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Our ref: FOI/12/168

8 January 2013

Mr C Valand
Request-141287-1a71829d@whatdotheyknow.com

Dear Mr Valand

Freedom of Information Request – A200 Dentistry Admission Statistics

My letter, dated 10 December 2012, in relation to the above refers.

Having reviewed your request and consulted with appropriate colleagues, I would respond as set out below:

1. How many of the students admitted were studying A Levels?

For the 2011-12 admissions cycle, 57 students were admitted to Dentistry and of these, 39 were A-level school-leavers.

2. How many of the students admitted were international?

A total of 12 international students were admitted.

3. For each applicant who was unsuccessful in obtaining an interview, can I get a list of their UKCAT score, their GCSE's, and predicted A Level results and subjects studied.

4. For each applicant who was successful in obtaining an interview, can I get a list of their UKCAT score, their GCSE's, and predicted A Level results and subjects studied.

7. For each applicant who was successful in obtaining an offer, can I get a list of their UKCAT score, their GCSE's, and predicted A Level results and subjects studied as well as their score in the interview stage?

9. Can I also get details of successful and unsuccessful candidates that studied the IB and their various predicted results and UKCAT scores?

In relation to parts 3,4,7 and 9 of your request, the University does not use either the predicted grades or the A-level subjects being studied by each applicant in the selection procedure – this information is, therefore, not readily available. Information in relation to grades in individual GCSE subjects is also not readily available.

Furthermore, the number of IB applicants is extremely small and these would have to be individually identified before the requested information could be collated.

In view of the above, compliance with parts 3, 4, 7 and 9 of your request would involve undertaking a significant piece of work in terms of retrieving and reviewing the documentation in relation to each applicant.

Section 12 of the Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit, which for the University is set at £450. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 2.5 working days in determining whether the University holds the information, locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

It is difficult to estimate the time and resource which would be required to provide the requested information in the format requested as much would depend on whether or not this could be achieved electronically or via manual intervention.

From our preliminary assessment, however, it is clear that we will not be able to process these parts of your request as it stands, as we estimate that to extract this information from the UCAS record for each student on an individual basis, isolate IB applicants, and collate with UKCAT data would take 10-20 working days. This information is, therefore, not being provided.

The GCSE and UKCAT combined score for each A-level applicant broken down by those interviewed/not interviewed is provided in Appendix 1.

5. Can I get a list of criteria that the interviewers looked at during the interview to determine a candidates suitability?

Information regarding the types of non-cognitive skills tested at interview is available on the Centre for Dental Education's website at: www.qub.ac.uk/schools/mdbs/dentistry/ in the section on 'Frequently Asked Questions'.

Accordingly, this information is reasonably accessible to you by other means and is exempt from disclosure under section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

6. How was the interview scored? Was it a score out of 10 by each interviewer or anything along those lines?

No, interviews are not scored out of 10. Interview scoring is a complex statistical process that involves a number of stages and calculations. An outline of this process is attached as Appendix 2.

8. I would also like any scoring or grading system used to assess interview performance and if a form or such is provided to interviewers to record performance is available I would also kindly request this. This specific request is for this year's admission cycle, ie 2012/2013.

This information is being withheld under Section 36(2)(c) of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000. Section 36(2)(c) provides that information is exempt if in the reasonable opinion of a qualified person, disclosure of the information would be likely to otherwise prejudice the conduct of public affairs i.e. in this instance the operation of the interview selection process.

In this instance, the qualified person is Mr James O'Kane, Registrar and Chief Operating Officer.

It is the reasonable opinion of the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer that the information held should be exempt under Section 36(2)(c) of the Act. In reaching this conclusion, the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer has given full and detailed consideration to the views expressed by the School

of Medicine, Dentistry and Biological Sciences within written correspondence on this matter.

The University has concerns about the effect that disclosure of the requested information would be likely to have on the fairness of the interview process. If the answer schedules were to be released, this would give applicants who had sight of them an unfair advantage and affect the integrity of the interview process.

Section 36 is a qualified exemption and the University is, therefore, obliged to consider whether the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

The University recognises the public interest in promoting transparency and accountability for decision making. It also acknowledges that there is a general public interest in the disclosure of information to allow the public to obtain a greater understanding of the admission process. The University is, however, of the view that, in this particular case, any public interest in the disclosure of the assessment process is very limited, as the nature of the information requested throws up no particular issues that warrant a high level of public interest in disclosure above the general public interest factors of transparency in decision making.

There is, however, a significant public interest in the University being able to preserve the integrity of the admission process and to ensure that this remains fair and effective. The requested information has been specifically designed for interviewing potential candidates to the A200 programme and it is reused each year. The information contains details of the elements and areas of performance upon which potential candidates are assessed.

In view of this, the University considers that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure and that, therefore, the information should be withheld.

Whilst the University is not providing the detailed criteria requested, general information regarding the skills and qualities assessed at interview are listed both in the Entry Profile on the UCAS website and on the University's website.

10. Can I get the interview scores for each successful candidate as well along with the interview scores for unsuccessful candidates in the spreadsheet requested above.

This information is provided in Appendix 3. Please note that this information relates to all applicants interviewed and not just to the subset of A-level School Leavers.

If you are dissatisfied with the response provided, please put your complaint in writing to me at the above address. If this fails to resolve the matter, you have the right to apply to the Information Commissioner.

