

University Admissions and Careers Guidance Policy

Primary person responsible for updates to this policy: Chris Randell

Job title: Principal

Last review date: June 2021

Next review date: June 2022

Relevant ISI coding (if applicable)

Circulation: This policy has been adopted by the governors and is available to parents on request. It is addressed to all members of staff and volunteers and applies wherever they are working with children.

'Parents' refers to parents, guardians and carers.

University Admissions and Careers Guidance Policy

At Abbey College there is a dedicated team of people who advise on careers and university admissions. Each Head of House and Tutor works with students and parents to advise the most appropriate courses linked to interest, future careers and previous and potential academic levels. Each student is given a lot of individual support to ensure they apply for the right university courses. For students wishing to pursue a career or other training after their course at Abbey College detailed advice and guidance will be offered.

Completion of the UCAS form

Year 12	<p>All students are allocated to a Success in the Sixth Form group – part of the remit is to start guiding the university choices process. Taster lectures etc. are delivered as part of this.</p> <p>All students complete Careers/university options questionnaire which is used to identify/plan individual and group provision for careers/university guidance and support.</p> <p>Detailed guidance begins in Term 2 with special provision provided for “Competitive course's etc. All students start UCAS forms in Term 3 via the Success in the Sixth Form group</p>
Year 13	<p>Complete UCAS forms by 1st October (competitive) and the end of the second week after half term (for the majority of students)</p> <p>Every year 13 student is allocated to a timetabled ucas group and guided through the process. Taster lectures and university talks run alongside the programme.</p>
References	Completed with 10 days of submission of UCAS form
Predicted grades	See policy below

The student is responsible for completing the online application form with support from their dedicated UCAS teacher: Personal details, Courses, Education and Employment. Guidance will be given with this, particularly with the ‘Entering Qualifications’ section. The online application form must be completed promptly once the UCAS cycle begins. All internal deadlines must be met. Offers are made by universities before the final UCAS deadlines; therefore students who do not complete all sections promptly face a delay in the submission of the application and may miss out on offers as a consequence. Students are issued with information regarding BMAT, UKCAT and LNAT tests where appropriate (i.e. deadlines and lists of universities which require these tests). The student is responsible for registering for the UKCAT or LNAT tests at a local centre by the required deadline. IFP/CSP students have Research skills built into their programmes designed to support them in completing their applications.

Personal statement

When making a UCAS application, students are given the opportunity to state why they want to study the subject they have chosen and to tell something about themselves. It is not the role of the tutor to write the personal statement. The tutor's role is to help collate ideas, order information and proof-read the statement, suggesting improvements where applicable. Students need to include information on academic subjects and enrichment activities to enhance the application following the UCAS guidelines.

We guide students to write the most appropriate statement for the course chosen and cannot accept responsibility for students or parents/guardians who choose to change the statement against our advice.

Reference

The reference is the responsibility of the referee and all references are sent directly from the Principal. The student has no input and will not be directly consulted on its content. The referee will be provided with a short summary reference from each subject and will meet with the student individually to discuss:

- Personal motivation
- Personal attributes
- Evidence of teamwork
- Evidence of positions of responsibility
- Evidence of self-directed/independent learning
- Participation in sports/hobbies
- Evidence of relevant work experience
- Extenuating circumstances (if applicable)

The document is not a reworking of the personal statement and is an honest reflection of the college's overall assessment regarding the suitability of the student for their chosen degree course.

Tracking the application

The student should keep up to date with the progress of their application using Track online. The college will be able to track the application online.

Interviews

Not all subjects or institutions will meet with prospective candidates. Students must let us know immediately if they are offered an interview. This gives us the full time to prepare.

Medically related careers, Oxbridge and teaching applications must be prepared to attend university interviews and open days. In order to prepare for such situations students are allocated MMI rehearsal and mock interviews.

UCAS website

We encourage students to sign up to the UCAS Hub <https://www.ucas.com/what-are-my-options/create-your-ucas-hub-today> This provides them with access to information

on universities and course options as well as planning tools to support them through the whole application process.

Writing to universities

Writing directly to an admissions tutor is the best way of finding out answers to any specific queries. Nothing said on the telephone or in person carries any weight subsequently.

Work experience / Work shadowing/ Voluntary Work

Appropriate work experience should be pursued to support certain university applications and students can discuss what is appropriate with teachers and tutors. Our enrichment programme forms an integral part of the college curriculum. Students can opt to do voluntary work or work experience as their Wednesday afternoon activity.

