SAT support and extra tutoring
- Careers and university fairs

During applications

- Essay support
- Personal statement support
- Interview practice
- Transcript creation
- References and letters of recommendation

After Application

- Practical life-skills training
- Follow-up advice on visas
- Results day support including UK clearing
- Support in Year 14 - gap year and transfers
- Alumni network

Skills sessions



- Two weekly hour sessions led by the Sixth Form team
- Focus on life skills, academic skills, application tips and navigating university
 - Including EPQ support session for those undertaking the qualification in Year 12
- Regular guest speakers from universities, employers, alumni and inspirational figures
 - UCL
 - HKUST
 - NYU Abu Dhabi
 - St Andrews
 - Almaty Hockey Team
 - 1900 km Silkroad bike race athlete



University Cooking Essentials

Skills sessions



Presentation from HKUST



Alumni advice session with Sanzhar



Visit from professional hockey team and business manager



Recent Careers Fair, with Air Astana in attendance



First Aid Certificate Training



Wellbeing Support team – who do takeover days

Unifrog – a research resource



Quizzes

Personality profile

✓ Quiz last taken 10 Sep 24: ENFJ and ENTJ



Quiz profile

✗ 1 of 4 quizzes complete



Exploring

Careers library

✗ Careers favoured



Subjects library

✗ Subjects favoured



Know-how library

✗ Guides favoured



Courses

✗ No courses added



MOOCs

You have 2 shortlists



Special opportunities

0 shortlists



Recording

Skills

✗ Completed all 12



Interactions

✗ Missing 5 Interaction types



Academics

✗ 2 Classes, 2 Predicts missing



Materials

UK personal statement

✗ Subject added



CV / Resumé

✗ Write CVs tailored for each roles



Writing tool

✗ 0 writing items added



Common App Essay

✗ Prompt chosen



US recommenders

✗ No recommender selected



Searching

UK universities

0 shortlists



US universities

0 shortlists



Oxbridge

0 shortlists



Asian universities

0 shortlists



Australasian universities

0 shortlists



Intl Foundations

0 shortlists



Connecting

Unifrog events

Interact directly with experts



Talent pool

✗ Not joined



The 6th Form and application experience of Aruzhan



- Where I am going to next year?
- Where did I apply?
- What support did I get?
- What challenges have there been?
- What I have appreciated the most?