Yours sincerely

Amanda Latimer
Information Compliance Unit

Category A Interviewed

Applicant Category	UKCAT Score	Academic Score	Total
A	5	36	41
A	5	36	41
A	5	36	41
A	5	36	41
A	5	36	41
A	5	36	41
A	5	36	41
A	4	36	40
A	5	35	40
A	4	36	40
A	4	36	40
A	4	36	40
A	4	36	40
A	4	36	40
A	4	36	40
A	4	36	40
A	4	36	40
A	5	35	40
A	4	36	40
A	4	36	40
A	4	36	40
A	4	36	40
A	4	36	40
A	4	36	40
A	4	36	40
A	3	36	39
A	4	35	39
A	3	36	39
A	3	36	39
A	5	34	39
A	3	35	38
A	4	34	38
A	5	33	38
A	4	34	38
A	3	35	38
A	3	35	38
A	4	34	38

Category A Interviewed

Applicant Category	UKCAT Score	Academic Score	Total
A	4	34	38
A	3	35	38
A	4	34	38
A	4	34	38
A	4	34	38
A	3	35	38
A	3	35	38
A	4	34	38
A	3	35	38
A	3	34	37
A	4	33	37
A	3	34	37
A	6	31	37
A	4	33	37
A	3	34	37
A	4	32	36
A	5	31	36
A	3	33	36
A	4	32	36
A	4	32	36
A	3	33	36
A	4	31	35
A	3	32	35
A	3	32	35
A	4	31	35
A	3	32	35
A	3	32	35
A	4	31	35
A	5	29	34
A	3	31	34
A	4	30	34
A	4	30	34
A	3	31	34
A	2	31	33
A	2	31	33
A	3	30	33

Category A Interviewed

Applicant Category	UKCAT Score	Academic Score	Total
A	4	29	33
A	2	31	33
A	4	28	32
A	4	28	32
A	3	29	32
A	0	32	32
A	4	28	32
A	5	27	32
A	2	29	31
A	3	28	31
A	3	28	31
A	4	26	30

Category A Not Interviewed

Applicant Category	UKCAT Score	Academic Score	Total
A	3	24	27
A	3	19	22
A	3	15	18

10 point plan to obtain MMI ranks

1. All station scores/global scores are recorded
2. Station scores converted to percentages
3. Percentages regressed on global scores to estimate cut-score for each station
4. Cut-scores are averaged across all stations used on particular days – so different average cut-scores are obtained for each day.
5. Pooled standard deviation (within days) of unadjusted average scores obtained (SD)
6. Alpha-coefficients obtained for each day: Average weighted by number of participants per day calculated (alpha)
7. SEM calculated: $SEM = (1 - \alpha)^{0.5} * SD$
8. SEM added to CS for each day
9. Each day's individual average scores adjusted to $CS + SEM$ for that day
10. Students are ranked from highest to lowest based on adjusted score. Any student below 50.0 is automatic failure.

	result
87.52	Pass
86.05	Pass
85.35	Pass
84.81	Pass
82.05	Pass
81.98	Pass
81.98	Pass
81.01	Pass
79.65	Pass
79.65	Pass
77.91	Pass
77.75	Pass
77.75	Pass
77.75	Pass
77.33	Pass
77.33	Pass
76.86	Pass
76.66	Pass
76.17	Pass
75.91	Pass
75.91	Pass
75.44	Pass
75.58	Pass
75.04	Pass
75.00	Pass
74.49	Pass
74.49	Pass
74.49	Pass
73.84	Pass
73.41	Pass
73.26	Pass
73.26	Pass
73.08	Pass
72.68	Pass
72.32	Pass
71.78	Pass
71.66	Pass
70.94	Pass
70.94	Pass
70.70	Pass
70.70	Pass
70.35	Pass
70.15	Pass
70.15	Pass
69.61	Pass
68.83	Pass

Interview Ranking and Scores 2012

67.45	Pass
67.41	Pass
67.41	Pass
66.94	Pass
66.90	Pass
66.87	Pass
65.81	Pass
65.81	Pass
65.70	Pass
65.70	Pass
65.27	Pass
65.12	Pass
65.12	Pass
64.58	Pass
63.96	Pass
63.63	Pass
63.10	Pass
63.10	Pass
62.69	Pass
62.22	Pass
62.22	Pass
62.01	Pass
62.01	Pass
61.64	Pass
61.27	Pass
61.05	Pass
60.80	Pass
60.38	Pass
59.30	Pass
57.57	Pass
57.57	Pass
57.13	Pass
57.13	Pass
56.08	Pass
56.04	Pass
56.04	Pass
55.13	Pass
54.96	Pass
54.66	Pass
54.19	Pass
53.71	Pass
53.50	Pass
52.33	Pass
52.30	Pass
50.88	Pass
50.59	Pass
50.41	Pass

Interview Ranking and Scores 2012

50.41	Pass
49.68	Fail
49.68	Fail
49.58	Fail
48.36	Fail
48.09	Fail
48.02	Fail
47.71	Fail
47.34	Fail
47.08	Fail
45.85	Fail
44.36	Fail
44.16	Fail
43.61	Fail
41.59	Fail
40.63	Fail
40.24	Fail
39.88	Fail
38.77	Fail
31.68	Fail
29.82	Fail