

# The Joseph Whitaker School

*An Academy specialising in Sport and Performing Arts*



13 August 2020

## A Level Results

Students at The Joseph Whitaker School collected their A Level results this morning, in a social distanced manner of course! They have all worked incredibly hard and COVID denied them the opportunity to achieve beyond expectations when examinations were cancelled. Although they have not been able to sit their final examinations the process for awarding grades was incredibly robust and these results are the culmination of years of hard work by the students. As you will see below there were some tremendous outcomes.

Paige Daniels achieved perfect GCSE results in 2018 with all Grade 9's or A\*. Her 3 x A\* at A Level means she has the perfect academic record placing her in the top 1% of students nationally. She now goes onto Durham to study Philosophy and Theology. Paige will be joined at this prestigious university by Molly Bird and Liam Mahan, who will be studying Anthropology and Archaeology and Engineering respectively. Ali Akhtar gained 3 x A\* and 1 x A grade, he is now applying to study medicine.

Law, Geography and Engineering have proven to be popular university options this year with Jamie Vaughan (Manchester or Liverpool), Natalie Purewal (Leicester) and Jacob Wright (Sheffield) gaining places on Law courses, Molly Rooth-Corder (Queen Mary's London), Isabelle Flint and William Hammond (Birmingham) going on to study Geography, as well as Adam Lloyd (Chemical - Nottingham) and Liam Mickle (Aerospace – Liverpool) focusing on Engineering degree courses.

It was a rather subdued morning with COVID restrictions, students unsure of how grades had been calculated plus uncertainty over university places. It was pleasing to note that common sense had prevailed and greater flexibility has been shown by most universities.

Unfortunately, the statistical methodology used by the examination boards, as directed by the government, has proven to be very controversial and this has disadvantaged a number of our students, unfairly in our view. Nationally 36% of grades have been lowered. Awarding bodies used the past 3 year's school performance to determine how many students should be allowed to achieve each grade in each subject. This takes no account of school improvement during that timeframe or that cohorts are significantly different in nature. So for example, one student was dropped from a C grade to a U grade because the statistical model indicated that there should be at least 3 U grades in that particular subject. In effect that student was punished for previous students' failures. We will be appealing all such cases. Overall, school results remained in line with previous years but this is not the most important thing.

In terms of the 'triple lock' we await the actual detail for the appeals process and additionally students have the opportunity to sit the examinations in October, although again we await the full details of this process. I think one Headteacher in the media used the term 'beggars belief' to describe the lack of a coherent plan, I could not possibly comment.

However, this must not detract from the hard work and wide scale achievements of all of our students. This was an excellent group of young people who will be incredibly successful in their chosen careers.

We are very proud of them all and wish them the very best for the future.



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