

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 time-table 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 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 student's 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 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 during Autumn Term, usually around the half-term point. For the 2016/17 year, our expectation is that predicted grades will be released after Progress Test 1, that is, mid/late October.

4. *How Are Predicted Grades Decided?*

The process of determining the predicted grade is as follows:

Step 1:

Each subject teacher decides 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 received at AS Level (if taken)
- Grades received at A-Level
- Grades generated by ALIS tests
- How many or what units are being taken or re-taken
- Results of Target Tests, Progress Tests or Mock Exam
- Performance in homework assignments
- Performance in any other class tests
- Grades received at GCSE
- The commitment demonstrated by the student to their subject and studies
- The view of the student's ability based on their 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
- Student's 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/Vice Principal, providing a list of students, their predicted grades, and 5 pieces of student work or information (such as homework assignments, class tests results etc.) to evidence that grade.

If the Co-Principal/Vice Principal deems the predicted grade accurately reflects the level of student performance as evidenced, the grade is finalised. If the Co-Principal/Vice Principal believes that the student evidence indicates greater ability, the Co-Principals may decide to increase the predicted grade. Similarly, if the Co-Principal/Vice Principal deems the predicted grade is not supported by sufficient evidence, the predicted grade may be lowered.

Step 3

The predicted grade, which is finalised during the meeting with the Co-Principal/Vice Principal, is made available, along with the written subject reference, to the UCAS tutors.

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 Principal/Vice Principal. 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 we 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 Principal 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 that 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 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 years 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

Student 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' prediction 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.