>

Enhancing the Student Experience

Transparent & accurate information

11 November 2010

Mary Curnock Cook

UCAS

UCAS vision

"UCAS … At the heart of connecting people to higher education"

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UCAS mission

"Creating value for Members through shared services

and

delivering admissions services that help applicants make the right choices, for the right reasons and with the right outcomes."

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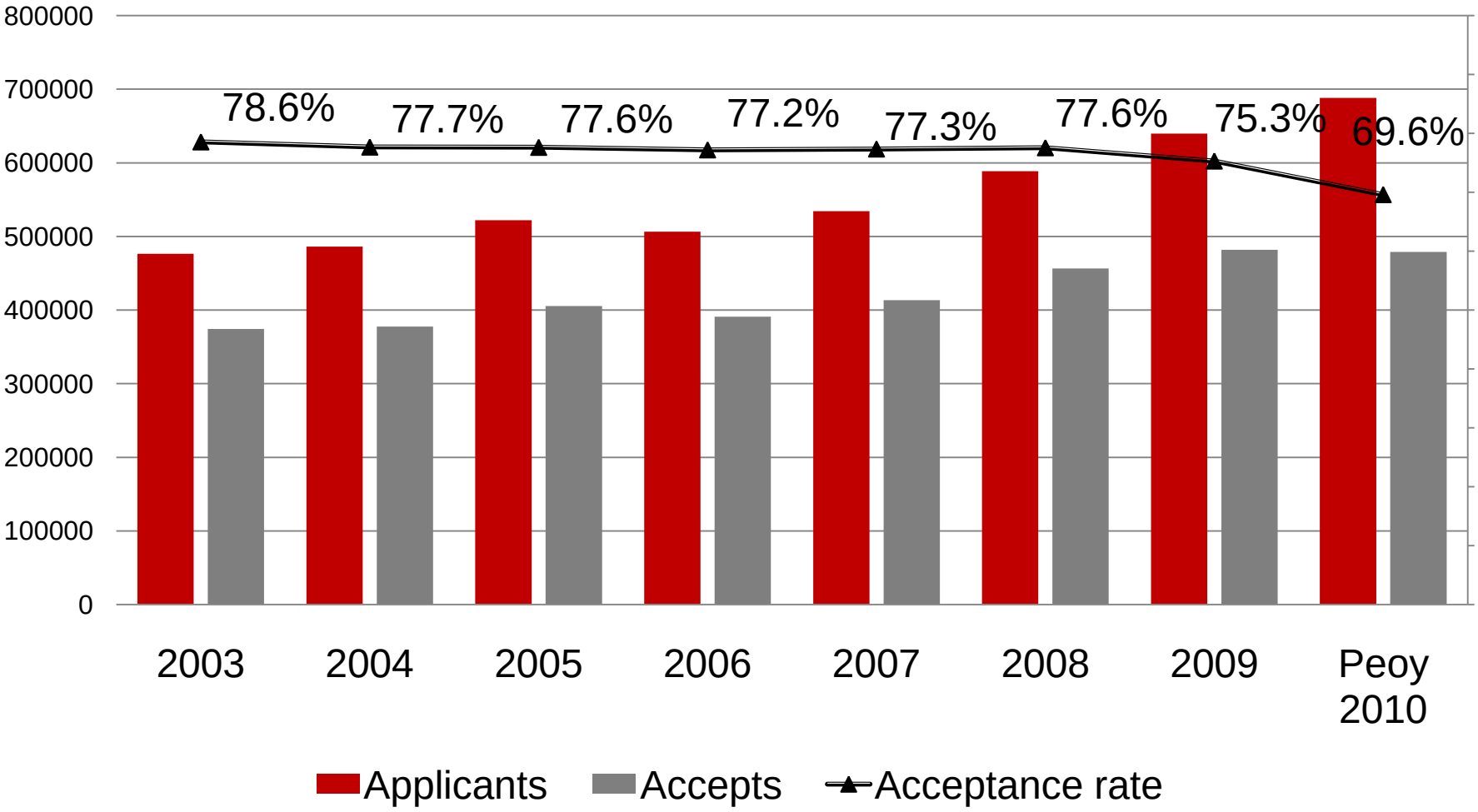
Applicants & Accepts 2003 – 2010 (provisional)



