

What you need to know at a glance:

- The tried and tested, normal arrangements for marking and grading continue this year.
- Your grade will be determined by your performance in your exams and assessments.
- Most people get their first university choice, your UCAS 'firm choice'. If you don't, or you change your mind, there are plenty of options available, with around 30,000 courses in Clearing offering you choice and flexibility.

Dear student,

It's officially summer and results day is around the corner, with plans well underway to help those of you wanting to go to university or college this September prepare for your next steps. As you wait to receive your grades, we know you might have questions about how your results are determined, results day, confirming offers and Clearing. We want to make it easy for you to explore all the options open to you on results day, and to understand what happens if you change your mind about your choice.

Here are a few key things for you to know in the run up to results day:

How will my exam be marked?

- Your work is marked by expert examiners, who are mostly teachers with many years' experience. They do not know your name, which school or college you go to, or where in the country you live. Ofqual makes sure that the rules are the same for all students taking the same qualification.

How does grading work?

- The normal tried and tested arrangements for grading will continue for GCSEs, AS, A levels and vocational and technical qualifications (such as in health and social care or engineering) in 2024. This means that a student who would have achieved a certain grade last year should be just as likely to achieve that grade this summer.
- For most qualifications, after most of the marking has been done, expert examiners review the papers to see the quality of student work and use all the available evidence before recommending grade boundaries (the number of marks needed to get each grade). Your grades are determined only by how you perform in your own assessments.
- Grade boundaries often vary from year to year to reflect the difficulty of each paper. These changes to grade boundaries make sure that fair and appropriate grading standards are set. Whatever your results, you can be confident that for GCSEs and A level it's no harder or easier to achieve a particular grade in each subject between one awarding organisation (exam board) and another.

How can I appeal against my grades?

- If you think there has been a mistake in how your exams or assessments have been marked, you should talk to your school or college, which can ask the awarding organisation to check if there were any errors in how your exam or assessment was marked. More information can be found in [Ofqual's Student Guide](#).

What if I don't get the results I need?

- If you get the grades for your offer, then you're in – congratulations! If you want to keep your options open or do not get the grades you were expecting, there are still plenty of choices in Clearing. Last year, about one in five accepted applicants achieved or exceeded their predicted grades. Yet over 80% of UK 18-year-olds applying to UCAS secured a place at university or college.
- Clearing offers choice and flexibility to all students, regardless of whether you receive predicted, better or lower grades. A record 39,620 UK 18-year-olds secured a place using Clearing in 2023. This year, there will be tens of thousands of choices on offer. With so many different courses available, we know it can be hard to find the right option but our Clearing Plus tool on ucas.com can match you to a personalised list of available courses.

How can I prepare for results day?

- You can put yourself in the strongest position by exploring all your options and planning ahead of results day. Discover personalised options in your [UCAS account \(UCAS Hub\)](#), listen to [UCAS's Streetview YouTube series](#) or get a taste of different university courses with Springpod's Subject Spotlights in the UCAS Hub.
- Make the most of the support network around you – speak to your teachers, university admissions staff, or UCAS's team of expert advisors who are readily available to answer any questions you may have.

Each year, UCAS supports almost 1.5 million students in making informed choices about their future. On results day, UCAS will send you an email tailored to you, clearly outlining your next steps and other options you may want to consider. UCAS advisors will also be standing by ready on the telephone, website and social media channels. Whatever your results, this is an exciting time and we want to ensure you have the best possible experience of transitioning to university.

Yours faithfully,

Sir Ian Bauckham CBE, Chief Regulator, Ofqual
Dr Jo Saxton CBE, Chief Executive, UCAS