**Bluecoat Sixth Form UCAS Predicted Grades and Reference Policy**

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. See below the answers to some frequently asked questions.

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

Predicted grades will open for staff to input them during the summer data snap shot. Teachers will be able to assess all the data at their disposal whilst ensuring that all students, including early-entry applicants (Oxbridge, Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary) have sufficient time to choose their courses appropriately based on these.

**2. How are predicted grades decided?**

It is essential 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 half-termly assessments
* Results of Year 12 mock exams
* General attitude to learning and commitment
* Performance in homework assignments
* GCSE results
* The student’s drive and passion for the subject
* Contextual information that may have impacted on student performance
* Professional judgement and experience of making UCAS predictions

For example, a student who consistently achieves ‘C’ grades throughout Year 12 in assessments and homework assignments in a particular subject may be awarded a predicted grade of a ‘C’, or indeed a ‘B’ if they have an excellent work ethic and attitude to learning. 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’. While this affirmation is certainly admirable, it is the case that Year 13 students work harder than they did in Year 12, simply to maintain their grades, due to the increased difficulty of final year content.

**3. Over-inflated predictions**

It is understandable that students and parents may desire teachers to over-predict A Level grades, in order 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.

The potential consequences of over-predicting A-Level grades are that students may 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. Future students may also be 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. Finally, 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. Appeals**

If a student feels that a particular predicted grade is not a true reflection of their ability or what they may achieve at the end of Year 13, then they may ask for the grade to be reconsidered by providing an appeal to the Head of Department using the template provided. This should outline the reasons why they think the predicted grade is not a fair assessment of what they may achieve. The appeal must be completed on the correct template and emailed to the Head of Faculty copying in Mrs Bromley for reference. The Head of Department will then consult the subject teacher or teachers, following which a final decision will be made as to whether or not the grade should be increased. Please note that the final decision will rest with the Head of Faculty (or SLT line manager if appealing the Head of Faculty’s prediction). Students will be informed of the decision in a timely manner (normally within a working week of appeal being received) and if successful, the grade will be changed on G4S.

Please note that the window for appeals is no longer than 2 weeks after the autumn 1 snapshot and 1 week after the resit snapshot, and appeals outside of this time frame will not be considered.

**5. References**

Students must choose **just two** of their teachers most aligned to the course for which they are applying to write a reference outlining their suitability for their chosen course. Students must email these 2 teachers to formally request a reference by October half term. They must include in this email details of the course that they are applying for and have their tutor copied into the email. Teachers are permitted a minimum of a two working week turnaround once this request has been received to provide the reference. This will be completed on Unifrog for tutors to access.

**6. Former Students**

Former students will be supported with UCAS references as an independent applicant after they leave Sixth Form as long as they had a personal statement approved and had a reference written whilst with us in Sixth Form. In order to enable us to honour this, we respectfully request that former students get in touch BEFORE October half term.

Please also note that if retaking exams, we will not be able to project higher grades than those previously projected or achieved (whichever is higher) while with us.

**7. What happens next?**

Teachers input their predicted grades along with their comments for the student’s UCAS reference. This information is passed along to the student’s tutor, who will then put the grades onto the student’s UCAS application, along with their completed reference. The application is then checked by a member of the sixth form team, before finally being sent to UCAS.