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For immediate release

ATAR cut-offs and changing preferences

WHEN ATARs are released next Thursday 17 December, many HSC students will think seriously about their chances of getting into university. UAC expects about 25,000 students to change their course preferences when they receive their ATAR and have a more realistic idea of the courses they can get into.

Applicants can do their research now by comparing their ATAR with last year’s cut-offs in the UAC Guide 2015–16 and on UAC’s website at www.uac.edu.au. However, cut-offs for university study in 2016 won’t be known until Main Round offers are released on Wednesday 20 January 2016.

Cut-offs change from year to year because they are determined by three factors which change every year and can’t be predicted – the number of places available in the course; the number of applicants listing the course as a preference; and the ATARs of those applicants.

Advice on changing preferences

You can change your preferences until midnight on Wednesday 6 January 2016 for the Main Round of offers – don’t leave changing your preferences to the last minute.

You need your UAC application number and UAC PIN to change your preferences.

You can have up to nine preferences including any combination of courses.

You can rearrange the order of your courses, add new courses or delete courses.

You should list your preferences in the order you want them to be considered. Put the course you most want to do first, then the course you would next prefer to do, and so on. If you are not made an offer for your first preference, you will be considered for your second preference, and so on until you are made an offer or until there are no further preferences.

Make sure the courses you add don’t have early closing dates or prerequisites you cannot meet.

Check last year’s cut-offs in the UAC Guide 2015–16 or on UAC’s website to see if you have a realistic chance of gaining entry with your ATAR but remember that cut-offs can change.

Also remember that many institutions award bonus points so don’t be put off by a course that has had a cut-off in the past that is higher than your ATAR. Put your ‘wish list’ courses at the top of your list and work your way down. Your list of preferences should include courses with a range of different cut-offs.

If your ATAR is not as high as you expected, you may need to think about alternative pathways to further study. Talk to the institutions – most have hotlines and special advisory days in January.

And finally, choose courses that you really want to do.

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