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WINGS TO THE WORLD

STUDY ABROAD

ILLUSTRATION: **ABIR HOSSAIN**

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THINKING OF STUDYING ABROAD?

Here's how school life varies worldwide

EHSANUR RAZA RONNY

Student life looks very different around the world, with each country offering its own approach to education, exams, and extracurriculars. Whether it's the schooling system or the academic pressures, where you study can shape your future in unique ways.

For students in Bangladesh considering studying abroad, here's a look at how school life, exams, and opportunities compare across different countries.

UNITED STATES: Flexibility and opportunity

In the United States, education is characterised by flexibility and innovation. High school students often have the freedom to choose elective courses that align with their interests. Advanced Placement (AP) courses and dual enrollment programs allow students to earn college credits early, giving them a head start in higher education.

Standardised tests like the SAT and ACT have traditionally been central to college admissions, though many universities are now adopting more holistic admission processes. Beyond academics, students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities such as sports, music, and technology clubs, fostering a well-rounded experience.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), College Board

UNITED KINGDOM: Tradition meets modernity

The UK has a long-standing reputation for academic excellence. Students usually take their General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) exams at age 16, followed by A levels or other qualifications like the International Baccalaureate (IB) for university preparation. The A level system allows students to specialise in subjects they are passionate about, making it a focused and rigorous educational path.

UK universities emphasise both academic achievement and personal development, with extracurricular activities like sports, music, and theatre playing an important role. The UCAS application system simplifies the university admission process, and many students also benefit from internships and work placements as part of their degrees.

Source: UCAS, British Council

AUSTRALIA: A balanced approach

Australia offers a well-rounded education system that balances academic rigour with a strong emphasis on extracurriculars and real-world experience. Students take the Higher School Certificate (HSC) or its equivalent, such as the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), which prepares them for university.

Exams are important, but there's also a focus on personal development through sports, arts, and outdoor activities. Australia's education system encourages critical thinking, teamwork, and practical skills, with many students opting for vocational education and training (VET) courses alongside traditional academic subjects.

Source: Australian Government Department of Education, Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)

JAPAN: Rigorous discipline and strong community

Japan's education system is renowned for its discipline and structure. Students adhere to a strict schedule, with respect for authority and rules being a core value in schools. The competitive nyūgaku shiken entrance exams for high school and university drive many students to attend after-school *juku* (cram schools) to stay ahead.

Extracurricular activities, known as *bukatsu*, are deeply ingrained in school life, whether in sports, arts, or academic clubs. These activities help students develop teamwork and leadership skills, balancing Japan's academic intensity with a sense of community and collaboration.

Source: Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT)

FINLAND: Focus on well-being and practical learning

In Finland, the emphasis is on student well-being and practical learning rather than rote memorisation. Finnish students enjoy a relaxed school environment with minimal standardised testing. Instead, project-based learning encourages creativity and problem-solving from an early age.

The only major exam, the matriculation examination, comes at the end of upper secondary education and determines university eligibility. Finland is also known for encouraging outdoor activities, arts, and self-directed learning, helping students grow holistically.

Source: Finnish national agency for education

INDIA: A competitive academic landscape

India's education system places immense pressure on students, particularly during key exams like the Board Exams for classes 10 and 12. Competitive entrance exams, such as the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) for engineering and the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) for medical studies, are crucial for university admissions.

Despite the academic intensity, India's students increasingly engage in extracurricular activities like debates, Model United Nations, and science Olympiads. There's also a growing push towards integrating arts and creativity into the traditionally STEM-focused curriculum.

Source: National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)

ILLUSTRATION: **ABIR HOSSAIN**

GERMANY: Academic excellence meets practical skills

Germany is known for its unique dual education system, where students split their time between classroom learning and apprenticeships. This system allows students to gain practical, hands-on experience while still earning academic qualifications.

After secondary education, students take the *Abitur*, which serves as a gateway to university education. Alternatively, many students pursue vocational training, blending academic knowledge with real-world skills and job placements.

Source: Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)

BANGLADESH: A blend of tradition and international curricula

In Bangladesh, students have access to both traditional and international education systems. Local students typically follow the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) pathways, while a growing number opt for O and A levels through Pearson Edexcel and Cambridge Assessment International Education (CAIE).