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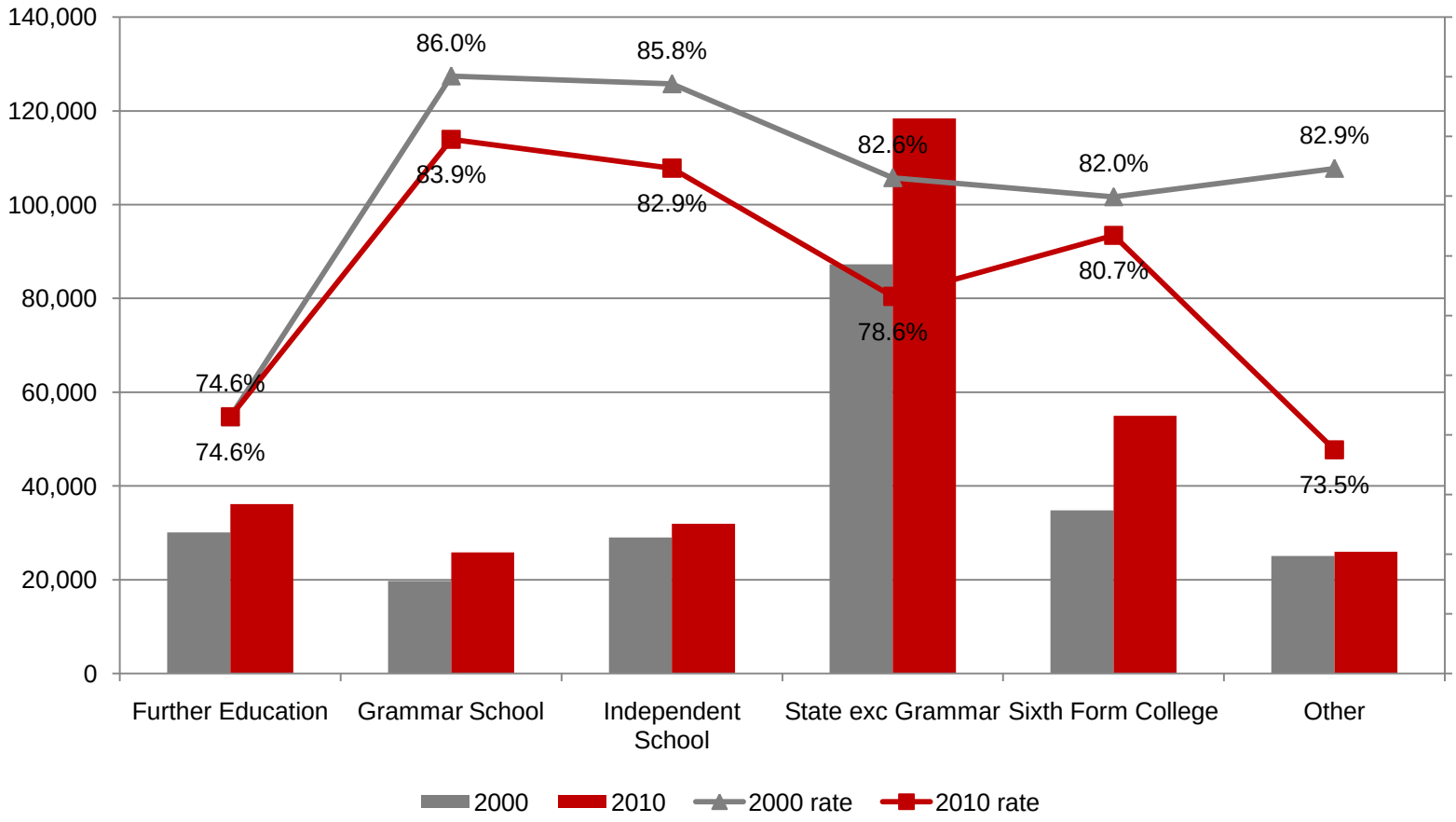
The changing profile of accepted applicants

