REGIONAL INSTITUTE SESSION · 2026

Rethinking School–University Engagement

for Today’s Counselling Needs

How schools and universities can turn engagements into meaningful outcomes for students.



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A REALITY CHECK

50-100

School/ counselors interactions

So… what makes one memorable?

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About This Session

An interactive workshop for counsellors

THE FAMILIAR TOOLKIT

- Fairs
- University Presentations
- Campus visits
- Masterclasses
- Competitions/ Workshops

Are these still fit for purpose?

→

A DIFFERENT STARTING POINT

Start from the counselling conversation, not the university offering.

- Examine familiar models
- Identify missed opportunities
- Reimagine approaches together

Purposeful · Relevant · Outcome-oriented

This session has* no blueprint*, is* not a verdict*, but an* invitation for an open discussion*.

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Why This Matters More Than Ever

The evolving counselling ecosystem

THE COUNSELLING ECOSYSTEM

- More schools with counsellors
- Uncountable events & sources of information
- Many more higher-education options
- Exposure starts early

→

WHAT STUDENTS NEED

- Information or Validation
- Interpretation
- Networks
- Confidence/ Assurance/ Support

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SECTION 03

University Engagements

Formats, Frameworks & A Group Activity

03

- Formats
- Frameworks
- Group Activity

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Common Event Formats

Not every interaction needs the same format

- Large Fair
- Single University Visit
- Counsellor Interaction
- Student Workshop
- Virtual Interaction
- Parent Session
- Small Thematic Roundtable
- ? Your new format

FOR EACH FORMAT, ASK

1. What does this format serve?
2. What will it be best for?
3. What are the pros & cons?

04 · FINAL TAKEAWAYS & REFLECTION

Ask Better Questions

The focus is not simply on creating new formats.

01

What should engagement achieve?

02

When is it most valuable?

03

What could schools and universities do differently together?

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Where Engagement Adds Value

Different points in the counselling process

01

Exploration

Opening up pathways and possibilities

02

Programme Fit

Matching students to the right course and context

03

Parent Decision-Making

Supporting families as they weigh choices

04

After an Offer

Guiding the conversation once offers arrive

Brainstorming Activity

Reimagining university interaction

GROUP TASK · 15 MIN



Design a university engagement format for your school.

Care to share ☺

Each group must define:

1. Student need / counselling challenge
2. Intended outcome
3. Target audience
4. University role
5. School / counsellor role
6. Format
7. Duration
8. Follow-up plan
9. What success looks like



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KEY INSIGHT

A Practical Framework for Rethinking Engagement

01

ASSESS

What is needed?

Start from the counselling need, not the offering

→

02

EXPLORE

Which approaches could work?

Look beyond the familiar formats

→

03

TRANSLATE

What will work in your school?

Turn ideas into realistic engagement models

Next: put the framework to work in the group activity.

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Case Study 1

A business-programmes event, built with universities

THE SCENARIO

You work in a international curriculum school.

60% of your students pursue higher education outside India

70% of your cohort is interested in Business programmes

THE CHALLENGE

Students don't understand the difference between Economics, Commerce and diverse kinds of business programs.

- Commerce
- BBA
- Economics
- Finance
- Other management programmes

YOUR BRIEF

Your school admin has given you a day and resources to run an event of your choice for Grade 11 and 12 students.

Create an event that will help your students. It must involve universities.

Describe the event:

1. **Objectives and goal**
2. **How it works**
3. **The process**

Case Study 2

Fact or forward? Verifying what families hear about study abroad

THE SCENARIO

Students and parents walk in quoting reels, videos and forwards about studying abroad.

Some claims are outdated, some are false, and the rules keep changing.

WHERE THEY HEAR IT

- Instagram reels
- YouTube
- News
- WhatsApp forwards
- Peers & relatives

THE COUNSELLING NEED

Help families check what is actually true about:

- Stay-back / post-study work visas
- Jobs for international students
- Part-time work rights
- Visa and policy changes

YOUR BRIEF

Design a solution your school can run with universities to help students and parents verify what they hear.

Describe your solution:

1. Who verifies, and using which sources
2. How families use it
3. How it stays up to date

KEY INSIGHT

Things we tried (School)

How to make the uni fair more useful

01

- How to Use The Fair Sessions
- University Bingo
- Study in India Worksheets
- Two-Minute Pitches - Videos
- Student Showcase Universities
- DU - Alumni Desk

