



15 November 2018

RECORDS MANAGEMENT SECTION

File ref: T3/30/80

Mr Bill Brady

Sent by email: [request-519069-344d3d9d@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-519069-344d3d9d@whatdotheyknow.com)

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Dear Mr Brady

### **Freedom of information request**

Thank you for your email of 9 November 2018 requesting a review of your request about BVM&S course entry data 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 11 September 2018 and acknowledged on 12 September 2018. The response was due on 9 October 2018 and on 9 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.

We sincerely apologise again for the delay in responding to your request.

### **Your request and our response**

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 425 years. We are the largest university in Scotland and in 2016/17 our annual revenue was £929 million, of which £265 million was research income. We have over 39,000 students and over 9,700 full-time equivalent 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.

The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies is a world leader in veterinary education, research, and clinical practice. It provides an outstanding veterinary education at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, using an award winning curriculum, innovative teaching methods, and an interdisciplinary environment, for both undergraduate and postgraduate students. The five-year undergraduate Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine and Surgery (BVM&S) degree programme prepares students for many aspects of the

veterinary profession and is the main route into veterinary medicine for students. Details of the programme, including the academic and non-academic entry requirements are available online at [www.ed.ac.uk/vet/studying/5-year-programme](http://www.ed.ac.uk/vet/studying/5-year-programme).

Competition for places on the BVM&S is extremely high. Every year we receive approximately 1,200 applications for around 72 Home/EU places and 43 graduate and international places. We interview approximately 350 candidates from the applications we receive each year and so inevitably a great number of applicants fall below the cut-off point for interview.

## BVM&S application figures

You requested the numbers of places available on the BVM&S programme from academic year 2013/14-2017/18, the number of applicants interviewed, who were offered a place, who were declined, and who firmly accepted a place. You asked for these numbers broken down by Scottish, EU, Rest of UK, and Overseas fee category students. This information is given in Table 1, below.

**Table 1: Places available on BVM&S, number of applicants, offers, places declined, places accepted, 2013/14-2017/18**

	Year of entry	Scottish / EU	Rest of UK	Overseas	Total
Places available	2018	42	30	53	125
	2017	42	30	53	125
	2016	42	30	53	125
	2015	40	32	53	125
	2014	40	32	53	125
Interviewed	2018	175	235	137	547
	2017	160	254	99	513
	2016	173	174	132	479
	2015	168	184	129	481
	2014	122	211	0	333
Offered	2018	72	83	98	253
	2017	66	70	77	213
	2016	65	70	96	231
	2015	61	59	103	223
	2014	58	57	113	228
Not offered/ withdrew	2018	103	152	39	294
	2017	94	184	22	300
	2016	108	104	36	248
	2015	107	125	26	258
	2014	64	154	0	218
Accepted	2018	43	30	29	102
	2017	42	30	35	107
	2016	42	29	34	105
	2015	39	33	45	117
	2014	36	34	49	119

### *Table notes*

- The 'not offered/ withdrew' category includes those called for interview but who withdrew, and those unsuccessful after interview.
- Where there are more places accepted than available in that fee category this is due to a withdrawal post-matriculation. A place that becomes available in this way will be offered to a student in the same fee category.
- Overseas places are self-funded so the 'places available' are an internal target, unlike the available places for funded SEU and RUK students. Overseas applicants were interviewed from 2015 entry onwards.

### *Applicant qualifications*

You also requested the corresponding A-levels and UKCAT points of each applicant, those who we offered a place, those who declined and those who accepted a place, including resit and re-marked qualifications for those students accepting a place.

We hold a spreadsheet showing individual entry qualification breakdowns for entrants from 2014 to 2016. However, the type of qualifications obtained do not necessarily indicate the fee status of the student so this data does not give an exact breakdown by Scottish/EU/RUK/Overseas fee status as requested. To confirm the fee status of each student it would be necessary to manually cross-reference each student by looking up their record on the student record system then noting their fee status in the existing spreadsheet. This could take over a day's work and therefore cost over £100, the level at which the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 allows the University to charge a small fee for answering requests.

We do not have a similar spreadsheet for 2017 and 2018, as the information was not compiled in this way. Therefore we would have to manually check each student record and compile similar data. This is estimated to take one to two days' work and again is likely to cost over £100.

If you would like us to calculate the fee for the 2014 to 2016 data and/or the 2017 and 2018 data, please let me know. However, as detailed below, please note that if we were to undertake this work we would not be able to release the information in full at an individual level. This is because disclosing this level of detail could enable individuals to be identified. This would breach the data protection principles set out in the Data Protection Act 1998. 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).

However I am able to provide overall grades for students who entered with A-levels in Table 2, and students who entered with Highers and Advanced Highers in Table 3 below. In most cases a breakdown by qualification type, subject (if recorded), and grade, results in fewer than five individuals. I have therefore aggregated the data. For students sitting overseas qualifications, any breakdown results in fewer than five students. I have therefore not provided a breakdown of these qualifications. This is because disclosing these low numbers could enable individuals to be identified. Again this would breach the data protection principles set out in the Data Protection Act 1998. 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 2: A-level grades of BVM&S students beginning academic years 2014/15-2016/17**

Other grades	AAA	A*AA	A*A*A	A*A*A*	A*AAA	A*A*A*A
18	43	38	22	11	6	9

**Table 3: Higher and Advanced Higher grades of BVM&S students beginning academic years 2014/15-2016/17**

Other grades	AAA/AAAAA	AAB/AAAAA	AA/AAAAA	AB/AAAAA
46	22	7	9	7

Applicants to the BVM&S do not submit a UKCAT score so the University does not hold information for this part of your request.

The University does not hold a record of the qualifications of applicants who were not offered a place, or who were offered a place but declined it.

Five entrants were admitted between 2014/15-2016/17 after resitting A-level examinations. I have interpreted 'remarked' as pupils whose school qualifications were re-graded on appeal. No entrants to the programme presented re-graded qualifications.

### **Right to appeal**

If you are dissatisfied with this response, you have the right to appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner within six months of receipt of this response. Information on how to do this is available at [www.itspublicknowledge.info/YourRights/Guidetoyourrights/AppealingtoCommissioner.asp](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/YourRights/Guidetoyourrights/AppealingtoCommissioner.asp). If you do not have access to the Internet, please let me know and I will provide a copy of the relevant web pages. 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.

### **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](http://www.ed.ac.uk/records-management/freedom-information/make-a-request).

Yours sincerely

**Eleanor Rideout**  
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)**