

UCAS END OF CYCLE REPORT 2019

CHAPTER 1: SUMMARY OF APPLICANTS AND ACCEPTANCES

- > 541,240 students accepted.
- > 73.6% of accepted UK 18 year olds placed at their first choice.
- > A record 34.1% entry rate for UK 18 year olds.
- > Over 45,000 from outside the EU accepted for the first time ever.
- > 15% growth in UK students aged 35+ accepted.



UCAS

MORE APPLICANTS THAN EVER WERE ACCEPTED TO START A FULL-TIME UNDERGRADUATE COURSE THROUGH UCAS IN THE 2019 CYCLE.

Overall applicants and acceptances

A record 541,240 people were accepted through UCAS to start an undergraduate course in the 2019 cycle. This is a 1.5% increase on 2018, and comes following two consecutive years of decreases.

The overall number of applicants also increased, by 1.6%, to reach 706,435. This is the first time since 2016 that the overall number of applicants has exceeded 700,000.

The 2019 acceptance rate is therefore 76.6%, a small decrease of 0.1 percentage points on last year after four years of growth.

Students from the UK account for 464,335 acceptances, up 1.1% on 2018. The number of applicants accepted from outside the EU has reached a new peak of 45,140, a 6.9% year-on-year increase, while EU acceptances have fallen by 90 (0.3%) to 31,765.

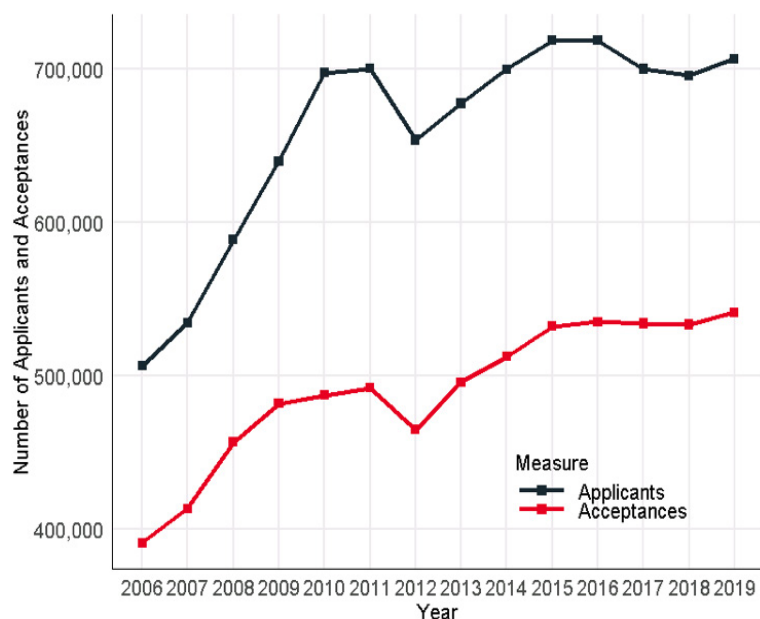


FIGURE 1: Total number of applicants and acceptances

UK applicants

There is a new record entry rate of 34.1% for UK 18 year olds. This is an increase of 1.1 percentage points from 2018, and continues the trend of increases which began in the 2013 cycle. The number of UK 18 year olds accepted has increased by 1.3% (3,135 students) to reach 241,515. This increase in acceptances, combined with the near 2% decrease in the overall UK 18 year old population, has produced the record entry rate of 34.1%.

There are significant increases in the number of UK applicants accepted over the age of 30. In the age group 30 – 34, acceptances have increased by 8.7%, to reach a record 13,395. The 35 and over age group has seen the largest proportional change of all – 15% – with acceptances reaching 27,195 for the first time (the previous record for this age group was 23,640 in 2018).

This increase in young entry rates and mature acceptances comes alongside recent confirmation from the Department for Education³ that a former Government target (set in 1999) of 50% of people from England to enter higher education by the time they are 30 has now been met.

Explore all the end of cycle data in our interactive dashboard on [ucas.com](https://www.ucas.com)¹. Definitions of terms used in this report are available in the [glossary](#)².

34.1% RECORD ENTRY RATE FOR UK 18 YEAR OLDS.

27,195 ACCEPTANCES FOR APPLICANTS AGED 35 AND OVER RISE BY 15%.

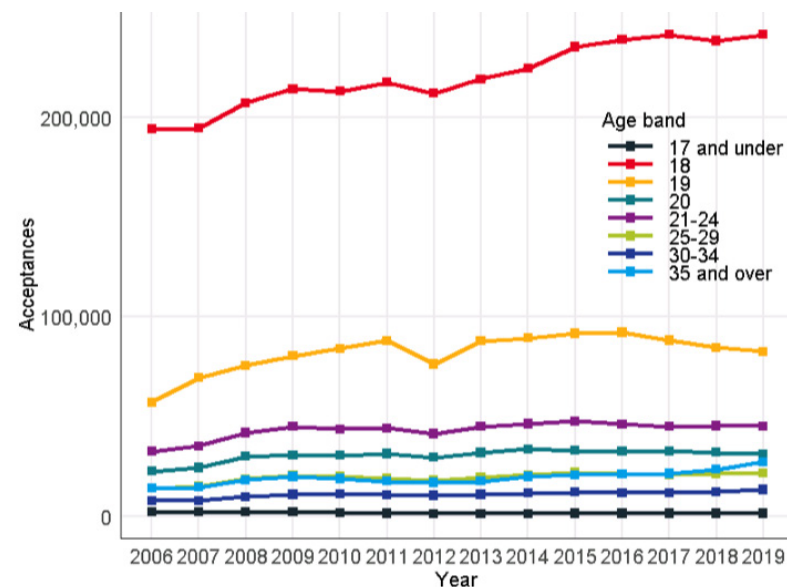


FIGURE 2: UK acceptances by age bands

¹ <https://www.ucas.com/data-and-analysis/undergraduate-statistics-and-reports/ucas-undergraduate-end-cycle-data-resources-2019>