The application landscape

Mr Wilkinson

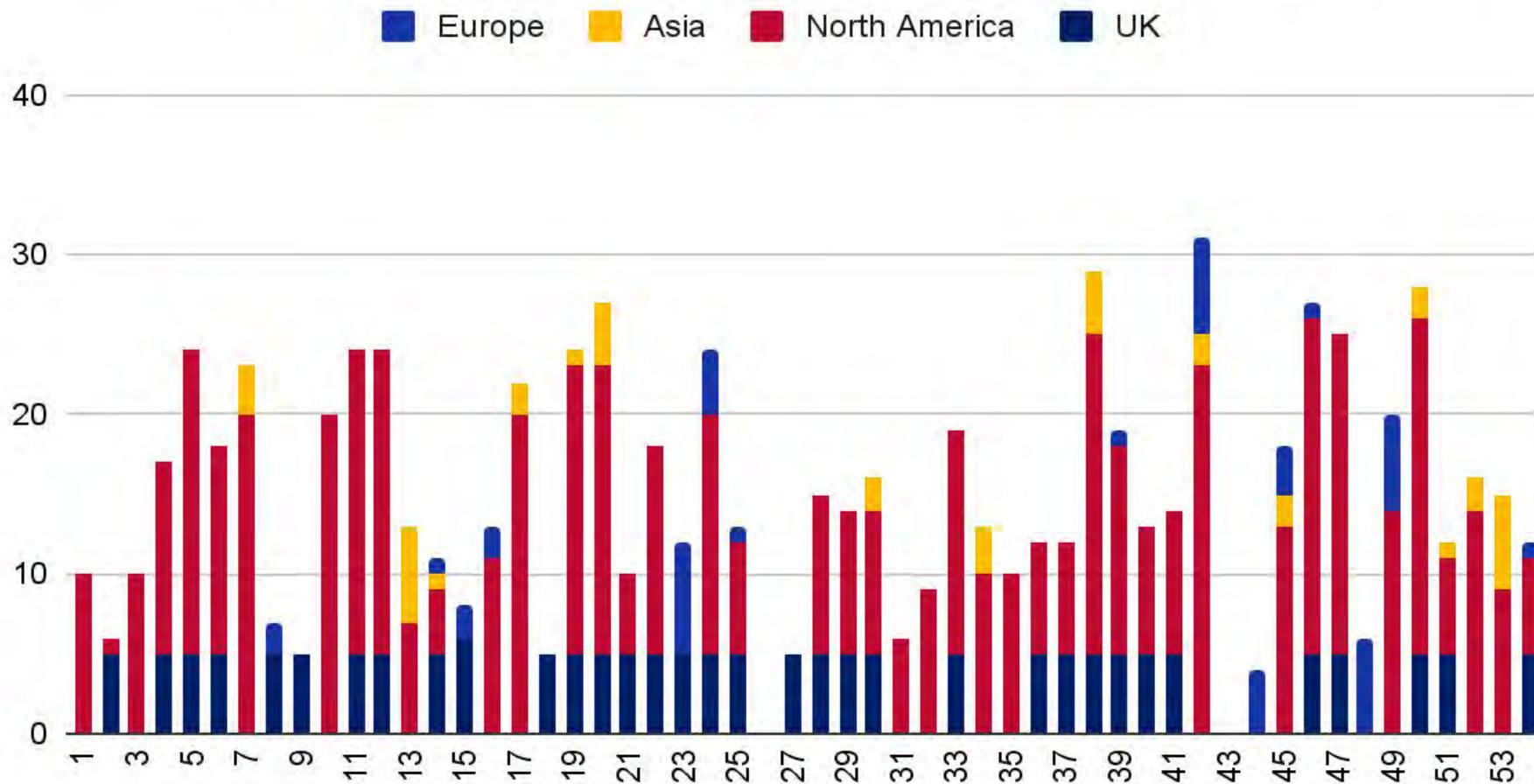
Reminder: Offers for our Year 13s



Lots of applications went in from Year 13 this year



University Applications - UK, US, Asia and Europe (as of 05/02)

