



REIGATE GRAMMAR SCHOOL VIETNAM

Predicted Grades Policy

ISI Code:	
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Reviewed by:	Aaron MAYO (University Counsellor) Gita GEMUTE (IBDP Coordinator)
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Context

RGSV prepares students for various post-18 opportunities, including further study in Higher Education (universities & colleges in Vietnam and abroad), apprenticeships, employment, and vocational training. For some of these opportunities, concerning university & college applications, RGSV is required to provide predictions of the grades that a student is expected to earn in each subject in the IB Diploma Programme, and maybe IGCSE levels.

Please note that we will use the term 'Predicted Grade' to encompass a predicted, estimated, projected, or anticipated grade for the purposes of this document.

Timing

University Predicted Grades: Applications to universities around the world are usually accompanied by Predicted Grades. The grades are submitted along with the application by the stated deadlines. Following long-standing practice, we submit all applications before the winter holiday as we believe it is in the students' interests to submit them during the Autumn Term.

IB Diploma Predicted Grades: These are given by DP staff to the DP Coordinator by 1st April each year in order to be sent to the IBO for their 20th April deadline.

RGSV Predicted Grades: At RGSV Predicted grades are requested during the following times and purposes:

June of DP1 (Grade 11):

Teachers and students share Predicted Grades at this time. Students and teachers assess where they think their efforts and work are leading in terms of Predicted Grades. The student and teacher meet to discuss the similarities or differences between both grades. The discussion will include explanations as to how they have come to the grade. The discussion will end with goal setting to help students assess what they need to do to begin preparation for their external May examinations and to either keep or improve the prediction. (Link to form to be used)

October of DP2 (Grade 12)

October Predicted Grades will be requested from teachers only for students who are applying to UK Oxbridge programs and for certain universities' courses in Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science. Or in the case where a university specifically requires or requests Predicted Grades for Early Decision or Early Action. Predicted Grades will only be sent to non-UK universities if the student can demonstrate that the university requires them, or if the university connects with the UC office directly to request predicted grades. Teachers will be asked to review if the June Predicted Grade needs to be changed. If the Predicted Grade stays the same or increases, the student will not be informed. If a change lowers the Predicted Grade, the University Counsellor will inform the student.

December of DP2 (Grade 12)

December Predicted Grades are used for regular decision processes around the world, and are shared only if the application process or universities require the information. Students and parents will receive the Predicted Grades within two weeks of teachers assigning them.

April of DP2 (Grade 12)

April Predicted Grades are required to be shared and uploaded with the IB and are only for externally required processes. The IB uses these grades in cases when final examination grades cannot be assessed in unusual examination circumstances (such as COVID-19) or if examinations are lost while being sent to the IB. Students do not usually receive information about the April predictions, unless the DPC and UC

see a large enough point discrepancy from the December Predicted Grade that could impact university applications. In that case, they will inform students and parents to plan for adjustments in university application processes.

Predicted Grades and the Application Process

Many universities advertise the typical offer grades for their courses on their web pages. Requirements are expressed in terms of IB points either in a range (e.g. 38-40 IB points) or in single points.

IB Predicted Grades are only one element in the selection process. Universities & colleges weigh several factors, and there is no single formula for this. Universities & colleges consider Predicted Grades, historical performance in public examinations, the pupil's Personal Statement/Essay, the school's Reference/Recommendation, and in some areas such as Medicine, relevant work experience. As students prepare University applications for a variety of countries and University programmes, they will work together with the RGSV University Ccounsellor to determine the most appropriate application strategy.

