



## A LEVEL PREDICTED GRADES POLICY

### 1. How Predicted Grades are formed

At Abingdon, Heads of Department are responsible for submitting predicted grades to the University Applications Office for use on a number of Higher Education (HE) application forms, most notably the UCAS form. Predicted Grades are submitted early in the Michaelmas Term of a student's Upper Sixth Year, according to deadlines set by the University Applications Office.

When drawing up their Predicted Grades, Heads of Department will rely heavily on the Guidance Grades that will have been issued towards the end of the Summer Term of a student's Lower Sixth. This grade will have been based on a number of data points, chiefly the November Test and the Summer Exam, but will also take in other performance indicators during the year, for example:

- End of topic tests
- Teacher comments on a student's performance in and approach to their subjects, including homework, class contribution and routine tests
- Departmental experience in tracking Lower Sixth performance through to A Level outcomes

Guidance Grades may be a single grade (e.g. "A") or may be split across two contiguous grades (e.g. "A/B", but not "A/C").

Predicted Grades may not be split and when turning Guidance Grades into Predicted Grades, Heads of Department will usually err on the optimistic side with split grades so that, for example, a Guidance Grade of "A/B" given at the end of the Lower Sixth would usually translate into an "A" Predicted Grade unless there were contrary indicators in the intervening time. By forming Guidance Grades in this way, students can be fairly confident about their likely Predicted Grades by the end of their Lower Sixth.

Students who wish to improve on their likely Predicted Grade once they have been issued with the Guidance Grade in the Summer of their Lower Sixth will usually be given the opportunity to prove their case via such things as completing some summer holiday work and taking a test in the September of their Upper Sixth. It may also be possible for students to give evidence over the first weeks of the term, prior to submitting their UCAS form, that they are deserving of a higher prediction than originally given.

When forming Guidance and Predicted Grades, Heads of Department will **not** place any weight on what a student thinks they need to get into a specific university/course of choice; nor do they pay much attention to a student's promise that they will 'work much harder in their Upper Sixth'

than they did in the Lower Sixth. Thus, Abingdon's Predicted Grades are an honest, but positive, assessment of a student's most likely achievement at A level, based on as much evidence as we can gather as well as substantial teacher experience. As such, we are confident in the grades we submit and will only consider altering a grade if a strong case can be made for us to consider a change.

Students should always be mindful of the importance of applying for suitable courses at suitable institutions. Securing an offer to get on a course on the basis of unrealistic grade predictions is unlikely to lead to ultimate success. It is also the case that students often think that universities will still accept them if they narrowly miss offers, but would not have made that offer in the first place if Predicted Grades didn't match their usual entry requirements. This is only partially true in our experience - and the higher the tariff of university (the ones who make the highest offers) the less likely they are to flex that offer when a student misses it.

## **2. How students are informed of their predicted grades**

Once the grades have been submitted by the Heads of Department and released to students, Tutors are asked to discuss them with their tutees in light of the universities discussions that will have been ongoing since the Lower Sixth. Grades will be released to MyAbingdon with an accompanying email to let students know they are there.

## **3. Right to review/to appeal**

Students may appeal individual Predicted Grades but should understand that grades are likely to be changed only when sufficient evidence has been presented to justify that change. Heads of Department will be willing to be optimistic but will also want students to understand that the more 'optimistic' they get, the less secure the prediction becomes. Predicted Grades are inherently optimistic and any increases move the prediction into the 'highly optimistic' range which is very difficult for students to achieve in final results. Again, students are strongly advised to be realistic in their university options and to apply for a range of institutions, some likely to be at the very extent of their reach and some more obviously within their grasp.

**Timings:** There is a centralised timeline for all Predicted Grade appeals, split into two branches differing by the public application deadline for university courses - early application (Oxford, Cambridge, Medicine etc.) and mainstream applications. The dates for these deadlines will be published to students at the start of September in Upper Sixth, with the publication of Predicted Grades later in September. There will be opportunities during the Michaelmas term for students to complete assessments that may act as evidence towards an appeal, outlined by individual departments. Heads of Department will not be willing to review their Predicted Grades outside of the timetabled appeals process.

Heads of Departments will consider each case on its merits. Depending on the evidence, they may wish to meet a student to discuss their appeal. If an appeal is successful, students will be notified by email on a specified date as set out in the centralised appeal timeline. If a student is unsuccessful in their appeal, the reasons for this will be outlined by the Head of Department. If the appeal is unsuccessful and the student remains dissatisfied with the outcome and its explanation, then a review of the appeal may be made to the Deputy Head Academic (DHA) for arbitration. Directly before making an appeal to the DHA, advice must have been sought from the UCAS office about the student grade profile. The DHA will reconsider the case as soon as is practicable and make a final decision.

#### 4. Further considerations

It may be the case that a student is applying to an alternative HE or FE programme with different timescales. If, in exceptional circumstances, a student makes rapid progress in the Upper Sixth (judged over half a term or more) that the original Predicted Grade issued is later deemed too low, this may be challenged. In these very rare circumstances, a further appeal to the Head of Department is allowable, so long as clear evidence can be offered (e.g. a sustained series of assessment / test marks). These then later adjusted Predicted Grades can be included on the relevant application form. Please note, UK universities do not accept ANY changes to Predicted Grades, regardless of rationale.

#### 5. Process summary

*A table to show the process leading up to the formation and publication of Predicted Grades*

L6th: November	November Tests; follow up by Sixth Form team for those who look to be struggling.
L6th: January	Retests for those deemed by HoDs to have fallen below an acceptable standard (on the day before term begins)
L6th: Lent Term	Most subjects will collect a formal data point in this term (e.g. end of topic test) according to their own timings.
L6th: Summer Term	Internal Exams after half term  Guidance Grades formed and issued.  Students offered the opportunity to take away holiday work in light of their Guidance Grade to improve on their likely Predicted Grade.
U6th: September/October	Students tested on any summer work they did and/or hand in work completed.  Predicted Grades formed and issued mid September.  Opportunity to appeal Predicted Grades based on evidence, first for early application candidates, and later for mainstream candidates.  Early applicant appeals decided.
U6th November	Predicted grade appeals decided for mainstream applications.
U6th post-November	In very exceptional circumstances, students pursuing alternative FE/HE options may receive improvement in predictions.

**Deputy Head (Academic)**

**Last Reviewed by Governors' Education Committee: October 2025**

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**Next Review by Governors' Education Committee: October 2026**