

November 2018

Dear Parents and Carers

**Re: The negative effect of Unconditional University offers**

Every year most of our Year 13 students go on to further studies at university. The growth of university places has meant that universities are competing to recruit students and they have found that offering students an unconditional place i.e. that the place will be offered regardless of the actual grades a student achieves in their final examinations has influenced student choices. It has been reported that approximately a third of university places were offered on this basis last year.

This can appear very appealing to students as it might be seen to remove the stress of needing to secure particular grades to gain a place on a course of the student's choice. However, our experience, and of other similar institutions, is that in a number of cases it has meant that students have lost focus on their studies and meant that their final grades at the end of the course have been lower than would have been the case had the student applied themselves fully for the remainder of their courses.

Whilst this does not affect their place at university or cap the level of degree the student might achieve, the graduate job market is very competitive and for employers who are faced with graduates with the same degree result they often look back at their performance at 18 as a further indicator of their capabilities. These grades can be the difference between getting an interview or not.

Our Year 13 students are currently preparing for their mock examinations whilst the UCAS process is ongoing. I thought it would be useful at this time for you to understand why we are determined that your child applies themselves fully to their studies for the remainder of their courses and, should they receive an unconditional offer, not see an unconditional as a reason to not push themselves to get the best possible final grades.

Thank you for your ongoing support for your child's education.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A Boyle". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial 'A'.

**Mr A Boyle**  
**Headteacher**