

Twice as many don't make grades

By Neil Johnston, News Editor (2012/13)

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The number of EU and home students accepted to the University after failing to match the grade requirements of their offer has doubled in the past year.

This year 773 students from the UK and EU were accepted, despite missing their offer, compared with 317 for the 2011/12 academic year.

The University have cited the fee rise as an explanation, however applications to York only declined by one per cent, far less than the national figure of 8.7 per cent.

There have also been large differences year on year for some departments. Economics and Related Studies saw 24 students accepted despite not meeting the precise conditions of their offer, compared to none the year before.

English and Related Literature saw 53 students accepted having not met the precise conditions compared to none the year before, while Maths had an increase from ten to 34 and the York Law School had an increase from one to 43.

A spokesperson for the University said: "There are changes in the external environment (principally the removal of the cap on admission of students with qualifications over a certain level and a consequent expansion of places for these students) which mean that we are operating in a more competitive landscape and our admissions policy and practice needs to be flexible to address that.

"The key point is that the data on students admitted who did not meet the conditions of their offer will include, for example, a student admitted with A*A*B when they had an AAA offer and it's hard to see that as a dropping of standards."

In 2011 the number of students being accepted and not meeting their entry requirements hit its lowest level since at least 2008.

The 317 students accepted in 2011 compared to 420 in 2010, 470 in 2009, and in 467 in 2008.

Furthermore, the proportion of students out of the overall number of offers that were accepted despite not meeting the precise entry requirements has also increased.

This year the number of home and EU students being given offers decreased from 12,641 to 12,377, therefore the proportion of students getting in with lower entry requirements was 6.3 per cent in 2012 compared to 2.5 per cent in 2011.

Most universities, especially in the Russell Group, tend to be strict when it comes to students meeting entry requirements, even if the total UCAS tally is the same as the original requirements. The next round of applications has just completed, with application figures have increased by 8.5 per cent this year.

Graeme Osborn, YUSU Academic Officer, said: "The current recruitment environment is very complex. It is likely that the removal of the cap on student numbers for those with AAB at A-Level will have had an impact, but it is almost impossible to say to what extent. The number does include those who have done

worse in one subject but better in other, so could include 'better' students. In addition, the figures do not include the large numbers who don't take A-Levels, so any comment on overall standards would be misleading."



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