The SSC and HSC exams, as well as university entrance exams, are critical for students hoping to attend universities in Bangladesh. For Bangladeshi students wanting to go abroad for higher studies, results from O and A levels are widely accepted. Extracurricular activities are gaining prominence, with students participating in national debates, science fairs, and even coding competitions. Digital learning platforms are also expanding opportunities for academic growth.

Source: Ministry of Education, Bangladesh; British Council Bangladesh

SOUTH KOREA: Intense focus on academic success

South Korea's education system is highly competitive, with immense pressure placed on students to succeed in exams. The Suneung (College Scholastic Ability Test) is one of the most critical and one of the hardest exams in a student's life, shaping their future university prospects.

Private academies, known as *hagwons*, are a cornerstone of South Korean education, where students often spend long hours preparing for exams. Despite the academic pressure, students also participate in school clubs and extracurricular activities to build social skills and foster personal growth.

Source: Ministry of Education, South Korea

How HSBC is enhancing the international education experience for Bangladeshi students

A CORRESPONDENT

The modern world is fast-paced and interconnected, and the dream of studying abroad in this day and age has become a defining moment for many young people. Studying abroad is no longer just about getting a degree – it's about stepping into a world filled with possibilities, cultures, and experiences that shape the person you become.

However, behind the excitement and dreams, there are real challenges, especially when it comes to managing the financial aspects of international education. This is where HSBC steps in, offering a hand to guide you and your family through this life-changing journey.

The financial aspects of studying abroad can feel overwhelming at times. From tuition fees to accommodation and living costs, there's a lot to manage. But you don't have to face it alone.

With a presence in 60 countries and territories across the globe, HSBC provides a sense of comfort, knowing that wherever you go, a part of your home is always with you. Their global reach ensures that you can stay connected to your roots while easily handling your financial needs, no matter where your studies take you. And for students in Bangladesh, where direct money transfers abroad can be tricky, HSBC's student file services provide a seamless way to send funds.

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A student file is a specific account set up by the bank that allows for the legal transfer of funds to cover educational expenses abroad. It's an essential service that ensures you can safely and easily manage tuition and living costs without the usual restrictions on foreign transfers.

Eligibility for opening a student file with HSBC

1. Any Bangladeshi citizen with a valid passport.

2. The student or sponsor must have an active "Select" account with HSBC.

The HSBC student file can be opened for the following:

- Regular undergraduate and post-graduate programmes
- Language courses that are prerequisite to approved undergraduate degree
- Professional diploma or certificate courses, where the course must be relevant to the student's current profession or line of work

Required documents to open a student file:

- Offer letter issued by the foreign educational institution in support of admission or I-20 for the United States
- Estimate relating to expenses, like annual tuition fee, board and lodging, insurance, incidental expenses, etc. issued by the concerned educational institution
- A copy of the visa (if available)
- A copy of the student's photograph

What makes HSBC truly special is how personalised their support is. Each family's journey is unique, and HSBC understands that. That's why they assign a dedicated Relationship Manager (RM) to walk with you every step of the way. From opening your account to transferring funds, your RM is there, offering advice, answering questions, and reassuring you that everything is under control. It's not just about numbers and transactions, it's about knowing that someone is looking out for you, so you can focus on what really matters: your studies and the adventures ahead.

HSBC's goal is simple: to make the financial process of studying abroad as smooth as possible. From the first moment you sit down to open an account to the day you finalise your financial arrangements, HSBC ensures the process is clear and easy, so you can feel confident that everything is being handled with care.

HSBC also understands the importance of staying connected with family while studying abroad. They provide international debit cards and supplementary cards linked to parents' accounts, making international transactions easier and more accessible. This arrangement allows students to manage their finances quickly and conveniently, giving them peace of mind and financial support even when they are miles away from home.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

What are the features of HSBC International Education Services?

HSBC International Education Service offers numerous benefits, including dedicated relationship managers, expert support at branches, cashback on IELTS fees, account opening facilities, and the provision of international supplementary debit cards, ensuring smooth and convenient banking for students abroad.

How long does a student file remain valid?

Students can send outward remittances until the end of their course. However, the student file must be renewed for every academic session from the opening date to continue processing remittances.

What are the expenses students can remit through the student file?

Students can remit funds for various educational expenses, including tuition fees, living expenses, health insurance, advance fees for applications, seat retention fees, and other costs required for visa or admission purposes, provided documentary evidence is issued by the educational institution.