Accepted applicants (17-19 year olds, UK domiciled)



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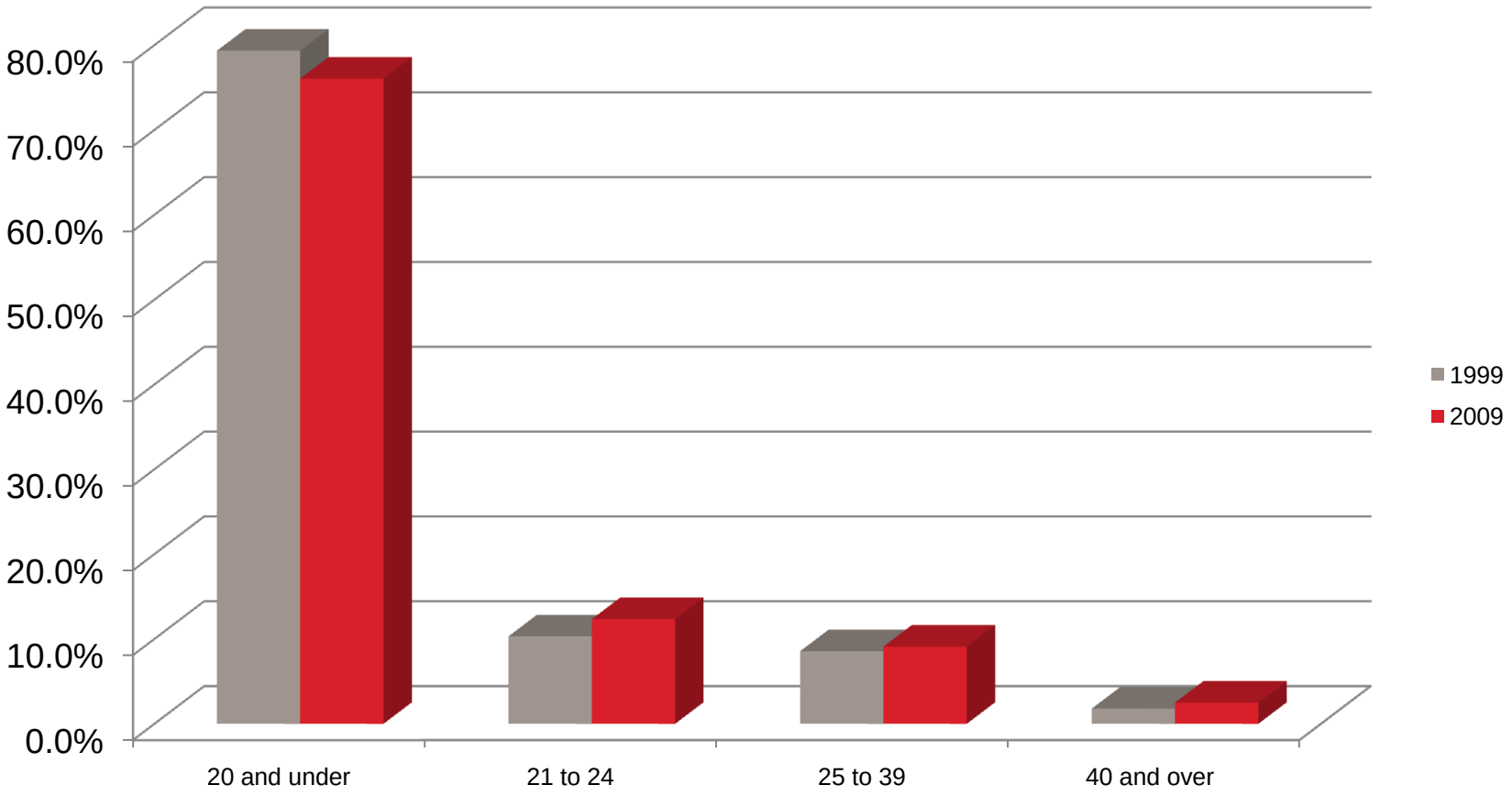
The changing profile of accepted applicants

