UNIVERSITY AND CAREER READINESS POLICY

Reviewed:	July 2026
Next Review Due:	August 2027
Applies To:	Whole Community
Owner:	Head of School
Approved By:	Board of Directors

Mission, Vision and Values

Mission
To inspire our children to reach their full potential by fostering curiosity and an interest in learning, awakening their minds and illuminating their world.

Vision
To create an affordable international secondary school with a high standard of education where children learn through practical and project-based work. To develop our students' moral and intellectual capacity, and to encourage creativity and adaptability.

Aim
An education that is broad, balanced and challenging, with an emphasis on developing strong connections to our host country, Uganda.

Values
Desire for lifelong learning; an ability to adapt; be innovative and reflective thinkers; open minded, and empathetic while achieving high academic success according to individual potential.

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1. Policy Statement

7Hills International School (7Hills) is committed to preparing every student to make informed, ambitious and personally meaningful decisions about their future.

The school recognises that careers education is not limited to selecting a university course or identifying a future occupation. Effective preparation for life beyond school requires students to develop self-awareness, curiosity, adaptability, resilience, communication, critical thinking, digital competence, financial literacy, leadership and the capacity to continue learning throughout their lives. Through a planned and progressive programme from Year 7 to Year 13, students will explore their interests, strengths, values and aspirations; develop an understanding of education and employment pathways; engage with universities, employers and professionals; experience authentic workplaces; and receive age-appropriate guidance at significant transition points.

The school will provide careers education and guidance that is inclusive, impartial, internationally minded and responsive to the changing nature of education, employment and society. Students will be encouraged to explore a broad range of academic, vocational, entrepreneurial and employment pathways without bias or limitation arising from gender, nationality, culture, disability, socioeconomic circumstances or other personal characteristics.

Careers education will be delivered through curriculum learning, personal development, university and careers guidance, employer engagement, work experience, community partnerships and the **7Hills Horizons Programme**.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- establish a coherent and progressive approach to careers education and future preparation from Year 7 to Year 13;
- enable students to understand their interests, strengths, values, skills and aspirations;
- provide accurate, current and impartial information about education, training, employment and entrepreneurial pathways;
- support informed decision-making at key educational transition points;
- raise aspirations while ensuring that guidance remains personalised, realistic and responsive to individual circumstances;
- develop the knowledge, competencies and personal attributes required for further education, employment and adult life;
- provide meaningful encounters with employers, professionals, universities, training providers, alumni and other external organisations;
- connect curriculum learning with future study, employment and real-world applications;
- provide appropriate opportunities for work experience, workplace learning and career exploration;
- challenge stereotypes and promote equity, inclusion and access to opportunity;

- prepare students to engage responsibly and effectively with emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence;
- support successful transitions from 7Hills into further education, higher education, training, entrepreneurship or employment; and
- establish processes for monitoring the quality and impact of careers provision.

3. Guiding Principles

Careers education and guidance at 7Hills will be guided by the following principles.

3.1 Student-Centred

Careers guidance will recognise that each student has individual interests, strengths, aspirations, circumstances and support needs.

Students will be encouraged to take increasing ownership of their future planning while receiving appropriate guidance from the school, families and external specialists.

3.2 Progressive

Careers education will begin in Year 7 and develop progressively throughout the student's time at 7Hills.

Early provision will focus on self-awareness, curiosity, skills and exploration. As students' progress, provision will increasingly focus on subject choices, education and career pathways, employability, workplace experience, university applications and successful transition beyond school.

3.3 Impartial and Informed

Students will receive balanced information about a broad range of future pathways. Guidance will not promote one institution, country, subject, profession or pathway as inherently preferable to another. Advice will consider the student's interests, strengths, academic profile, personal circumstances and long-term aspirations.

3.4 Aspirational

The school will encourage students to develop ambitious goals, explore unfamiliar opportunities and recognise their capacity for continued growth.

High aspirations will be supported by accurate information, purposeful planning, appropriate challenge and realistic pathways towards achievement.

