

22 August 2019

Ref: FOI19-323

Dear Requester,

Thank you for your email of 29th July 2019 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Please see the responses to each of your questions below:

All requests are for the 2018/2019 cycle. If data for the 2018/2019 cycle is not possible, I would like it for the 2017/2018 cycle. Many thanks.

- 1. For each applicant, can I know their A-level predicted grades, GCSE grades, UKCAT score, BMAT score, whether they were successful in getting an interview and whether they were successful in getting a place?**

The University does not use BMAT system

- 2. For each applicant, can I also know whether they were home or international (if so whether they were an EU citizen)**
- 3. Please can I know what type of school the applicant went to (independent, maintained, grammar, academy or boarding)?**

For question 2 and 3 the data you have requested are exempt from disclosure under Sections 21, 40(2) and 43 of the Act as explained below.

The detailed data you have requested cannot be provided in full by either the University or UCAS due to the low numbers of applicants covered by the requested data. The data would need to be anonymised in line with Section 40 of The FOIA and it would therefore not be possible to disclose the level of detail you have requested. The redactions which would be required would also reduce the usefulness of the data for the purposes of analysis.

As the detailed dataset could not be disclosed under FOIA we then considered if an anonymised dataset could be provided and if so, if any additional exemptions may apply. UCAS can provide anonymised figures through the EXACT service and therefore the data is publicly available elsewhere, albeit in an anonymised form. It is worth noting that the anonymisation methodologies may vary across institutions, UCAS would be able to offer a consistent, comparable source for the data so procuring the data from them may be more appropriate if you wish to compare institutions in any analysis.

Although EXACT is a chargeable service UCAS considers the pricing methodology of EXACT to be reasonable, justifiable and transparent. Details can be accessed via their publication scheme on ucas.com here <https://www.ucas.com/about-us/policies/freedom-information/guide-information>. We feel that disclosure of UCAS derived data by higher education providers would prejudice their ability to sell application data via the EXACT service to third parties. There is likely to be significant commercial harm to UCAS as a disclosure under FOI, being a disclosure into the public domain, will allow the release of information with commercial value therefore severely weakening UCAS' ability to continue to sell this level of data. Such sales assist in the finance of their operations and the pursuit of their charitable aims; reduction in income from such services can lead to consequences including loss of significant revenue, inability to offer the same level of service to applicants or potentially impact on



jobs within their media or wider operations. We consider that the Section 43(2) argument is supported by the fact that the relevant data would be accessible on the payment of a fee as per the details available at <https://www.ucas.com/data-and-analysis/data-products-and-services/exact>.

Given the arguments set out above we would like to reiterate that the data requested is available in an anonymised releasable format through UCAS on behalf of the sector. While there is a cost for accessing bespoke datasets, the price of which is determined by UCAS in line with the organisation's charitable aims. We therefore consider that the data is reasonably available through that route and is exempt from disclosure under sections 21 and 22 of the FOIA.

4. Please could I have a breakdown of their UKCAT and BMAT scores by section

As per question 1

5. How their PS and interview performance was graded or scored

The University of Exeter Medical School does not rank or score the personal statement as part of its selection process. The Medical School will take into account information provided within the Personal Statement and reference, particularly where this reveals extenuating or mitigating circumstances which may have affected academic performance.

Where selection after interview is concerned, candidates are awarded a Yes or No judgement by each of the 7 panellists they see. Offers will be extended to those who achieve the highest number of Yes judgements. Should there be a large pool of candidates performing to the same level, the Medical School may refer back to UCAT performance to select candidates.

6. Whether they were on a gap year or taking a deferred place

The University does not hold data which would allow us to answer this question.

This response has been prepared in accordance with a request received pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The supply of documents under FOI does not give the person who receives the information an automatic right to re-use the documents without obtaining the consent of the copyright holder. If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. You must submit this to the Information Governance Office in writing within 40 days of receipt of this notification. Please quote the reference number above.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF. (<https://ico.org.uk/>)

Kind Regards,

Information Governance

University of Exeter