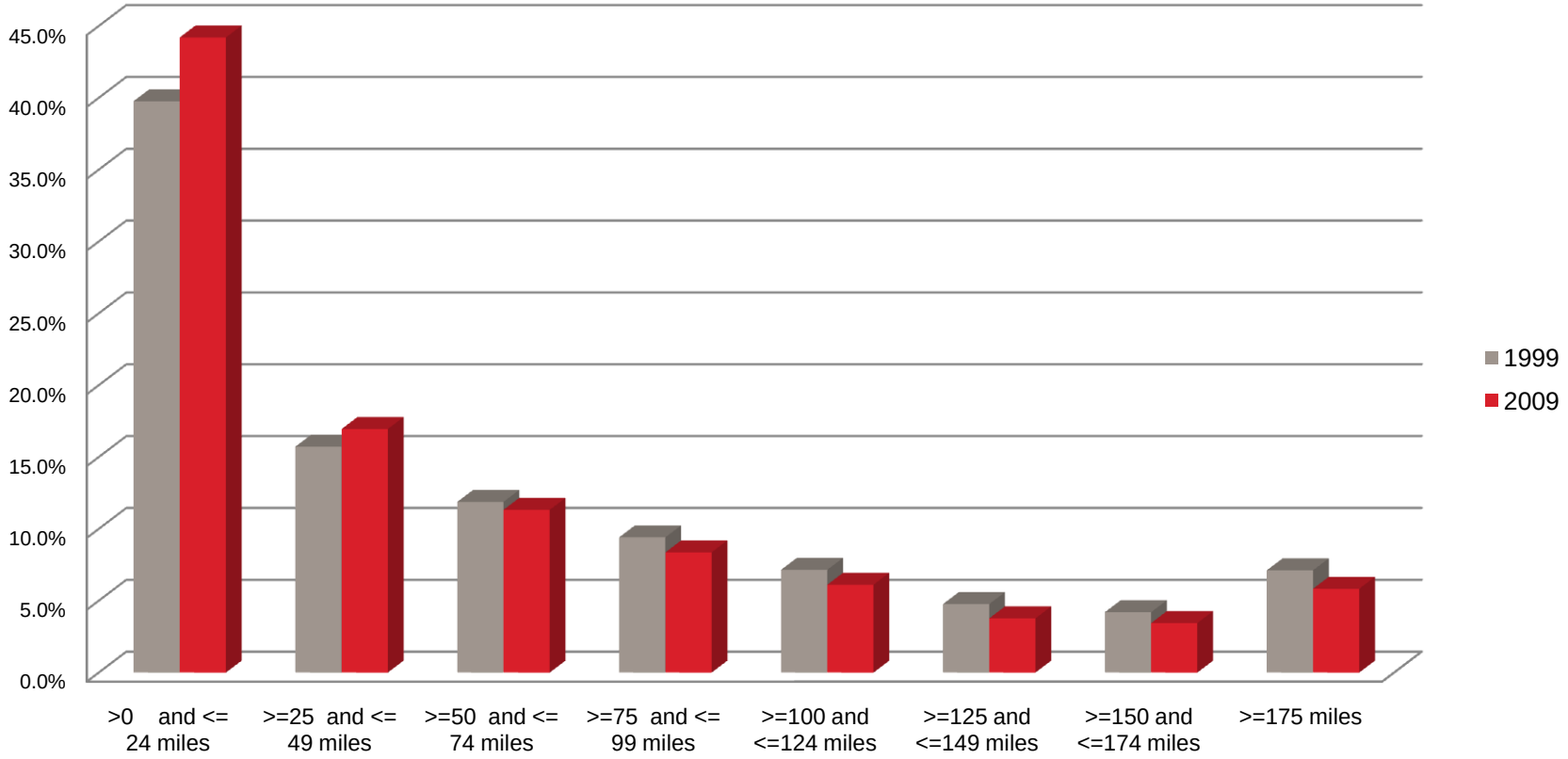
Age



Source: UCAS Statistics

