



GRAHAM GUEST COLUMN FOR TELFORD JOURNAL

August 2020

Well, what a couple of weeks it has been. A level and GCSE results time is always tense – but this year in particular, students and their families have been put through the emotional wringer.

All's well that ends well, of course, but I can't help thinking that with a little more forward planning from both regulators and the Government, many of these stresses and strains could have been avoided.

The positive from our point of view is that students who worked so hard towards potentially life-changing qualifications have at least received the grades they deserve.

It would have been distressing on many levels if those honest, fact-based assessments which teachers submitted to the exam bodies back in June had been ignored in favour of an algorithm which unfairly penalised less affluent parts of the country.

Even before the Government U-turn which ditched that flawed algorithm at the 11th hour, we'd already announced our intention to rely instead on teacher-assessed grades for our next intake of students.

Why? Because we have very strong and close relationships with secondary schools across the town, giving us full confidence in the quality and accuracy of the grades teachers had predicted.

There is a great community feel in Telford, and we're fortunate that education organisations work together in the best interests of the town's young people.

So enough of glancing over our shoulders – now's the time to look forward with optimism.

A new academic year starts in a couple of weeks, and we have been working hard this summer on changes around the campus to make it a Covid-safe environment.

On the back of our consistently improving A level, GCSE and vocational results, we have a solid launchpad.

It's particularly pleasing to see our high grade GCSE maths and English passes out-performing the UK average for the fourth successive year, because these qualifications open up a much wider range of choice.

There has never been a greater choice on offer to young people in Telford, whatever their GCSE or A level grades. So the message is: make sure you check out all the options right on your doorstep.

And if you think Telford College could be the next step on your journey, why not take a 'virtual' tour of our campus to see what we've got in store. It's available online now at telfordcollege.ac.uk/virtual-open-event