

# Y75: unconditional offers

## York St John University's perspective on unconditional offers:

*In 2015, the university took the decision that from 2016, it would adopt unconditional offers as part of its undergraduate recruitment model. For 2019 entry, we have introduced a new offer scheme based on contextual information that builds on our record of widening access. The revised scheme reflects the ethos and ambitions of our new long-term University Strategy.*

*In introducing and making a large number of unconditional offers, 3 factors were important to us:*

- 1. Satisfying ourselves that the individuals we made unconditional offers to had the potential to succeed at university. We did this by making unconditional offers to those whose predicted grades matched or exceeded our entry requirements. This approach appears to have worked. Statistical analysis of our 2017 cohort shows that those students who joined on unconditional offers did not differ in terms of their academic performance in their first year from those we recruited through conditional offers, nor is there any difference between the two groups in terms of their retention rate.*
- 2. Giving applicants a clear and direct choice. Throughout the last 3 years, we have used 'straight' unconditional offers, rather than the 'conditional unconditional' methodology, whereby the unconditional offer is dependent on the applicant naming an institution as their firm choice. Our model gave students whose predicted grades satisfied our entry requirements the reassurance to make us a firm or insurance choice, based on our suitability.*
- 3. Addressing the concerns that unconditional offers may reduce performance at A level or other qualifications. To do this, we operated a scholarship system which emphasised to applicants the importance of reaching their full potential (regardless of their university offer) throughout their pre-university studies. In 2016, we awarded 175 scholarships of £1,750 each for the highest achieving students on enrolment, and continued to deploy a variation on this scheme in the following years.*

*In line with our University Mission, and having carefully analysed the data on unconditional offers, we have moved to an innovative contextual offer scheme. This will significantly reduce the number of unconditional offers we make, and use them in a more focused way.*

*Over half the students at our university come from one or more of the underrepresented groups in UK higher education. Our contextual offer scheme called 'Opportunity and Excellence' builds on that strength. It utilises what we know through UCAS about an applicant's background, and applies a points-based system so that more of our unconditional or reduced points offers are based on a combination of academic potential and the background of our applicants. Those experiencing multiple barriers to entering higher education receive concessionary offers if they demonstrate potential in their predicted grades and overall application. Further details are available on our website.*

*In feedback, students tell us unconditional offers make them feel valued by the institution and help relieve exam pressure. Our revised scheme continues to deploy a limited number of unconditional offers, alongside reduced offers, but better aligns with our longstanding commitment to widen access to a university education.*

## Definitions of offer types:

### Unconditional offer

This is an offer made by a provider where they are satisfied that an individual has demonstrated sufficient attainment and potential to succeed on their chosen programme. Based on the offer status at the 30 June application deadline.

### Conditional unconditional offer

An offer made by a provider which was originally conditional, but becomes unconditional if the applicant selects that offer as their firm (first) choice. By definition, conditional unconditional offers that are selected as a firm choice by the applicant become unconditional and are also included in the unconditional offers group (see above).

### Offer with an unconditional component

All offers showing as having an element of unconditional offer-making, that is, unconditional offers plus conditional unconditional offers that have not been selected as firm (and hence remain conditional unconditional).