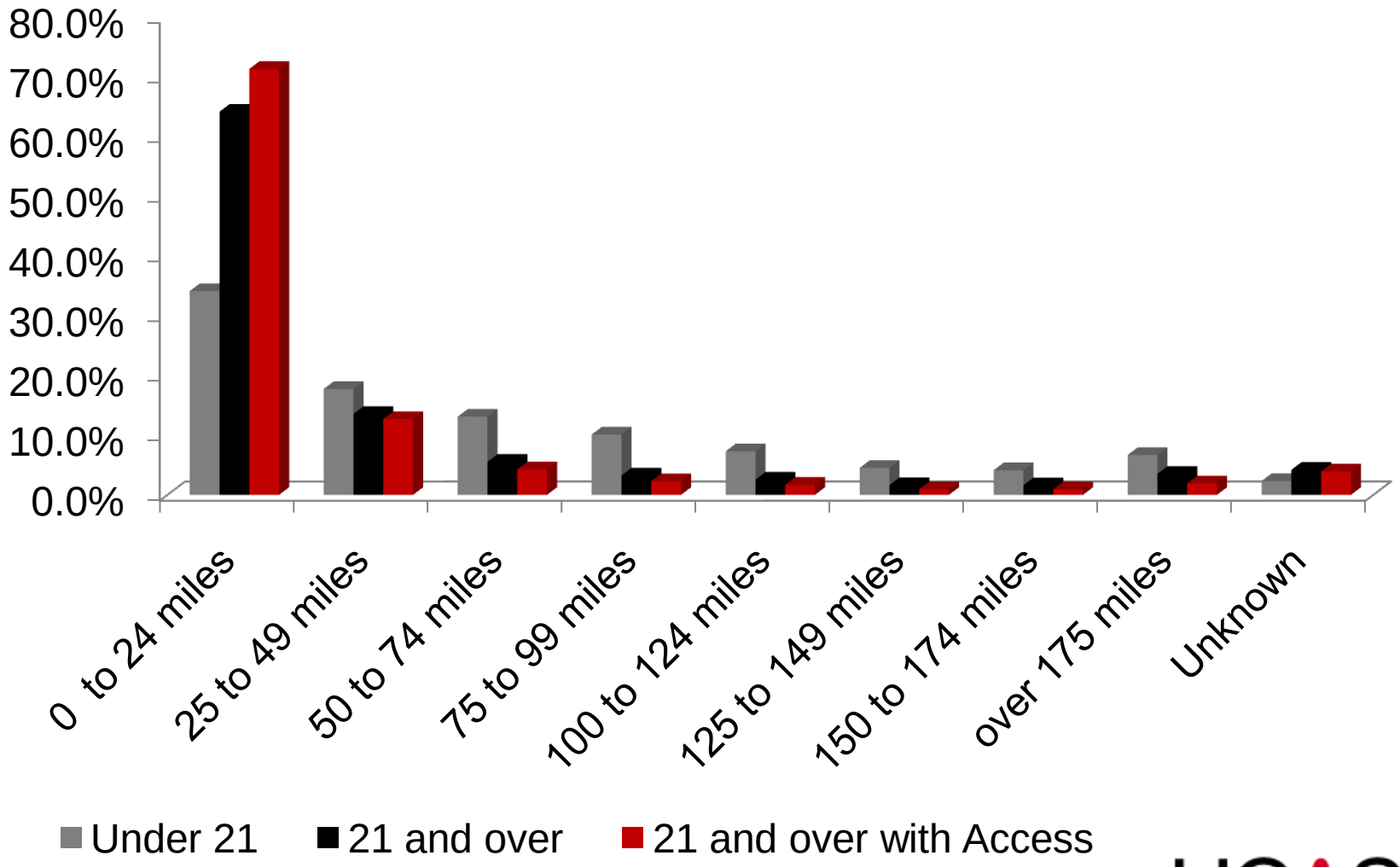
The changing profile of accepted applicants