Considerations Regarding Predicting Grades

Both universities and RGSV appreciate the fact that predictions are estimates and cannot be 100% reliable, although experience shows a good correlation between teachers' predictions and eventual outcomes. A temptation to 'inflate' Predicted Grades has led to poorer correlation for many schools, in turn undermining the credibility of their estimates. In common with other leading schools RGSV does not collude in the practice of 'grade inflation'. This policy follows the guidance of the UK Department for Education, whose spokesperson (reported in *The Independent*, 4th February 2016) said:

"We trust teachers to act in the best interests of their students by giving fair predicted ... grades that accurately reflect their ability. Distorting grades would be unfair on the pupils involved and could result in universities having to artificially inflate their entrance requirements, rendering it pointless in the long run."

RGSV's approach is based on the following principles:

- Teachers have the students' best interests at heart, and try to support their applications so that they make a successful transition to higher education.
- Teachers draw on a wealth of professional judgement and experience. They consider the following factors:
 - school reports
 - previous public examination performance
 - performance under test conditions in school
 - data drawn from tracking tests and termly assessments
 - classroom performance and engagement with the subject
 - comparative performance against the standards achieved by previous students on the course
 - any special factors which may have caused temporary under-performance.
- Teachers do not base predictions on what a student would like to achieve in order to get into a particular University or course. Nor do they predict on the basis of a student's promise to work harder in order to achieve it. This does the student no service, as university offers based on unrealistic grades are not likely to be met, and a University choice will have been wasted.

RGSV is confident that the grades we predict are an honest assessment of the student's most likely achievement, based on evidence and professional judgement. Please note that Pamoja-taught subjects and Grade Predictions follow the procedures set out by Pamoja Education.

Predicting Grades

Both universities and the school appreciate the fact that predictions are estimates and cannot be 100% reliable (although experience shows a good correlation between our predictions and eventual outcomes). A temptation to 'inflate' such grades has led to poorer correlation for many schools, in turn undermining the credibility of their estimates. In common with other leading schools we do not collude in the practice of 'grade inflation'. Our policy follows the guidance of the UK Department for Education, whose spokesperson (reported in *The Independent*, 4th February 2016) said: "We trust teachers to act in the best interests of their students by giving fair predicted ... grades that accurately reflect their ability. Distorting grades would be unfair on the pupils involved and could result in universities having to artificially inflate their entrance requirements, rendering it pointless in the long run."

Our approach is based on the following principles:

- We have the students' best interests at heart. We wish to support their applications so that they make a successful transition to higher education.
- We draw on a wealth of professional judgement and experience. Teachers consider factors such as school reports, previous public examination performance; performance under test conditions in school; data drawn from tracking tests and termly assessments; classroom performance and engagement with the subject; comparative performance against the standards achieved by previous students on the course; any special factors which may have caused temporary under-performance.
- Heads of Department, in conjunction with the subject teachers, give predicted grades to the Diploma Coordinator and University Counselor which, based on the criteria above, reflect a realistic optimistic assessment. That is, the prediction will indicate what the student might achieve, taking all factors into account, at the best in his or her range. Thus, a student who is working at IBDP 5 level but who demonstrates the clear potential to achieve an IBDP 6 will be given the benefit of an IBDP 6 prediction if an application of the criteria justify it. These predicted grades are shared by teachers with students individually so that students' university applications are made in light of these.
- We do not base predictions on what a student would like to achieve in order to get into a particular university or course. Nor do we predict on the basis of a student's promise to work harder in order to achieve it. This does the student no service, as university offers based on unrealistic grades are not likely to be met, and a university choice will have been wasted.
- On this basis, we are confident that the grades we predict are an honest assessment of the student's most likely achievement, based on evidence and professional judgement. Please note that Pamoja-taught subjects follow the procedures set out by Pamoja Education.