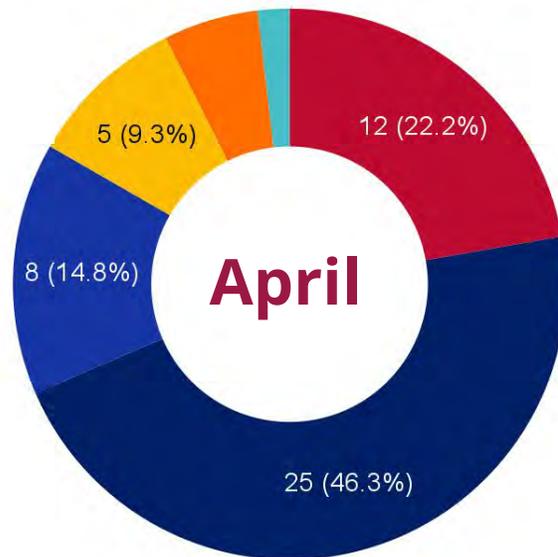


There has been a shift in where our students are likely to go

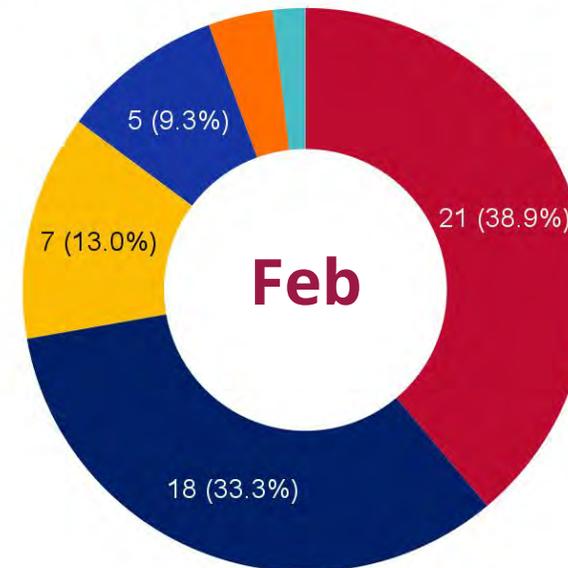


- There is expected to be a general shift from the US to UK and Europe
 - With others thinking about gap years

Expected University Eventual Destination (as of 01/04)



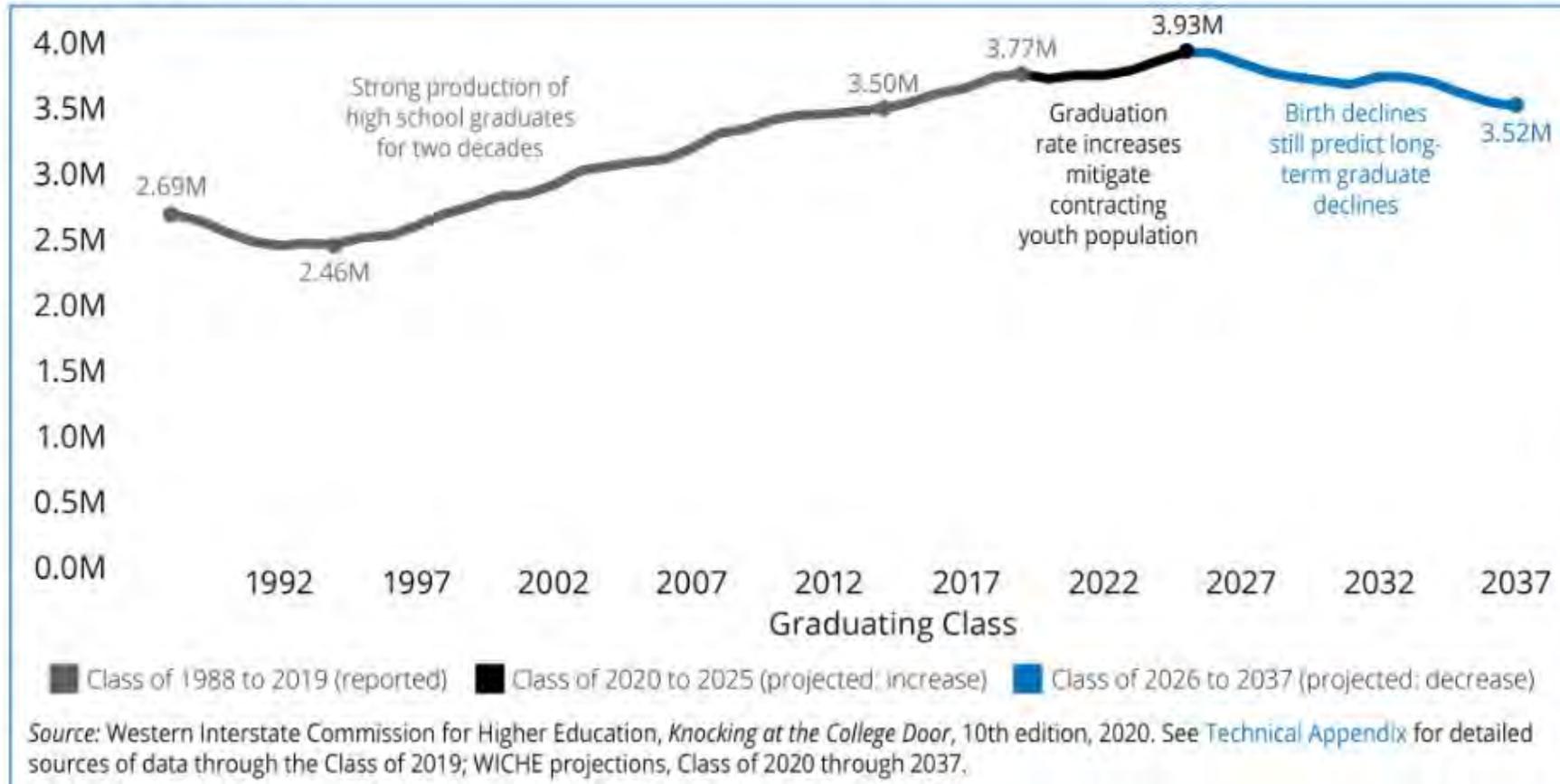
Expected University Eventual Destination (as of 05/02)



