



Whitburn Church of England Academy

An Academy with Specialist Status in Maths and Computing

Whitburn, Sunderland, SR6 7EF Principal: J E Crowe B.A. (Hons)
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'Excellence for All'

23rd March 2020

Re: Sixth Form admission update following cancellation of GCSE exams

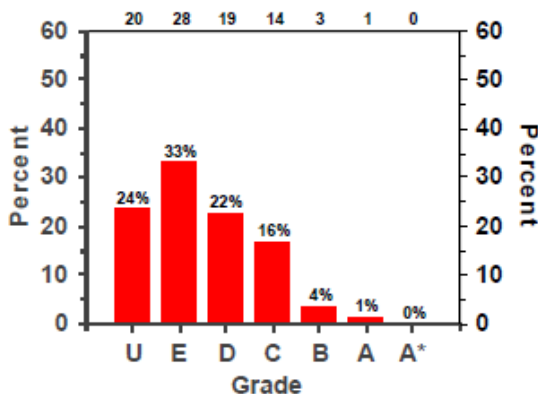
Dear applicant,

We would like to let you know that we share your disappointment at the cancellation of GCSEs and we appreciate you will be worried about the awarding of grades and the potential impact on admission to Sixth Form.

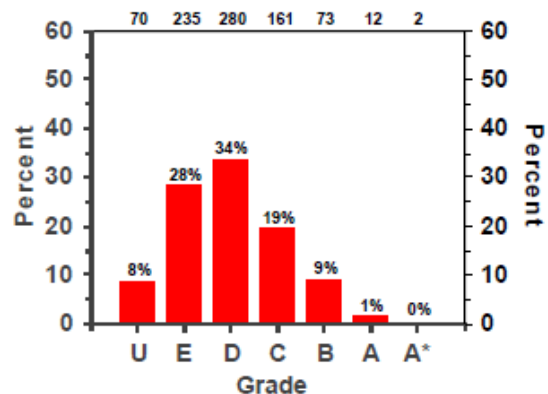
Whatever method is used to awarding grades, our priority remains unchanged. We will endeavor to ensure that students are signed up to appropriate courses and will only be allowed on to a course if there is a realistic chance they can enjoy success in that course. Our published criteria will not change (Prospectus, page 12 https://www.whitburncofeacademy.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Prospectus-2020-Edition-v1_.pdf) as these requirements are based upon evidence about chances of success at Advanced Level.

Take, for example, the chances graph for Biology (below). There is a clear link between GCSE attainment and success at A Level. The 'G' in GCSE stands for 'general' and mastery of 'general' level enhances the chances of success at 'advanced' level.

GCSE Grade 5



GCSE Grade 6



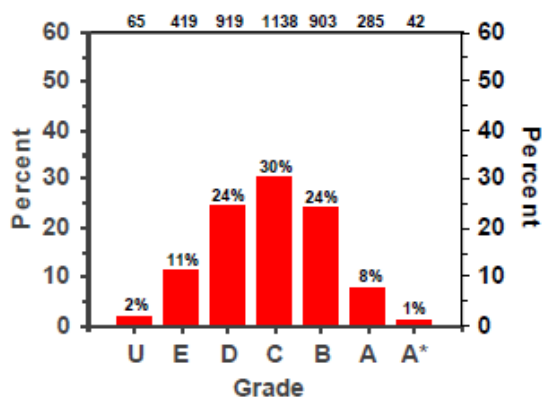
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Document available in large font, alternative language or audio format on request

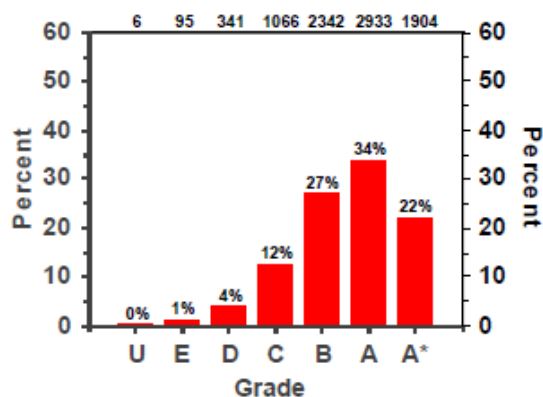


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GCSE Grade 7



GCSE Grade 8-9



We would encourage all applicants to attend enrolment with their statement of results. At the time of writing, we do not know the exact methodology for awarding results or even the timeline and whether August 20th will remain as 'results day'. We will send out further instructions for enrolment when these things become clear.

At enrolment, you will be able to discuss your results and a member of the Sixth Form team will be able to confirm what we can offer. For all applicants who have the required grades, you will be offered the subjects you applied for. If you do not have the required grades, we will consider this on a case-by-case basis and may offer you an alternative course.

If you do not have at least five GCSEs at Grade 5 and above, we may not be able to offer you a place in Sixth Form. Advice will be available about your options if you are in this position.

Guidance Meetings help us to confirm students intentions so that we can finalise the school timetable and ensure staffing levels meet demand. With the numbers of applicants we have for different courses, and informed by the guidance meetings we have held up to now, we have had to take the difficult decision not to run Media Studies, Philosophy and Ethics and Theatre Studies. Health and Social Care will run as a single award only (alongside two A Levels) as there is insufficient demand for the double award course. Spanish and Further Maths currently have very small numbers and their viability is under review with a final decision to be made shortly after Easter. The final blocking structure is as follows. We will contact you individually if you are affected and request replacement subjects if necessary.

Block A	Block B	Block C	Block D
Biology	Business Studies	Core Maths	Art
Chemistry	Chemistry	English Language	Biology
Economics	Computer Science	Maths	Business Studies
History	English Literature	Physics	Geography
Maths	Maths	Psychology	Health & Social Care
Psychology	PE	Spanish	Politics
Sociology	Psychology	EPQ	Sociology
EPQ			Further Maths

If you have any doubts about your subject choices or combinations, I would direct you to Unifrog (for those students currently studying at Whitburn or other schools who subscribe to Unifrog) and Informed Choices:

<https://www.unifrog.org/student/careers>

<https://www.informedchoices.ac.uk/subjects>

Despite the uncertainty, please continue to work through the tasks set by your teachers. Aim to complete the specification content in all subjects, but pay special attention to English, Maths and

any subject named in the entry requirements for your chosen subjects. As we said earlier, it is crucial you achieve mastery of general level to enhance your chances at advanced level. We will be sending out bridging tasks for preparation for A Level. Completion of these will be a requirement for beginning an A Level course.

Please continue to watch the school website and our official social media channels for further updates. If you have further queries, please contact me at lcraggs@whitburncofeacademy.org

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L M Craggs', written in a cursive style.

Mr Lee M Craggs
Head of Sixth Form
Whitburn Church of England Academy