² <https://www.ucas.com/data-and-analysis/undergraduate-statistics-and-reports/ucas-undergraduate-end-cycle-reports/2019-end-cycle-report>

³ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/843542/Publication_HEIPR1718.pdf

Acceptance routes

The firm (an applicant's first choice after receiving their offers) route remains the most common way to be accepted. 68.8% of everyone (all ages, all domiciles) accepted – 372,290 people – were placed at their firm choice, although this is a decrease of 4,610 compared to 2018. The insurance (an applicant's second choice) route was used by 35,440 people – up 255 on last year. For UK 18 year olds accepted, 73.6% were placed at their firm choice.

Clearing continued to grow in popularity, with 73,320 people accepted in total. This is the first time that more than 70,000 people used Clearing. It is split between 53,685 people accepted through main scheme Clearing having initially applied earlier in the cycle (up 9%), and 19,640 people applying for the first time during July, August, and September (direct Clearing, up 12.1%).

The Extra and Adjustment routes both saw decreases in 2019. 4,635 people were placed through Extra (a fall of 7.8%), and 590 people were placed through Adjustment (down 33%). These reductions are a likely result of the introduction of online self-release into Clearing, covered in more detail in Chapter 3 of the 2019 End of Cycle Report.

Extra allows applicants to add another choice to their application, one at a time, if they are not holding an offer after using their first five choices. Adjustment allows a student to move to a more aspirational place if they achieve higher grades than their firm offer requires.

Subjects

The subject group 'business and admin studies' once again had the most acceptances. A record 72,135 people were accepted, an increase of 3.1% and the seventh consecutive year of increase. This consistently large number of acceptances is likely to contribute to the wide range of median salaries reported for graduates five years after graduation⁴, from £19,400 to £71,700.

'Subjects allied to medicine', which includes nursing courses, saw a 6.6% increase (3,705 people) in acceptances. See more details on nursing statistics in Chapter 2 of the 2019 End of Cycle Report.

'Medicine and dentistry' acceptances increased the most proportionally, by 11.3% (1,150 acceptances), to reach a record 11,360 for that group. This comes as more medical places were made available in England⁵ for the second year running.

Mathematical sciences saw the largest proportional fall of -9.9% (915 acceptances) to 8,285, the lowest number since 2012, coinciding with the launch of the new maths A level⁶, which saw nearly 6,000 fewer students taking the subject in summer 2019⁷. Mass communications also saw a significant fall of -7.7% (1,010 acceptances) to 12,110, the lowest total since 2013 – a HE subject with one of the lowest median salaries five years after graduation⁸.

⁴ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718225/SFR_18_2017_LEO_mainText.pdf

⁵ <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/news-blogs-events/news/new-medical-schools-open-train-doctors-future>

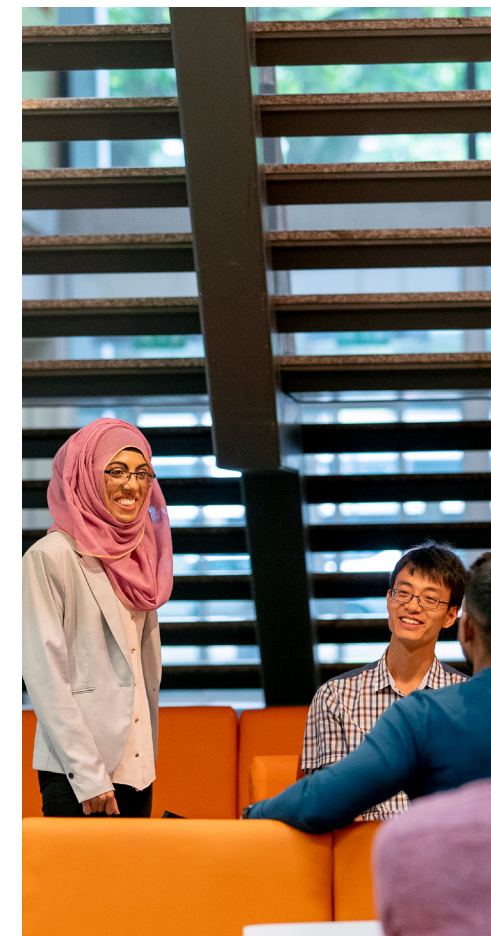
⁶ <https://ofqual.blog.gov.uk/2019/02/08/new-a-level-maths-in-2019/>

⁷ <https://www.jcq.org.uk/Download/examination-results/a-levels/2019/main-results-tables/a-level-and-as-results-summer-2019>

⁸ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718225/SFR_18_2017_LEO_mainText.pdf

541,240

**TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS
ACCEPTED THROUGH UCAS TO
START AN UNDERGRADUATE
COURSE IN THE 2019 CYCLE –
UP 1.5% ON LAST YEAR.**





© UCAS 2019

All rights reserved.

UCAS is a registered trade mark.

UCAS, a company limited by guarantee, is registered in England and Wales.
Registered number: 2839815.

Registered charity number:
1024741 (England and Wales) and SC038598 (Scotland)

Publication reference: MD-5916

Published by: UCAS, Rosehill, New Barn Lane, Cheltenham, GL52 3LZ.