

Dear Sixth Form students, their parents and carers,

## **Re: Update on A/AS level & Btec Results**

Today was a day of great celebration for many of our students who celebrated very well deserved, excellent A level and AS level results. The vast majority of students have been able to progress onto their next chosen future pathway. Many students were truly overjoyed upon opening envelopes this morning at school. For other students, and staff there was frustration and concern that grades awarded by exam boards were different from our centre-assessed grades. After many months of hard work and study, followed by the disruption caused by a pandemic, the days leading up to results would have involved an even greater sense of anxiety. This was then magnified with the Secretary for Education suddenly announcing new changes, late Tuesday evening, following the concerns raised in Scotland over the statistical methodology employed to calculate grades. Due to these late changes we made the decision only yesterday to share additional data with you, so I must apologise for delays in this being received, but we thought you would appreciate having this rather than fill in a request form.

With thousands of schools and colleges assessing thousands of A-level and AS-level grades, it would have been incredible if every centre-assessed grade had perfectly matched a national statistical model, and there were always bound to be adjustments.

We can assure students and parents that we set about the task of grading and ranking students in unprecedented circumstances with the utmost diligence and care. Our teachers and Curriculum Leaders applied careful assessment methodologies, reflecting skill, professionalism and integrity to ensure all students were assessed fairly. It was recognised from the outset with all schools being asked to rank pupils that adjustments would be made either down or up when exam boards standardised the grades. The leadership team's concerns about Ofqual's methodology had already been raised with the organisation during their consultation process, and were sadly confirmed today. What has caused anger among staff at Bosworth Academy is that seemingly our rankings alone have been overlaid onto the grade profiles of previous year groups of students studying each A level subject and used to determine grades. This approach does not take into account the individual. As well as this it does not account for our ever improving progress and value added per student which saw Bosworth Academy achieve a 'top 25% A level provider over 3 years' national accolade from ALPS (A Level Performance Systems). Last year the Department for Education Performance Tables showed Bosworth Academy's value added in the highest quintile across all schools nationally and exceeding nearly all schools across Leicestershire including many independent schools. This current year group was on track for similar or even higher

progress yet these awarded grades for some students look more like national average progress.

To support students and to be fully transparent we have chosen to share the centre-assessed grades as well as the exam board calculated results (which are the ones to be used as 'currency' for CVs). Many Universities or employers, understanding what students have been through this year, may take these grades into consideration. We included our Trial Examination results as well where these were sat by students, which were shared earlier in the academic year. As an organisation we do not believe that this 'mock' result alone is a good predictor of student outcomes, though it is part of the evidence that each A level subject used to determine our centre-assessed grades. As Gavin Williamson, Secretary of State for Education has just announced it 'may' be that this Trial Exam result can be awarded as part of the 'triple lock' if it is higher than the exam board awarded grade. Regrettably, there are no further details about how we can appeal this and are told that schools will be sent information next week. I expect it will open up wider support for an appeal and involve some specific criteria to be met rather than enabling that grade to be awarded automatically, as 'mocks' can vary so much between organisations. Once more I am sorry at this stage I cannot give further details on how this will work.

Many students' calculated exam grades now differ because of a deeply problematic statistical model. We will be reviewing our results in detail over the next few days and strongly fighting our case with exam boards and Ofqual with an aim to reinstate centre-assessed grades for those students negatively affected.

Our 'A level Class of 2020' have had to overcome so many obstacles to achieve the many great results achieved today. Our A level headline measures, often quoted by the press, are very positive and once again higher than national including at A\*, A\*/A and A\*-B. What really matters though, is our students and their individual achievements. It is important that we celebrate our students incredible tenacity, proactive stance towards learning and their dedication to study throughout their A/AS levels. I am confident they have acquired the skills to navigate ambiguity and change, so important in our current times. Their achievements are a testimony to the commitment and expertise of Bosworth staff who have remained committed to seeing them succeed.

The Autumn Examination Series is also available in October for A level students who believe they can achieve better grades. We will update students next week on how they can enter these examinations. As ever we will endeavour to continue to keep students and parents updated and informed through these uncertain times to support our students in achieving that next phase in their education or career.



Simon Brown  
Headteacher  
Bosworth Academy

### **Statement by Emma Hollis, Chair of Governors Bosworth Academy**

Over recent years the outcomes for young people who have studied at Bosworth Academy's sixth form have continued to rise. As Simon has indicated, in 2019 the academy was positioned amongst the top performing schools in the country. This year's very specific and unprecedented context has presented a series of challenges which staff and students have met with fortitude and resilience. The governing body are proud of the achievements of the class of 2020 and stand side by side with every family as you respond to your specific set of results. We are confident that Bosworth's highly skilled and committed staff will do everything they can to ensure that students achieve the best results they can to help them take the strongest possible next steps in their careers. We send you all our very best wishes for the year ahead.