



By e-mail: Mr Normand <request-629887-c070c3cf@whatdotheyknow.com>

Office of the Vice-Chancellor
4 West
University of Bath
Claverton Down
Bath
BA2 7AY

20 January 2020

Dear Mr Normand

Request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 2000 – 2019/376

Your request was received on 20 December 2019, and is copied below for your reference:

"My request is regarding statistics for the BSc Physics, BSc Chemistry and BSc Biology courses or nearest equivalent where the precise course doesn't exist. All requests are for the 2017/2018 cycle. Please can I have the following anonymised data about candidates who applied for each course. Please could you provide the data separately for each course.

1. *For each applicant, can I know their A-Level predicted grades.*
2. *For each applicant, can I know their GCSE grades, and whether there were any extenuating circumstances involved.*
3. *For each applicant, could I know, where relevant, whether they were successful in getting an interview and how this was graded.*
4. *For each applicant, if their personal statement was given a score or grade, could I know the corresponding score.*
5. *For each applicant, can I know whether they were successful in receiving an offer.*
6. *For each applicant, please could I know which type of school they attended (independent, maintained, grammar, academy or boarding)*
7. *For each applicant, could I please know whether they were home or international.*
8. *For each applicant, whether they were on a gap year or taking a deferred place."*

Section 1(1) usually entitles you to be told whether the requested information is held and have that provided to you unless it is judged to be exempt from disclosure.

We are unable to provide the data requested on an 'applicant by applicant' basis, even when anonymised, as there is sufficient risk that individuals could be identified, including by triangulation of requested data with other information held or otherwise known. This information is therefore exempt from disclosure under section 40(2), where disclosure would breach any of the principles defined in the Data Protection Act. In reaching this conclusion the University is mindful of the conditions for fair and lawful processing and has judged that individuals have a reasonable and legitimate privacy expectation that their personal details are only processed according to the conditions outlined in the University's [Data Protection Statement](#).

We are however able to provide summarised data corresponding as fully as possible to your questions, which is contained in the attached document. Please note:

1. For the same data protection grounds as previously stated, we are withholding data about small groups of students to minimise the risk of identification. This includes instances where percentages would reveal groups of eight or fewer in the chart for questions 1 and 5, consistent with the practice adopted by the Higher Education Statistics Agency for such data. Figures of 90% or more (including 100%) are also shown as $\geq 90\%$ to minimise data protection risks. Information on extenuating circumstances and gap years is also being withheld due to data protection considerations.
2. In relation to question 3 (interviews), typically, only students taking BTECs or the Access to Higher Education Diploma are interviewed prior to an offer being made. Of those interviewed across the three courses, 42% received an offer. Interview grading and feedback is not routinely retained. We are not providing any further information for the same data protection grounds previously mentioned.
3. In relation to question 4 (personal statements), whilst all are read by at least twice during the admissions process, for Biology, Chemistry and Physics, personal statements are not graded or scored formally, but instead assessed for their suitability.
4. In relation to question 6 (secondary education), this information is only provided to universities by UCAS for UK schools. All non-UK schools are classed as 'other'. Small numbers of students (fewer than five) are also being withheld in accordance with section 40(2) and are shown as <5. Zeroes are also shown as <5 to prevent the calculation of withheld figures.

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of how your request was handled you may ask the University to conduct an internal review. A request for an internal review must be submitted within 40 working days of receipt by you of this response. Requests received outside this period will only be considered at the University's discretion and where there is a valid reason to do so. Applications for internal review should be addressed in writing to Freedom of Information Team, University of Bath, Claverton Down, Bath BA2 7AY or e-mail freedom-of-information@bath.ac.uk.

If you remain dissatisfied you may appeal to the Information Commissioner's Office at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF. Further details of this process are available via the following link: [https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/official-information-concerns-report/official-information-concerns/](https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/official-information-concerns-report/official-information-concern/) Please note that the Information Commissioner will only consider appeals once the internal review process has been completed.

Yours sincerely

John Evans

John Evans
Freedom of Information Officer