

UCAS PREDICTED GRADES POLICY

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1. Introduction

Predicted grades at Regent Independent College will be honest and based on informed opinion. Anything else would be dishonest and in the long-term disadvantageous to the student body as well as the academic reputation of the college.

UCAS predicted grades play a crucial role for universities in their decision making process. Universities will not usually make offers to students who are likely to fall below the normal minimum entrance grade requirements unless other parts of the application are exceptional.

The timetable for university applications can be both an emotional and stressful time for all who are involved in this process including students, their parents, teachers and UCAS tutors. However, it is the responsibility of Regent Independent College to ensure that any prediction made is realistic and in the best interests of the student. Overly optimistic predictions have shown, with experience, to have a significant negative impact on both the students' progression and destination after leaving Regent Independent College.

2. Overall Aim

The college and subject teachers will work with students and their parents to ensure their predicted grades accurately reflect their ability, potential and aspirations. Regent Independent College will, as a matter of course, take responsibility to guide full-time students through the UCAS process. Unless by prior agreement in writing, part-time students are expected to use their previous school or college for UCAS or apply directly to UCAS as an independent candidate. In these circumstances, Regent Independent College will provide subject references and predicted grades only based on the criteria below. Full time students' UCAS references and predicted grades are also based on the below criteria.

3. Release of Predicted Grades

With the exception of students who are applying for a course with a 15th October deadline and who therefore require their predicted grades earlier, students will be provided with their predicted grades after Progress Test 1 has taken place after the half term.

4. How are Predicted Grades Decided?

The process of determining the predicted grade is as follows:

Step 1:

Each subject teacher makes a preliminary decision on a predicted grade for each student. Subject teachers may take a combination of the following factors into account in their decision making process; some of the below may not be relevant to all students. Greater weight may also be given to some of the items in the list below than others.

- Grades already achieved at A-Level
- Results of weekly tests, progress tests and mock examinations
- Performance in homework assignments and independent learning tasks
- Performance in any other informal class tests
- Grades received at GCSE
- The commitment demonstrated by the student to their subject and studies
- Their view of the student's ability based on teachers professional judgement and experience in making predictions
- A previous educational establishment's comments on performance and capabilities
- Any other relevant factors

Teachers will not take into account;

- Parental aspirations or promises
- Students' promises to 'work much harder'
- Comments relating to - 'We're paying for this'

Unfortunately, the parental desire for a student to do well will not affect performance in exams and though we appreciate that parents believe that their child has top-level potential, it is only the teachers who have the past experience and subject knowledge to make accurate predictions. Whilst a student's desire to work harder is admirable, students must always work harder in the second year of the A-Level course as it is much harder than the first year, in the same way that the first year of the A-Level course is much harder than the GCSE course.

Step 2:

Each subject teacher arranges a meeting with the Co-Principal(s), providing a list of students, their envisaged predicted grades, and a minimum of 5 pieces of student work or information (such as homework assignments, class tests results etc.) to evidence that grade.

If the Co-Principal(s) deems the predicted grade accurately reflects the level of student performance as evidenced, the grade is finalised. If the Co-Principal(s) believes that the student evidence indicates greater ability, the predicted grade may be increased. Similarly, if the Co-Principal(s) deems the predicted grade is not supported by sufficient evidence, the predicted grade may be lowered.

Step 3

The finalised predicted grade is made available to students (and to the UCAS tutors) and students must finalise their 5 UCAS choices in light of these grades.

5. Appeals

The only time when the College will consider making a change to the predicted grades is if, based on the factors above, you can prove that our predicted grade assessment is unjustifiable.

In such cases, pupils will need to provide a letter of appeal, which must be provided to the Co-Principals. The letter of appeal must state your name, the subjects and predicted grades you have been given and explain why you think them to be an unfair assessment of your capabilities.

We will consider the content of your appeal and will consult with your subject teachers, UCAS Tutor and yourself to ascertain whether the increasing of the predicted grade is the right decision or not. Ultimately, the final and overall decision rests with the Co-Principals of the College.

6. Over-Inflated Predictions

It would be easy for the college to acquiesce to students' and parents' requests and demands to over-predict A-Level grades. However, the consequences of such actions would lead to students having unrealistic expectations.

More realistic predicted grades encourage students to select more appropriate institutions so that actual grades means they will have a greater chance of securing a university and course of choice. Students on the other hand who fail to meet higher than realistic predictions or offers may find themselves without a university when results are published and will likely have to go through the Clearing system.

Scenario:

Take this situation as an example: you are predicted BBB, you pressure your teachers to predict you AAA to meet the grade requirements of the course you want. In August you get the BBB the teacher originally predicted but end up with no place because you did not get the AAA you need for the course. You have to go through Clearing and end up on a course which is of a CCC or DDD level. This should illustrate how it is better to be happy with a good university than strive for

one which is most likely unachievable and end up enrolling at a course at a less desirable institution.

Inflated predicted grades can also have a negative impact on the college community as a whole, especially for students in lower year groups who will be applying in the future or new students who join the college. University admission tutors build up knowledge of applying school and colleges and how well their predictions match the eventual final outcomes. Gaining a reputation as an educational establishment that over-predicts its students means that future applications are significantly disadvantaged as concerns are raised by a history of disparity between predicted and actual grades and may jeopardise future students' opportunities.

7. UCAS Adjustment

Students should also be aware of a process called UCAS Adjustment. UCAS Adjustment is a process whereby students who have met and exceeded the conditions of their firm choice can hold onto that choice on Results Day and ring round other institutions/courses to see whether they can be accepted there.

Scenario:

You are predicted BBB. You accept your teachers' predictions and make a BBB institution your Firm Choice. You end up getting AAA. You can then apply to that university to see if they will accept you on that course with your new increased grades whilst holding onto your Firm choice.

This is a much safer way of getting the place you want as you do not risk missing out on the BBB institution or losing it.

However, please do note that going into Adjustment does not automatically assure you of getting the place you want as this is at the discretion of the university.