**PRESS RELEASE August 4, 2015**

***Former Olympic performance coach available for interview - ‘A’ Level & GCSE results - August 13 and 20th***

As student stress levels rise, psychologist Miranda Banks shares best ways of coping with any exam result disappointment

Performance psychologist Miranda Banks, who specialises in working with youngsters struggling with exam stress, says there are many students who are so disappointed with their results they risk falling into a spiral of depression.

With ‘A’ Level results published on August 13 and GCSEs a week later on August 20, the former Olympic performance coach urges students not to allow negative feelings take over if they don’t achieve the grades they want.

Her advice comes after the NSPCC revealed earlier in 2015 that it had experienced a 200 per cent increase in its ChildLine counselling sessions about exam stress.

Miranda, from Petworth, West Sussex, said: “Exam result days can be extremely stressful times – especially if students don’t achieve the grades they want. I tell students to try not to panic and let feelings of isolation or being trapped set in, as these can lead to more serious negative feelings and things spiraling out of control.

“There are always ways of tackling feelings of hopelessness - ask yourself what do you need to do to get back on track? Focus on each step of the process you take to take in order to get there. Don’t think that you can’t achieve your goal – it may just take you longer or you might have to take a different route. There are always people to help such as teachers, family, friends and supportive charities.”

Miranda works extensively with students struggling to cope with the pressures of exams, using techniques honed from her days as a performance coach for Olympic and professional sportspeople in Australia.

She also works closely with dyslexic students and as an advisor to schools in the South East and has developed an exam preparation programme, which also advocates exercise as an important part of the revision schedule. “SmartivateTM”, is offered free to all secondary schools throughout the UK.

Miranda developed “SmartivateTM”, for youngsters from Year 7 to ‘A’ Level after working extensively with students, both in the UK and abroad. She said: “I wanted to reach far more children than I ever could with one-to-one sessions and ultimately help students who would not normally be able to access this extra support.”

[ends]

**Note to Editors:**

Miranda is available for interview before, during and after ‘A’ Level and GCSE exam results are published on August 13 and 20th. Please call her direct on 07789 933936.