

AS & A LEVEL

With results in the bag, students eyeing higher studies

ABRAR HOSSAIN

Taking tests under Cambridge International Examinations or Pearson Edexcel of the British Council is usually a nerve-racking

experience for any student. However, after the Covid-19 outbreak began in March 2020, both the Ordinary Level and Advanced Level exams were suspended indefinitely. Most people would think that students were overjoyed by such a

development and while that may have been true at first, uncertainty about their future eventually began taking a toll on their mental wellbeing.

The exams were ultimately held though on the condition that all relevant health guidelines of the Directorate General of Health Services and World Health Organization would be followed.

In addition, participating students in the May-June session of 2020 were awarded results as per the centre assessed grades method, which allows the respective school or exam centre to predict their would-be score had the test been taken under an official examination board.

Similarly, the teachers assessed grades (TAG) system was used to assess students of the 2021 May-June session. Under the TAG system, students receive grades determined by their teachers.

Three years on since the pandemic began, students were finally able to return the halls for official assessment in the recently concluded May-June session and are now well on their way towards higher education.

Of the III Advanced Level candidates under Cambridge this year, four students secured A* in all four of their selected courses while 24 recorded the top grade in three or more subjects.

This is the first time in two years that the exams have taken place physically and the results have been average,

according to Md Fazlul Haq, board exam coordinator of Cambridge.

He went on to say that students suffered a lot during the pandemic and so, the return to physical examinations was welcome.

Likewise, the Advanced Level exams under Pearson Edexcel were held physically for the first time in three years during the May-June session.

Emma Whale, vice president of Pearson School Qualifications, congratulated the students on a job well done and said they have shown tremendous resilience in the face of more than two academic years amid the pandemic.

"We are proud of the role we have played in implementing a clear plan for the exam system following a challenging period for all. Thank you to all teachers, schools and their staff for their hard work throughout the year to deliver qualifications," she added.

Whale went on to say that the students have adjusted well with the return to exams.

Now, students will move towards higher education and many will go abroad for this purpose.

There are several experienced and reliable overseas higher education consultants in Bangladesh who provide A to Z solutions, and Education Hub is one of them.

"For the January intake, we are offering 100 per cent cash back on all fees so that students feel encouraged to take the service," said Abdullah Arafat, head of operations at Education Hub.

He then informed that they offer foundation courses that help students live out their dreams, including those who may not have secured high marks.

Arafat congratulated all the students who did well this year and urged those who did poorly to not lose hope as Education Hub is there to fulfil their consultancy needs.

Arafat then said everyone was ecstatic about returning to physical exams.

"Their interest in studying has returned and nothing could be better than that," he added.

There are also some transnational educational institutes who are providing a doorway to first-class global degrees right from the heart of Dhaka. Universal College Bangladesh (UCB) has been playing a prominent role to this end. UCB is the local partner of Monash College, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the world-famous Monash University.

Amid Chowdhury, head of marketing at UCB, congratulated the graduating students, saying that those who did well will have it easy moving forward.

Besides, even those who were less lucky still have the option of taking a foundation course under UCB to further their education.

The foundation course is particularly beneficial for Ordinary Level graduates as they can use it to skip past the massive hassle of Advance Level exams.

In addition, the foundation certificate is a universal qualification that students can use to enrol not only in Monash University, but almost any educational institute of their choice.

Not only does this programme help save time as it takes only one year to complete as opposed to the two needed to finish Advanced Level, it also saves money considering the huge fees involved in securing the latter certification, Chowdhury added.



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