

30<sup>th</sup> March 2017

Dear Parents / Carers

**Re: Students in Years 10 and 11 – The reformed GCSEs**

As you will already be aware the GCSE specifications have and continue to change so that the new qualifications are graded from 9-1 rather than the traditional A\*-G grades. This summer our Year 11 students will be awarded with a grade 9-1 in just their English and maths GCSEs. For our Year 10 students almost all of their qualifications will be awarded with grades 9-1.

This week in the news you may have seen that The Right Honorable Justine Greening, Secretary of State for Education, provided some additional clarification as to what these grades actually mean. Here is an extract of the letter she wrote to the Chair of the Education Select Committee:

*"I want to provide certainty about how this new grading will work and, in particular, the consequences for individual pupils of achieving a grade 4 or grade 5. Rather than reporting on the "good pass", we will instead distinguish between a grade 4 as a "standard pass" and a grade 5 as a "strong pass" and report on both.*

*Under the new system, a grade 4 and above will be equivalent to a C and above. This is - and will remain - the level that pupils must achieve in order not to be required to continue studying English and maths post 16. Therefore, a GCSE pass at new grade 4 will continue to have real currency for individual pupils as they progress to further study and employment. Where employers, FE providers and universities currently accept a grade C we would expect them to continue recognising a grade 4."*

At SUA we have already stated that for our students we would expect them to achieve a grade 4 in their English and maths for them not to have to retake these subjects in our sixth form. This is now confirmed to be known as a "standard pass". The uncertainty for all secondary schools, predicting the grades that may be awarded this summer, remains a challenge. We specifically joined an organisation called PiXL, in October 2016, so that English and maths mock papers for Year 11 could be sent off and the marks be compared to the other 1,500 secondary schools who are also members. This data will be back in the academy in the next few weeks but we will still remain cautious. We will follow these same methods with our current Year 10 as more becomes known about the grading.

Striving to ensure that all of our students do the best that they can do, we continue to support them in their studies in the lead up to exams. I am certain that you will agree with the combination of effective teaching in timetabled lessons, the additional period 6 sessions, Saturday Study School, Easter and Whit week revision sessions – we are committed to do all we can to see as many of our students be as successful as possible. Your support with this is significant and very much appreciated.

If you require any further information about your son/daughter's progress, please do not hesitate to contact Assistant Principal, Mrs Pearson, at the academy via [spearson@suacademy.co.uk](mailto:spearson@suacademy.co.uk)

Yours sincerely



Mrs R. Hillier  
Principal