Year-by-Year Guide

TASIS Portugal · University & Career Counseling Hub

To support students and parents as they navigate high school and make informed decisions about their future, we've created a year-by-year guide that outlines key focuses, recommended activities, and Future Pathways topics for Grades 9 through 12.

Awareness & Involvement

- Be involved
- Explore new areas of interest
- Focus on doing well in your classes
- Attend university visits and fairs

Research & Direction

- Continue researching universities
- Determine your testing plan
- Begin preparation for specific pathways (Medicine, Law, Arts, etc)
- Participate in activities, internships, and summer programs in subjects and careers of interest
- Create a preliminary balanced list of universities
- Start drafts for essays
- Attend university visits and fairs



Discovery & Exploration

- Introduction to the Unifrog platform
- Take formal assessments to discover your learning style, personality traits, skills, and interests
- Begin to explore university options and admissions requirements
- Choose IBDP courses
- Participate in activities and summer programs that will expose you to subjects and careers of interest
- Attend university visits and fairs

Decisions & Transitions

- Finalize college list
- Create an application timeline
- Complete and submit university and scholarship applications
- Compare offers
- Decide on what university to attend
- Prepare and send final documents

AWARENESS & INVOLVEMENT

Grade 9 – Awareness & Involvement

Student Checklist

- [ ] Ensure IGCSE course selections align with potential IBDP study interests.
- [ ] Attend all G9 Future Pathways courses throughout the year.
- [ ] Explore extracurricular opportunities on and off campus.
- [ ] Consider joining the TPA Mentorship Program.
- [ ] Participate in the Grade 9 field trip to a local university, such as NOVA SBE.
- [ ] Attend TPA Career Panel events.
- [ ] Attend on-campus university visits and events.

Future Pathways Course Topics May Include

- Overview of the University and Career Counseling department.
- The importance of grades and how universities evaluate them.
- The importance of extracurricular involvement and maintaining a journal.
- Assessment tests to help students discover their character strengths, talents, and personality traits.
- Exploring and researching careers.
- Summer opportunities (refer to our database for options and ideas).
- The value of visiting universities, even during vacations.

DISCOVERY & EXPLORATION

Grade 10 – Discovery & Exploration

Student Checklist

- [ ] Access your Unifrog account.
- [ ] Attend mandatory one-on-one meetings with University and Career Counselors.
- [ ] Stay engaged in extracurricular activities.
- [ ] Attend the SAT/ACT Information Session to determine testing needs.
- [ ] Consider joining the TPA Mentorship Program.
- [ ] Sign up to take the PSAT in October at TASIS, if applicable.
- [ ] Attend all G10 Future Pathways courses throughout the year.
- [ ] Meet with the IBDP Coordinator and University and Career Counselors for IBDP course selection.
- [ ] Participate in on-campus university visits and local college fairs.
- [ ] Attend TPA Career Panel events.
- [ ] Continue visiting universities.
- [ ] Stay up to date with Unifrog assignments and activity log.
- [ ] Explore summer opportunities (refer to our database for options and ideas).

Future Pathways Course Topics May Include

- The importance of grades and the impact they have on final IGCSE exams and transcripts.
- Introduction to Unifrog: Exploring careers, subjects, and universities.
- Overview of testing: Creating a personalized testing timeline and preparation plan.
- Career exploration: Using assessment tools to identify potential career paths.
- Discovering your best fit learning environments and personal learning styles.
- Using Unifrog to guide IBDP subject choices and university research.
- Understanding how IBDP subjects impact university options and career aspirations.
- Stepping outside your comfort zone: Exploring lesser-known universities.
- Explore the MOOCs and Courses tools on Unifrog to learn new skills.
- Developing a CV and cover letter.
- Interview skills.
- Research and apply to summer opportunities.

RESEARCH & DIRECTION

Grade 11 – Research & Direction

Student Checklist

- [ ] Work closely with the IBDP Coordinator and University & Career Counselors to ensure that subject choices align with university goals.
- [ ] Consider taking the PSAT (Important for US Citizens aiming for National Merit).
- [ ] Determine SAT/ACT testing needs and create a testing plan.
- [ ] Consider joining the TPA Mentorship Program.
- [ ] Attend G11 Future Pathways courses throughout the year.
- [ ] Complete the TASIS Grade 11 University Research Project.
- [ ] Attend mandatory one-on-one meetings with University and Career Counselors.
- [ ] Continue attending university visits, TPA career panel events, and college fairs.
- [ ] In the Spring term, students and parents should attend the following: Evening Presentation – Understanding the University Application Process; One-on-one meetings – to finalize students' postsecondary plans.
- [ ] Get parental sign-off on student's “final” university application list.
- [ ] Apply for summer jobs, internships, or programs (refer to our database).
- [ ] Visit your top 5 universities during the summer if possible.
- [ ] If applying to US universities or selective UK programs, students should aim to complete a rough draft of their required essays prior to leaving for summer vacation.

Future Pathways Course Topics May Include

- Introduction and requirements of the TASIS Grade 11 University Research Project.
- Corsava Assessment: students will use the results to help them discover what they are looking for at university – environment, learning style, social life and more.
- Understanding the differences in universities and their application processes across countries and types.
- How to use the TASIS University Research Spreadsheet for university list building.
- Creating an application timeline, including deadlines, interviews and entrance exams.
- Fine-tuning CVs for university applications, internships and job interviews.
- Understanding the different types of essays required for university applications (e.g., US Common App Essay, UCAS Personal Statement, Dutch motivation letters).
- Essay brainstorming.
- Guidance on how to ask teachers to write their letters of recommendation.

Grade 12 – Decisions & Transitions

Student Checklist

- [ ] Parents and students are encouraged to attend the Grade 12 “What to Expect during the Application Season” presentation.
- [ ] Meet with counselors for application guidance. Students can book as many one-on-one meetings with the counselors as needed.
- [ ] Attend the “Applying to the ...” workshops which will focus on applying and attending universities in specific countries.
- [ ] Request transcripts and IB Predicted Grades by October 1st if applying to Oxbridge, UK medicine or Early Decision/Early Action in the US.
- [ ] If applying to a selective UK program, make sure to register for any special admissions tests and interviews.
- [ ] Take the ACT or SAT if needed.
- [ ] Continue to attend university visits on campus.

Future Pathways Course Topics May Include

- Finalize your application list and understand what is required by each university system.
- Understand the different application types and their deadlines, such as Early Decision (ED), Early Action (EA), and numerus fixus programs.
- IB Predicted Grades and official transcripts – what they mean and how they are used for university admissions.
- Complete the Senior Brag Sheet – used for letters of recommendation.
- How to create different application accounts and upload documents.
- Create a personalized timeline, including deadlines/requirements for each university.
- Essay guidance.
- How to explore university specific financial aid options.
- Importance of checking emails after applying and meeting important deadlines like housing, deposits and document submissions.
- Make sure to submit all document requests before December break for all applications due in January.
- Weighing all your options – logging university decisions into Unifrog.
- Make the final decision and requesting final reports.
- Understand the transition from high school to university.
- What to expect at university and important tips that will help make the transition easier.