

Opening pathways to GLOBAL EDUCATION

MD AL-AMIN SARKER, COO, FICC

MD AL-AMIN SARKER, COO of Farees International Career Counseling (FICC), a leading centre in Bangladesh that provides student friendly support to study abroad. Since its inception, it has accomplished remarkable achievements and progress.

The Daily Star (TDS): Could you provide an overview of FICC's mission and how your student counselling services for studying abroad fit within it?

MD AL-AMIN SARKER (AS): From scholarships to career guidance, our counselling services focus on every step of studying abroad, from selecting universities and funding opportunities to processing visas and planning long term careers.

TDS: What is the primary value of international education for Bangladeshi students today?

AS: Students gain access to world class teaching, research facilities, and innovative learning methods. More importantly, international exposure builds communication, leadership, adaptability, and problem-solving skills, all critical in today's job market. Ultimately, students return with global perspectives and leadership qualities that contribute to Bangladesh's economic and social development.

TDS: What are the most common challenges students face, and how do you help them navigate these?

AS: The three biggest challenges are securing scholarships, choosing the right university or country, and managing finances. We guide students in identifying scholarships that fit their profiles, assist with strong applications, and support them throughout the funding process. Our team carefully

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reviews academic records, long-term aspirations, and budgets to ensure students can pursue international education with confidence.

TDS: What makes FICC's counselling unique?

AS: We prioritise students' interests above all. Every recommendation is based on thorough profile assessments and counselling credentials. FICC is affiliated with the British Council and IDP, and is a recognised member of ICEF and FACD-CAB, which ensures our services meet international standards of trust and credibility.

TDS: What trends are you seeing among Bangladeshi students?

AS: Demand is strong for Australia, the UK, New Zealand, and Europe. Popular study fields include business, IT, engineering, and health sciences, chosen for their global career potential. Families increasingly look for affordable pathways and scholarships, focusing on the return on investment of higher education.



IELTS:

Opening doors to study, work, and migration

Every year, thousands of Bangladeshis take their first step towards studying, working, or settling abroad with IELTS, the International English Language Testing System. Accepted by over 12,500 organisations in 140+ countries, including top universities and immigration authorities in the UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, IELTS remains the world's most trusted English test.

WHAT IS IELTS?

IELTS measures real-life English skills in Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking. The test lasts 2 hours 45 minutes. Listening, Reading, and Writing are taken back-to-back, while Speaking is a face-to-face conversation with a trained examiner, held the same day or within a week.

THERE ARE TWO TYPES:

- Academic – for higher education and professional recognition.
- General Training – for workplace opportunities and migration.

Candidates can choose IELTS on Paper or Computer.

WHY IELTS?

- Global recognition: Preferred by governments, universities, and employers worldwide.
- Human interaction: Speaking is always with a trained examiner, ensuring fairness and natural conversation.
- Fairness and accessibility: Secure testing protocols, multiple test centres, and support for candidates with special needs.

GLOBAL OPPORTUNITIES

IELTS opens doors to world-class universities, scholarships, and career opportunities. A Universities UK International report found 83% of international graduates said their UK degree (secured via IELTS) helped them land a job. Employers in healthcare, engineering, and finance, as well as migration authorities, trust IELTS scores.

REGISTRATION & PAYMENT

Booking is quick and secure with a valid ID and card. To make IELTS accessible, the British Council offers 0% EMI through 32+ banks in Bangladesh, letting candidates spread the fee over three months. Test centres operate in Dhaka, Chattogram, Sylhet, and more.

RESULTS & RETAKE

- Computer: Results in 1-2 days.
- Paper: Up to 13 days.
- UKVI Life Skills: 7 days.

Candidates get an official Test Report Form (TRF) and up to five free additional TRFs sent to institutions.

If one section falls short, candidates can use One Skill Retake within 60 days, saving time and money. With decades of expertise, the British Council offers trusted preparation tools, flexible booking, affordable EMI options, convenient centres, fast results, and support like One Skill Retake making IELTS not just a test, but a pathway to global opportunities.

ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT studying in Australia?



S.M. ARSH ALAM, student at Western Sydney University.

Australia has become a second home for thousands of international students, valued for its quality education and diverse lifestyle. Among its leading institutions, Western Sydney University stands out. It is ranked in the top 2% of universities worldwide according to the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2024. For those who need a stepping stone, the Western Sydney University International College offers a supportive pathway that helps students build skills and confidence before moving into their degree programs.

The college is based in Parramatta, just 25 minutes by train from Sydney's Central Business District. With small class sizes, free support in English and Maths, and a dedicated student services team, the International College supports students every step of the way. We spoke to alumnus S.M. Arsh Alam, who completed a Diploma in Business and is now continuing his studies at Western Sydney University.

What has been your biggest achievement so far?

Arsh Alam: After graduating from Western Sydney University International College, my biggest achievement has been leveraging my academic knowledge to build upon my existing business experience and background. I successfully combined theoretical concepts with practical skills, enabling me to expand and diversify my entrepreneurial ventures. This included launching several business initiatives in Sydney, such as a consultancy firm, a trading business, and other projects within the trade and creative industries.

"I appreciate my time at Western Sydney University International College. Coming here has changed my life for the better and I have met people from different backgrounds and cultures."

What advice would you give students from Bangladesh who are thinking about studying at the International college?

Arsh Alam: My advice for other students from Bangladesh is simple: stay focused, stay curious, and believe in yourself. Plan, stick to your goals, and don't be afraid to ask for help when needed. Remember, every challenge you overcome brings you closer to your dreams. Keep learning, stay persistent, and success will follow!

Where are you currently at with your studies?

Arsh Alam: I am currently in my second year at Western Sydney University, where I am pursuing an undergraduate Business degree. Through my studies at the University, I have collaborated with multinational companies on diverse projects, gaining valuable experience in global business operations. I am also training to become a pilot.

For more information about Western Sydney University International College, please visit internationalcollege.westsydney.edu.au

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