

UCAS VERIFICATION SERVICE REPORT 2025

Introduction

UCAS supports around 700,000 applications every year from domestic, EU, and international applicants to higher education in the UK. The role of the verification service is to help check that applications include true, complete and accurate information, and to support applicants in providing this. Verification activities also help prevent anyone from gaining an unfair advantage or securing a place by deception. UCAS' activities complement those undertaken by universities and colleges, and other service providers, such as the Student Loans Company.

Applications submitted to UCAS are subject to checks using fraud detection software, and personal statements are screened using similarity detection software. Universities and colleges may also identify issues with applications. If information is incorrect, missing or an issue is raised, the application will be flagged, and applicants or their referees will be asked to provide additional information or clarification. If, ultimately, the issues cannot be resolved, the application may be cancelled. Applicants may appeal cancellation decisions.

As part of our commitment to transparency, we publish an annual report and statistics on the performance of the verification service for the undergraduate admissions service, including numbers of applications that were flagged and cancelled, and an analysis of the characteristics of these applicants.

Statistical reporting on the 2025 cycle (UK domiciled applicants only)

In the 2025 cycle, 425 applications from UK domiciled applicants were flagged for further consideration, which equates to 0.07% of the total UK applicant population. Of these, 145 applicants had their applications cancelled, 0.02% of the total population of applicants. Table 1 shows these results in comparison to previous cycles.

In comparison to the 2024 cycle, there has been a 15% decrease in the number of flagged applications from UK domiciled applicants, however, with a 26% increase in the number of cancelled applications.

Table 1: UK domiciled undergraduate applicants, total flagged and cancelled for each cycle

Cycle	Applicant Baseline	Flagged	Reinstated	Cancelled	Suspended
	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.
2021	607000	640	15	60	50
2022	616320	680	10	90	65
2023	604285	630	15	75	45
2024	607645	500	10	80	35
2025	610585	425	15	90	55
All	4189215	5660	125	515	405

UK domiciled applicants by ethnic group

Table 2 shows the number and percentage of flagged and cancelled applications by ethnic groups. The proportion of flagged applications across ethnic groups has broadly remained the same as seen in the 2024 cycle.

In the 2025 cycle, 48% of flagged applicants were classified as black in comparison to 42% in the 2024 cycle. The percentage of cancelled applications in the flagged black ethnic group increased to 45%; however, this was 40% in the 2024 cycle.

19% of flagged applicants were classified as white in comparison to 16% in the 2024 cycle. The percentage of cancelled applications in the flagged white ethnic group has increased from 12% in the 2024 cycle to 21% in the 2025 cycle.

Table 2: UK domiciled undergraduate applicants, total flagged and cancelled and relative proportion each ethnic group comprises (2025 cycle)

Ethnic Group	Applicant Baseline		Flagged		Cancelled	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Asian	101995	17	80	19	25	17
Black	67985	11	205	48	65	45
Mixed	38130	6	20	5	10	7
Other	21140	3	30	7	10	7
Unknown or Prefer Not to Say	13980	2	10	2	5	3
White	367355	60	80	19	30	21
All	610585	100	425	100	145	100

UK domiciled applicants by age

Mature applicants are defined as those aged 21 and over and typically account for a quarter of UK domiciled applicants. Our figures show the applicants of this group, who commonly apply without the support of a school or college, are more likely to find their applications flagged.

In the 2025 cycle, this accounted for 60% of flagged applicants. This remains the same compared to the 2024 cycle. The proportion of cancelled applicants aged 21 and over has decreased from 75% in the 2024 cycle to 66% in the 2025 cycle.

Table 3: UK domiciled undergraduate applicants, total flagged and cancelled and relative proportion each age band comprises (2025 cycle)

Age Band	Applicant Baseline	Flagged	Cancelled
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	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
17 or Under	2960	0.5	0	0	0	0
18	335910	55.0	65	15	20	14
19	92380	15.1	65	15	20	14
20	36375	6.0	40	9	10	7
21+	142960	23.4	255	60	95	66
All	610585	100	425	100	145	100

UK domiciled applicants by Apply centre (i.e. with the support of a school or college)

Independent applicants are defined as those who apply without the support of a UCAS-registered centre (typically a school or college).

In the 2025 cycle, 32% of individuals applying to higher education were classified as independent applicants. Our figures show these applicants are more likely to have their applications flagged. In the 2025 cycle, 77% of flagged applications were classified as independent applicants with a 2% increase from the 2024 cycle.

Table 4: UK domiciled undergraduate applicants, total flagged and cancelled and relative proportion each apply centre comprises (2025 cycle)

Apply Centre	Applicant Baseline		Flagged		Cancelled	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Apply Centre	414205	68	100	23	20	14
Independent	196380	32	330	77	120	86
All	610585	100	430	100	140	100

UK domiciled applicants by region

Our data shows that applicants living in London are more likely to have their applications flagged than those living in other parts of the UK. In the 2025 cycle, this accounted for 41% of flagged applications, representing a slight decrease from 42% in the 2024 cycle.

Table 5: UK domiciled undergraduate applicants, total flagged and cancelled and relative proportion each region comprises (2025 cycle)

Region	Applicant Baseline		Flagged		Cancelled	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Unknown	795	0.1	0	0	0	0
Channel Islands	5	0.0	0	0	0	0
East Midlands	37305	6.1	25	6	10	7
East of England	51505	8.4	35	8	15	10
London	120805	19.8	175	41	60	40
North East	18270	3.0	5	1	0	0
North West	68045	11.1	50	12	15	10
Northern Ireland	18225	3.0	0	0	0	0
Scotland	49865	8.2	5	1	10	7
South East	80395	13.2	35	8	10	7
South West	40185	6.6	10	2	0	0
Wales	23225	3.8	10	2	0	0
West Midlands	56935	9.3	45	10	15	10
Yorkshire and The Humber	45025	7.4	35	8	15	10
All	610585	100	430	100	150	100