

CONTEXTUALISING STATEMENT FROM THE CHEADLE COLLEGE MARPLE SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

The Cheadle College is an open access college of some 850 students of whom 70% study advanced level courses. The College serves the South and West areas of Stockport, including the less affluent parts of the borough, and also draws large numbers of students from other surrounding areas.

Marple Sixth Form College is an open access college of some 600 students of whom 85% study advanced level courses. The College serves the South and East areas of Stockport, including the less affluent parts of the borough, and also draws large numbers of students from other surrounding areas.

Across both colleges, the proportion of students on BTEC courses is nearly 70%. Increasingly, students may take a 'blended programme' of A level combined with BTEC to give them a total package of '*three A levels in size*'.

A Level Students starting in September 2017 were required to study 3 A Level subjects in the main. A small proportion of students with high average GCSE points scores (APS of 7 or above) studied four subjects if they wished. Our view was that the vast majority of our students applying to university are given offers based on three full A levels and that the number of 'stand-alone' AS levels had vastly reduced with the first wave of reform from the previous two years.

Our motto from the outset was 'three for your degree'. For many of the students who had high APS scores, but who did not wish to study a fourth subject in year 12, the Extended Project Qualification was a good substitute, providing stretch and challenge, as well as being valued by universities.

With the exception of Further Maths, no students starting on reformed A levels in 2017 were entered for the AS exam. The reasons behind this were that the taking of exams at the end of a two year course appeared to be the very design of the reformed A levels; that greater clarity had now been provided by HEPs with regard to their approach to qualification reform; and, that we felt that a rigorous internal mock exam would serve as a valid indicator of final performance.

Our method of predicting grades for the 2017 cohort applying to university remains as in previous years: academic performance over the year in 6 key assessments (formative assessments mirroring examination material) including rigorous internal mock exams. As ever, decisions will be arrived at on a case by case basis.