



# SAIBSA



## UNIVERSITY GUIDANCE CONFERENCE IN ASSOCIATION WITH UNIVARIETY



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► MAY 2014  
► Event Report



# INTRODUCTION

South Asian IB School Association (SAIBSA) and Univariety conducted India's first University Guidance Conference for its member schools. The events were conducted in New Delhi at The Shri Ram School and in Mumbai at Podar International School in the month of May, 2014. We successfully brought together counsellors, coordinators, teachers and heads of schools from IB Schools from the length and breadth of the country. There were discussions and workshops focused on best practices of university counseling at high schools along with the key issues that schools face.



## PURPOSE

### FOR SCHOOLS

Discussions were held around college counselling, psychometric tests, counsellor evaluation methodologies and SOPs / LORs. Analysis on the higher education processes in countries like USA, UK, Singapore and India was presented. Schools highlighted concerns, experiences and brainstormed solutions.

### FOR UNIVERSITIES

Universities got an opportunity to come face to face with a large group of guidance counsellors from progressive international schools. The environment in the event was all focused on college counselling and allowed counsellors to learn from heads of universities that were present.

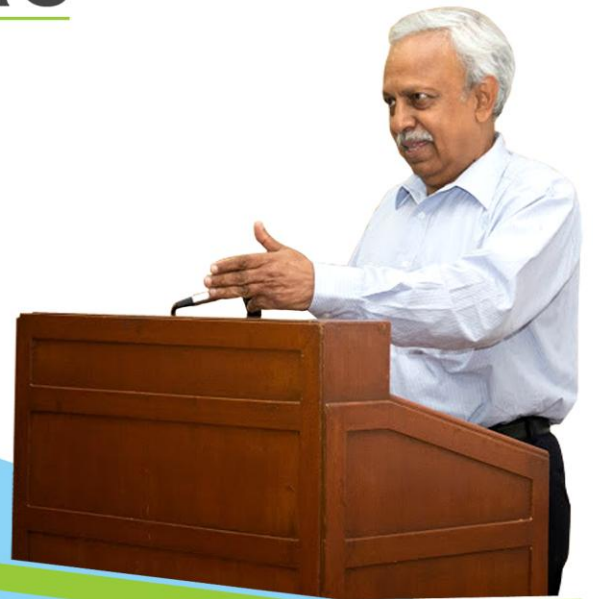
## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The event was the result of joint efforts of SAIBSA & Univariety. The main purpose was to acknowledge the growing importance of college counselling and placement systems in progressive schools. The events were well supported by The Shri Ram School and Podar International School. We also appreciate the involvement of institutions like University of Rochester, Michigan State University, OP Jindal University, MDIS and University of Edinburgh.

# KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

## DELHI

Dr. Vijay Gupta was a Professor in the Department of Aerospace Engineering in IIT Kanpur for close to three decades. He is also the former Vice Chancellor at Punjab Engineering College - Chandigarh and Lovely Professional University. Now, he serves as the Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Sharda University.



## MUMBAI

Prof. C. Raj Kumar has won several awards, scholarships and fellowships from University of Oxford, Harvard Law School, Loyola College, Monash University and Indiana University. He now serves as the Vice Chancellor of O.P. Jindal Global University.

# KEY TAKEAWAYS

## TOPIC

### COLLEGE ADMISSIONS THE UNIVERSITY PERSPECTIVE

It is a common perception that IB students find it challenging to secure admissions in a majority of Indian public and private universities. The topic explored what Indian universities really thought of IB curriculum when it came to college admissions and the efforts (if any) that universities make to accommodate IBDP students.

- 1** Most of the new universities in India are keen to welcome IB students in their programs. They recognise and appreciate how the IB curriculum empowers students with a keen sense of enquiry and encourages them HOW to think rather than WHAT to think.
- 2** There is a real need to bridge the lack of understanding of the IB curriculum amongst the public universities. Currently, IB curriculum doesn't feature as a priority for most Government institutions due to the small numbers.
- 3** The examination result dates of IBDP students prevent them from applying to many Indian universities. IB should also consider to review the dates like some other international curriculum are planning to do.