3.5 Inclusive and Equitable

All students will have equitable access to careers education, information and guidance.
The school will actively challenge stereotypes and seek to ensure that students do not perceive their future opportunities as restricted by gender, nationality, culture, disability, additional learning needs, financial circumstances or other aspects of identity or background.

3.6 Internationally Minded and Locally Connected

Careers provision will reflect the international composition and aspirations of the school community while maintaining strong connections with Uganda and the wider East African region.

Students will be encouraged to explore local, regional and international opportunities and understand the social, cultural, economic and ethical contexts within which education and employment operate.

3.7 Future-Focused

Students will develop the adaptability, creativity, digital literacy and commitment to lifelong learning required to respond to changing technologies, industries and employment patterns.

4. Careers Education Framework

The school's approach is informed by internationally recognised principles of effective careers education, including:

1. a stable and progressive careers programme;
2. access to current career and labour-market information;
3. provision responsive to the individual needs of each student;
4. meaningful connections between curriculum learning and careers;
5. regular encounters with employers and professionals;
6. authentic experiences of workplaces;
7. encounters with universities, colleges and other education or training providers; and
8. access to personalised careers and future-planning guidance.

These principles reflect the broad structure identified across the sample careers policies.
The school will adapt these principles to its international context, educational programmes and the needs and aspirations of the 7Hills community.

5. Student Entitlement

Throughout their time at 7Hills, students are entitled to:

- participate in a planned and progressive programme of careers education
- explore their interests, values, strengths, skills and aspirations
- receive accurate and impartial information regarding future education, training, employment and entrepreneurial pathways
- understand the relationship between curriculum learning and future opportunities
- learn about a diverse range of occupations, industries and professional pathways
- encounter employers, professionals, entrepreneurs, universities, training providers and other external organisations
- develop employability, leadership, communication and future-ready skills
- receive guidance before making significant subject, qualification, university or career decisions
- access current information about universities, courses, entry requirements, scholarships, financial considerations and application processes

- participate in workplace learning and work-experience opportunities
- receive additional or personalised guidance where required
- have their individual needs, circumstances and aspirations considered
- develop an individual pathway and future-readiness profile
- receive support during applications to universities, colleges, training programmes and other post-school destinations; and
- contribute feedback regarding the quality and relevance of the school's careers provision.

6. The 7Hills Careers Programme

Careers education will be delivered through a combination of:

- the 7Hills Horizons Programme
- curriculum learning
- personal, social and well-being education
- university and careers guidance
- individual and group guidance meetings
- assemblies and workshops
- guest speakers
- employer and professional encounters
- university and college engagement
- workplace visits
- work experience
- community partnerships
- enrichment and extracurricular activities
- student leadership
- service learning
- digital careers and future-planning resources
- application support
- parent information sessions
- alumni engagement

The programme will be developmental rather than limited to isolated careers events. Activities will build progressively as students develop greater awareness, independence and responsibility.

7. The 7Hills Horizons Programme

7.1 Overview

The 7Hills Horizons Programme is the school's distinctive five-year personal development, careers-readiness and future-preparation programme.

The programme supports students from Year 9 to Year 13, providing a coherent journey from early exploration through IGCSE and International A Level study to university, employment, entrepreneurship and adult life.

The Horizons Programme recognises that future success depends on more than academic qualifications. Students require broad knowledge, intellectual curiosity, personal discipline, cultural awareness, communication skills, digital competence, adaptability and meaningful exposure to people, ideas and experiences beyond the classroom.

Across five academic years, each student will engage with a structured programme incorporating reading, ideas, professional encounters, practical challenges, future skills and personal reflection.

7.2 Monthly Horizons Entitlement

During each of the ten months of the academic programme, students will engage with:

Monthly Horizon	Purpose
One Book	Develop reading, intellectual curiosity, empathy, cultural understanding, self-knowledge and engagement with significant ideas
One TED Talk or Significant Talk	Introduce influential ideas, diverse perspectives, innovation, leadership and contemporary global issues
One Guest Speaker or Professional Encounter	Provide authentic insight into careers, education, leadership, entrepreneurship and different life pathways
One Personal or Practical Challenge	Develop confidence, resilience, independence, teamwork, creativity, leadership or service
One AI or Digital-Literacy Experience	Develop responsible, critical and effective engagement with artificial intelligence, digital technologies and emerging tools
One Careers and Futures Focus	Explore industries, professions, future study, labour-market developments, employability or entrepreneurship
One Reflection and Portfolio Entry	Support students to evaluate their learning, identify personal growth and maintain evidence of their development

The specific programme may be adapted annually to reflect student needs, emerging opportunities, current global developments and community partnerships.