Demographic trends – record number of US High School Graduates



Figure 1. Slowing Growth in Number of U.S. High School Graduates, then Decline (U.S. Total High School Graduates)



Challenging environment for US applicants



- As well as demographic trends the university application environment has been skewed by a shift to more right-wing politics
- At this point there has been there has been no direct legislation against international students in the US, but Reuters suggest that Trump is considering visa and travel restrictions on 41 countries
 - This is similar to his move in 2018 to travelers from 7 majority muslim countries
 - It is not intimated that Kazakhstan is on this list
- Funding has been removed from a number of international programmes from the government, such as for exchange programmes

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/trump-administration-weighs-travel-ban-dozens-countries-memo-says-2025-03-15/>
<https://monitor.icef.com/2025/03/us-trump-administration-actions-creating-an-uncertain-outlook-for-international-students/>

The mood music

“**Columbia’s** announcement followed the Trump administration’s **cancellation of \$400m in federal funding**, mostly for scientific research, over what the White House said was the university’s failure to protect faculty and students “from antisemitic violence and harassment”. Notably, Columbia’s bending to the government’s demands did not immediately restore the funding, with **Trump administration officials indicating they would continue to monitor adherence to the policies** they forced on the university.”



‘Canary in the coalmine of totalitarianism’: how Columbia went from a home for Edward Said to a punching bag for Trump

The university had a history of being a home for cutting-edge discourse on Palestine - until it capitulated to the administration’s demands



People rally in support of Palestinians at Columbia University in New York on 22 April 2024. Photograph: Charly Triballeau/AFP via Getty Images

Last week, Columbia University announced that it would **cave to demands** by the **Trump administration** and adopt sweeping measures against pro-Palestinian activity on campus, including new restrictions on protest and the takeover of an academic department from faculty control.

Other similar stories



“The administration of President Donald Trump has announced it will undertake a **“comprehensive review” of federal contracts with Harvard University**, as part of its **crackdown on anti-Semitism** in the United States.”



<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/3/31/trump-threatens-to-yank-billions-in-harvard-university-contracts-and-grants>

“Hundreds of **international students in the U.S. have been ordered to leave due to campus activism**. A new policy, "Catch and Revoke," **uses AI to monitor student activities, revoking over 300 visas**. Social media posts, even likes and shares, are under scrutiny.”



<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/u-s/no-warning-just-an-email-from-donald-trump-hundreds-of-international-students-ordered-to-leave-the-u-s-over-campus-activism/articleshow/119715764.cms?from=mdr>

Universities concerned about students not getting back



“In a 16 March campus-wide email, **Brown University**'s executive vice president for planning and policy Russell Carey said, “Out of an abundance of caution, we encourage international students, staff, faculty and scholars — including U.S. visa holders and permanent residents (or 'green card holders') — to consider **postponing or delaying personal travel outside the United States until more information is available from the U.S. Department of State**...Potential changes in travel restrictions and travel bans, visa procedures and processing, re-entry requirements, and other travel-related delays may affect travelers' ability to return to the US as planned.”