Distance travelled (UK domiciled acceptances)



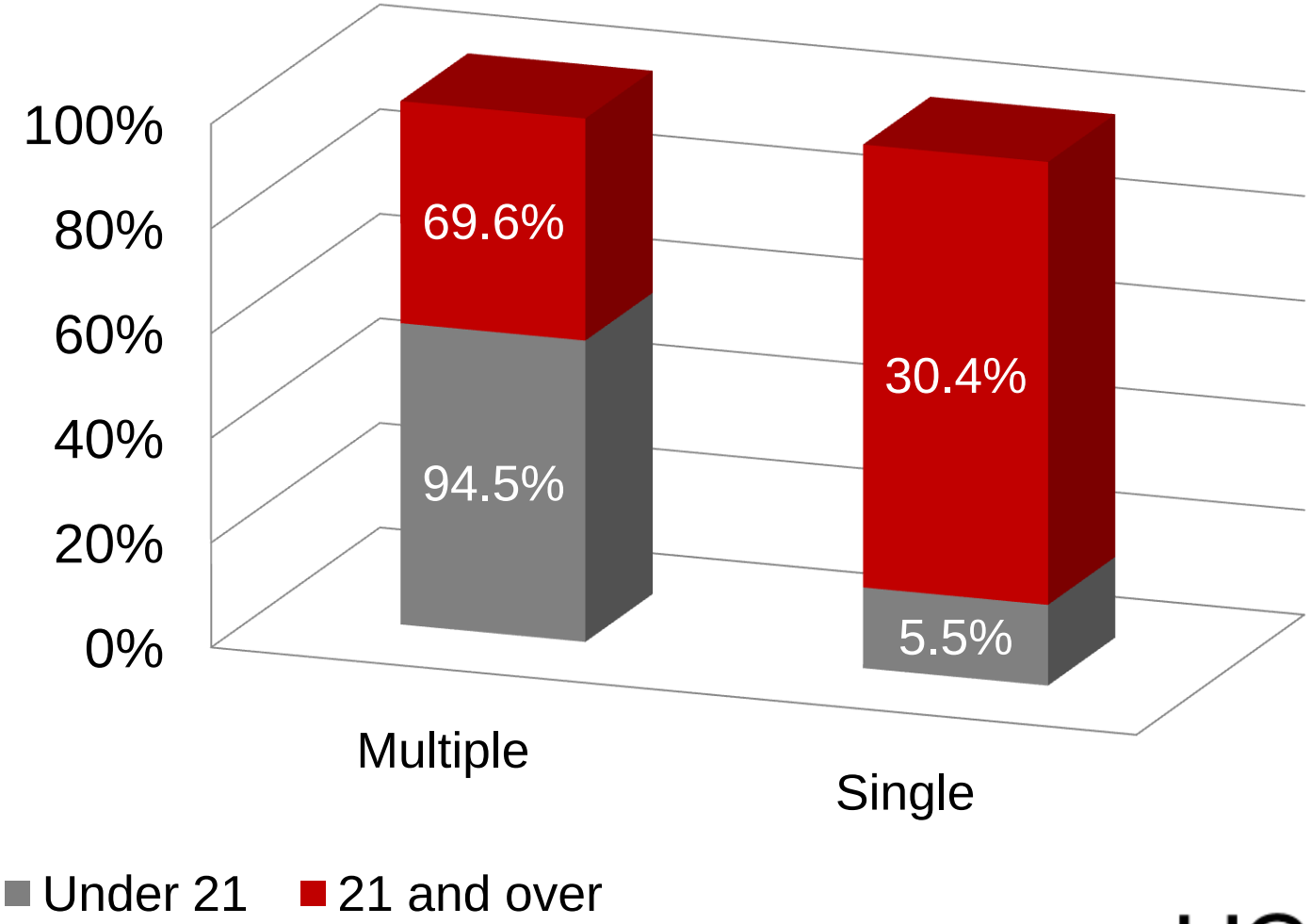
Source: UCAS Statistics

Distance travelled - UK domiciled accepts 2010



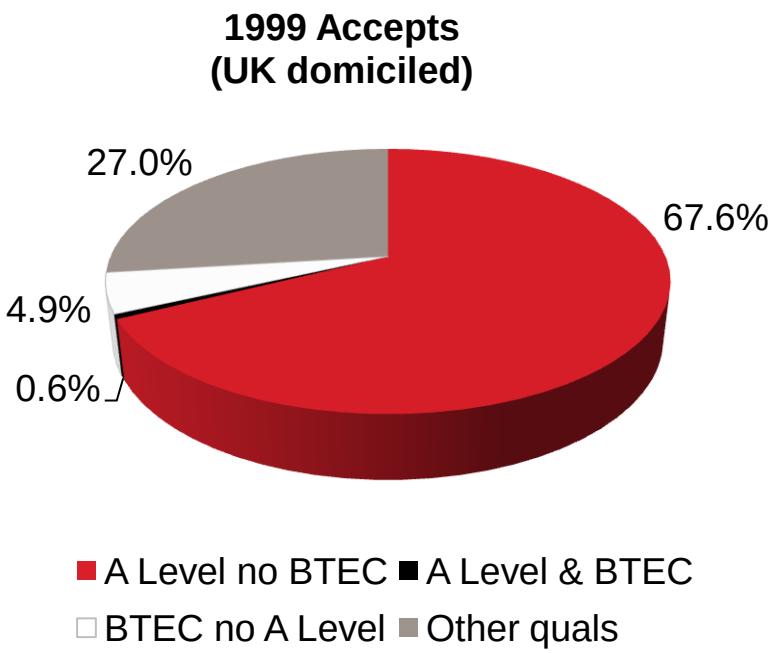