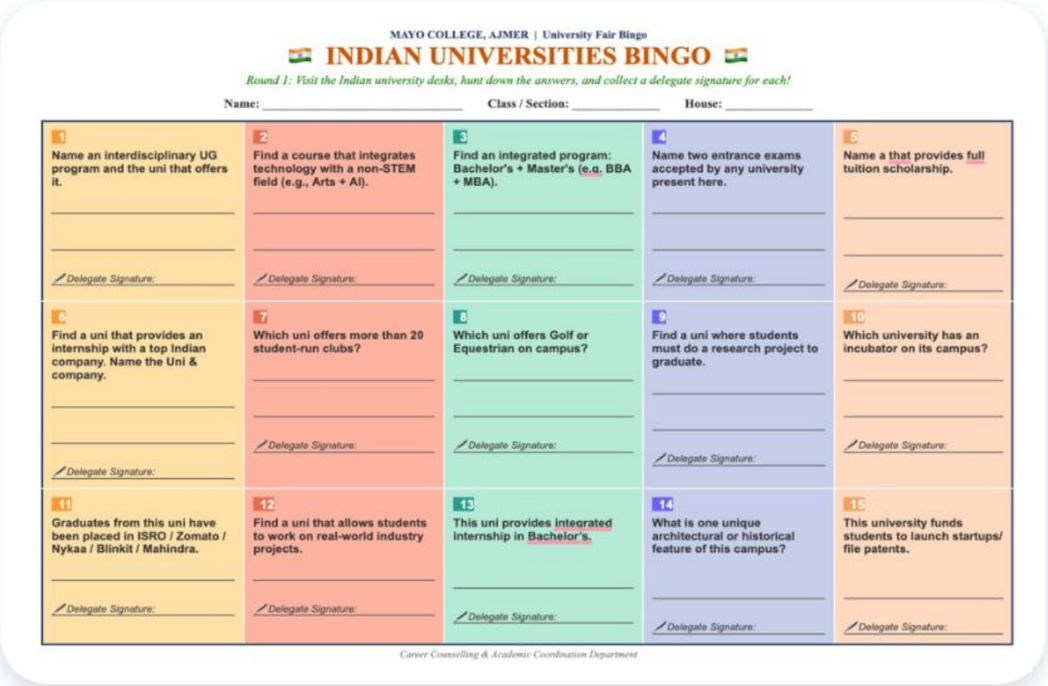
How to increase awareness of universities

02

- University Visits/ Destination tours
- University collaboration in flagship school events
- Faculty visits to universities
- University supporting aligned clubs/ activities

University Bingo

An example of making the university fair more useful



MAYO COLLEGE, AJMER | University Fair Bingo

INDIAN UNIVERSITIES BINGO

Round 1: Visit the Indian university desks, hunt down the answers, and collect a delegate signature for each!

Name: _____ Class / Section: _____ House: _____

1 Name an interdisciplinary UG program and the uni that offers it. Delegate Signature:	2 Find a course that integrates technology with a non-STEM field (e.g., Arts + AI). Delegate Signature:	3 Find an integrated program: Bachelor's + Master's (e.g. BBA + MBA). Delegate Signature:	4 Name two entrance exams accepted by any university present here. Delegate Signature:	5 Name a that provides full tuition scholarship. Delegate Signature:
6 Find a uni that provides an internship with a top Indian company. Name the Uni & company. Delegate Signature:	7 Which uni offers more than 20 student-run clubs? Delegate Signature:	8 Which uni offers Golf or Equestrian on campus? Delegate Signature:	9 Find a uni where students must do a research project to graduate. Delegate Signature:	10 Which university has an incubator on its campus? Delegate Signature:
11 Graduates from this uni have been placed in ISRO / Zomato / Nykaa / Blinkit / Mahindra. Delegate Signature:	12 Find a uni that allows students to work on real-world industry projects. Delegate Signature:	13 This uni provides integrated internship in Bachelor's. Delegate Signature:	14 What is one unique architectural or historical feature of this campus? Delegate Signature:	15 This university funds students to launch startups/ file patents. Delegate Signature:

Career Counselling & Academic Coordination Department

Visit the desks

Students go from one university desk to the next

Hunt the answers

15 prompts on courses, internships, clubs, campus and startups

Collect a signature

A university delegate signs each square they answer

From browsing stalls to asking real questions

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KEY INSIGHT

Things we tried (University)

01

Turned Event into in-class experience

The competition was designed to gauge student interest in cybersecurity and facilitate an ecosystem that connects schools, industry experts, and academic stakeholders to strengthen the quality and relevance of cybersecurity faculty.

02

Building a Counsellor Community

Instead of engaging counsellors only when you have an event, application deadline or recruitment target, build an ongoing professional network where they exchange insights, discuss student challenges and engage with university representatives.

03

Bringing University Expertise in School Ecosystem

Bring faculty expertise into schools through subject-specific workshops, research exposure, career exploration and collaborative projects that respond to what school teachers actually need, along with counsellors, and students.

What is School Engagement actually meant to deliver?

1. **Direct Recruitment:** For institutions expecting measurable student enrolments.

   School counselling sessions, targeted student workshops, application clinics, parent sessions and follow-up with interested students.

2. **Market awareness and positioning:** For Institutions aiming for market awareness and positioning

   Counsellor briefings, faculty masterclasses, school leadership partnerships and a consistent presence that helps schools understand what differentiates the institution.

3. **Academic engagement and student readiness:** For institutions whose identity rests on academic depth, specialist programmes or a distinctive educational approach.

   Subject-specific competitions, faculty-led workshops, research exposure, curriculum collaboration and structured pathways from school to university.

The Expectations of School Engagement Have Changed

The shift in what universities expect from schools, and what schools expect from universities

Earlier Expectation	Evolving Expectation
Visit schools to introduce the university	**Build sustained relationships with counsellors and school leadership**
Attend fairs to generate applications	**Create engagement that influences student awareness, consideration and readiness**
Deliver presentations about courses and rankings	**Offer academic experiences, faculty access and relevant learning opportunities**
Measure success by attendance and applications	**Examine influence on the recruitment pipeline, relationships and long-term outcomes**

A Good Engagement Expands…

- Perspective
- Trust
- Context
- Clarity

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From Where We Stand

What each of us wishes for school–university engagement

01

Sapna

High School

I wish…

- *For communication about applicants from my school*
- *For superpowers that help universities separate ‘Doctored’ from Authentic*

02

Sandeep

University

I wish…
I wish schools would view university engagement as a year-round partnership, rather than a calendar of fairs

03

Amrita

Community forum

I wish for:

- *Openness to trying*
- *Information on accommodation, feedback on student struggles*

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