Does the student file need to be tagged with an account?

Yes, the student or sponsor must have an active HSBC Bangladesh account for the student file to be valid.

Where should I contact to learn more about Student File Service?

You can visit any HSBC branch for further details. Alternatively, you can reach out to our 24/7 contact centre at 16240 (from Bangladesh) for assistance.

At the heart of it all, HSBC isn't just about banking. They are a partner in your family's journey. International education opens up a world of opportunities, and HSBC is there to help you every step of the way. With their financial expertise, personalised guidance, and unwavering support, you can focus on your dreams and education, knowing that HSBC is by your side, making sure everything is safe, secure, and seamless.

PURSUING AN UNDERGRAD IN GERMANY

What you should know

ARSHAD SALEH

Renowned for its industrial excellence and being home to some of the world's greatest minds, Germany sits at the heart of Europe as a hub of opportunities. German institutions have always had a reputation of being academically rigourous, and in recent years, have attracted thousands of international students looking to pursue a high quality of education. The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) is a national agency for tertiary education in Germany. DAAD offers a vast database, allowing international students to find their preferred programmes with ease.

"The efficiency of navigating DAAD.de for my undergraduate application to Germany was remarkable. With nearly 200 English-taught programmes available, it surpassed most European offerings, though there was a noticeable lack of diversity in business courses compared to STEM fields," said Hasiba Khan, a Spring '25 applicant.

A major benefit of higher education in Germany are tuition policies at public universities. When asked about to what extent such benefits influenced her application, Hasiba explained, "I've always aimed to relieve my parents of the financial strain of funding my education which made Germany an appealing choice. With most public universities offering little to no tuition fees alongside a nominal semester fee, covering public transport fees, and ample work opportunities for international students, I can pursue my studies without the worry of accumulating student debt, all while attaining a high-quality education that is recognised worldwide."

However, the structure for Germany's secondary school education is different to that of Bangladesh.

"I was initially taken aback by Germany's 13 years of education requirement for undergraduate eligibility, but my A levels allowed me to apply directly. For students with an HSC qualification, they must complete one year or 25 percent of their bachelor's degree at an Anabin-verified university to transfer credits to a German institution," said Zayn Ahnaf, also a Spring '25 applicant. However, an alternative pathway to this is through Studienkolleg, a preparatory school that seamlessly bridges the gap between the 12th and 13th years. In addition, you will typically need your O/A level or SSC/HSC equivalent grades as well as your English proficiency test scores (IELTS/TOEFL).

When applying to Germany, the visa application process is said to be the most challenging aspect. From long waiting periods to considerable paperwork, it is a process which demands great patience.

"The visa process was very tiring and time consuming. After the pandemic, the waiting period and the documentation required has increased. Universities continuously nudge students to submit their documents. Despite their best efforts, students are unable to attend classes on time even because of the long waiting period which may take up to 20 months or longer. There is not much that the Bangladesh government can do here and so, the situation has not improved much," says Fardin Alam, a freshman at South Westphilipa University of Applied Sciences.

Although the waiting period is long and strenuous, if you plan ahead, you can still progress without wasting time. After completing HSC, work on getting a 13th year certificate from an accredited university as this is a requirement. Also finish taking IELTS, learn German or maybe even get a job to gain experience. Being productive during this time will make the path to Germany easier.

Germany offers many opportunities beyond an undergraduate degree. Graduate programmes, for instance, offer even greater prospects for scholarships. In addition, joining the growing international work force in Germany and obtaining a permanent residence can be done with relative ease.

Despite the large and growing international community, the importance of the German language to its people cannot be overstated. While it is not required to apply, life in Germany proves to be difficult when you do not know the language.

"The German language has a massive importance here. Even if people know English, they do not speak it unless it is absolutely necessary. Most applications that are needed on a daily basis are not in English either. You'll have a very hard time if you know no German. I came here after completing the A2 level German course, so I am not completely lost. It still proves to be very difficult, especially when filling out various government paperwork. Although the people here have been helpful to me for all sorts of things, they will not go out of their way to help unless they feel that you are doing something very wrong," Fardin added.

Nonetheless, students are able to find jobs even without knowing German. It is, however, advised to learn the language up to the A2 level before going. This can be done through online courses or joining an institution such as the Goethe Institute. Although the language barrier may pose a challenge, studying abroad gives students the privilege of experiencing new cultures.

