



UCAS – POLICY ON PREDICTED GRADES AND REFERENCES

Policy Custodian: Head of Upper School & Deputy Head (Academic)

Approving Body: MTS Senior Leadership Team

Approved: June 2025

(This policy does not apply to Merchant Taylors' Prep.)

Our policy on predicted grades is as follows:

1. **Predictions** – Heads of Department are asked to make predictions in the form of a range of grades. These will represent a positive but achievable range of outcomes. They make these predictions in the light of the progress over the year, performance in the Lower Sixth examination and the current trajectory the student is on. These grades will then form the basis for constructive one-to-one discussions between the student and his UCAS advisor. The grade entered on the UCAS reference will be that at the top of the range, but the student is advised to take into account the range of predictions when selecting university courses.
2. **Informing pupils/parents** – The range of predicted grades is published on the parent and pupil portals in June of the Lower Sixth year. A letter is sent to parents explaining this earlier in the term, and the process is reiterated during the UCAS information evening in May.

UCAS and universities ask the school to provide realistic A-level predictions for each applicant. It is extremely important for the school to maintain the integrity of this process and to protect it from pupil and parental pressure. The school is not required to disclose A-level UCAS predictions in advance of submission of the UCAS form but does so to enable pupils to calibrate their choices to their predictions, and not the other way round. Heads of Department will be able to explain how a prediction has been arrived at, but it is not a basis for negotiation: the decision on final predicted grades must remain with the school.

UCAS Reference

Our policy on UCAS References is as follows:

1. **Compilation** – Subject and Tutor references are written in June of the Lower Sixth year. They are written and saved on the school database (iSAMS). UCAS Advisors then collate and use these references as the basis of the final School Reference that is pasted onto each pupil's UCAS Form.
2. **Discussion** – The purpose of the School Reference is to highlight particular areas of strength that relate to the chosen field of each applicant, to corroborate what is written in the Personal Statement and to outline any relevant mitigating or extenuating circumstances. Consequently, it is important that UCAS Advisors discuss possible content for the reference with individual pupils. This may take the form of asking the pupils to produce a list of what they would like the referee to focus on, but most important is the need to engage in a sustained discussion with applicants as the reference-writing season progresses.
3. **Disclosure to pupils** – In order to avoid mistakes creeping into the final reference, UCAS Advisors will read pupils their reference before the application form is sent off. However, it should

be made clear to the pupils that whilst they may correct any factual inaccuracies, they cannot challenge the judgements made by their teachers/referee.

4. **Disclosure to parents** – Whilst references will be read to the pupils, they should not be given a copy (either electronic or a hard copy). References will not be sent home to parents, however if pupils and their parents do wish to have a copy of their reference, they can access it by contacting UCAS after the application form has been sent off (a nominal administration fee applies).

5. **Checking** – The whole UCAS Form – including the reference – is checked by a designated senior member of staff for obvious mistakes and errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar. UCAS Advisors should however, read each form carefully before sending it on for final checking, whilst ultimately, responsibility for all parts of the application form except the reference and predicted grades, remains with the individual applicant.

Head of Upper School
Deputy Head (Academic)
June 2025