# PANEL DISCUSSION

## PANELISTS

- 1 Mr. Jaideep Gupta (Moderator)** - Chief Executive Officer, Univariety
- 2 Dr Vijay Gupta** - Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Sharda University
- 3 Dr. Patricia Croom** - Associate Director for International Admissions, Michigan State University
- 4 Ms. Manisha Malhotra** - Principal, The Shri Ram School
- 5 Mr. Kaiser Dopaishi** - Principal, Singapore International School; President, SAIBSA



- 6 Prof. C. Raj Kumar** - Vice-Chancellor, O.P. Jindal Global University
- 7 Mr. Jonathan Burdick** - Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid, University of Rochester
- 8 Dr. Mrs. Vandana Lulla** - Director, Podar International School
- 9 Dr. Pratibha Jain** - Managing Director, Eduabroad Consulting

### TOPIC: To what extent should schools seek external career guidance expertise at the high school level?

Many progressive schools are realising that career counselling & college planning is a strong need of their students and parents. The challenge is with the allocation of school resources and deciding where to seek external help. How much can be entrusted to external experts and what parts? What is the basic minimum that a school must do itself?

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 1** In order to create an environment focused on college counselling & placements, there should be at least 1 – 2 teachers of the senior school who get trained on the basics. Even better would be 1 dedicated counsellor being supported by teachers of the senior classes.
- 2** Whether there are dedicated counsellors or teachers acting as part time counsellors, there needs to be a system that tracks all student progress. Principals felt that the weaker students don't get the necessary attention and the academically strong students demand extra time. It is important to identify those who are acting slowly and nudge them into taking action.
- 3** The sheer number of options available to students today is mind-boggling. Especially when you add on the multiple countries and their complicated admission processes. It is good to have some external experts coming in to speak about specific topics.
- 4** Each year, valuable data about which colleges the students applied to and where they finally joined is lost. This data should be tracked and used for guiding the future batches. External help around technology should be taken for this as the school shouldn't spend resources on creating its own technology.



# NETWORKING DURING COFFEE & LUNCH





# KEY SESSION

## SESSION 1

### *Discovering the counsellor in the educator*

## TAKEAWAY

- ▶ Though there are many challenges and limitations that a counsellor faces, it is possible to overcome them by coordinating with teachers and external experts.
- ▶ Measuring the counsellor performance is important. However, it is not right to judge the performance basis the rank of colleges where students have got admissions. There has to be due importance given to the process employed by the counsellors along with the results achieved.
- ▶ The counsellor should create a schedule of pre-planned sessions with the students, teachers and parents. A good structure is once in a month with the student, once in 2 months with the teachers and once in 3 months with the parents. In order to achieve this, technology needs to be implemented and a few of the other activities need to be outsourced.



### *Evaluating the different psychometric career assessment tests & SAT versus ACT.*

## TAKEAWAY

- ▶ Psychometric career assessment tests are considered authentic and can be used by counsellors to guide students with their career and course choices. However, counsellors must choose tests which assess students on aptitude, personality, and interest (API) and not just on personality.
- ▶ Univariety has evaluated over 20 psychometric tests in India. There are 5-6 of them which are far superior to the others on multiple parameters.
- ▶ There are many conceptual differences between SAT & ACT. Counsellors should recommend SAT to students who have a high level of IQ but are not necessarily attentive in class. ACT should be recommended to students who are regular to class and are more focused towards their studies since it tests students on their grade specific subject knowledge. Preferences of colleges vary.



**Note - Contact Univariety to find out more about the psychometric tests which are best applicable for your students and to understand the key differences between SAT & ACT**



# KEY SESSION

## SESSION 2

*What makes for a good essay, teacher reference & student CV?*

### TAKEAWAY

- ▶ Writing an LOR is not a subject teacher's responsibility alone. It should be a coordinated effort between a counsellor and a teacher. Academic performance should be evaluated by a teacher while personal characteristics and ability to work in a team are the areas of a counsellor.
- ▶ Unlike what most counsellors and teachers think, usage of superlatives or heavy phrases in an LOR to describe the student accomplishments is not helpful for the student's application. Counsellors and teachers should instead focus on giving accurate observation about the student without adding many embellishments.
- ▶ A university admissions officer reviews a student's SOP or CV to understand his temperament and interests besides his academic potential. For best admission chances, any document about the student should be unambiguous and should reflect the student's true nature.



## SESSION 3

*Region specific breakout session- North America, UK, Singapore, India*

### DISCUSSION POINTS

- ▶ Counsellors and teachers got clarity around how they should guide students in selecting a country based on preference of students.
- ▶ University delegates cited the advantages that IB students have over other curricula when it comes to undergraduate admissions abroad and how universities evaluate students on the basis of the predicted grades.
- ▶ Dates, deadlines, early application and admission processes were also discussed as a part of the session.