"German culture is very different, but I found that exciting. The young people here are very welcoming. If you speak German, it is a lot easier to interact with people but they will try to speak to you even if you aren't fluent. Try to embrace their culture and speak their language," says Sadat Hossain Adol, a student at Hamm-Lippstadt University of Applied Sciences.

Germany offers many opportunities beyond an undergraduate degree. Graduate programmes, for instance, offer even greater prospects for scholarships. In addition, joining the growing international work force in Germany and obtaining a permanent residence can be done with relative ease.

"Germany's allure extends far beyond its tuition-free education. The ease of obtaining permanent residence compared to other European countries, and securing a Schengen Visa are real game changers for me," adds Zayn.

Although Europe's historical architectural and ethereal nature add to its appeal, choosing a university abroad is a decision that should be thought out thoroughly with all factors evaluated. Despite all its benefits, applying to Germany requires patience and perseverance.

Planning to study in the UK?
Let AHZ show you the way

FAISAL BIN IQBAL

Every year, hundreds of thousands of international students arrive in the United Kingdom (UK) for higher studies, many of whom are from Bangladesh. The UK, being one of the most popular study abroad destinations for university education, offers some of the most interesting and sought after academic programmes in the world. Irrespective of the field – be it business, arts, or STEM – universities in the UK have something for everybody, which is why so many Bangladeshis, every year, dream of studying in the UK.

However, turning this dream of higher education in the UK into reality is not an easy task. Hence, AHZ, a sister concern of MH Global Group, has taken it upon themselves to help these aspiring students and guide them along the way to make their dreams of studying in the UK a reality.

AHZ is the largest UK-exclusive university representative. They provide comprehensive guidance and support at every step of an applicant's journey, ensuring a smooth transition to their desired university. AHZ started in London way back in 2012, and since then, the agency has gone on to support more than 25,000 students to enrol in UK institutions.

That being said, with so many education agencies out there, all claiming to be the best at what they do, what exactly sets AHZ apart?

For starters, AHZ boasts a solid portfolio featuring affiliations with over 140 prestigious universities across the UK including institutions like University of Kent; University of Roehampton; City, University of London; Birmingham City University; and University of East Anglia.

The agency, across its 60+ global offices, has over 750 counsellors who have served over 600,000 students globally with a staggering student satisfaction rate of 99%. For its commitment to helping students with their higher studies in the UK, AHZ has gone on to win more than 35 awards, a testament to their professionalism and dedication.

From the moment you enrol as an international student, AHZ's team of expert UK education professionals will guide you every step of the way. These professionals are experts in their field, most of them holding degrees from UK universities and certified and trained by the British Council.

Through one-on-one counselling sessions, these education experts will help you choose the right courses and universities that align with your long-term goals. Rest assured, AHZ offers these consultations completely free of charge. In fact, AHZ offers a complete range of free services to students, including one of the quickest UK admission processes in Bangladesh.

Admission requirements can differ based on the country and programme you choose. While many institutions adhere to UK National Recognition Information Centre (NARIC) guidelines, some may have unique criteria for specific majors, grades, course lengths, work experience, or English language skills. It might seem super challenging, but with AHZ by your side, there's no need to stress. Their experts will guide you through every step, right up to the final outcome of your visa application.

Despite being the best at what they do, AHZ still strives to improve their services and evolve for the better. The agency's main mission, however, remains intact – to ensure that students eager to study in the UK have the opportunity to do so.

AHZ goes beyond logistics. They understand the emotional challenges of studying abroad, offering counselling to help with culture shock, language barriers, and homesickness.

AHZ's commitment to ensuring maximum satisfaction of their students is especially important in the modern world, given how many students are often misguided by false promises of easy admission, visa waivers, or immediate permanent residency (PR).

AHZ steers clear of such gimmicks, maintaining a clear focus on their commitment to students, providing guidance and support throughout their entire journey to the UK. Their ethical approach, combined with comprehensive services, makes AHZ an agency that genuinely understands and meets the needs of aspiring students.

For Bangladeshi students, adjusting to the UK's culture can be quite a shock at first. That's where AHZ comes in. With their strong presence in the UK, they don't just help students get into top universities. They also make the transition to life abroad a lot smoother.

Despite being the best at what they do, AHZ still strives to improve their services and evolve for the better. The agency's main mission, however, remains intact – to ensure that students eager to study in the UK have the opportunity to do so. AHZ wants to make higher education in the UK more accessible in the coming years and be at the forefront of that.

