

# UCAS Predicted Grades Principles

When a student applies to university through UCAS, the school is asked to give predicted grades in order that universities are best able to establish the suitability of the student to their chosen courses.

## 1. When do students get their predicted grades?

Predicted grades are published in Y13 Tracker 1 (early October). Teachers will usually have shared these with students before this date. This is particularly important for early-entry applicants (Oxbridge, Medicine, Veterinary Medicine and Dentistry).

It is unlikely that UCAS predicted grades will be a surprise to students, but this date ensures they sufficient time to choose their courses appropriately.

## 2. How are predicted grades decided?

It is important that we predict grades that we feel are a true reflection of each student's ability and potential. We adopt an honest and evidence-based approach to this process, whereby attainment and progress in Year 12 is the main indicator of future performance.

The teacher or teachers of each subject decide the predicted grades for their students, as they know their own students best. They may consider some or all of the following factors when making their decision:

- Results of Year 12 assessments
- End of Y12 mock exams
- Predicted grades on Y12 Trackers Grades awarded in progress reports
- Attitude to Learning (A2L)
- Performance in homework assignments
- Independent work
- Response to feedback
- The student's drive and passion for the subject (as evidenced by wider reading, involvement in super curricular activities around the subject etc)
- Professional judgement and experience of making UCAS predictions

For example, a student who consistently achieves B grades throughout Year 12 in assessments and homework assignments in a particular subject may be awarded a predicted grade of a B, or indeed an A if they have positive A2L. It is unlikely, however, that such a student would be predicted an A\* grade as the evidence would not support such a prediction.

Teachers will not base their predictions on a student's wishes, what the student needs to get into a particular course, or on students' promises that they will 'work harder next year'.

## 3. Higher predictions

It is understandable that students (and parents) may want teachers to predict higher A Level grades so that the student may access a particular university course. However, we have a professional and moral responsibility to ensure that the student has realistic expectations with regards to their abilities, whilst still remaining motivational and aspirational. There are a number of potential consequences of over-predicting A Level grades:

- i. Students find themselves without a university place when they receive their results, as they achieved what teachers originally predicted, but not the higher grades that were requested.
- ii. The student must go through the competitive Clearing process, often finally choosing a course that has lower entry requirements than they actually achieve.
- iii. Future students are affected, as the school's reputation for accurate predictions is diminished. University admission tutors build up a knowledge of the accuracy of a

particular school's predictions. Therefore, if the school becomes known for over-predicting, then future applications are put at a disadvantage as their predicted grades will be brought into question.

- iv. Teachers are asked to go against their professional judgement and honest opinion, which is not moral, nor is it fair to other students who are given an accurate prediction that may be lower than they would like.

#### 4. Extenuating circumstances

If a student feels that a particular predicted grade is not a true reflection of their ability due to exceptional circumstances, they should discuss this with their teacher or Student Support Assistant in the first instance. They will be asked to outline the reasons why they think the predicted grade is not a fair assessment of what they may achieve. Teachers may set additional assessments to help them decide if increasing the predicted grade is honest and evidence-based.

For example, if a student's Y12 mock exam result was particularly low, their teacher may allow them to sit another assessment in exam conditions.

#### 5. What is the overall process?

