

# Nobel prize winner was 'B student': university

October 6 2010

---

Konstantin Novoselov, the Russian-born physicist [who shared this year's Nobel prize](#), struggled with physics as a student and was awarded a handful of B grades, his university said Wednesday.

The Moscow Physics and Technology University (MFTI) posted report cards on its website for Novoselov, who at 36 won the [Nobel prize](#) for physics with his research partner Andre Geim.

The reports reveal that he gained a handful of B grades in his term reports for theoretical and applied physics from 1991 to 1994.

He was also not strong on physical education -- a compulsory subject at Russian universities -- gaining B grades. And while he now lives in Britain, he once gained a C grade for English.

The university also revealed documents on Nobel prize winner Geim, who studied at the same university from 1976 to 1982. His brilliant academic career was only marred by a few B-grades for Marxist political economy and English.

Geim was turned down when he applied first to another Moscow university specialising in engineering and [physics](#), and worked as a machinist at a factory making electrical instruments for eight months.

In a dark reminder of Soviet-era discrimination, his former secondary school teacher told the Tvoi Den tabloid that Geim's German origins

made it hard for him to get into his first-choice university.

"His father is German," Olga Peshkova, 72, who still teaches in the town of Nalchik in the North Caucasus region of Kabardino-Balkaria, told the tabloid.

"He said that after two years of studying hard and wanting to get in, he only later understood that it was because of his 'biographical details'."

In documents published by MFTI, Geim described himself as "German" in the practice of the time, when everyone had to describe themselves according to ethnic origin in official forms.

Russia has a community of ethnic Germans, most of whom have now emigrated. In Soviet-era repressions, the Germans were exiled to Siberia and Central Asia and were discriminated against in education and in their careers.

(c) 2010 AFP

Citation: Nobel prize winner was 'B student': university (2010, October 6) retrieved 30 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2010-10-nobel-prize-winner-student-university.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--