### All offers

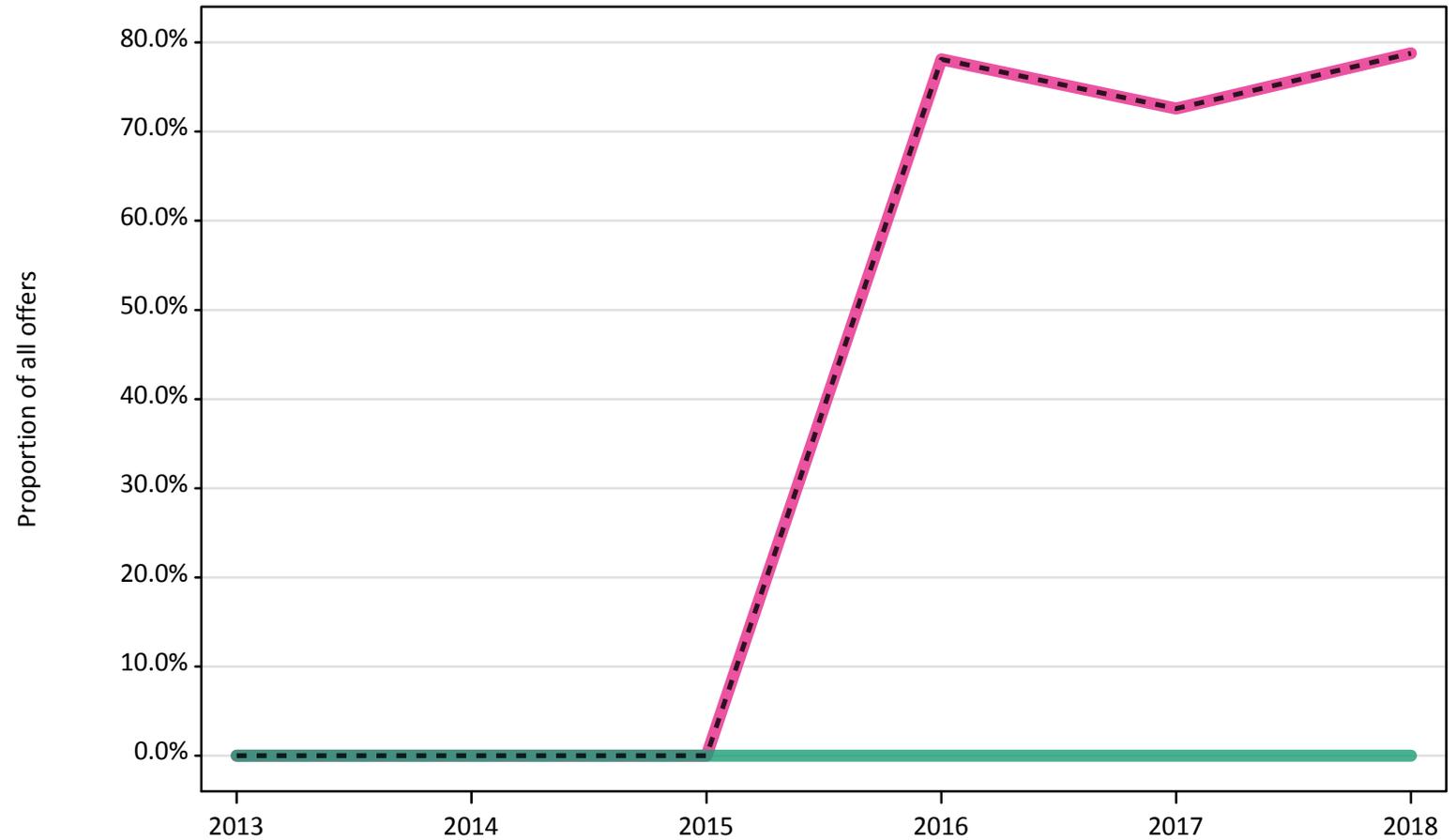
All offers made by the provider, subject to the coverage of this report. This includes conditional as well as unconditional offers to 18-year-old main scheme applicants domiciled in England, Northern Ireland, and Wales.

**Technical note:**

The coverage of this report is limited to offers made by 30 June, to 18-year-old main scheme applicants domiciled in England, Northern Ireland, and Wales. This is because these applicants are least likely to apply already having achieved a full set of qualifications typically required for undergraduate higher education.

**A.1 Proportion of all offers that are unconditional, by cycle year**

- Unconditional offers
- Conditional unconditional offers
- Offers with unconditional component



## A.2 Unconditional offers by cycle year

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Unconditional offers	0	0	0	3,445	4,110	4,645
Conditional unconditional offers	0	0	0	0	0	0
Offers with unconditional component	0	0	0	3,445	4,110	4,645
All offers (conditional and unconditional)	4,450	4,450	4,000	4,410	5,660	5,895

## A.3 Proportion of all offers that are unconditional, by cycle year

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Unconditional offers	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	78.1%	72.6%	78.8%
Conditional unconditional offers	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Offers with unconditional component	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	78.1%	72.6%	78.8%

Note: Percentage values are not printed in the above table if the total rounded number of offers for that year is below 100.