



30 September 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Covid-19 – UCAS Predictions

Over the last week I have had a number of meetings with our Sixth Form Team and I am writing to let you know the procedure we are putting in place for UCAS – the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service, which is the process for our Sixth Form students to apply for courses of study at university. The following link details the advice and guidance published by UCAS for entry to university in 2021:

<https://www.ucas.com/advisers/managing-applications/predicted-grades-what-you-need-know-2021-entry>

A requirement of the UCAS application process is for schools and colleges to provide predicted grades for each subject a student is studying in Sixth Form. I want to clarify the distinct difference between the UCAS predicted grades, ALPS Targets and internal assessments.

Each year, we base the UCAS predicted grades on the principles set out in the guidance and we set targets based on ALPS (A Level Performance System); this year we will be basing the UCAS predicted grades directly on ALPS targets.

It is important to be aware that predicted grades and targets are very different to each other:

Predicted grades: A predicted grade is the grade of qualification an applicant's school or college believes they're likely to achieve in positive circumstances. These predicted grades are then used by universities and colleges, as part of the admissions process, to help them understand an applicant's potential.

ALPS Targets: Are grades a student should be aiming to achieve based on their performance in Key Stage 4 examinations. ALPS minimum target grades are aspirational; to achieve these, students need to match the performance of students in the top 25% of providers nationally.

Although we produce predicted grades and set targets, a key factor is the standard of work our students produce in class, for homework, private study and performance in assessments throughout their course of study. As we all are aware, COVID-19 has significantly impacted on course delivery and will therefore have impacted on student progress.

Internal assessments: These may take the form of extracts from past examination papers; end of unit tests; extended pieces of writing or a combination of these. The purpose is to have a check on what students understand at present and provide an indication of progress made – they do not determine either the ALPS Target or the UCAS predicted grade.

It is important to understand that the end of course performance by a student in examinations does not always match UCAS predicted grades or ALPS targets; sometimes outcomes can be higher or lower than predictions and targets. It is important to note that over the last three years, our performance at Sixth Form has been an upward trend with positive value-added scores at A Level and Applied General examinations. All the seventy-six applications to university of choice have been successful for 2020, twenty-five to a Russell Group university.

I appreciate this is an anxious time for students and their families. I wish to reassure our students, their parents and carers that the internal assessments are to help identify gaps in learning so that our teachers can support students to make further progress towards their examination outcomes in 2021; to reiterate, the internal assessments will not determine the predicted grades for UCAS applications.

Once again, I wish to thank you for your continued support and understanding as we respond to the advice and guidance published to school.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Morrel', written in a cursive style.

Ian Morrel
Headteacher