



Queen Mary's Grammar School

Headmaster: R J Langton, M A

29th June 2020

Dear parent/guardian,

Arrangements for UCAS Predicted Grades – Summer 2020

You will be aware that we wrote to you in February of this year with information regarding how we had intended to award UCAS Predicted Grades for our Year 12 students, following the Year 12 Summer exams. Clearly, the many and varied impacts of the coronavirus upon this school and society in general mean that we have had to devise a new approach to the awarding of these grades. The Year 12 Summer exam period was cancelled and there will be no opportunity to assess students in an equivalent robust exam period in the Autumn term.

We are still awaiting national guidance and specific detail for a return to school in September. What is clear though, is that our priority must be the physical and mental welfare of staff and students and a recovery of the learning time that has been lost, despite all our best efforts to work via a blended delivery of online tasks, recorded and live tutorials since March 20th. It is our intention to instigate a period of Year 13 mock exams in January/February of 2021, to give all students the chance to test themselves in those all-important exam conditions. More details on those mock exams will follow.

Since we cannot base UCAS Predicted Grades on the outcomes of the exams at the end of Year 12, we intend to use STAR estimated grades as the starting point instead. Heads of Department will be allowed to adjust the grades upwards, or downwards, by one grade, based on evidence and staff professional judgement of students' performance over Year 12. As you have been informed on previous reports, a STAR estimated grades shows differentiated potential in each A Level subject based upon overall performance at GCSE. These are calculated by looking at an average point score in all GCSE subjects and this information is then benchmarked against national data to make an estimation of the most likely grade to be achieved.

UCAS Predicted Grades will be emailed out to student school email addresses, following the same process as when we issued reports at Easter. This will be by Monday 13th July. Please do not contact individual members of staff to discuss predicted grades. Teachers and Heads of Department have been instructed not to discuss them with students or parents ahead of their release at the end of term to ensure that the UCAS Predicted Grades that are produced at this stage are fair and robust.

Any appeals following this process should be in writing to myself by the following deadlines:

- Priority applicants: Monday 14th September
- All other applicants: Monday 19th October

An appeal against the UCAS Predicted Grade should be on the basis of any individual and specific exceptional circumstances that may have had a detrimental impact upon a student's ability to achieve their potential during Year 12. It cannot be based upon a promise to "work harder" in Year 13. I will make my decision in the case of an appeal on a review of Year 12 performance and reserve the right to raise a Predicted Grade by one grade above that which has been awarded by staff on 13th July.

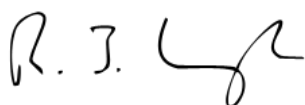
It is vital that we have a consistent and strict approach to setting UCAS grades in order to maintain our excellent reputation amongst higher education institutions and I am confident that this approach achieves this, despite the challenging circumstances in which we find ourselves. We have consulted the UCAS “Principles for Predicting Grades” and firmly believe what we have in place adheres to those principles. In particular, they will be:

- “in the best interests of applicants – fulfilment and success at college or university is the end goal
- aspirational but achievable – stretching predicted grades are motivational for students, unattainable predicted grades are not
- determined by professional judgement – school expertise and experience are vital in informing predictions
- data-driven – while each school will have its own process, schools should look at past Level 2 and Level 3 performance, and/or internal examinations to inform predictions”

<https://www.ucas.com/advisers/managing-applications/predicted-grades-what-you-need-know#what>

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. J. Langton'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Richard Langton
Headmaster