Predicting Release of Predicted Grades

Predicted grades are released to students in the following ways:

Predicted Grade Issue	Release to students	By whom	Further communication
June of DPI	Two days after teacher and student entry	RGSV Secondary Office staff on behalf of the DPCs	Teachers and students meet to reflect on and discuss the predictions
October of DP2	Not released to students unless the University Counsellor decides to share the grades with students.	Not released	Communication initiated by the University Counsellor if needed.
December of DP2	Two weeks after teacher entry	University Counsellor	Students may speak to teachers regarding grades with the purpose to improve learning, not to appeal a change
April	Not released to students unless the predicted grade from Dec to Oct has changed by two points	University Counsellor and DPC	Students should make appointments with the UC to reassess university applications

Date of Policy: 1st August 2019

Developed by: Colin BRADSHAW BASTIDA (Head of Secondary and IBDP Coordinator) & Alyssa PHOSRITHONG (University Counsellor)

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Reviewed by: Aaron MAYO (University Counsellor) and Gita GEMUTE (IBDP Coordinator)

Next review: August 2024

Teacher Appendix

How should we determine Predicted Grades?

1. What factors should inform how we determine PGs?

Our priorities here are to:

- (i) provide students with realistic information about their trajectory
- (ii) remain credible to universities.

There is some tension here between PGs and our general approach of trying to be as optimistic as possible with students. We recognise this, and in this case will seek to be positive, but must meet our priorities. Overall, therefore, we seek to be as accurate as possible.

The PG should:

- Take into account all elements of IBDP subject performance; where possible in approximately equal proportions to the actual IBDP weightings. This may mean including the student's likely performance in various elements of coursework, on the basis of available evidence
- Not take into account any grade needed for University application
- Not be over-influenced by any single aspect of assessment such as the Grade 11 exam (this is a very popular misconception among students and parents that we must seek to re-correct each year)
- Not be the cause of any additional assessments beyond those already there
- Not be based on promises to work hard or on academic potential
- Not be used as a motivational tool (this feedback would be more appropriate in your Target Setting talks)
- Be in line with the student's assessment history
 - We do not expect great discrepancies between PGs and previous holistic attainment levels
 - Where the PG differs from the previous holistic attainment level, we should have a good reason to justify the difference, and these should be discussed at department level
 - In any case where the PG is lower than the previous holistic attainment level, student and parents should be explicitly informed by the subject teacher in writing about this grade before the formal sharing process begins
- Take into account the improvement likely with continued guidance throughout Grade 12 to the final examination
- Take into account any increase in the level of difficulty of the remaining curriculum
- Only predict an IBDP grade 3 or less where such low attainment has been identified through earlier assessments, thereby ensuring the student has received support from the teacher, in partnership with the Diploma Coordinator and Head of Department.

All that said, we recognise that a PG is a professional judgement about the grade most likely to be attained. For example, if taking all these factors into account, a teacher thought a student was more likely to get an IBDP 5 than an IBDP 6, a PG of IBDP 5 would be appropriate even though an IBDP 6 was not out of the question.

While PGs are based on knowledge of the student, supported by assessment data, and informed by departmental discussions, it is not realistic to expect total accuracy.

2. What are our internal systems for ensuring PG accuracy?

Individual teachers make professional, evidence-based judgements (see above), and these are collaboratively examined at departmental level. While exact precision is elusive, the notion of 'standardisation with critical friends' should inform this process.

Following IBDP results, departments can examine accuracy at a subject and individual teacher level, looking at PG (Sept) PG Updates (Nov/Dec & April) and reflecting on the findings. HoDs & DPC should monitor specific difficult individual cases and lessons learnt each year. Observations and action points can be mentioned in departmental reports.

System Clarifications

We enter PGs directly into a Google Drive spreadsheet and not into Managebac.

1. When will predicted grades be entered?

Predicted grades will be recorded in September of Grade 12, and updated in November and April of Grade 12.

2. What if I need to change an PG after they have gone live?

Make no promises to students unless it is a genuine error in the original submission. There should not be any reason to make a change, the PG entry points are timed very tightly around university application deadlines. If there is a perceived exception, open up the discussion with your respective HoD and inform the DPC. If a change is deemed appropriate or an error needs to be fixed, then the HoD, DPC, UC all need to be informed.

