

Technical definitions for terms used in daily Clearing analysis 2017

The terms defined in this document are those used in the 2017 daily Clearing analysis, which is published on the UCAS website. The daily Clearing analysis comprises of a number of PDF report documents, each containing tables and graphs that provide core numbers for the current UCAS cycle, and comparison data for the previous four cycles. The daily Clearing analysis is produced on 8 August, and then each weekday during the period 17 August - 1 September. Not all of the terms defined below are used in each PDF report, and the number and type of reports produced varies throughout the reporting period.

In Scotland there is a substantial section of provision that is not included in UCAS' figures. This is mostly full-time higher education provided in further education colleges, which represents around one third of young full-time undergraduate study in Scotland. This proportion varies by geography and background within Scotland. Accordingly, the statistics on UCAS acceptances in these data resources reflect only that majority of full-time undergraduate study that uses UCAS.

From the 2015 cycle onwards, applications to postgraduate teacher training programmes in Scotland were included in the UCAS Undergraduate admissions scheme, previously these were recruited through UCAS Teacher Training. The numbers for providers in Scotland from 2015 onwards recorded through UCAS Undergraduate scheme include those which were previously part of UCAS Teacher Training. In 2015, around 120 courses at providers in Scotland moved into the UCAS Undergraduate scheme, and it is estimated to be around 2,000 acceptances, mostly aged 21 or over.

Populations used in analysis

Applicants	A person who has made an application in the UCAS system during the cycle reported. This includes those who submit applications for deferred entry. All reporting in the daily Clearing analysis is based on the application cycle, and is not adjusted for deferrals to report by entry cycle.
Base population estimate <i>Used to calculate the proportion of 18 year old UK population placed</i>	The population estimates are based on the Office for National Statistics mid-year estimates and national population projections. For 16 to 20 year olds, the estimates are obtained by ageing 15 year olds from the appropriate number of years earlier. This approach avoids the estimates being susceptible to changes in net migration (including overseas students) during these ages.

Applicant types and statuses

Main scheme	The main UCAS Undergraduate application scheme, through which up to five providers/courses can be applied to. Opens in September and closes to new applications on 30 June.
❖ Placed	An applicant who has been placed for entry into higher education. There are a number of placement routes: Clearing, Adjustment, firm, insurance and Records of Prior Acceptance (RPAs). RPAs are excluded from the daily Clearing analysis.
• Clearing	An acceptance route available late in the application cycle.
• Adjustment	An acceptance route where applicants who have met and exceeded the conditions of their firm choice choose to take up an alternative offer.
• Firm	An offer made by a provider which has been confirmed by the applicant as their first choice. These can be either conditional (dependent on achieving specified requirements), or unconditional (these are assumed to be accepted/placed). In order to be defined as placed (firm), an applicant must have been placed at the provider with which they hold their firm choice at 30 June.
• Insurance	An offer made by a provider which has been confirmed by the applicant as their second choice, in case the conditions of the firm choice are not met. These can be either conditional (dependent on achieving specified requirements), or unconditional (no further requirements to be met). In order to be defined as placed (insurance), an applicant must have been placed at the provider with which they hold their insurance choice at 30 June.
• Other	Applicants in placed (other) include those for whom statuses could not be defined because no decision had been recorded on their application by 30 June.
• RPA	An RPA is a Record of Prior Acceptance, where an application is submitted to UCAS by a provider, when an unconditional firm has been offered and accepted by the applicant. These are not recorded in the daily Clearing analysis and will be reported after the cycle has closed.
❖ Holding offer	An applicant who was holding an offer at 30 June which has a yet-to-be-resolved outcome. For example, a conditional firm (CF) for which the results are yet to be verified against the conditions.
❖ Free to be placed in Clearing	An applicant who is not placed or holding an offer, and applied by 30 June. Applicants can move from this status to placed (Clearing).
Direct to Clearing	Applicants who register to apply after 30 June. Applicants cannot make parallel applications through this route – only one application will be active at a given point in time. Applicants in other (direct to Clearing) include those for whom statuses could not be defined, because no decision had been recorded on their application at the point of reporting.

Applicant characteristics

Age	The daily Clearing analysis uses country-specific age definitions, which align with the cut-off points for school/college cohorts in the different administrations of the UK. For England and Wales, ages are defined on 31 August, for Northern Ireland on 1 July, and for Scotland on 28 February the following year. Defining ages in this way matches the assignment of children to school cohorts. For applicants outside of the UK, the cohort cut-off for England and Wales has been used.
Domicile	Declared area of permanent residence.
POLAR3	Developed by HEFCE, and classifies small areas across the UK into five groups according to their level of young participation in HE. Each of these groups represents around 20 per cent of young people and is ranked from quintile 1 (areas with the lowest young participation rates; the most disadvantaged) to quintile 5 (highest young participation rates; considered most advantaged). Updates in geographical classifications may result in small changes to the POLAR3 quintile assignment of applicants between reporting cycles.
Region	Area of permanent residence for UK regions.
SIMD16	Scottish index of multiple deprivation (SIMD) for 2016 identifies small area concentrations of multiple deprivation across Scotland, providing a relative measure of deprivation amongst 6,976 small areas (data zones) based on seven socio-economic domains. These small areas are classified into five groups, ranked from quintile 1 (considered the most deprived) to quintile 5 (considered least deprived), with equal populations in each quintile. SIMD is only defined for applicants domiciled in Scotland. SIMD has been updated to SIMD16 and as such figures may not match those previously published.
Subject (JACS3)	Courses are classified using JACS3: www.hesa.ac.uk/content/view/1787/281/ The predominant subject group can be derived for applicants only when over half of their main scheme applications are made to one JACS3 subject group. All other applicants will be assigned a predominant subject group of 'none'. The values reported against subject group in the 2015 cycle have been restated from those which appeared in the equivalent report in 2015.

B7 applicant types and statuses

B7 nursing applicant	An applicant who has applied to a nursing course with JACS3 subline of B7. Applicants who applied to a nursing course but are placed at or holding offer to non-B7 courses are not considered.
❖ Placed	An applicant who has been placed for entry onto a nursing course, with the JACS3 subline of B7.
❖ Holding offer	An applicant who was holding an offer to a course with JACS3 subline B7 at 30 June, which has a yet-to-be-resolved outcome.
❖ Free to be placed in Clearing	An applicant who was holding an offer to a B7 course at 30 June and is currently neither placed, nor holding an offer to any course.

Provider characteristics

Tariff group	Providers are grouped based on the average levels of attainment of their accepted applicants in recent cycles (summarised through UCAS Tariff points). A provider belongs to either the lower, medium, or higher Tariff group, and each group of providers accounts for around a third of all UK 18 year old acceptances in recent cycles.
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