



AITCHISON COLLEGE

US Admissions Newsletter: Spring 2025

Meet Our Counselors

Ms. Sarah Malik

Former Admissions Officer at her Liberal Arts alma mater and M.Ed. graduate from the University of Illinois, she is currently working as the **Head of US Admissions**. With 8 years at Aitchison, Ms. Sarah is committed to helping every student build a strong profile for college success. Fun fact: she's visited over 30 US universities in the past two years.

Ms. Sahar Saleemi

Senior US Admissions Counselor and member of the International Association for College Admission Counseling (IACAC), Ms. Sahar holds a Master's in Finance from Hailey College, and brings over 13 years of experience as a US college admissions specialist. Fun fact: she has been selected by USEFP to represent Aitchison and Pakistan at the IACAC Conference in Boston this July.

Ms. Tosheeba Sarwar

Driven by the belief that now is always the right time to begin, Ms. Tosheeba is an educator and image management consultant with over 25 years of experience. She brings a dynamic and forward-thinking approach to everything she does. For Ms. Tosheeba, counseling is an energizing journey shaped by deep insight and a relentless commitment to growth and transformation.

Ms. Hadia Mahmood Tariq

With over two decades in education, Ms. Hadia is an expert in English Language, SAT English preparation, and college application essay writing from her experience as a Career Counselor. With a B.S. in Finance and Investments from Babson College, she is dedicated to empowering students for successful college admissions. Fun Fact: Hadia will be a judge in this year's Queen's Commonwealth Essay competition.

COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

Dear Aitchison Family,

As the Batch of 2025 admission cycle winds down, I am excited to share news of our successful acceptances and to introduce this first edition of our quarterly newsletter. Following a strong performance in the Early Admissions round, our students have continued to receive offers from many of the world's most selective universities. These achievements reflect our students' hard work along with the strength of our academic program and the support systems in place at Aitchison.

This newsletter is intended to keep you informed, to celebrate the accomplishments of our students, and to provide insight into the ongoing work of our US Admissions Office. Our commitment begins well before the application season, with careful guidance on subject selection, profile development, and co-curricular engagement, and continues right through to the final stages of college admissions, including financial aid application support.

We are confident that the resources and expertise available within our school provide everything a student needs for a successful application journey. I encourage all families to take full advantage of the support we offer and to trust in a process built on experience, individual attention, and genuine care.

Warm regards,

Ms. Sarah Malik, Head of US Admissions



BATCH OF 2025 ADMISSIONS HIGHLIGHTS

This year's US Admissions Cycle has yielded more than **390** acceptances from over **160** US universities across the United States, Asia and the Middle East. Among these are **80** acceptances from top-ranked colleges and universities, reflecting the strength and diversity of our students' academic and extracurricular profiles.

Notably, our boarding students have had an exceptionally successful admissions cycle with 85% of boarding applicants receiving acceptances to an average of 5 universities each.

Congratulations to the entire Aitchison Community!



Navigating the Financial Aid Process: We're Here to Help!

Applying to U.S. colleges as an international student can be exciting, although financially complex. Fortunately, Aitchison's U.S. Admissions Counselors are here to guide families through individualized support, helping you plan confidently and honestly.

U.S. colleges offer two main types of aid: need-based aid, (awarded based on your family's financial situation) and merit-based aid (based on academic or extracurricular achievements). Some colleges will automatically consider students for merit-based aid while others may require a scholarship application. It's complicated, and that's why it's important to be aware of the opportunities early in the process!

It's also important to understand admissions policies: **need-blind** universities (very few for international students) do not consider your financial need in admission decisions. In contrast, **need-aware** institutions do, which means that applying for aid might affect your chances of being admitted. Above all, honesty is crucial in the financial aid process. Families must provide accurate income and asset documentation. Misrepresentation can result in lost opportunities.

We strongly encourage families to begin early, ask questions, and meet regularly with our counselors. Whether you're exploring careers ideas in C1 or preparing applications in H2, we're here to support you with personalized advice and up-to-date resources.



NYU Visits Aitchison

We were delighted to welcome Mr. Salelaye Samoura from NYU Abu Dhabi who shared valuable insights into NYU's holistic admissions process and the unique academic opportunities at their global campus. His visit offered students a clearer understanding of what makes a competitive NYU applicant.

This year, Aitchison also hosted representatives from dozens of leading universities through the Ed Programs and USEFP College Fairs, providing students with direct access to a wide range of institutions.

More recently, the US Admissions Office invited Ms. Alyson Lucas from Duke University to meet students, further enriching their exposure to global higher education options.

Pre-College Summer Programs: Are They Worth It?

For motivated C1, C2, and H1 students, pre-college summer programs can provide a valuable glimpse into university life while allowing them to explore academic interests and enhance their college applications. However, not all programs offer the same value, and it's important to consider both the benefits and limitations before committing.

Benefits

- Exposure to the rigor of college-level coursework
- Opportunity to explore academic interests in depth
- Some programs offer transferable college credit
- Selective programs may strengthen college applications
- Network with professors and like-minded peers

Limitations

- Academic quality and selectivity vary widely
- Non-selective programs may not boost applications
- Transfer credits may not be accepted by all universities
- Many programs are "pay-to-play" and carry less weight
- High costs, including tuition, housing, travel, and other fees

Notable Pre-College Admissions for Summer 2025

- Research Science Institute (RSI)
- Yale Young Global Scholars
- Economics For Leaders (FTE)
- Wharton Global Youth Program
- UPenn LPS Social Justice Research Academy
- Columbia Pre-College Program
- UChicago Pre-College Program
- Pioneer Academics Research Program
- Lumiere Education Research Program



To book an appointment with a US Admissions Counselor, please email: counselingassistant@aitchison.edu.pk