

HNC's Key Terminology Explained for Students and Parents

Name	Explanation
SG (Statistical Grade)	A statistically generated grade that is calculated using GCSE grades on entry. HNC's Statistical Grades are very aspirational as they are based on the performance of the top 25% of students within the cohort. As these are an aspirational grade based on national data, they are not a prediction of what an individual student is going to achieve, and they do not limit what a student can achieve. Statistical Grades are used by teachers to provide motivation as to the high level that an individual student can achieve and are the starting point for an on-going learning conversation with the student. It is very common for students with the same Statistical Grade to achieve different final grades at the end of their course. This is influenced by their attendance and work ethic throughout the course, in addition to the teaching and learning provided.
PG (Progress Grade)	Teachers award students a Progress Grade at every Progress Point (ProP). Progress Point reviews occur on an approximately ½ termly basis. The Progress Grade is the final grade that a student seems most likely to achieve taking into account all the evidence from classwork, homework, coursework, internal or external examinations, skills and knowledge development, attendance and work ethic. It is not the grade that a student would achieve if they completed their course or sat their exams today. These professional judgements are based on the collective evidence available at the time and are not a guarantee of outcomes. They depend upon the student continuing to work and to develop in a similar manner to when the Progress Grade is inputted; these grades tend to become more accurate over the duration of a course. Note that there is often a disparity between a students' Progress Grade and the grades that they are being awarded on Markbook as the Progress Grade is based on a collective of evidence and a Markbook grade on a single specific piece of evidence (for example an assessment).
UCAS Grade	UCAS grades are decided early in the 2 nd year of a student's course of study and are an estimation of the best possible grade that a student can achieve in the subject. UCAS grades are very optimistic.
Mock Exam Grade	Mock exams are taken by A level students in the January or February of their second year. Teachers adopt different approaches to the setting of mock exams, depending upon the learning that they are seeking to promote through the mock process. Although mock exams are taken under exam conditions, the results that students achieve cannot be assumed to be the results that they will achieve when they sit their final exams in the summer. They are an early

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	indicator of what a student can achieve under exam conditions, to inform learning priorities in preparation for the final exams in the summer.
CAG (Centre Assessment Grade)	Centre Assessment Grades were awarded to students for the first time ever in August 2020 because students did not have the opportunity to complete their study programme in the normal manner. CAGs were fair, objective and carefully considered judgements of the grades that teachers believed their students would have been most likely to achieve if they had sat their final exams, or completed all their assignments. CAGs took into account the full range of available evidence. CAGs were subject to an internal moderation process to ensure that they were consistent with the three year historic grade profile in each subject (as directed by Ofqual) and then were subject to an external moderation by the exam board to verify this, using an algorithm designed by Ofqual (later withdrawn). This meant that some CAGs changed through the dual moderation process.
Awarded Grades	A level qualifications are graded A*-E, a U grade is a fail. BTECs are graded Distinction*, Distinction, Merit, Pass, Fail. GCSEs are graded 9 - 1, colleges and employers treat grades 9 - 4 as passes, a U is a fail.
Level 2 (GCSE English and maths, L2 BTEC)	Students on Level 2 courses are automatically allocated the grades required for progression to Level 3 as their target grades. This means that every GCSE resit English and maths student has a Grade 4 as their target grade and every Level 2 BTEC student has MM as their target grade. These target grades are not a guarantee that a specific student will go on to achieve those grades. They have different starting points to these grades and their final grade is influenced by their attendance and work ethic, in addition to the teaching and learning provided.
Trial Exams	Trial exams are taken by A level students during the final term of Year 12. Trial exams provide students with the opportunity to practise their exam skills and test their current subject knowledge. Teachers use the results of the Trial Exams to identify students who require additional support and challenge to achieve their best.
BTEC exams and coursework	Students taking Level 3 BTEC qualifications are assessed through a combination of examined units and coursework units. It is important to note that if a student fails an externally set and assessed examined unit three times they cannot pass the course, irrespective of the coursework marks that they achieve.

