

Success for Varndean College students in challenging times

Varndean College in Brighton is celebrating the high achievements of its students who have yet again achieved an outstanding record of A Level and Vocational course results overall. Students completing their studies this year have had an educational journey like no other time, with much of their education spent in lockdown and online learning, as well as the Government's cancellation of all A Level exams. Despite this, students have been exceptional in their capacity to rise to these challenges and continued to engage with their studies. Final results were based on attainment over the past two years; this proved a very unsettling and worrying time for them all and we are immensely proud of how they responded. The grades students have earned are very well deserved, having undergone rigorous assessments throughout their studies and especially so from Easter 2021 when there was an 'assessment period' where all students carried out final point assessments under exam conditions. Our teachers have worked tirelessly with students to ensure that their results are accurate, fair and reflect their abilities and hard work.

The overall pass rate at A level is 99% with the majority of subjects achieving 100% pass rate with 65% achieving A*-B and 86% A*-C grades.

- All vocational courses, BTEC and CTEC had a 100% pass rate, as well as our Level 3 CACHE course having exceptional results of 100%.
- Visual Arts courses (Art, Graphic Design, 3D Design, Textiles and Photography) once again continued to be outstanding, with 97% of students achieving A*-C grades, 86% achieving A*-B grades and 86 students achieving the prestigious A* grade. In 3D Design, all students gained an A*-B grade, and in Photography 94% of students gained an A*-B.
- Other subjects with exceptional success include: in languages, A Level French has a 100% pass rate with 88% A*-B, in A Level German 80% of students gained A*-B. In Humanities; in History A Level 88% of students gained an A*-B, in Maths and Science all subjects gained a 100% pass rate with 100% of Further Maths students gaining an A*-B grade, in Maths 76% gained an A*-B, in Physics 71% of students gained an A*-B. Similarly, Film students gained 100% pass rate with 70% getting the very highest grades of A*-B; in Drama and Theatre Studies 72% of students achieve an A*-B.

As well as offering traditional A Levels, Varndean College also offers a comprehensive programme of Level 3 vocational qualifications, which many students take either as standalone courses or in combination with A Levels. These results are impressive with many students moving on to higher education courses or direct into apprenticeships/employment.

College Principal, Donna-Marie Janson, said; "We are incredibly proud of our students this year, particularly under the extreme circumstances they have found themselves to be in due to the global pandemic. They have dealt admirably with all of the uncertainty of the past two years, to the lockdowns, self-isolations and online lessons, as well as huge changes to the system of assessment, taking everything in their stride and continuing to focus. They have

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been inspiring to work with, to teach and to get to know. Our students are quite frankly amazing and they and their loved ones should feel as proud of themselves as we do for their spirited determination and for all they have achieved. I would like to thank and commend my entire staff for their hard work and dedication working throughout the pandemic, adapting and responding throughout and ensuring that students have the best possible opportunities and the best possible experience. I would also like to thank all the parents and families of our students who have supported us throughout, we could not have done it without you.”

This A Level success follows on from Varndean’s successful International Baccalaureate results in July, when the College achieved a pass rate of 98% and received its highest marks ever, with an average score of 36.61 points, equivalent to at least three A grades at A Level and beating a global average of 33.02. At the time of writing, 82% of our UCAS applicants were successful, with 78% meeting their firm choice offer and 77% securing places at Russell Group universities. Sixty-three percent of our students achieved 36 or more Diploma points, with 15 (37%) gaining an impressive 40 points or more, equivalent to A*A*A and placing them in the top 9% of students worldwide.

Amongst those achieving the highest grades were **Hayden Newnham** (ex-Oathall Community College) whose perfect score of 45 points - comparable to five A* at A Level - places him in the top 1-2% of 170,660 IB students worldwide this year. Hayden is currently taking a gap year but applying for Modern Languages, studying French, German and Russian, commencing 2022.

Sammy Doublet (ex-Varndean School) with 44 points will read Architecture at UCL. Forty-three points were achieved by ex-Sir Robert Woodard Academy student **Lucy Ayres** and ex-Hove Park student **Circe Marden-Rull** seeing them head to the University of Leeds to study Sociology and Internal Relations, and the University of Bristol to read Comparative Literatures and Cultures respectively. Also achieving 43 points **Lillian Laffan** (ex-Varndean School) who will be reading Philosophy at Trinity Hall, University of Cambridge.

Scoring 42 points or the equivalent to three A* at A Level: **Tabitha Fawfus** has secured a place at Warwick University to read Politics, International Studies and Global Sustainable Development whilst **Leyona Bray Kaji** is heading to Glasgow to study BioChemistry.

Our two medicine applicants also secured places. **Miaya Harman** is heading to Cardiff University having achieved 41 points, whilst **Anthea Gabot** has a place at UCL having scored 39. Our MedVetDent coordinator and IB Chemistry teacher John Luton said; “lockdown was a difficult time for most students, however Miaya and Anthea showed themselves to be driven, disciplined and motivated students who will be a valuable asset to any medical school.”

Congratulations and well done to all our departing students and the very best of luck in your future progression routes.

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