



Bradley Stewart
By email

Reference: FOI-2021-127

5 March 2021

Dear Mr Stewart,

Your request was received on 8 February 2021 and I am dealing with it under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act').

You asked:

2020/21 English admissions statistics

I would like to request the following information regarding admissions to the BA English course (Q300) in the latest admissions cycle for UK and overseas (non-UK) applicants:

1. The number of applications each college received; 2. The number of applicants receiving an interview in each college; 3. Of the number of applicants receiving an interview in each college, the number of applicants placed in the Winter Pool following interview; 4. The number of offers made by each college; 5. Of the total number of offers made by each college, the number of direct offers made; 6. Of the total number of offers made by each college, the number of winter pool offers made.

I would like all of the above information to be provided for first-degree domestic (UK) and overseas (non-UK) applicants.

I would also like to request that the information be presented in a table, with each piece of information (number of applications, number receiving interviews, number placed in winter pool, total offers, direct offers, winter pool offers) as a column, and each college as a row. Each row can then be divided into UK applicants and overseas (non-UK) applicants.

The information requested, insofar as it is held (noting that the current undergraduate applications cycle is ongoing, and that we do not hold information about interviewees), is exempt under section 36(2)(c) of the Act because its disclosure would be likely to prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs, in this case the integrity of the University's applications and admissions process which form a fundamental part of its mission as an educational institution. (As the information requested is statistical

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in nature, the opinion of the qualified person did not need to be sought for this application of section 36.) The current undergraduate applications cycle is ongoing and applications are still being submitted and assessed. The University considers that the disclosure of detailed statistics about applications made within the current cycle would be likely to prejudice the notion of a fair and confidential admissions process whereby each applicant has the same information at their disposal and partial granular data is not disclosed to specific members of the public while the process is ongoing. As this is a qualified exemption, the University has considered whether, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. The University considers that, while some people might have an understandable private interest in these statistics, there is no genuine public interest in them when set against the extensive statistical information available about previous admissions cycles published at <https://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/apply/statistics>, coupled with the prevailing public interest in maintaining a level playing field in terms of the information available to all applicants.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request an internal review of this decision, you should contact us quoting the reference number above. The University would normally expect to receive your request for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this letter and reserves the right not to review a decision where there has been undue delay in raising a complaint. If you are not content with the outcome of your review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the University. The Information Commissioner may be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF (<https://ico.org.uk/>).

Yours sincerely,

Zoe Allwood