

Dear Parents,

The Destination of Leavers 2016

9th September 2016

Once again we are celebrating another very good set of exam results at both GCSE and A level. Whilst the overall national picture for boys at GCSE is modest, with 5% gaining A* and 15.8% gaining A*/A, the boys at Merchant Taylors did much better. One third of all grades were A*, and 56% of all grades were A*/A. Our Upper Sixth Leavers also excelled with over three quarters [76.81%] at A*-B, the benchmark for entry to university or entry onto an apprenticeship scheme at a 'Blue Chip' firm. To help parents differentiate between the results of different schools and to understand the sometimes confusing range of headlines used by schools, please follow this link: <http://bit.ly/2cpAOxt>.

On the reverse of this letter, you will find information about the course choices and destinations of this year's leaving cohort. Parents are naturally keen that their sons should gain access to the top university courses, which in the UK are generally provided by the traditional city centre or 'red brick' universities, sometimes called the Russell Group. Whilst the university destination of our leavers is important, so is the academic rigour and reputation of the courses they choose to study. With the recent rise in university tuition fees, where most courses now charge a minimum of £9000 per annum, a common theme in the media is to question the 'graduate premium.' Bluntly, many commentators suggest that for some students, they would have been better served by entering a higher level apprenticeship or go directly into employment, rather than accumulate large debts, studying courses of questionable value, with poor employability rates.

At Merchant Taylors', we still believe that for the majority of our leavers, university education at undergraduate level retains intellectual, professional and personal value, but it is by no means right for everyone. We advise our Sixth Formers to choose academically rigorous courses (although also ones they will enjoy and have an interest in), and also bear in mind their possible employment prospects after graduation.

As the charts on the reverse of this letter indicate, the quality and range of courses and destinations remains very encouraging. I would like to congratulate the Upper Sixth Form on these results which according to the Daily Telegraph, places us in the top 250 schools in the UK at A level, from over 3000 secondary schools and colleges.

I am delighted to be able to provide such positive feedback to our parents. I also hope your sons have made a good start to the academic year. Please may I also use this letter as a reminder that our Open Evening this year is on **Thursday 6th October**, from 5.00 pm until 7.00 pm and our Open Morning is on **Saturday 8th October**, from 9.00 am until 12.30 pm? I should be grateful if parents would encourage any of their friends who might be interested to visit us then.

Yours sincerely,

