

N38: unconditional offers

University of Northampton's perspective on unconditional offers:

Context

The rise in unconditional offers from 2016 to 2018 is a result of our transition from conditional unconditional offers to unconditional offers. Our unconditional offers have no requirements from applicants to make us their firm choice, therefore there have been significant increases in applicants (who meet our unconditional offers entry criteria) being offered an unconditional offer in 2017 and 2018.

Approach

At the University of Northampton, we assess which programmes are suitable for our unconditional offer scheme, and we exclude programmes which are not suitable (including but not limited to Adult Nursing, Midwifery, Primary Education, Social Work, Child Nursing, Mechanical Engineering, Integrated Foundation Framework). For programmes which are included in our unconditional offer scheme, we adopt an evidence-based decision-making approach. Applicants are assessed against unconditional offer scheme and programme entry criteria using a range of information/criteria, which can demonstrate an applicant's motivation and potential to achieve successfully at university. The criteria and information on which a decision is made may include the following:

**Reference*

**Personal statement*

**Previous academic achievement at Level 2 (e.g. GCSEs) or part completed Level 3 (e.g. BTEC)*

**Predicted academic achievement at Level 3 (e.g. A levels, BTEC)*

**Quality of a portfolio*

**Performance at interview or audition*

Applicant communication

All applicants who receive an unconditional offer from us receive a detailed communication, which highlight a range of important factors related to unconditional offers. Firstly, it details what an unconditional offer is and why they are offered. Secondly, it highlights the importance of Level 3 qualifications in developing skills and experience in order to transition successfully to university. Lastly, it details the impact Level 3 qualification can have on future career and study opportunities.

Review

Our unconditional offer scheme is reviewed on an annual basis in alignment with each admissions cycle. The reviews look into a range of factors which may include:

**assessment of programmes which are included in or excluded from the unconditional offer scheme*

**applicant behaviour or trends*

**previous academic achievement required*

**predicted grade requirements*

**impact of grade inflation, and the discrepancy between actual and predicted grades*

**qualitative feedback from a variety of sources*

**progression outcomes and performance of students*

Summary

In summary, our approach to unconditional offers is transparent, with no requirements on applicants to make us their firm choice, which does not put undue pressure on applicants to make a decision, and also allows applicants the flexibility to choose us as their insurance choice. This allows applicants the time to make an informed decision on whether the University of Northampton is the right choice for them and their future studies.

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

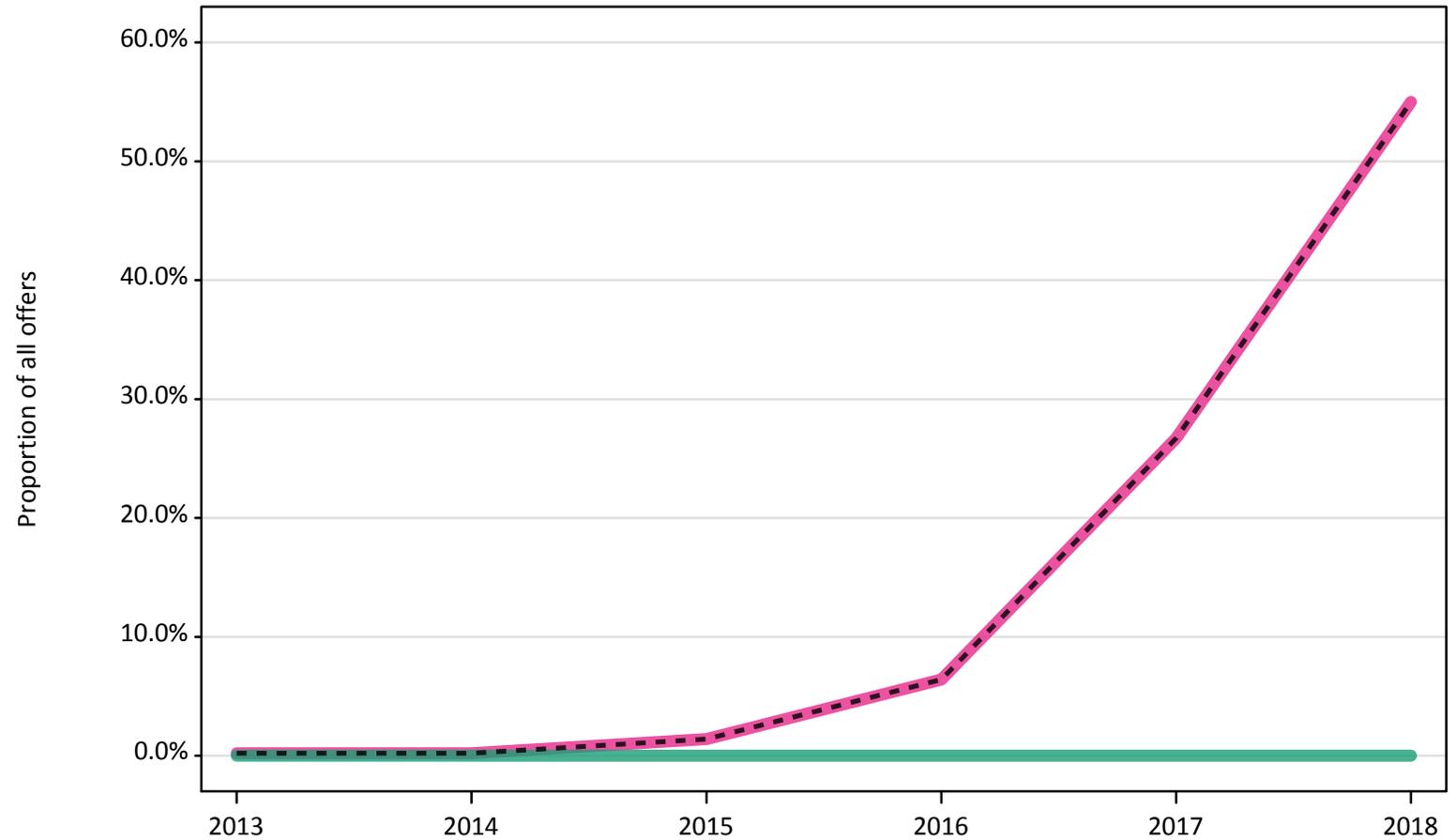
All offers made by the provider, subject to the coverage of this report. This includes conditional as well as unconditional offers to 18-year-old main scheme applicants domiciled in England, Northern Ireland, and Wales.

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	10	15	65	350	1,445	3,200
Conditional unconditional offers	0	0	0	0	0	0
Offers with unconditional component	10	15	65	350	1,445	3,200
All offers (conditional and unconditional)	5,615	5,810	4,590	5,460	5,405	5,825

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

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Unconditional offers	0.2%	0.2%	1.4%	6.4%	26.7%	55.0%
Conditional unconditional offers	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Offers with unconditional component	0.2%	0.2%	1.4%	6.4%	26.7%	55.0%

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