



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

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22 August 2022

File ref: FOI2022/00389

Huzefah Hanif

Sent by email: request-882772-
422e19ac@whatdotheyknow.com

Dear Huzefah Hanif

Freedom of Information request: FOI2022/00389

Thank you for your email of 28 July 2022 requesting information about medicine admissions statistics of Muslim applicants and the provision of facilities for Muslim students.

The University of Edinburgh is a global university, rooted in Scotland. We are globally recognised for our research, development and innovation and we have provided world-class teaching to our students for more than 430 years. We are the largest university in Scotland and in 2020/21 our annual revenue was £1.18 billion, of which £324 million was research income. We have over 45,000 students and over 16,000 staff. We are a founding member of the UK's Russell Group of leading research universities and a member of the League of European Research Universities.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

The University is committed to embedding equality, diversity and inclusion across all our work and to developing a positive culture where all staff and students are able to develop to their full potential. Our continuing commitment to equality and diversity plays a vital role to ensure the University's success as a great civic institution for both students and staff. The University has a single equality strategy to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are guiding principles in our pursuit of academic excellence.

To further the University's commitment to [equality, diversity and inclusion](#) and to meet the requirements of the Scottish regulations under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equalities Duty, the University has set challenging equality outcomes, which are detailed in our published [Equality Outcomes 2021-2025 and Mainstreaming Progress Report 2017-2021](#).

You may be interested to know that [reports from the Equality Diversity Monitoring and Research Committee \(EDMARC\)](#), which contain analyses of equality protected characteristics data about our students and staff, are published on our website.

Widening participation

The University is committed to creating and maintaining a diverse community of students and staff, thereby enriching the learning, working and social experience for all, and demonstrating our commitment to social justice. Ways we achieve this include: working to raise engagement and aspirations in individuals from groups under-represented in higher education, broadening the base of our applicant pool; and providing and raising awareness of our access bursaries and making fundraising for bursaries and scholarships a high priority for philanthropic giving. Further information about our [widening participation activities](#) and our [scholarships](#) is published on the University website.

Edinburgh Medical School

The University of Edinburgh Medical School is renowned for preparing its students to be world class doctors. The MBChB programme curriculum aims to ensure that our graduates are caring, competent, confident and reflective practitioners, and are able to function at the highest level in academic, hospital or community settings. [Further information about the MBChB](#) is published on the University's website.

Medicine admissions statistics

You asked for the proportion of applicants to the Edinburgh Medical School who are Muslim and the proportion of these applicants who are from a low socioeconomic background, i.e. with an annual household income bracket below £24,000. You then asked for: the proportion of Muslim applicants who applied for Medicine who received an offer from the University; the proportion of these applicants who accepted the offer; the proportion of Muslim applicants who got an interview for Medicine; and the average UCAT score for Muslims who applied to the University.

The University does not record the religion/religious background of applicants. Therefore, the information required to answer this part of your request is not held by the University.

Please note we do not record the socioeconomic background of applicants, but we do record measures of disadvantage that are used for Widening Participation purposes. We use the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), which is the Scottish Government's official tool to identify areas of multiple deprivation in Scotland. We also use ACORN (A Classification of Residential Neighbourhoods), which is a demographic tool that classifies UK households into five broad categories and is quite commonly used by universities in the UK to identify widening participation applicants. Both reflect the geographic area in which an individual lives and not necessarily their personal circumstances. The [Widening access offers webpage](#) on the University's website gives a more detailed breakdown of how SIMD and ACORN is used when assigning contextual flags.

You also asked for the proportion of Medical School interviewers who are BAME (black, Asian and minority ethnic).

Edinburgh Medical School interviewers are all practising or retired doctors or clinicians. Their ethnicity is not recorded by the School. Therefore, we do not hold the information you request.

Religious requirements

You asked for the number of prayer rooms on campus. We have interpreted this question as asking about Muslim prayer rooms specifically.

There is a Brothers' and a Sisters' Muslim prayer room at King's Buildings, and also shared prayer spaces on other sites (Central Area, Moray House and the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies). More information on the Chaplaincy's buildings and facilities throughout the University can be found on the [locations](#) page of their website.

You may also be interested to know that there is a [list of faith and worship facilities](#) throughout Edinburgh also available on the University's Chaplaincy website.

You asked whether the University provides halal food options in any of our canteens.

The University does not serve halal meat to students in communal dining rooms or restaurants/cafes managed by the University. All menus include over 50% vegetarian or vegan options as per the commitment within the [University's Good Food Policy](#) to reduce consumption of meat. Within catered halls, given the size of operation, it is not possible to cater for special diets, and students with a specific dietary requirement are advised to apply for self-catered accommodation. The University does, however, occasionally buy halal meat on request for commercial events organised by UoE Accommodation Ltd (UoEAL), trading under The University Hospitality and Events Collection.

UoEAL is a subsidiary company, wholly-owned by the University of Edinburgh, responsible for the University's commercial accommodation, catering and events business. It is a separate legal entity from the University, and does not come under the scope of the University's obligations under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. This means that the University is unable to answer requests for information held by UoEAL. [UoEAL's publication scheme](#) is published online, and includes details of how to make a freedom of information request for information held by UoEAL. The University cannot forward your request to UoEAL as doing so would invalidate your rights under freedom of information legislation.

Finally, you asked whether there is a Muslim chaplain at the University. The University does have a Muslim chaplain. It also has a Muslim Belief Contact. Their details can be found on the Chaplaincy website's [Muslim Honorary Chaplains and Belief Contacts](#) web page.

Right to review

If you are dissatisfied with this response, you may ask the University to conduct a review of this decision by contacting the University's Records Management Section 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. The contact details for the Records Management Section are at the top of this letter. When the review process has been completed, if you are still dissatisfied, you may use the [Scottish Information Commissioner's guidance on making an appeal](#) to make an appeal to the Commissioner. 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 for information request applicants

[The University of Edinburgh's request privacy notice](#), which describes how we use the information you have supplied about yourself and your request, is published on the University website.

Yours sincerely

Celia Jenkins

Records Management Section

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