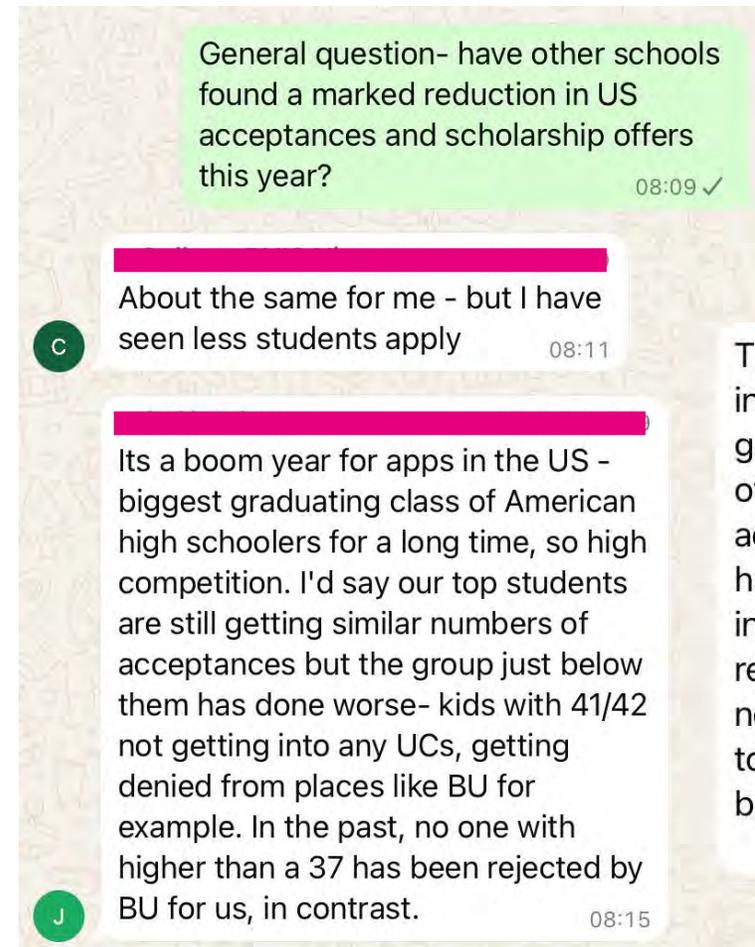


<https://monitor.iccf.com/2025/03/us-trump-administration-actions-creating-an-uncertain-outlook-for-international-students/>

So what this means?



- The school and other international schools in our counselor network have seen a marked reduction in acceptances and scholarship offers in the US
- This seems to be in part due to inferred pressure from Government but also from universities reducing their risk in a time when policy can change rapidly and unpredictably
- US Universities are worried about the government administration so are being cautious. There are still many offers and we have some very good news, but less so this year



The US was brutal this year. Very few international students are getting good offers. Although the admissions offices are saying they still are admitting international students, I have seen that they are accepting internationals who are already resident in the US, so that they don't need to apply for visas. No one wants to stand out as the school who is bringing in many new foreigners.

14:26

The Big Picture – Non US Destinations



- **Financial constraints on UK universities**

- Rising running costs and stagnant fees for UK students
- Low numbers of mature students
- Particular decline in Humanities outside of Russell Group
- Lower numbers of Indian and Nigerian students

- **UK and USA still top of rankings (for now...)**

- Oxford top of Times World Rankings
- All Top 10 UK and USA
- But country average dropping in rankings

- **The Rise of Asia**

- China has 12th (Tsinghua) and 14th (Peking)
- National University of Singapore (17th)
- Tokyo (29th)
- Proportion of income research spent on research growing in the region
- Scholarships – Belt and Road China
- The school is finding good scholarships in Hong Kong, China, Korea and Japan
- Middle East is having a lot of investment

So what this all means...



UCAS

FIRST STEP
FOUNDATION
DEGREE!

WE OFFER PROGRAMMES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS, WITH GUARANTEED PROGRESSION TO MANY OF THE UK'S LEADING UNIVERSITIES



ALWAYS HAVE A PLAN B



Check the Rankings, but remember, it is just Marketing!



1. Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
2. Imperial College London
3. University of Oxford
4. **Harvard University**
5. University of Cambridge
6. Stanford University
7. ETH Zurich
8. National University of Singapore (NUS)
9. University College London (UCL)
10. University of California, Berkeley (UCB)
11. University of Chicago
12. **University of Pennsylvania**
13. University of Melbourne
14. California Institute of Technology (Caltech)
15. Tsinghua University
16. Peking University
17. **Yale University**
18. The University of Sydney
19. The University of New South Wales
20. The University of Edinburgh
21. **Columbia University**
22. EPFL – École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne
23. The University of Tokyo
24. Johns Hopkins University
25. University of Toronto
26. The University of Hong Kong (HKU)
27. Northwestern University
28. The University of Manchester
29. Seoul National University
30. Australian National University (ANU)

Think beyond t-shirt universities: Netherlands



Excellent Quality at a Reasonable Price

- Courses and universities consistently high in global rankings
 - TU Delft ranks 47th globally in the QS Rankings for 2025
- Many courses taught in English and 95% of the Dutch population speaks English fluently
- Tuition fees in the Netherlands are around €6,000
 - Plus lower living expenses
- Easy application through Studielink
- Dutch universities are well-aligned with labour market needs and maintain strong ties with industries



Think local; then go global



Allow more contact with home and more time for maturity

- Narxoz – Business Administration (BBA) complete years 1 and 2 at Narxoz then apply for advanced entry into Year 2 of BSc (Hons) Business Management at Queens Belfast
 - A Russell Group University
- Growing partnerships, with others such as
 - Penn State, USA
 - Coventry (Bachelor of Law)
 - Mykolas Romeris, Lithuania (European and Business Law) and
- Family in Middle East
 - NYU Abu Dhabi, Birmingham, Dubai
 - Carnegie Mellon, Qatar
 - Other specialist universities

NARXOZ
ECONOMICS AND
MANAGEMENT



**QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST**

**Double Degree Program with Queen 's University
Belfast**

Requirements:

UNT: 100 scores (Management - 75 scores)
English level: B2 (Upper Intermediate)



Excellent Quality with great Scholarships

- We have students attending Hong Kong University of Science and Technology in their Hong Kong campus and their new Guangzhou campus
- Also, Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen, offers accessible scholarships and very good quality studies, research and internships.
- KAIST in Korea is a top ranked technical university with full financial aid for admitted international students
- Japanese universities are inexpensive and offer some scholarships
 - KUAS in Kyoto

HKUST Campus, Hong Kong



So what this means, our advice...



- Do not apply to more – because this takes a toll on academics and mental health
 - Look for easy platforms for applications such as UCAS and Studielink- 5 applications for the price and time of 1
- Still go for Plan A
 - If your children want to go the US – apply
 - But they should de-risk their application profile
- Diversify!! – Try to secure a plan B early
 - Keep things open – if you can afford to pay deposits on a place, do so
- Looking for scholarships? – US is not as promising as it was
 - Asia – HK, mainland china and South Korea, Japan
 - Look at Middle East
- Looking for good quality education at a cheap price?
 - Europe – Netherlands, Italy
- Don't discount the Middle East and niche universities
 - Specialisms in AI, creatives – lots of finding from governments



What an Admissions Officer Looks For

Mr Stockermans and Mrs Munoz





Extra-curriculars

- US want broad extra-curriculars
- UK and RoW extracurriculars are far less important and only really look at a focus on proving interest and skills in the subject
 - For example MUN would be really helpful for a History undergraduate, less so for someone interested in Biomedicine
 - Sports are great! – but won't influence a UK application