3. Does this have implications for sharing IBDP Internal Assessment grades? (Note that not all IAs are submitted/graded/moderated soon enough to be taken into account).

If IA marks form part of the evidence for grades, it is reasonable that students have a good idea of how they have done. How we communicate this may be subject dependent; it could be as simply as 'low 6' or 'high 4' or it might be more detailed as appropriate. Each department, however, should have an internally consistent approach. All indications should be given with the caveat of further possible departmental or IB moderation.

4. Will the final IBDP and/or IGCSE predicted grades (the ones that are shared with the IBO/CAIE) be open?

No. For these final predicted grades, being so close to the exams means that the advantages for sharing them are outweighed by the disadvantages. We have never been asked about them and we have no plans to proceed down this route.

5. How will we make sure that parents and students clearly understand all our grading and reporting systems and how we decide on predicted grades?

We will build this into the annual communication flow, using the regular mechanisms of emails, Managebac messages etc.

6. How will PGs be communicated to students?

Subject teachers are expected to explicitly speak to students individually. In cases where teachers believe the grade may be unexpected, they should discuss with HoD, DPC & UC and consider discussing with the student/family beforehand.

7. What would the systems be for subsequent discussion? What is the UC's role in this process?

The University Counselor will discuss what PGs are needed for specific courses, but any discussions about the levels of PGs given, or about improvements must be between subject teacher and student; students can, therefore have a short discussion with their subject teachers, to understand the PG. It is, however, vital that the conversation is not a negotiation about grades, but a discussion about improving learning (see section below for advice). In these cases, teachers should let the UC know that the conversation has taken place.

8. How are predicted Core points calculated?

Given the nature of the EE and TOK tasks, historical data indicates that the most accurate indicators of Diploma Programme Core points are derived from analysis of students' overall predicted point score, rather than from individual EE/TOK predictions. We would therefore base analyses on 3 years of historical data from our graduates, and also use professional interpretation to ensure that the prediction is sensible given what we know about students' on-going performance.

Student Welfare and Focus

1. How will we avoid student fixation on the numbers, and talk to students so that they focus on learning and progress?

The way we frame and talk about this will be crucial. Some students may fixate on numbers; but we need to bring conversations around to the notion that these are the grades for which the student has provided the strongest evidence. The aim will be to focus on what needs to be done to provide stronger evidence so that we can support them.

2. Will PGs demotivate students because they will feel labelled? Are they in opposition to growth mindset? How will PGs affect the relationship between teacher and student?

Some students may initially feel demotivated (of course, others may feel motivated) and we need to intentionally manage conversations to re-motivate. How we approach this (see section below) will determine if a growth mindset is reinforced or undermined. A lot here will depend on trust, which will itself depend on how well a student understands his or her trajectory, but some points for such conversations might be:

- Engage positively and actively, rather than defensively. State that you are really pleased the student has opened the conversation about how he/she can meet his/her aspirations and that you want to help
- Stress that the PG is just another piece of information as to current performance; so absolutely categorically avoid the 'you are a 6/A' kind of talk, and move to 'the evidence I have so far seen is indicative of a level 6/A grade'
- Move the focus to what would be the evidence needed to indicate a higher grade, then in some cases what behaviours would be likely to show this evidence, and always, what understanding at that level would look like.

So overall, this is a significant cultural piece and a great deal will hinge on our ability to navigate these difficult conversations.

3. How will we deal with 'haggling' conversations with students about changing their grades?

In those rare cases where the approach does not prevent a student from inappropriately pressing for an increased grade, teachers will have to gauge the situation to make a judgement about the best response; remembering the PG process cannot be a negotiation. If conversation becomes difficult, remembering that it is being driven by disappointment, we should respond as sensitively as we can, but not raise the grade, and the teachers should let HoD know, and refer the student to the DP Coordinator & Head of Secondary. Language (with a smile and approachable voice) might be "This is the grade for which there is most consistent evidence, so that's the right grade here. We can't negotiate about that, I'm afraid. As for university options, I need to refer you to the University Counselor." Whether a student is applying in an Early Decision round or to ultra-selective universities should not influence a Predicted Grade decision.

