

Hele's School

A great place to learn. A great place to grow.



July 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Exam Results Day – GCSE and A Level

I hope this finds you well. I wanted to contact you prior to the summer holidays as I thought it may be helpful to lay out all that we know in advance of Results Day itself. There is a great deal of potential for misunderstanding and confusion, so I do hope the following information is useful:

The day itself – what to expect:

Your child will be able to attend Results Day on site in the School Library from 8.30am on Tuesday, 10th August for A Level results and Thursday, 12th August for GCSE. This is a nationally specified release time to ensure parity for all students across the country. You are welcome to accompany your child and should enter the site via the East Gate if on foot or via the West Gate by car, where you can use the 2 car parks immediately to your left for parking. Please do not park at the front of the school where contractors and premises staff will require priority access for the on-going works taking place within the school. On the day, your child will receive a breakdown of their results by subject and a letter explaining the various support options available. There will be further information on the School website and a paper copy of all documents will be posted out to your child's home address. If your child is in Year 11 and has applied to Hele's Post-16, they will receive an email from Mr Stone shortly after the release of results to confirm if they have been accepted into the Sixth Form. Please note that where an acceptance email is received, even if your child's results don't appear to have met the entry criteria, the acceptance is correct. If your child has any queries regarding next steps, they can refer to the supporting letters which provide guidance on how to contact Hele's Post-16 support, as well as other providers.

Teacher-assessment grades (TAGs):

You know from previous communication that students who were due to sit A level, AS level or GCSE exams this summer will receive a final calculated grade. For each student, schools and colleges were asked to provide a 'teacher-assessment grade' (TAG) for each subject – this grade was a holistic grade reflecting the student's overall level of performance, taking into account a basket of evidence previously shared with students, parents and carers and available on our school website [here](#).

The TAGs which schools and colleges submitted to the Exam Boards for A and AS levels and GCSEs were standardised across schools and colleges using a model developed with Ofqual, the independent qualifications regulator. All grades were also subject to several levels of internal and external moderation prior to submission to the Exam Boards. Students' final calculated grades will not necessarily be the same as either the TAG put forward by their school, or, in the case of Year 13 students, the predicted grades used for university applications, however, any changes made by the Exam Boards have been done through human agency and not through use of an algorithm.

Principal: Justine Mason

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At Hele's School, we are confident that our teachers know their students very well and were able to assess grades with a high degree of accuracy. We believe that the process of providing TAGs was the fairest possible approach available under the circumstances this year and acknowledge that it is a rigorous process, which means that grades awarded this year are as valid as any other year and students will not be differentiated in any way due to the year of their certification. As such, this will allow students to progress to the next stage of their education or into employment in the normal way.

Supporting student progression:

Though we do not anticipate changes being made to the TAGs submitted, in cases where a student's final calculated grade differs greatly from their TAG, we will be happy to share (with the student's permission) their TAGs with the local college or post-16 provider they have applied to and to explain the school's position. We will encourage all providers to look at a student's TAG, as well as their final calculated grade, before deciding about whether to offer them a place.

There is a general view for A level students, that universities are likely to be more relaxed about entry requirements again this year. Again, though, we will be happy to liaise with admissions tutors and share students' TAGs where this could be beneficial.

Appeals and complaints:

It has been made very clear by exam boards, Ofqual and the DfE that dissatisfaction with the grades issued by exam boards does not constitute grounds for an appeal. **There are very specific grounds for appeal as outlined in the 'Information on Appeals' letter accompanying this letter.** Please do take the time to read this carefully in advance of Results Day itself.

Where students remain dissatisfied with their final calculated grade, there will be an opportunity for students to sit exams in all subjects in the autumn term (October for A and AS level and November for GCSE). For **A Level, entry requests must be made in writing to Ms Clapham by Friday 27th August** and for **GCSE, entry requests must be made to Ms Clapham in writing by Friday 17th September.** It is worth noting that for A level, results of these exams will not be available until late December and for GCSE, the estimated results window is mid-February. As such, a student would not be able to rely on sitting the exams in autumn as a progression pathway and our advice, after 6 months away from studying, would be against trying to combine new study at a higher level with the retaking of GCSEs or A levels. That decision will, however, be up to each individual student.

External support

The National Careers Service is providing a series of webinars for parents and carers whose children are receiving results this August, to give advice on options and tips for helping their child prepare for Results Day. Please see the links below if you feel this would be useful to you:

[Friday 30 July, 12pm](#)

[Tuesday 3 August, 4pm](#)

[Wednesday 4 August, 12pm](#)

I fully appreciate that this is a lot of information to take in and I have attached the previously issued JCQ document 'Guidance for students, parents and guardians: GCSEs and AS/A Levels in England, Summer 2021'. Again, I hope this helps. Further information will be available on our School website on Results Day itself and staff will be available on the day to support. In the meantime, I hope you have a restful summer break.

Yours sincerely,

Emma Clapham

Assistant Principal

Principal: Justine Mason

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