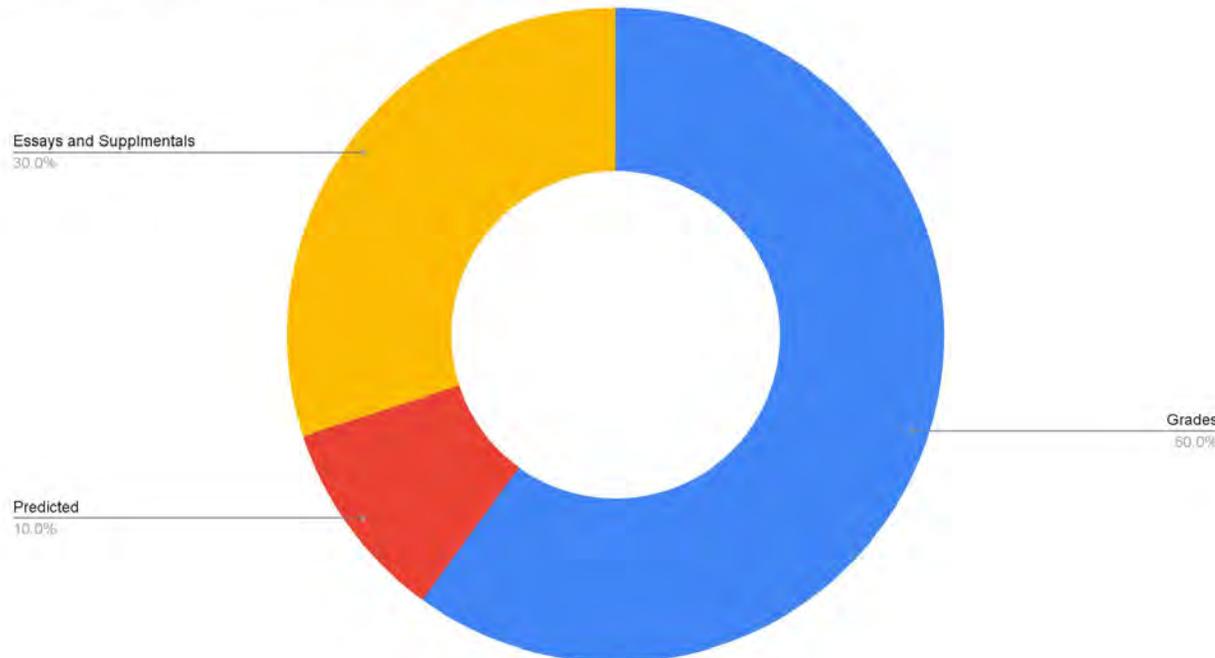
Grades

- UK and RoW universities will only look at IGCSE, AS and A-level results
- They do not look at school reports or GPA etc

Grades matter!



Relative weighting for US applications (according to SST)



- For US – the **AS grades are the most important** grade on the transcript
- For UK – The **UCAS deadline is *before* any resit deadlines come out.** Therefore you students will apply with their grades from June exams
 - Predicted grades are largely based on AS grades
 - But they must convert the grades to get-in – conditional
 - US is not
- Anything below A – will not support Oxbridge or Ivy League

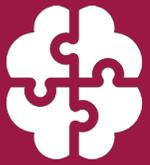


Academic Performance



- Strong GPA in rigorous coursework (A Levels, AP, IB, Honours courses)
- Upward academic trends over time. Not dropping, but always improving
- Competitive standardised test scores. The SAT is growing in importance in the US, Europe and Asian universities
 - 1400/1600 is a very good score. Top level universities look for 1500/1600