With unmatched expertise, a wide range of services, and a strong focus on student satisfaction, AHZ sets the standard for local education agencies. If you're aiming for higher education in the UK, choosing them is a smart step towards a successful and rewarding experience.

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MACES: Empowering Bangladeshi students to study abroad

MACES has established itself as one of the top education consultancies in Bangladesh, helping students fulfil their academic ambitions by guiding them to prestigious universities worldwide. With over 17 years of experience, MACES has built a reputation for delivering expert advice and comprehensive services free of cost to aspiring students.

From humble beginnings with just one partner university in 2007, MACES now collaborates with more than 200 universities across the globe, opening doors for Bangladeshi students in the USA, Canada, Australia, the UK, Japan, Malaysia, and beyond.

With an unrivalled track record, MACES is committed to making the dream of studying abroad a reality for Bangladeshi students by simplifying the application process, providing personalised guidance, and ensuring students are fully prepared for the journey ahead. The consultancy's mission is to find the perfect university and country for each student, considering their academic profile, career aspirations, and personal needs.

What sets MACES apart in the industry is their commitment to maintaining strict standards in terms of the institutions they work with. Because of their core tenets, and their overall focus on providing quality service, they have developed strong partnerships with local and global institutions, and students. Not only that, what adds to their uniqueness is their dedication to maintain honesty and transparency throughout their services, ensuring a lasting relationship with their clients based on trust.

At the heart of MACES's success is a team of experienced counsellors who have themselves studied abroad. This personal experience allows them to empathise with students, guiding them through the complexities of studying in a new environment. The counsellors take into account several factors — academic performance, financial capability, test scores, travel history, and future career goals — to recommend the best-fit universities and programs.

Tina Salem Manzoor, Founding Partner at MACES, started its operations with a one-room office. Over the years, with sheer hard work and commitment, she was able to establish the company as an Approved Partner of the British High Commission and set up key partnerships with prominent schools and universities. She dreams of making MACES a household name in the education sector in Bangladesh, and strives to earn the trust of every client for the brand. She believes in honesty and transparency, and continues to extend her support to students through MACES while keeping these core tenets in mind.

Rouham Manzoor, Managing Partner, is another instrumental figure at MACES. Having been trained as an Educational Consultant by the British Council, British High Commission, and the Australian High Commission, he has been a pivotal member of the team in establishing MACES as a prominent study abroad brand in the education industry. His love for helping students is what has driven him over the years to remain committed to the work he does. He believes that proper guidance is what makes or breaks a person's life, and thus he dedicates his life's work to help realise students' dreams of studying abroad.

As an authorised centre for English language proficiency tests, MACES provides step-by-step guidance on IELTS and TOEFL exam registration. This enables students to focus on enhancing their scores, instead of worrying about the registration process.

Many students rely on scholarships or financial aid to study abroad. MACES plays a pivotal role in helping students navigate the application processes for university-specific scholarships, government grants, and other financial aid programmes. MACES has also assisted students in winning prestigious scholarships like the Developing Solutions Scholarship and various university-funded grants.

Writing personal statements and admission essays can be challenging, but MACES offers thorough reviews to refine these essential components of the application. Additionally, the consultancy prepares students for university interviews, ensuring they present themselves confidently and professionally.

Adjusting to a new country can be overwhelming, especially for first-time travellers. MACES assists students in securing accommodation, offers travel tips, and provides practical advice about adapting to a new cultural environment. Their visa services ensure that students meet all immigration requirements, and last-minute changes or concerns are efficiently communicated to universities on behalf of the students.

The support and care provided by MACES have made it a trusted name among students and parents alike. Students who have benefited from their services consistently praise the consultancy's professionalism and warmth.

MACES hosts one of the largest annual education fairs in Bangladesh, providing students with the unique opportunity to interact directly with university representatives. These events allow students to receive on-the-spot assessments and feedback about their academic profiles, helping them refine their plans and better understand their prospects.

At the heart of MACES's success is a team of experienced counsellors who have themselves studied abroad. This personal experience allows them to empathise with students, guiding them through the complexities of studying in a new environment.