7.3 Progressive Horizons

The programme will develop progressively across the five years.

Year Group	Horizons Theme	Principal Focus
Year 9	**Discover**	Identity, interests, strengths, curiosity, broad career exploration and awareness of future possibilities
Year 10	**Explore**	Employability, workplace awareness, IGCSE pathways, transferable skills and preparation for work experience
Year 11	**Direction**	Post-IGCSE pathways, decision-making, future qualifications, personal goals and transition planning

Year 12	**Experience**	University and career research, leadership, professional engagement, advanced future skills and application preparation
Year 13	**Launch**	Applications, interviews, transition, independence, financial capability, professional identity and readiness for life beyond school

7.4 Horizons Portfolio

Each student will maintain a 7Hills Horizons Portfolio documenting significant learning and development throughout the programme. The portfolio may include:

- reading reflections
- responses to talks
- guest-speaker learning
- career and university research
- records of workplace experiences
- personal challenges
- leadership and service experiences
- AI and digital-literacy activities
- skills development
- achievements and certifications
- personal goals
- curriculum and extracurricular achievements
- application preparation
- reflections on changing interests and aspirations

The portfolio will support mentoring, student-led conferences, university and career guidance, application writing and transition planning.

8. Careers Education Across the Curriculum

Careers education is a whole-school responsibility and will not be confined to designated careers lessons. Teachers should, where relevant:

- identify connections between subject learning and future education or employment
- explain how subject knowledge and competencies are applied beyond school
- introduce students to careers associated with their subject area
- highlight transferable skills developed through learning
- use authentic problems, projects and professional contexts
- challenge stereotypes relating to subjects and careers
- identify opportunities for external speakers, visits or partnerships
- support students to articulate the knowledge, competencies and dispositions they are developing

Curriculum links should be meaningful and relevant rather than added artificially.

9. Career and Labour-Market Information

The school will support students and families to access current information regarding:

- emerging and established employment sectors
- occupations and professional pathways
- employment trends
- skills in demand
- local, regional and international labour markets
- changing technologies and their implications for employment
- professional qualifications
- academic, vocational and technical pathways
- entrepreneurship and self-employment
- workplace expectations
- future study requirements
- potential progression and development opportunities

Students will be supported to evaluate information critically and recognise that labour markets, technologies and employment opportunities change over time.

Information should include opportunities within Uganda and East Africa as well as international pathways.

10. Employer, Professional and Alumni Encounters

Students will have regular opportunities to engage with employers, professionals, entrepreneurs, community leaders, alumni and representatives of different industries. Opportunities may include:

- Horizons guest-speaker sessions
- careers talks
- professional panels
- workplace visits
- career fairs
- mentoring
- professional workshops
- entrepreneurship activities
- job-shadowing
- work experience
- industry projects
- interviews and employability workshop
- online engagement with international professionals

The school will seek representation from a diverse range of sectors, backgrounds and professional pathways.

External contributors must comply with the school's safeguarding, visitor, communication and professional-conduct expectations.

11. Work Experience

The school recognises work experience as an important opportunity for students to develop workplace awareness, professional skills, confidence and a clearer understanding of future pathways.

Year 10 students will normally participate in a designated period of work experience. Additional workplace learning, volunteering, job-shadowing, internships or career experiences may be available to students in Years 11–13.

Work-experience arrangements will be governed by the school's Work Experience Policy and Procedures. Placements should, wherever possible:

- reflect student interests and aspirations
- provide meaningful exposure to a professional environment
- include appropriate responsibilities and learning opportunities
- support the development of employability skills
- be appropriately supervised
- meet safeguarding, health and safety, and risk-management expectations
- include preparation and reflection

Work experience is recognised in the sample policies as an important component of progressive careers provision and preparation for future pathways.

