

# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

## RESULTS DAY SUPPORT

A Level and GCSE students will receive their results on 15 and 22 August, respectively. It can be a stressful time for young people and parents, as students' next steps, choices and opportunities are often determined by these outcomes. This guide aims to help everyone involved navigate the challenges of results day – providing practical advice to reduce stress and aid decision making.

### 1 BE PREPARED

Now is the moment to provide support and advice before the big day comes. Talk to pupils about how they feel, listening to their worries whilst reassuring them however you can. Most importantly, remind them that they have options no matter what their results may be.

### 2 REVIEW OPTIONS

Whatever future plans a youngster may have, it's prudent to review their options. What's their first choice for the next stage of their education or the beginning of their career, and are they still happy with this? What grades are needed to pursue this route? Do they feel they'll meet these requirements? Are there any potential problems? What's their back-up plan? If they're staying in education, how do they feel about their reserve UCAS choice or alternative post-16 courses?

### 3 REMEMBER CLEARING

If post-18 students haven't got into their first or reserve UCAS choice, the clearing system offers alternatives. In 2023, more than 38,000 students secured courses via this route. It's important for students to be proactive and consider their options, as this is a fast-moving process where initiative is often rewarded.

### 4 CELEBRATE AND MOTIVATE

Many students want to receive their results independently, but all schools will have staff available on the day to celebrate their success or support and advise them as needed. If a child has been successful, hype up their achievements of course, but encourage them to confirm their post-16 application or UCAS offer as soon as possible. However, it's always worthwhile to double-check with them one last time that this is definitely what they want.

### 5 RESPOND TO SETBACKS

If something hasn't gone to plan, it's important to focus on the positives and take stock of the situation. Reassure the child and evaluate the options they have. Can they pursue their desired route with lower grades? If they're continuing to higher education, is their reserve choice or alternative plan viable? Who can they speak to for advice? Time is critical, as popular courses fill up quickly; however, any decisions should be carefully considered.

### 6 SEEK HELP

School staff are often best placed to support students facing difficulties, but will often be quite busy on results day. Try to book an appointment as soon as possible and ask to speak to the best adviser in person (this will usually be a member of the leadership team, the head of sixth form or a subject leader). Parents should attend the meeting with their child with a list of queries and questions.

### 7 CONSIDER SEEKING A RE-MARK

If a student narrowly misses their required grades, it can be worth seeking a re-mark. School staff can provide exact marks and advice on grade boundaries, which are also published by exam boards. If the gap is marginal, it can be worth applying for a priority re-mark for one or more papers. If you do this, be sure to keep the child's intended destination informed. Also keep in mind that re-marks can sometimes result in grades being lowered rather than increased.

### 9 GO EQUIPPED ON THE BIG DAY

Students will be nervous on results day, so it's a good idea to agree a plan in advance. Make sure children know you're there to support and advise on the day. Ensure they have all details of offers and useful numbers prepared in a folder in advance. This would include the school's contact information, course requirements and UCAS logins, as well as university and college contact numbers.

### 9 ADVOCATE FOR STUDENTS

Schools, colleges and universities can be flexible when a student has narrowly missed the entry criteria for a course; they often respond positively to applications from determined students who present themselves well in person or over the phone. If a student badly wants a particular course or a close alternative, it's worth making your case to the decision makers. Always mention any special circumstances, SEND, or re-marks that are underway.

### 10 RE-SITS, GAP YEARS, AND FURTHER HELP

If a viable plan can't be found, it's time for the student to sit down with a careers adviser or teacher to review all the alternatives. Is it possible to re-sit any exams? Are other opportunities such as employment or apprenticeship suitable? Could re-application the following year be successful? If the latter is the case, make sure this additional year adds value to the student's CV and future applications.

## Meet Our Expert

Paul Ramsey has over 30 years' teaching experience in mixed, single-sex and faith schools, including 14 years as a secondary headteacher. He is passionate about supporting students, parents and educators on GCSE and A Level results day and ensuring that students make informed choices about successful next steps in education, employment and training.



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