What sets MACES apart from other education consultancies is its unwavering commitment to students. The consultancy offers a student-first approach, ensuring every step of the process is tailored to meet individual needs. MACES counsellors do more than just provide application assistance; they walk students through every challenge, from planning their applications to securing visas and preparing for life abroad. Their hands-on support helps students overcome anxiety and ensures they transition smoothly into their new environments.

In a landscape where educational consultancies are often viewed with scepticism, MACES stands out as a trustworthy partner that genuinely cares about its students' success. Through its services, personal guidance, and extensive network of partner universities, MACES has empowered countless Bangladeshi students to achieve their dreams of studying abroad. With a strong focus on integrity, expertise, and student well-being, MACES continues to redefine the study abroad experience, helping students unlock global opportunities and pursue bright futures.

As MACES continues to grow, its commitment remains the same: to guide students every step of the way, from application to arrival, ensuring they have the tools, knowledge, and confidence to thrive in their academic journey abroad.

In conversation with Manzuma Murshed, Managing Partner at MENTORS' CHITTAGONG

Manzuma Murshed, Managing Partner at Mentors' Chittagong, has driven a significant positive shift in Chattogram's education landscape. Through her leadership, Mentors' Chittagong has become more accessible than ever, offering support through their main branch, dedicated helplines, email, and active social media channels.

A CORRESPONDENT

Going beyond basic guidance, they regularly host seminars, workshops, and webinars to provide students with the latest insights for their higher education journey.

For students seeking guidance from Mentors' Chittagong, the process begins with a comprehensive assessment to understand each student's unique goals and aspirations. This initial step lays the groundwork for a personalised roadmap, with expert advice on test preparation, university selection, application processes, and visa support.

Mentors' Chittagong doesn't just offer advice; they walk alongside students, providing one-on-one counselling, help with document preparation, and interview coaching to ensure a seamless path to success. Wherever you are in the process, their support is just a call away.

The Daily Star sat down with Manzuma for a quick interview where she talked about the differences in circumstances for students outside Dhaka and those residing in the capital, her experience as a guidance counsellor, and how Mentors' Chittagong can help streamline the application process for students aspiring to study abroad.

The Daily Star: Would you say the circumstances and factors for students outside Dhaka are different from students in Dhaka?

Manzuma Murshed: Yes, there are several factors unique to students outside Dhaka. For example, access to resources and exposure to international education fairs, admissions officers, or university alumni can be more limited. Students outside Dhaka often rely more on local counselling services to guide them through application processes and standardised testing requirements.

Mentors' Chittagong bridges this gap by providing extensive in-person counselling and organising seminars and expos that give students in our area the guidance they need to access the same opportunities as those in larger cities.

The Daily Star: In your experience as a guidance counsellor, what are some recommendations for prospective international students living outside Dhaka?

Manzuma Murshed: For students outside Dhaka, it's essential to start early, especially with standardised tests like the IELTS, as available dates might fill up quickly. Another important step is building a strong profile through extracurricular activities and community service, as these help make up for limited access to certain academic resources.

I also recommend taking advantage of online platforms and webinars for additional information about international programmes. Mentors' Chittagong regularly hosts such sessions and provides resources that help these students stay competitive and well-prepared.

The Daily Star: How does Mentors' Chittagong help streamline the application process for students?

Manzuma Murshed: We work closely with each student to ensure they understand every stage of the process, from selecting universities and preparing for tests to meeting application deadlines. Our counsellors provide personalised guidance, helping students manage timelines, complete documentation, and stay organised.

By offering services such as IELTS registration, document review, and interview preparation, we simplify the process so students can focus on preparing themselves academically and emotionally for studying abroad.

The Daily Star: Would you like to elaborate on some specific and unique ways in which Mentors' Chittagong helps their students?

Manzuma Murshed: Mentors' Chittagong takes pride in being a personalised service provider. We not only focus on admissions but also foster students' academic and personal growth. For example, we organise mock interviews and skill-building workshops that prepare students for the cultural and academic shift they'll experience abroad.

Mentors' Chittagong bridges this gap by providing extensive in-person counselling and organising seminars and expos that give students in our area the guidance they need to access the same opportunities as those in larger cities.

Our close connections with school heads in the area allow us to offer targeted support based on the unique needs of local students. This community-focused approach is at the heart of what makes Mentors' Chittagong unique.