**Note - Contact Univariety to get complete details of the sessions**



# CLOSING & CERTIFICATES DISTRIBUTION

The aim of this conference was to provide school counsellors, teachers, principals and the school management with a platform to learn, share and network. It also aimed to help everyone share best practices in the fast growing area of university guidance counselling and placements. In many ways, the conference organised by SAIBSA and Univariety started a trend which received tremendous support and encouragement from participants, panellists and guests alike. Most participant schools will now look at integrating technology into their counselling function. Judging by the overall support, conferences such as these should become a regular feature in their academic calendars of schools.



## PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

- ▶ Pathways School
- ▶ Scottish High International School
- ▶ DPS International School
- ▶ Rasbihari International School
- ▶ Modi School
- ▶ The Shri Ram School
- ▶ TIPS Global Institute
- ▶ Edubridge International School
- ▶ The Aga Khan Academy
- ▶ Ecole Mondiale World School
- ▶ RBK International Academy
- ▶ Jamnabai Narsee School
- ▶ Dr. Pillai Global Academy
- ▶ Navrachana International School
- ▶ Fountainhead School
- ▶ NSS Hill Spring International School
- ▶ Goldcrest International
- ▶ The Bombay International School
- ▶ Symbiosis International School
- ▶ JG International School
- ▶ The Cathedral Vidya School
- ▶ Chinmaya International Residential School
- ▶ The DOON School
- ▶ International School Aamby
- ▶ Choithram International
- ▶ Singapore International School
- ▶ Podar International School
- ▶ HVB Global Academy
- ▶ NES International School
- ▶ Mercedes-benz international school
- ▶ Garodia International
- ▶ Aditya Birla World Academy



# EVENT PHOTOS





# TESTIMONIALS

We have been asking for such a conference for the last few years. University placement is a key element in any international school and this conference prepared us to prepare the students for their future. The good thing is that we were given a lot of information which were not just generic but also specific to countries. I certainly hope that we have more of these every year.

**- Mr. Frank Braccia, Head of School, Goldcrest International - Mumbai**

The best part for me in this conference was networking with other counsellors and getting to know people who are experts in the field and listen to their views on various topics.

**- Ms. Pragati Pandey, Student Counsellor, Aga Khan Academy - Hyderabad**

It is one of the most important conferences that have happened in all these years in SAIBSA because it is the first time ever that all counsellors of different schools have come together. Overall, it has been a very successful conference

**- Dr. Vandana Lulla, Principal, Podar International School - Mumbai**

Conferences like these provide an opportunity to schools as well as universities to better understand one another. When we in the United States go through the application process, we highly value the relationships with overseas school counsellors. It helps us a lot especially if we have a question on a student's application; we can immediately get in touch with the counsellor if we know him/her on a first name basis.

**- Dr. Patricia Croom, Associate Director for International Admissions, Michigan State University, Michigan - USA**

Counselling can be a very lonely profession, so these networking sessions are very important. Through these sessions, we learn and share the best practices in the counselling industry and also know about tools and technology used in career guidance counselling.

**- Mr. Jorge Lugris, Counsellor, Edubridge International School - Mumbai**

It is a fantastic initiative by Univariety because avenues such as this creates opportunities for student counsellors, teachers, principals and vice chancellors from universities to come together and talk about the larger challenges that are confronting the aspirations of young people.

**- Prof C. Raj Kumar, Vice-Chancellor, O.P. Jindal Global University - Delhi**



# ABOUT SAIBSA

SAIBSA is the acronym for the South Asia International Baccalaureate Schools Association. The body is devoted to promoting education in a greater, more holistic level. SAIBSA members are authorised to implement the IB curriculum in their schools and guide students towards true learning.

It enjoys the membership of every IB school from across the Indian subcontinent including India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh.

**WWW.**saibsa.net



# ABOUT UNIVARIETY

Univariety is the largest and fastest growing organisation in India which focuses on setting up outplacement systems in high schools. Using our system, students gain clarity on courses, colleges, destination countries and scholarships. Univariety focuses not only on the students but also helps the school to build its own internal capability for providing the right guidance.

Currently, over 20,000 students from 180+ premier schools across 15 cities in India are using the system. Our students received offers from over 200 universities globally including 44 of the top 100 global universities. Our students also gained over USD 2.5 million in scholarships last year alone.

**WWW.**univariety.com



If you would like to participate in the next event focussing on University Guidance Counsellors of high schools,  
Please E-mail at: **contactus@univariety.com**