4. When would we change the PG between rounds?

Obviously having two rounds for the University PGs implies the possibility for change. So the simple answer here is 'when we have evidence that changes our judgement about the most likely grade'. Of course, we need to specify the nature of what evidence is needed.

- No Surprises! We must communicate to students and families before the PG has gone live if the PG is lower than the previous one. We would also expect the teacher to have signalled a significant concern beforehand.
- It might be that the teacher sees evidence of maturation beyond previous expectations (some increase in maturity is natural and built into the initial PG), or simply accelerated understanding for no obvious reason. In this case, the evidence would be the usual range of observations and data, and a higher grade may be justified.

There will also be students who understandably ask, between PG rounds, what he or she can do to increase the grade. While the response should be tailored to the individual student, we should bear in mind:

- Such a request might be crucial to the student's aspirations, and is implicitly based in a growth mindset, and so should be welcomed, and supported
- The work needed to provide evidence of improved understanding may come at the cost of commitment elsewhere, and with a cost to wellbeing. For these reasons, HRTs, HoD, DPC & UC should be aware of these cases, and requirements should be measured and not overwhelming
- The student will need to have some clear indications as to what 'sufficient evidence' would look like:
 - Evidence should not be vague (try harder); or simple tick list of things to do (do these past papers); or potentially unrelated to understanding (ask more questions in class)
 - Where a student's understanding is at issue, evidence should be related to the teacher's judgement, and ideally, closely related to the quality (not just volume) of ongoing work, rather than related to re-doing previous work. So advice might be: you need to be able to consistently demonstrate almost flawless algebraic accuracy, or you need to show me the ability to analyse and synthesise, not just describe, in the next four tasks we do or you need demonstrate a consistent ability to explain in detail, using original examples, how opinions may change when you adopt different perspectives

- Where a student's capacity to perform in timed examinations is at issue, advice might be centred around exam technique and dealing with stress (seeking further guidance from specialists if appropriate). Teachers should discuss with their HoD.

Parental Conversations

Parents will be directed to this policy at the start of each year's process.

1. Do we have to justify our grades to parents? Should we share evidence with parents?

The vast majority of parents will be supportive and understanding; they will have confidence in our processes, and transparency will not be an issue. Few PGs should be surprises, as PGs are based on public information that parents already have:

- Patterns of holistic attainment grades and reports.
- Parent-Teacher conference conversations.
- Ongoing formative assessments / feedback to students, mostly recorded on Managebac

Nevertheless, parents may wish to discuss the PG. As stated elsewhere in this document, the predicted grade is not 'awarded' by the teacher - it is simply the grade for which the student has provided the strongest evidence. The conversation is thus not about the teacher, and what she/he thinks, but about the evidence. Teachers should ensure they are familiar with the points in this policy document before conversations, and seek HoD support if necessary.

That said, we are mindful that pressure may be brought to bear. We do not want a blanket rule of 'parents may not contact teachers about this', as that will undermine trust, but in those extremely rare cases where parents place pressure for grade changes, this should be treated as other difficult conversations; the teacher should contact HoD and DPC for support as necessary. Teachers should not engage in negotiation with parents on the PG.

The situation is very different when parents are looking to understand what they can do to support their child's learning. These are welcome at any point.

2. Will the administration ever change the teacher's PG?

In a small minority of cases (historically in schools, about 0.5%) we have opened discussions, introduced context and in very rare cases, amended grades. Adjustments have been made where:

- Input errors have been discovered
- There were extenuating assessment or personal circumstances of which the teacher was not aware

In cases such as these, DPC will discuss with teacher and HoD to seek to understand, and may ask for adjustments.