



13 December 2018

RECORDS MANAGEMENT SECTION

File ref: T3/30/43

Mr James Davenport

Sent by email: [request-520444-1d8ea279@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-520444-1d8ea279@whatdotheyknow.com) and [request-512337-0fd74bd6@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-512337-0fd74bd6@whatdotheyknow.com)

The University of Edinburgh  
Old College  
South Bridge  
Edinburgh EH8 9YL

Direct Dial 0131 651 4099  
Switchboard 0131 650 1000

Email [recordsmanagement@ed.ac.uk](mailto:recordsmanagement@ed.ac.uk)

Dear Mr Davenport

### **Freedom of information request, review request, and correction**

Thank you for your email of 26 November 2018 requesting a review of the University's handling of your request for admissions statistics for two MSc degree programmes on the basis that we have failed to provide a response within the statutory 20 working days.

Your request for information was sent by email on 18 September 2018 and acknowledged on 20 September 2018. The response was due on 16 October 2018. I sent an apology for the delay on 17 October 2018, and on 26 November 2018 you requested a review.

As the University was working towards responding to your request when we received your review request, our review decision is that you should receive the response as soon as possible. This letter therefore provides our response to your request and explains your right to appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner's Office if you are dissatisfied.

This letter also provides a correction to the figures we provided in our response of 18 September 2018, to your request of 22 August 2018, requesting the same admissions statistics for MSc Artificial Intelligence.

We sincerely apologise again for the delay in responding to your request. As previously explained this is due to us currently experiencing an exceptionally high volume of requests and staff shortages.

### **Admissions statistics for MSc Data Science, and MSc Statistics with Data Science**

You requested statistics for applications to the University's MSc Data Science and MSc Statistics with Data Science programmes in 2016/17, 2017/18, and 2018/19.

You requested the number of applicants by geographic region. This information is given in Table 1, below. Applicants' country of domicile has been matched to the geographical regions used by the United Nations Statistics Division. Further details are available online at <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/m49/>. These geographic regions are

based on continental regions; which are further subdivided into sub-regions. I have not been able to provide a further breakdown into sub-regions as doing so could enable individuals to be identified. Disclosing this information would be likely to breach data protection principles. The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 does not require us to provide this sort of information as it is exempt under section 38(1)(b).

**Table 1: Number of applications to MSc Data Science and MSc Statistics with Data Science, by region, 2016/17 to 2018/19**

Programme	Region	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
MSc Data Science	Africa	29	35	28
	Americas	14	27	46
	Asia	210	349	575
	Europe	91	108	148
	Oceania	0	1	2
MSc Statistics with Data Science	Africa	9	14	26
	Americas	6	25	30
	Asia	43	235	443
	Europe	30	68	115
	Oceania	0	0	0

You also requested the total number of offers, the number of conditional and unconditional offers, and the number of offers which were firmly accepted, with the student expected to enrol. These figures are given in Table 2. Please note that unconditional offers are only made when applicants already hold the required qualifications.

**Table 2: Number of applications, offers and acceptances for MSc Data Science and MSc Statistics with Data Science, 2016/17 to 2018/19**

Programme	Statistics	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
MSc Data Science	Applications	344	520	799
	Offers	177	152	199
	Conditional Offers	35	8	<5
	Unconditional Offers	142	144	198
	Unconditional firm acceptances	64	50	79
MSc Statistics with Data Science	Applications	88	342	614
	Offers	32	150	245
	Conditional Offers	8	22	26
	Unconditional Offers	24	128	219
	Unconditional firm acceptances	12	46	76

*Table note:*

- Unconditional firm acceptances are used as a proxy for entrants, as these are applicants who have met all of their conditions and have firmly accepted an offer. However, not all applicants who firmly accept an offer will go on to matriculate at the University.
- You will see that I have not provided the exact number where the number is fewer than five. Disclosing these low numbers could enable individuals to be identified. Disclosing this information would be likely to breach data protection principles. The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 does not require us to provide this sort of information as it is exempt under section 38(1)(b).

You asked for the number of offers to be broken down by UK undergraduate degree classification. These figures are given in Table 3.

**Table 3: Number of offers for MSc Data Science and MSc Statistics with Data Science, by UK degree classification of previous qualification, 2016/17 to 2018/19**

Programme	Degree classification	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
MSc Data Science	First class	6	5	10
	Second class, division I	<5	5	<5
	Second class, division II	0	<5	0
	Third class	0	0	0
MSc Statistics with Data Science	First class	0	0	0
	Second class, division I	0	0	<5
	Second class, division II	0	0	0
	Third class	0	0	0

*Table note:*

- You will see that I have not provided the exact number where the number is fewer than five. As I explained above, this is because disclosing these low numbers could enable individuals to be identified. Disclosing this information would be likely to breach data protection principles. The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 does not require us to provide this sort of information as it is exempt under section 38(1)(b).