12. University, College and Further-Education Guidance

Students will be supported to understand a broad range of post-school opportunities, including:

- universities in Uganda
- universities within Africa
- universities in the United Kingdom
- universities in Europe
- universities in North America
- universities in Asia, Australia and other international destinations
- foundation and pathway programmes
- technical and vocational education
- professional qualifications
- apprenticeships and workplace-based learning
- gap-year opportunities
- entrepreneurship
- direct entry into employment, where appropriate

Guidance may include:

- course and institution research
- entry requirements
- subject selection
- standardised admissions assessments
- application systems and timelines
- personal statements and application essays
- references
- portfolios and auditions
- interviews
- scholarships and financial aid
- student finance and budgeting
- visas and international transition
- accommodation
- student well-being
- preparation for independent living

The school will provide impartial guidance and will not promote a particular institution, country or pathway where this is not in the student's best interests.

13. Personal Guidance

Students will have access to individual guidance at significant transition points. Personal guidance may consider:

- interests and aspirations
- academic achievement and potential
- subject choices
- strengths and areas for development
- personal values
- extracurricular experiences
- preferred learning environments
- career and university research
- entry requirements
- financial considerations
- family circumstances
- additional learning or accessibility needs
- alternative pathways

Guidance should support informed decision-making rather than make decisions on behalf of students.

Appropriate records of significant guidance meetings, agreed actions and future plans will be maintained.

14. Inclusion and Targeted Support

The school recognises that some students may require additional or adapted support to access careers education and future opportunities equitably.

The University and Careers Coordinator will work with the Head of Student Support, SENCo, teachers, students and families to identify appropriate support. This may include:

- adapted careers information
- additional individual guidance
- accessible resources
- targeted mentoring
- additional transition planning
- consideration of accessibility and support services
- supported engagement with employers or universities
- guidance regarding disclosure and reasonable adjustments
- collaboration with external specialists or organisations

The school will seek to identify and address barriers that may limit students' participation, aspirations or access to opportunity.

15. Artificial Intelligence, Digital Literacy and the Future of Work

The school recognises that artificial intelligence, automation and emerging technologies are changing education, employment and society. Through the Horizons Programme and wider curriculum, students will develop the ability to:

- use AI tools responsibly, ethically and effectively
- understand the opportunities and limitations of AI
- evaluate AI-generated information critically
- recognise bias, misinformation and inaccurate outputs
- protect personal and confidential information
- understand academic integrity and appropriate attribution
- explore how technology is changing different professions
- identify emerging careers and future skills
- use digital tools to support research, creativity and productivity
- recognise the continuing importance of human judgement, empathy, ethics, collaboration and creativity.

AI may support career exploration and future planning but should not replace personalised professional guidance or independent student decision-making.

16. Roles and Responsibilities

16.1 Board of Directors

The Board of Directors will:

- provide strategic oversight of careers education and future preparation
- ensure that careers provision supports the school's purpose and strategic priorities
- monitor the quality, inclusivity and impact of provision
- support the development of appropriate community, professional and employer partnerships
- approve and review this policy.

16.2 Head of School

The Head of School will:

- provide strategic leadership for careers education
- ensure that appropriate leadership, staffing and resources are available
- promote careers education as a whole-school responsibility
- support partnerships with universities, employers and community organisations;
- ensure alignment with the school's guiding principles and wider educational provision
- report significant developments to the Board

16.3 University and Careers Coordinator

The University and Careers Coordinator will:

- develop, coordinate and evaluate the careers programme
- provide and coordinate impartial careers and university guidance
- support students at significant transition points
- coordinate university applications and related guidance
- maintain current careers, pathway and higher-education information
- develop relationships with universities, employers and external organisations
- coordinate professional encounters, careers events and workplace opportunities
- support the implementation of the Horizons Programme
- maintain appropriate student guidance records
- monitor student destinations
- support teachers to connect curriculum learning with careers
- report on the quality and impact of careers provision

The responsibilities reflect the emphasis in the sample policies on strategic leadership, programme coordination, external partnerships and ongoing evaluation.

