

BISHOP HEBER HIGH SCHOOL

RESPECT · OPPORTUNITY · ACHIEVEMENT

Thursday, 16th July 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: A-level Results Day 2020

I would like to take this opportunity to explain how A-level Results Day will run this year, in accordance with COVID-19 guidance set out by the Government.

A-level Results Day will take place on **Thursday, 13th August**. Results will be published on our parent portal 'INSIGHT' from 9 a.m. so that you can access them remotely. In addition, students can collect their A-level results from 9.30 a.m. in the Main School Hall. There will be a queuing system to maintain social distancing, only students will be allowed into the Main School Hall and we politely request that all parents or accompanying adults remain in their vehicle.

We will also be mailing (2nd class) each student results to their home address (on file) on Friday, 14th August 2020.

If students require additional support for example the student has not met the entry requirements for their chosen university, then students will need to arrive at school as soon as possible after 9.30 a.m. and no later than midday on **Thursday, 20th August** and let a member of staff know that they require a meeting. The student will be taken to meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss their options. At that point, we will invite one parent to accompany their son/daughter on site. This will be by arrangement/appointment only adhering to stringent social distancing and enhanced hygiene practices. Again, we respectfully request that parents remain in their vehicle until requested.

Centre Assessed Grades

As you know, this summer's external exams were cancelled due to COVID-19 and the Government asked for Centre Assessed Grades to replace them, including ranking of how likely each student was to achieve a grade compared to others.

Staff were given clear guidance how to approach this challenging task:

School Moderation process

A. Subject Level

In making decisions about what grade to award and where in the ranking a student should be placed, teachers and Subject Leaders were guided by:

- The attainment data they had for each student – from homework, classwork, tests and mock exams
- Their knowledge of how the student works – their attitude to learning, how they generally perform in tests and their overall picture of their students
- External assessment that had already been graded or assessed e.g. coursework
- Target grades based on student's prior attainment
- The trend performance of their subject over the last three years for A-level.



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Senior Leadership Team (SLT) Level

Data was transferred into the school's exam analysis system (SISRA) and overall patterns for each individual student, teacher and subject were moderated, including the three-year trend. Any subject who results showed an unusual pattern were contacted for a discussion about the evidence for their grades.

In addition, we compared our GCSE grades to FFT Datalab (the organisation that provides school targets), for further analysis and national comparison and A-level grades in ALPs. These tools allowed further conversations with subject teams and final adjustments before submission to the exam boards.

Centres have been informed that they must not, under any circumstances, share the Centre Assessment Grades nor the rank order of students with students, or their parents/carers or any other individuals outside the centre, before results have been issued. This is to protect the integrity of teachers' judgements, and to avoid teachers, Subject Leaders, SLT or Heads of Centre being put under pressure by students and parents, to submit a grade that is not supported by the evidence.

B. National Level

Ofqual, the exam's regulator, together with the exam boards will now carry out a national standardisation process to ensure that the grades awarded are comparable with: a school's trend data; the prior attainment profile of students and the national distribution of grades that we see every year. We do not know how they intend to complete this national standardisation process, but it could well mean that the A Level grade awarded this August, is not the same as the grade we submitted in June.

Appeals: Schools and colleges can only appeal, on student's behalf against the process or the use of the data, not against teachers' use of their professional judgement.

In addition, if a student does not feel their grade reflects their ability, they will have the opportunity to take an exam in the autumn.

Ofqual guidance (dated Thursday, 2nd July 2020)

"A centre may appeal to the exam board if it believes the centre itself made an error when submitting a centre assessment grade or rank order information; or similarly, if it believes an exam board made a mistake when calculating, assigning or communicating a grade.

We considered carefully opportunities for a student to challenge their centre assessment grades and position in their centre's rank order. On balance, we decided it would not be in the interests of students or the fairness of the arrangements overall. Any appeal would have to be undertaken by someone better placed than the student's teachers to judge their likely grade if exams had taken place – in the unique circumstances of this summer, we do not believe there is any such person. In addition, because of the role of the rank order in grading this year, such an appeal would have implications for other students in the cohort: if one student successfully appealed against their position in the rank order, it would have negative implications for other students who would, in turn, need to be given an opportunity to appeal.



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If students or others have concerns about bias, discrimination or any other factor that suggests that a centre did not behave with care or integrity when determining the centre assessment grade and/or rank order information they should normally raise these concerns with their centre, in the first instance. In some cases, where there is evidence of serious malpractice on the part of the centre, it may be appropriate to bring those concerns directly to the exam board in the first instance. Where there is evidence, we require exam boards to investigate allegations as potential malpractice or maladministration. We expect such allegations to be rare, but this is an important safeguard for students and their overall confidence in this year's grading arrangements".

On Results Day, we will have available on the school website, an **Appeal Form** for a student (and parents) to complete if they wish to appeal the grade, outlining their reason for the appeal which must be evidence based. In the first instance, this appeal is to the school. We will then collate and summarise the evidence we used to arrive at the grade we predicted and contact students and parents to discuss.

If students wish to sit an exam to improve their grade, a **form to register to take an exam in the autumn exam series will be available on the school website**. We have been informed that all GCSE and GCE exams timetables will run as follows:

- GCE AS and A-level examinations start on Monday, 5th October and finish on Friday, 23rd October.
- GCSE examinations start on Monday, 2nd November and finish on Monday, 23rd November.

The deadlines for entries are:

- GCE AS & A-level – Friday, 4th September.
- GCSE (English Language and Mathematics) – Sunday, 4th October.
- The exam boards will post the timetables on their website and we will update you in August.

Kind regards,



Mrs R Abbotson
Assistant Headteacher - Director of Sixth Form



Miss H Windsor i/c Exams
Assistant Headteacher



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