

17 March 2010

Dear F.L. Hunter

Thank you for your email of 20 February 2010 requesting information about the University of Edinburgh's undergraduate admissions policy. I am pleased to enclose most of the requested information.

1. *I would like a copy of your Undergraduate Admissions Policy, along with minutes from any meetings over the last three years where changes to this policy have been discussed.*

Much of the information you request is available on the University website. In particular, may I point you towards:

The University of Edinburgh's Admissions Principles
<http://www.ed.ac.uk/studying/undergraduate/applications-admissions/guidance/principles>

College of Humanities & Social Science selection criteria and processes:
<http://www.hss.ed.ac.uk/Undergraduate/prospective/infoschools.htm>

College of Science & Engineering Admissions Policy:
<http://www.scieng.ed.ac.uk/Undergraduate/Tellme.asp>

MBChB Admissions Selectors' Handbook
<http://docstore.mvm.ed.ac.uk/PoliciesAndProcedures/Undergraduate/Handbook.pdf>

BVM&S Admissions Policy
<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/vet/studying/uk-eu-school-leavers/how-to-apply/admissions-policy>

I have attached extracts of minutes from meetings held since February 2007 at which changes to the University's undergraduate admissions policy have been discussed. You will notice that parts of these documents have been blacked out. This is because, although the University holds all the information you requested, I cannot supply you with all of it, as the University admissions policy is currently undergoing review, and the disclosure of this information would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs. The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 does not require us to provide this sort of information as it is exempt under section 30c.

2. *I would like a copy of the standard letter you send making an offer (conditional and unconditional) to a prospective student; and a copy of the standard letter you send rejecting an applicant.*

The University does not have a standard offer letter. It does not communicate its admissions decisions directly to undergraduate applicants. Instead, decisions are transmitted electronically by the University to the Universities & Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS), which provides these decisions to applicants via the online UCAS Track service. Details of any conditions attached to an offer are included in this communication from UCAS. Any applicant who has not been successful is welcome to request feedback on their application.

The University does write to each applicant to whom an offer has been made, in order to explain the next stages of the admissions process, and to give information about academic year dates, opportunities to visit, provision for disabled students, University accommodation, and so on. The content of the letter varies according to an applicant's age, domicile, tuition fee status and the programme to which an applicant has applied, in order that they receive information that is pertinent to them.

3. *I would like you to confirm the average time taken to respond to Undergraduate applicants last year, with details of whether this varies depending on the type of offer made; or whether there is variation across the different academic areas of the University.*

The University does not monitor the time taken to respond to undergraduate applications. All applications submitted prior to the UCAS deadlines (e.g. 15 October for Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, 15 January for all other UK/EU applications) are given equal consideration. The time taken to respond to an application varies according to the programme to which an applicant has applied, the level of competition for entry to a programme and the strength of an application. In general, the very strongest and weakest applications are responded to most quickly. The initial response may be an offer, a rejection, or an invitation to attend for interview or submit a portfolio in order for an application to be considered further. In accordance with the rules of the UCAS scheme, all applications submitted by the 15 January UCAS deadline are responded to by 31 March.

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If you are dissatisfied with this response, you may ask the University to conduct a review of this decision. To do this, please contact the University in writing (including by fax, letter or email) or in some other recorded form (e.g. audio or video tape), describe the original request, explain your grounds for dissatisfaction, and include an address for correspondence. You have 40 working days from receipt of this letter to submit a review request. When the review process has been completed, if you are still dissatisfied, you may ask the Scottish Information Commissioner to intervene.

Yours sincerely

Rebecca Gaukroger
Admissions Service Manager