Guide to the UCAS Teacher Reference

The UCAS teacher reference is a written statement which gives context to your student's application to university. The reference will be sent to each university's admissions department alongside the rest of the application.

Why is the reference important?

- Assists in the selection process to distinguish between candidates with similar profiles.
- Universities use it to understand the potential of the applicant and their ability to succeed.
- Provides information about factors that might prevent the student from achieving typical offer grades (e.g. any personal factors, disability, disruption to studies etc.)

Key information

- Maximum 4,000 characters or 47 lines of text.
- You will input the reference online. The page will time out after 35 minutes so make sure you save regularly or consider drafting in a word processor first.
- Will not been seen by applicant prior to submission, however they can request a copy afterwards.
- Predicted grades are added in a separate box rather than the statement itself.

Example structure

Information on the school/college

Special circumstances (if applicable)

Feedback from subject teachers

Student's suitability for their chosen course

Concluding statements

Information on the school/college:

- Size/number of students overall
- Number or proportion of students progressing to HE
- Typical number and patterns of qualifications taken by students
- Extra courses/qualifications students take (EPQ, General Studies)
- Any relevant WP (widening participation) criteria (e.g. school context, local area etc).

Special circumstances

- Occasionally students' studies are disrupted due to illness, personal or family issues.
- With the student's permission, it is advised that you write briefly about what this disruption was and how it impacted on the student.

Subject reports should include:

- Academic and practical skills related to the subjects
- Capability as an independent learner
- Examples of student exploring subject outside of lessons
- Ability to work hard and keep to deadlines
- Attainment in comparison to rest of the group

Suitability for Higher Education:

- Potential for success in Higher Education
- Skills and qualities they possess
- Attitude, motivation and commitment
- Why the student is suited to their chosen subject and career

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