



Information Assurance and Governance
Office of the Principal

5 December 2021

Dear Dr Marshall,

Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002
Our Ref: 436-21(b)

I refer to your enquiry dated 7 November 2021 asking to be supplied with information under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 in relation to admission to the School of Medicine in academic years 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22. You are seeking to be supplied with data pertaining to individual applicants in the form of a spreadsheet, with information presented as one row per applicant.

- Per individual applicant (one row per applicant):
 - Candidate number (any unique identifier)
 - Undergraduate or Graduate applicant
 - Course applied for by code (A100, A101 etc.)
 - UK/home or International applicant (fee status)
 - UCAT score (per section & SJT if available, or overall score)
 - Curriculum (GCE A-levels, IB, CBSE, Aps, SAT subject tests, Canadian secondary school)
 - Invited for Interview – yes or no
 - Received an offer – yes or no
 - If yes, what offer was sent? (grades required to achieve)
 - Accepted an offer for application year – yes or no
 - Deferred place for the following year – yes or no
 - If following GCE A-levels, then please provide: A Level Grades for each subject; and specify if that grade is predicted or achieved.
 - If following IB, then please provide: HL grades per subject; Specify if that grade is predicted or achieved; SL grades per subject; Specify if that grade is predicted or achieved; Overall IB score predicted or achieved.
 - Please provide the equivalent information (predicted or achieved grades) for students who apply with CBSE curriculum, Aps, SAT subject tests and Canadian secondary school diploma.
 - If a student applied with a differed curriculum, write “NA”.
 - If the student has completed GCSEs or iGCSEs, please provide: Specify if GCSEs or iGCSEs; Grades achieved for each subject.
 - If a graduate applicant: Degree achieved or predicted; Degree class; Degree subject; Masters (yes or no); PhD (yes or no).

Information Assurance and Governance
01334 462776
foi@st-andrews.ac.uk

The University's response is noted below.

1. Information not held

The University does not distinguish between undergraduate and graduate applications and this data is not separately recorded. The following information is not held in a reportable and verifiable format which would allow the information requested to be provided through data-retrieval alone:

- Curriculum (GCE A-levels, IB, CBSE, Aps, SAT subject tests, Canadian secondary school)
- If following GCE A-levels, then please provide: A Level Grades for each subject; and specify if that grade is predicted or achieved.
- If following IB, then please provide: HL grades per subject; Specify if that grade is predicted or achieved; SL grades per subject; Specify if that grade is predicted or achieved; Overall IB score predicted or achieved.
- Please provide the equivalent information (predicted or achieved grades) for students who apply with CBSE curriculum, Aps, SAT subject tests and Canadian secondary school diploma.
- If a student applied with a different curriculum, write "NA".
- If the student has completed GCSEs or iGCSEs, please provide: Specify if GCSEs or iGCSEs; Grades achieved for each subject.
- If a graduate applicant: Degree achieved or predicted; Degree class; Degree subject; Masters (yes or no); PhD (yes or no).
- Deferred place for the following year.

The process involved in providing the above data in the format requested requires data analysis, validation and a level of intellectual input resulting in the creation of new information which is out with the provisions of the FOISA.

Section 17 of the FOISA requires that a Scottish public authority confirms in writing where information requested of it is not held and notice is therefore given to this effect.

2. Personal Information

Provision of the remaining information requested per individual applicant is being withheld on the basis that this constitutes personal information under section 38(1)(b), *Personal Information* of the FOISA.

Candidate ID numbers are unique indicators and therefore we are unable to supply the information held by the University in the way requested as there is a risk that this could lead to an identifiable individual, disclosing information of a personal nature where there is no expectation of this happening and release would therefore be unfair. This would contravene data protection principle 1(a) in Article 5(1) of the General Data Protection Regulation i.e. that personal data shall be processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner.

Disclosure of information under the FOISA is release of information into the public domain and by extension, members of the University community. It is through this route that identification is most likely to occur when the data is taken in conjunction with other data that could potentially come into the possession of another.

The exemption available at section 38(1)(b), *Personal Information* of the FOISA is being applied in this respect. This is an absolute exemption on not subject to the public interest test.

3. Advice and Assistance

You will find information on the minimum entry requirements for each of the different qualifications listed on our website at: <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/subjects/entry/> .

You may wish to consider refining your request for information so that it removes the requirement for data to be provided on an individual applicant basis. For example, the University can look to provide you with the:

- Number of applications, interviews, offers and entrants for each fee status for A100, A101 and A990 Medicine degree programmes;
- Minimum, Mean and Highest UCAT Score for each stage of the application process; and each SJT Band.

If you would like to be supplied with this alternative data please let me know and I will arrange for this to be processed.

Your right to seek a review of how your information request was managed

If you are not satisfied with the University's response and/or our reasoning set-out above, you have the right to request a review of our decision. The timelines in which this right is available are set out in section 20(5)(a) and (b) FOISA. In broad terms the right to seek a review must be exercised within 40 working days of receiving this response.

The Information Assurance and Governance team are currently working remotely due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Any request for review at this time should be sent by email to foi@st-andrews.ac.uk stating:

- a) your name and address;
- b) details of your original request; and
- c) the reasons why you are dissatisfied with our response.

If you remain dissatisfied with how your request for information has been dealt with following Review, you also have the right to apply to the Scottish Information Commissioner (SIC) for a decision. In the event of an appeal to the SIC, the Commissioner will generally only be able to investigate the matters raised in the request for review.

Details/

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The University of St Andrews is a charity registered in Scotland, No: SC013532

Details on how to make an appeal online to the SIC can be found on their website: <http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/YourRights/Unhappywiththeresponse/AppealingtoCommissioner.aspx> .

This concludes the University's response.

Yours sincerely

JUNE WEIR

Information Assurance and Governance Officer