Finally, you requested the previous degrees of the offer holders. To respond to your request fully, we would have to manually search the 955 individual applications for a record of each applicant's previous degree of study. This information could be located in the personal statement, references, attached documents, or notes fields. Doing this would cost more than £600, the limit over which the University is not required to respond to freedom of information requests.

If you were to restrict your request to the previous degrees of the offer holders for a single year, the cost would be reduced. However providing information for one year would still cost over £100, the limit over which the University can charge a fee. If you would like information for one year please let us know and we will calculate the fee. However, please note we would need to ensure the information is appropriately anonymised to prevent disclosure of identifiable information.

## Right to appeal

If you are dissatisfied with the response to your request for admissions statistics for MSc Data Science and MSc Statistics with Data Science programmes, you may ask the Scottish Information Commissioner to investigate. You must do so within six months of receipt of this response. The process for making an appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner, including the application form, is published at [www.itspublicknowledge.info/YourRights/Unhappywiththeresponse/AppealingtoCommissioner.aspx](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/YourRights/Unhappywiththeresponse/AppealingtoCommissioner.aspx). If you do not have access to the Internet, I can provide a copy of the relevant web pages, or you can contact the Commissioner's Office using the details below. When the appeal process has been completed, if you are still dissatisfied, you have the right to appeal to the Court of Session, but on a point of law only.

Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner  
Kinburn Castle

Doubledykes Road  
St Andrews  
Fife  
KY16 9DS

Telephone: 01334 464610  
Fax: 01334 464611

### Correction to MSc Artificial Intelligence admissions statistics

On 22 August 2018, you requested the same statistics for applications in 2016/17, 2017/18, and 2018/19 to MSc Artificial Intelligence. The 2015/16 to 2017/18 statistics we provided in our response of 18 September 2018 were incorrect. I apologise for this error. Table 4, 5, and 6 below, provide the correct figures for 2015/16 to 2017/18. As the 2018/19 admission cycle is now complete, I also include the figures for 2018/19.

As in Table 1 above, the applicants' country of domicile in Table 4 has been matched to the geographical regions used by the United Nations Statistics Division. I have not been able to provide a further breakdown into sub-regions as doing so could enable individuals to be identified. Disclosing this information would be likely to breach data protection principles. The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 does not require us to provide this sort of information as it is exempt under section 38(1)(b).

**Table 4: Number of applications to MSc Artificial Intelligence by region, 2015/16 to 2018/19**

Region	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Africa	27	43	34	39
Americas	23	32	35	67
Asia	225	316	527	940
Europe	86	146	258	337
Oceania	2	0	1	3

**Table 5: Number of applications, offers and acceptances for MSc Artificial Intelligence, 2015/16 to 2018/19**

Statistics	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Applications	363	537	855	1,386
Offers	234	314	373	467
Conditional Offers	42	65	17	4
Unconditional Offers	192	249	356	463
Unconditional firm acceptances	109	138	149	211

*Table note:*

- Unconditional firm acceptances are used as a proxy for entrants, as these are applicants who have met all of their conditions and have firmly accepted an offer. However, not all applicants who firmly accept an offer will go on to matriculate at the University.

**Table 6: Number of offers for MSc Artificial Intelligence, by UK degree classification of previous qualification, 2015/16 to 2018/19**

Degree classification	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
First class	13	13	21	38

Degree classification	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Second class, division I	11	6	12	15
Second class, division II	<5	0	<5	0
Third class	0	0	0	0

*Table note:*

- You will see that I have not provided the exact number where the number is fewer than five. As I explained above, this is because disclosing these low numbers could enable individuals to be identified. Disclosing this information would be likely to breach data protection principles. The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 does not require us to provide this sort of information as it is exempt under section 38(1)(b).

## Right to review

If you are dissatisfied with the response to your request for admissions statistics for MSc Artificial Intelligence, you may ask the University to conduct a review of this decision by contacting the University's Records Management Section ([www.ed.ac.uk/records-management/about/contact](http://www.ed.ac.uk/records-management/about/contact)) in writing (e.g. by letter or email) or in some other recorded form (e.g. audio or video tape). You should 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 appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner using the guidance at [www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal). If you do not have access to the Internet, please let me know and I will provide a copy of the relevant web pages.

## Privacy notice

The University of Edinburgh's privacy notice, which describes how we use the information you have supplied about yourself and your request, is available on-line at [www.ed.ac.uk/records-management/freedom-information/make-a-request/privacy-notice](http://www.ed.ac.uk/records-management/freedom-information/make-a-request/privacy-notice).

Yours sincerely

**Iain Phillips**

Information Compliance Officer

**If you require this letter in an alternative format, such as large print or a coloured background, please contact the Records Management Section on 0131 651 4099 or email [recordsmanagement@ed.ac.uk](mailto:recordsmanagement@ed.ac.uk)**