Forecasting and UCAS Procedure Rationale

- To remove the barriers to ucas application and reduce conflict by empowering students by being an active part of the negotiations and hopefully in so-doing increase motivation and achievement.
- To release staff from the conflicting roles of forecasting achievement and predicting for the ucas system.

The process

To allow the teacher to record the forecast A-level grade they believe a student will achieve. There will be three opportunities to record this grade:

- October of the academic year in question
- After the college examinations in December
- After the mock examinations in March/April

To re-introduce the slashed grade as part of the teachers forecast and to separate the notion of a ucas prediction from the forecasted grade.

The forecasted grade will then be used to measure against final performance in the summer and the differential can be used as part of the analysis of examination results alongside comparison with incoming grades and ALIS baseline grades.

Once the forecast grades have been collected the students have an interview regarding their university choices. It is likely that the students will fall into three categories:

- Green: Those who are applying to universities which match their forecast grade
- Amber: Those who are applying to universities which require a grade higher than their forecast grade in one or more subjects
- Red: Those who are applying to universities which require one and half or two grades higher than their forecast grade in one or more subjects

It is at interview stage that the student can negotiate their ucas grade and will be given ownership of that target within a 1.5 grade tolerance of the teacher's forecast grade. e.g. a

B/C could negotiate an A grade. This will mean that we are no longer the 'gate keepers' of ucas and that the student can aim for their chosen courses if they are prepared to take the risk. Indeed it may even motivate the student to work harder towards achieving their chosen target. For competitive course see the separate section. By removing the obstacles to application we can remove the time wasted in lengthy meetings in which students and parents try to negotiate grades and the need for testing to reveal if a higher ucas grade can be given.

However, there are conditions attached to the negotiations.

- Students must choose two courses which match the teachers forecast grade
- When it comes to the time when the student chooses their CF and CI their CI must be approved by the college.
- The negotiation will be written down clearly with a chart showing the forecast and negotiated grade. The risks will be recorded and this letter will be sent to the student and parents/guardians/agents.

Sample

Name: Stu Dent

Year: 13

Subject	Biology	Chemistry	Psychology
Teacher forecast grade	C/D	B/C	B
Negotiated ucas grade	B	A	A

Risks of this strategy:

- You may not achieve the ucas grade in one or more subjects
- You may be better putting more choices that are realistic
- You may be better choosing some different courses which you will better cope with at university
- You will be asked to get AAB grades rather than slightly lower grades

IFP/CSP percentage predictions

IFP/CSP students will receive percentage scores on the same basis as above. For international students who can apply in January the actual December scores can be used.

MDV and Oxbridge

Applications for these courses have additional demands which make the process more complex. Therefore in the Spring/Summer terms of Year 12 and/or at interview for re-sit/transfer students the following chart will be used to ensure that candidates are meeting

all the criteria for these courses. This means that the negotiation process would only apply if all the other aspects of the application are in place.

Abbey College Manchester
Interview form for students wanting to apply for competitive courses
Spring term

Attendance and punctuality	
GCSE grades College exam grades Mock grades AS forecast grade Final AS grades A2 Forecast grade	
Attitude to study and work ethic	
Contribution to the college community	
Relevant work experience/ voluntary work etc. and/or evidence of their enthusiasm for/commitment to their chosen course. How they have pursued their interest in the subject.	
Other notes and comments on suitability Conditions to be met for the application to be supported	

Post results review in August and decision on support of application

Contextual data/extenuating circumstances

If underperformed in AS exams but meet other criteria final review in October

Abbey College Manchester ucas application discussion form

Name:

Year: 13

Date of meeting:

Subject			
Teacher forecast grade			
Discussion points about ucas forecast grade			
Negotiated ucas grade			

Review date: (if required)

Risks:

- You may not achieve the ucas grade in one or more subjects
- You may be better putting more choices that are realistic
- You may be better choosing some different courses which you will better cope with at university
- You will be asked to get the higher grades rather than slightly lower grades

Signed:

Teacher

Student

International Foundation Programme

IFP percentage predictions are based on mock exams, previous performance and class work/independent study.

The UCAS Tariff

The UCAS Tariff is a points system used to report achievement for entry to Higher Education in a numerical format.

Year 11 students

Year 11 student receive advice and guidance on progression routes via their tutors and Heads of House. Assemblies inform their decision making in the spring/summer term and reviews are held to discuss the options at ACM or at other schools/colleges both in the UK or abroad.