Intellectual Curiosity



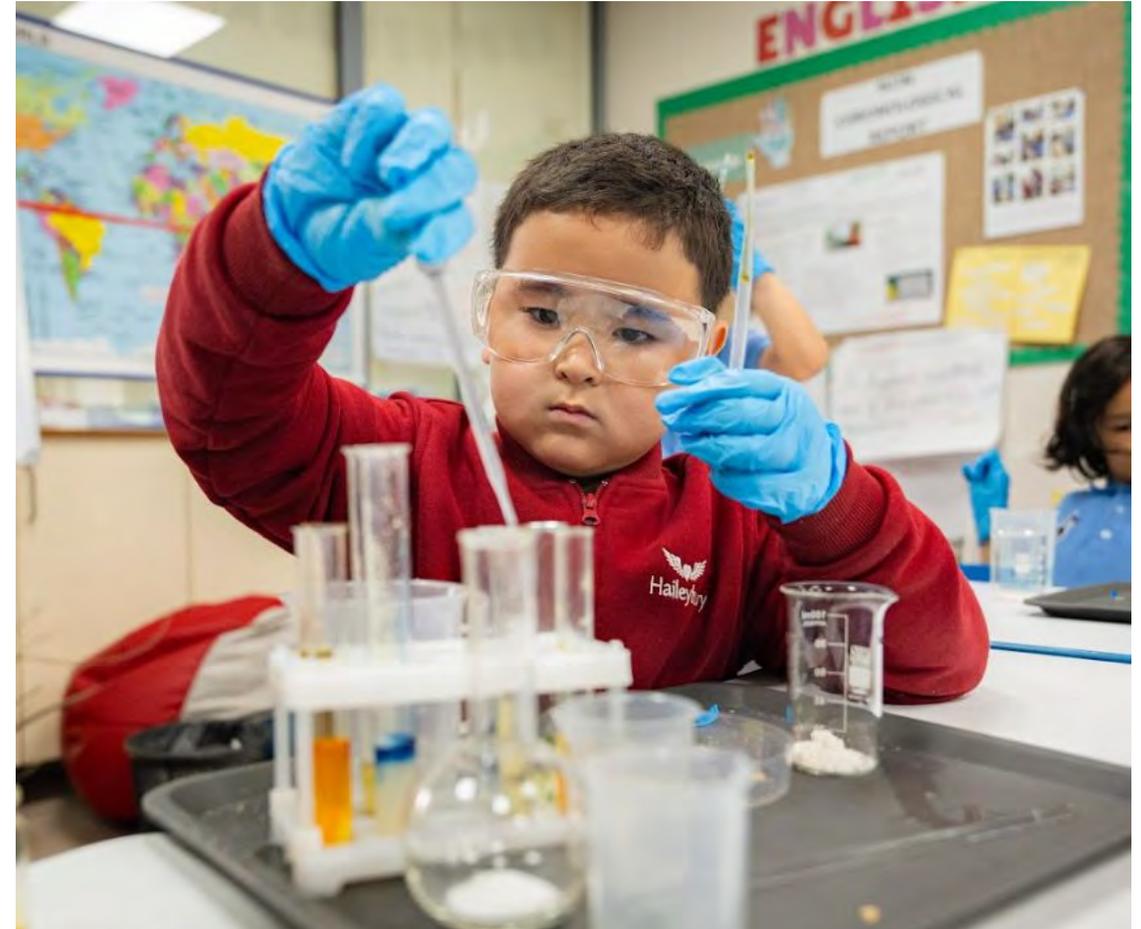
- Challenging course load relative to what's available. Have you taken an easy route, or the hardest?
- Passion for learning, especially in intended major. Show us what else you have done in that field.
- Independent projects or research, like the EPQ. Summer programs, internships, extra reading, clubs....
- Note: Just going to summer programs isn't enough. It has to be part of a larger, longer effort



Extracurricular, Super Curricular Involvement



- Depth > breadth (long-term commitment)
 - START EARLY, don't wait for Year 12 to create a project.
- Leadership roles and initiative.
 - DOES IT HAVE IMPACT???
- Unique or standout activities which demonstrate your interest in your subject
 - We have these at school - no need to go outside
- Examples: HALSAT, MUN, TozBe, Olympiads, International Science Fair,



Four Key Check Boxes



Leadership

What have you done to demonstrate your leadership skills?



Community

What have you done to make your community a better place?



Creativity

How do you demonstrate your creativity? Art, Entrepreneurship, theatre, sports...



Impact:

Has your efforts made a difference to your community?

Results?

Be prepared to get Rejections:
It happens to everyone



Accepted



Waitlisted



Rejected



Final comments

Mr Wilkinson

Everything you need; no need for extra services



- We have the best knowledge of your children
 - And have direct contact with their teachers and pastoral support
- We have extensive knowledge of the university system and continue to keep engaged with trends
- There is extensive and tailored support for all students regardless of their destination
 - Be open to different pathways for your students

**Any questions for Aruzhan,
Mr Stockermans,
Ms Munoz or myself?**