MIE PATHWAYS & MIE ENGLISH ACADEMY

Helping Bangladeshi students realise their dreams of higher education abroad

FAISAL BIN IQBAL

Pursuing higher education is one of the biggest steps in a student's life, and the choices they make can have a lasting impact on their future. While many still opt for local universities, more and more Bangladeshi students are looking beyond the country's borders, excited by the incredible opportunities that come with studying abroad.

However, getting into a top international university is easier said than done. Without the right guidance and up-to-date information, studying abroad can remain just a dream, never quite becoming a reality.

This is where MIE Pathways and MIE English Academy step in. These two agencies – under MH Global Group – are committed to helping Bangladeshi students navigate every stage of their journey toward a global education.

MIE Pathways: Your Bridge to International Education

Applying to international universities can be challenging for many students, especially when navigating differences in education systems, cultural backgrounds, and languages. To ease this transition, programmes like the International Foundation Year (IFY) or International Year One can be a game-changer. That's where MIE Pathways comes in, offering a clear path for Bangladeshi students to top universities abroad.

MIE Pathways has teamed up with NCUK, a global pathway provider working with universities in popular destinations like the UK, US, Australia, New Zealand, and Malaysia. This partnership means aspiring international students can begin their journey in Bangladesh and eventually progress to more than 50 prestigious universities worldwide, including Cardiff University, UNSW Sydney, and Auckland University of Technology.

Studying abroad can be an overwhelming experience, especially if it's your first time navigating a new culture, language, and education system. MIE Pathways understands these challenges and has designed programmes like the NCUK International Foundation Year (IFY) to help students overcome them. This programme bridges the gap, especially for students whose HSC results may not meet the requirements of top-ranked universities, or who have study gaps.

The IFY programme offers small class sizes, allowing students to build confidence and prepare academically for their future studies, all while still in Bangladesh. Students also gain essential cultural skills that will make their transition to studying abroad much smoother.

MIE Pathways also provides the International Year One programme, letting students complete their first year of an undergraduate degree in Bangladesh, then seamlessly transition to the second year at a partner university. With pathways to over 300 programmes across 26 universities, students can choose from five subject routes, making the journey less intimidating.

Besides, the foundation year offered by MIE Pathways costs just £4,000 in Bangladesh, compared to the £15,000 - £20,000 costs abroad. Plus, MIE Pathways offers up to 50 percent scholarships based on merit, making quality education more accessible.

With top-notch facilities and qualified instructors, MIE Pathways ensures students are fully prepared to start their higher education journey abroad.

MIE Pathways and AHZ – another sister concern of MH Global Group – organise various events throughout the year to raise awareness among prospective international students. At the large-scale exhibitions, partner universities participate to showcase their offerings, while smaller events allow students to meet AHZ and MIE Pathways staff, university academics, and representatives.

MIE English Academy: Helping you unlock the power of English communication

MIE English Academy is more than just a language school. It's a vibrant community passionate about helping you master English communication as you prepare yourself for studying abroad.

Whether you're preparing for IELTS, PTE, OET, or want to improve your spoken English, MIE English Academy is here to guide you every step of the way.

Backed by a team of experienced educators who are nationally and internationally certified, this organisation takes pride in offering personalised training, designed to meet the unique learning needs of every student. Through their flexible courses, available both online and offline, the team at MIE English Academy makes it easy for you to learn English on your own schedule.

At MIE English Academy, you'll find skilled teachers who know how to make learning engaging and effective. With their support, getting the IELTS score you've been aiming for becomes easier. The teachers their understand that every student has different goals, so they offer tailored programmes that adapt to your pace and preferences. Besides, as they offer a range of course options, from in-person classes to interactive online sessions, you can easily fit your English lessons into your daily routine while balancing multiple commitments.

Also, as MIE English Academy emphasises real-world language skills, students gain confidence in speaking, listening, and communicating effectively in everyday situations. That way, as you arrive at your destination country for higher studies, you can communicate with your peers in English with ease.

The foundation year offered by MIE Pathways costs just £4,000 in Bangladesh, compared to the £15,000 - £20,000 costs abroad. Plus, MIE Pathways offers up to 50 percent scholarships based on merit, making quality education more accessible.

MIE Pathways and MIE English Academy have become vital resources for Bangladeshi students aspiring to study abroad. From offering essential guidance and support to navigate the complexities of international education to ensuring cultural preparation, these two agencies are empowering Bangladeshi students to turn their dreams of higher education abroad into reality.