16.4 Curriculum Leaders and Teachers

Curriculum leaders and teachers will:

- identify meaningful links between curriculum learning and future pathways
- support the development of transferable and employability skills
- promote high aspirations
- challenge stereotypes
- identify relevant professional and community connections
- support Horizons activities where appropriate
- refer students requiring specialist guidance to the University and Careers Coordinator

16.5 Head of Student Support

The Head of Student Support will:

- collaborate with the University and Careers Coordinator to identify students requiring additional support
- support inclusive and accessible careers provision
- contribute to transition planning
- consider the relationship between student well-being and future planning
- support students experiencing barriers to participation or decision-making

16.6 Students

Students are expected to:

- participate actively in careers and Horizons activities
- approach future planning with curiosity and openness
- research opportunities carefully
- reflect on their strengths, interests and development
- maintain relevant records and portfolio evidence
- meet application and guidance deadlines
- seek support when required
- take increasing responsibility for informed decisions about their future

16.7 Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are encouraged to:

- engage in discussions regarding their child's interests and aspirations
- participate in relevant information sessions and guidance meetings
- support exploration of a broad range of pathways
- encourage informed and independent decision-making
- share relevant professional expertise or community connections where appropriate
- communicate with the school regarding significant questions or support needs

17. Community Partnerships

The school will develop partnerships with:

- employers
- businesses
- entrepreneurs
- universities
- colleges
- professional organisations
- NGOs
- community organisations
- cultural institutions
- government and public organisations
- alumni
- parents and members of the wider school community
- other organisations able to contribute meaningfully to student learning and future preparation

Partnerships will operate in accordance with the school's Community Partnership Policy and relevant safeguarding, health and safety, data-protection and visitor requirements.

18. Safeguarding and Student Well-being

All careers activities involving external organisations or individuals must comply with the school's safeguarding and child-protection requirements. The school will ensure that:

- external speakers and visitors follow school procedures
- appropriate supervision is provided
- professional boundaries are maintained
- students are protected from inappropriate recruitment, promotion or commercial influence
- student information is shared only where authorised and necessary
- workplace activities are appropriately assessed
- concerns are reported through established safeguarding procedures
- careers guidance supports student well-being and does not create inappropriate pressure or unrealistic expectations.

19. Information Sharing

Information regarding careers, university guidance and the Horizons Programme may be shared through:

- the school website
- student and parent handbooks
- newsletters
- assemblies
- information evenings

- parent meetings
- student guidance meetings
- digital learning platforms
- careers resources
- university and careers events
- direct communication with relevant students and families.

Information will be reviewed regularly to support accuracy and relevance.

20. Monitoring and Evaluation

The school will evaluate the quality and impact of careers provision through:

- student participation
- student, parent and staff feedback
- student reflections and Horizons portfolios
- completion of planned careers activities
- engagement with employers and professionals
- participation in workplace learning
- student confidence and preparedness at transition points
- university, college and other application outcomes
- student destination data
- access and participation across different student groups
- feedback from universities, employers and community partners
- review of the careers programme against recognised principles of effective provision

Evaluation will focus on the quality and impact of experiences rather than the number of activities alone. Findings will inform annual planning, resource allocation, professional development and future programme priorities.

21. Related Policies and Documents

This policy should be read alongside the school's:

- Community Partnership Policy
- Work Experience Policy and Procedures
- Curriculum Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Visitor and Guest Speaker Policy
- Data Protection Policy

- Online Safety Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Equality, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy
- Student Well-being Policy
- Parent Communication and Partnership Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Risk Assessment Procedures

22. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Head of School and University and Careers Coordinator. The review will consider:

- student needs and destinations
- developments in education, employment and technology
- student, family and staff feedback
- university, employer and community partnerships
- the effectiveness of the 7Hills Horizons Programme
- evidence regarding participation, inclusion and impact
- changes to school programmes and structures
- relevant national and international guidance