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Attendance	Research proves that students who miss 10% of their lessons on average drop one grade. The College expectation is that students attend 100% of their lessons, with a baseline of 95% for genuine absence. All genuine absences (such as illness) must be reported to the College before 10:00am on the day of the absence. Other known genuine absences, such as for an Orthodontic appointment or a Driving Test, must be authorised in advance through consultation with the Progress Tutor.
Progress Tutor and Tutorial	The Progress Tutor is the key point of contact for students and parents / carers. Progress Tutors have regular 1-2-1 meetings with their tutees to review progress and set targets. They provide academic guidance; encourage tutees to think about their learning more broadly; provide advice and know when to get more expert help if things are not working out; offer pastoral support and guidance on a range of topics (academic, personal, emotional, social); encourage tutees to actively participate in enrichment activities; discuss and plan the next stage in a tutee's life (including applying for university, apprenticeships or employment) and write their reference.
Progress Point Target Setting - VESPA	At every Progress Point (ProP) course tutors allocate their students a VESPA target area to focus on in order to support their continued improvement. Students are responsible, with course and progress tutor support, for deciding exactly how they are going to address the specified VESPA target area. Departments' record, track and monitor VESPA targets in a way that works best for them. Progress Tutors discuss VESPA targets during their regular 1-2-1's with tutees and support them to make progress towards achieving these personalised targets. Please refer to the table below for further details about each element of VESPA.

VESPA Target	Description	Recommended Student Action
V Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A vision provides students with an overall purpose and from this flows motivation, commitment and focussed action. Students without a clear vision tend to hit a ceiling and underperform. If a student doesn't know why they are in college their effort soon decreases when the going gets tough. • A clear vision enables students to set short and medium term targets, it leads to tangible action to achieve their long-term goal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a clear purpose for being in college; if lacking a clear purpose speak to teachers / tutors / careers advisors / parents / trusted friends about potential future careers. • Once you have a vision break it down into an actionable plan (short / medium / long term goals). Stick to the targets that you have set for yourself even when you encounter obstacles. • When you experience setbacks in achieving your vision – and everybody does – proactively reach out to your support network to help you get back on track as quickly as possible.
E Effort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many students believe in the myth of effortless success – 'you've either got it or you haven't'. Believing that effort has no impact upon success often leads to disengagement and withdrawal as the challenges become harder and the set-backs more frequent. • In reality, effort underpins success and this applies to every aspect of life including studying at college. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and acknowledge the clear link between effort and success which applies to every walk of life. • Devote the recommended time to independent study. The College's general rule is that you should allocate 1 hour of independent study for every 1 hour of class time. • Log independent study and proactively identify opportunities to undertake more study.
S Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is almost impossible for a disorganised student to achieve their Statistical Grade. In particular students require: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A system to organise learning so that they can make sense of their studies, often over a two-year period. ○ A system to organise their time so that they can complete all learning tasks within the set deadlines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be clear about short, medium and long-term deadlines and prioritise work accordingly. • Proactively seek help for the areas of your personal systems that require development – file and time management are of particular importance. • Devote time and effort to organising resources, notes and handouts in a logical manner to enable effective retrieval.

VESPA Target		Description	Recommended Student Action
P Practice & Perfect	Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effort alone does not guarantee academic success, a student may devote numerous hours to independent study but spend this time on activities that don't enhance their learning. • It is vital that students make the best possible use of their independent study time by undertaking activities that have been endorsed by their teachers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan every independent study session to ensure that it is as productive as possible. • Follow course tutor's advice on what type of independent study activities to undertake. Every independent study activity should require your full concentration and involve deep thinking. • Ask for help if you are not sure how best to utilise your time.
	Perfect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently high performing students should always seek to challenge themselves further to develop a broader knowledge base and to finely hone essential higher order skills to prepare themselves to achieve the top grades and progress to the most competitive destinations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively seek opportunities to broaden and deepen your knowledge by engaging with additional subject-related materials. Examples include reading a relevant journal, watching a documentary, listening to the news and participating in a subject-related enrichment activity such as a work experience placement. • When producing written work for the subject have a clear focus on developing the analytical, evaluative and creative aspects which examiners tend to award the highest marks for.
A Attitude		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During any course of study students will inevitably experience challenges and set-backs. The most successful students constantly seek new challenges to extend their learning and respond positively to set-backs. • Being resilient, determined and positive when faced by difficult challenges or when receiving disappointing grades or feedback is essential in ensuring that the learning process continues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware from the outset that learning is difficult and that set-backs are inevitable. When these set-backs occur learn from them by carefully listening to the feedback provided to you by tutors and act upon their advice in a positive manner. • Understand that you choose how to respond to challenges and set-backs. Students who are able to respond positively and know that setbacks are an inevitable element of the learning process will outperform students who hide from challenges, take setbacks personally and respond defensively to feedback.