Source: UCAS Statistics Unit

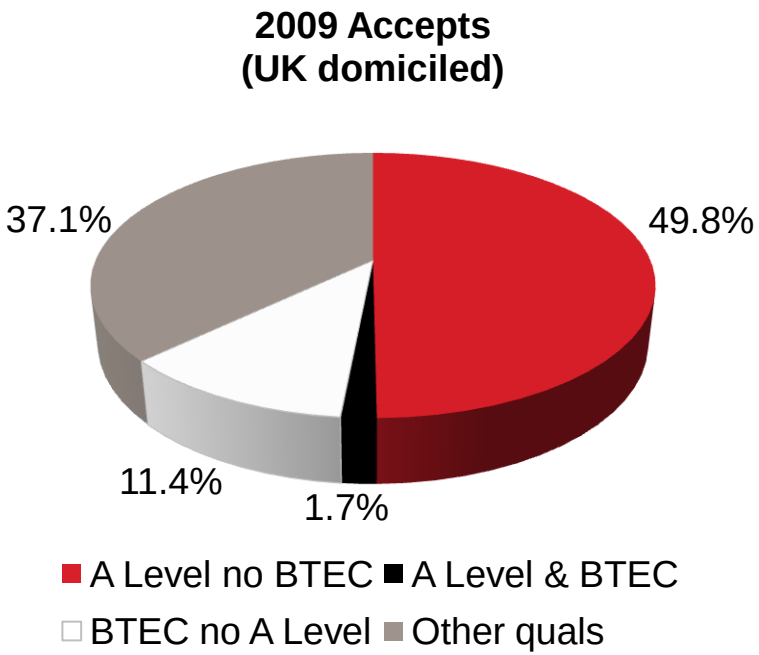
Single and multiple choice applications



Source: UCAS Statistics Unit

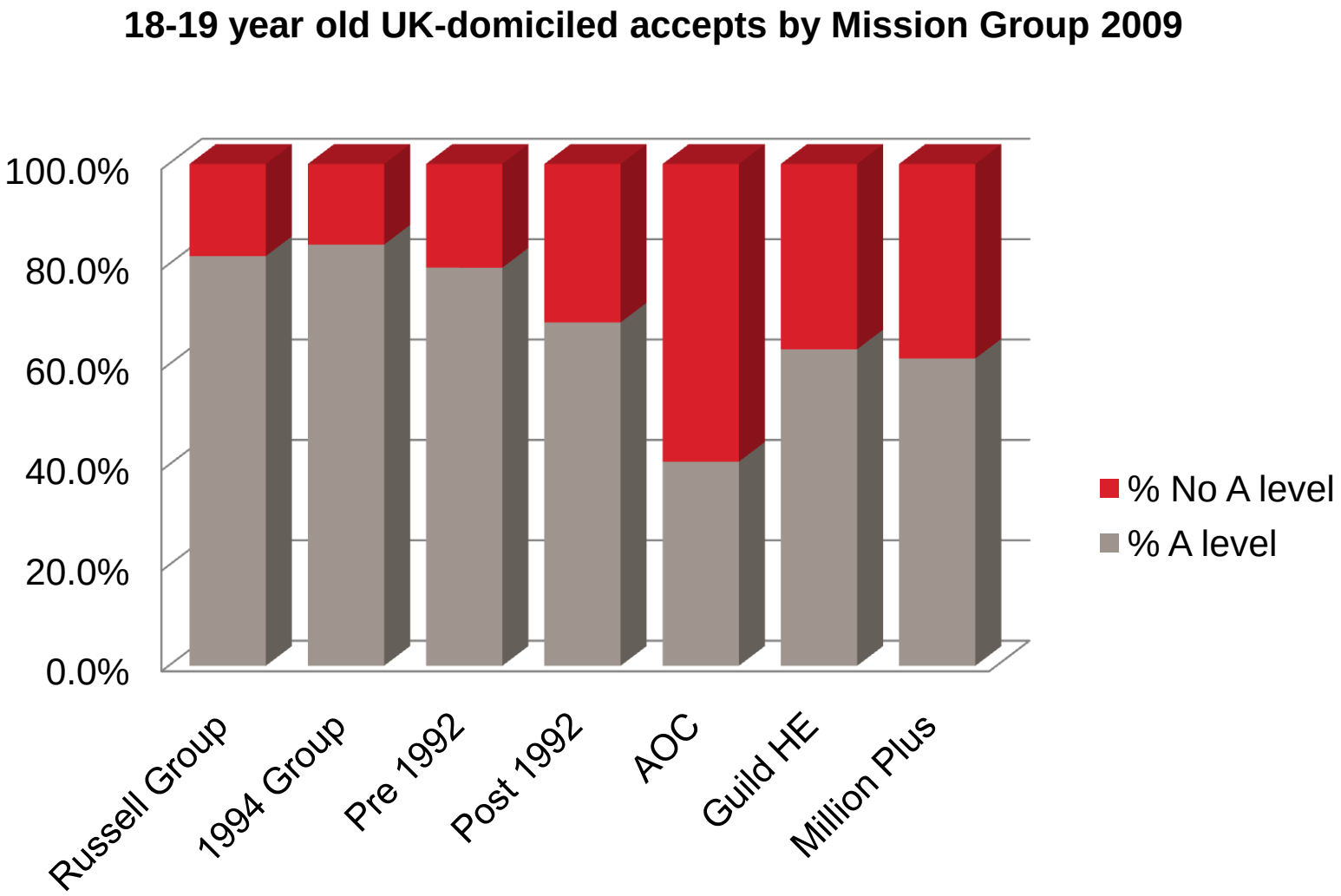
The changing profile of accepted applicants





Source: UCAS Statistics

A levels accepts



Source: UCAS Statistics

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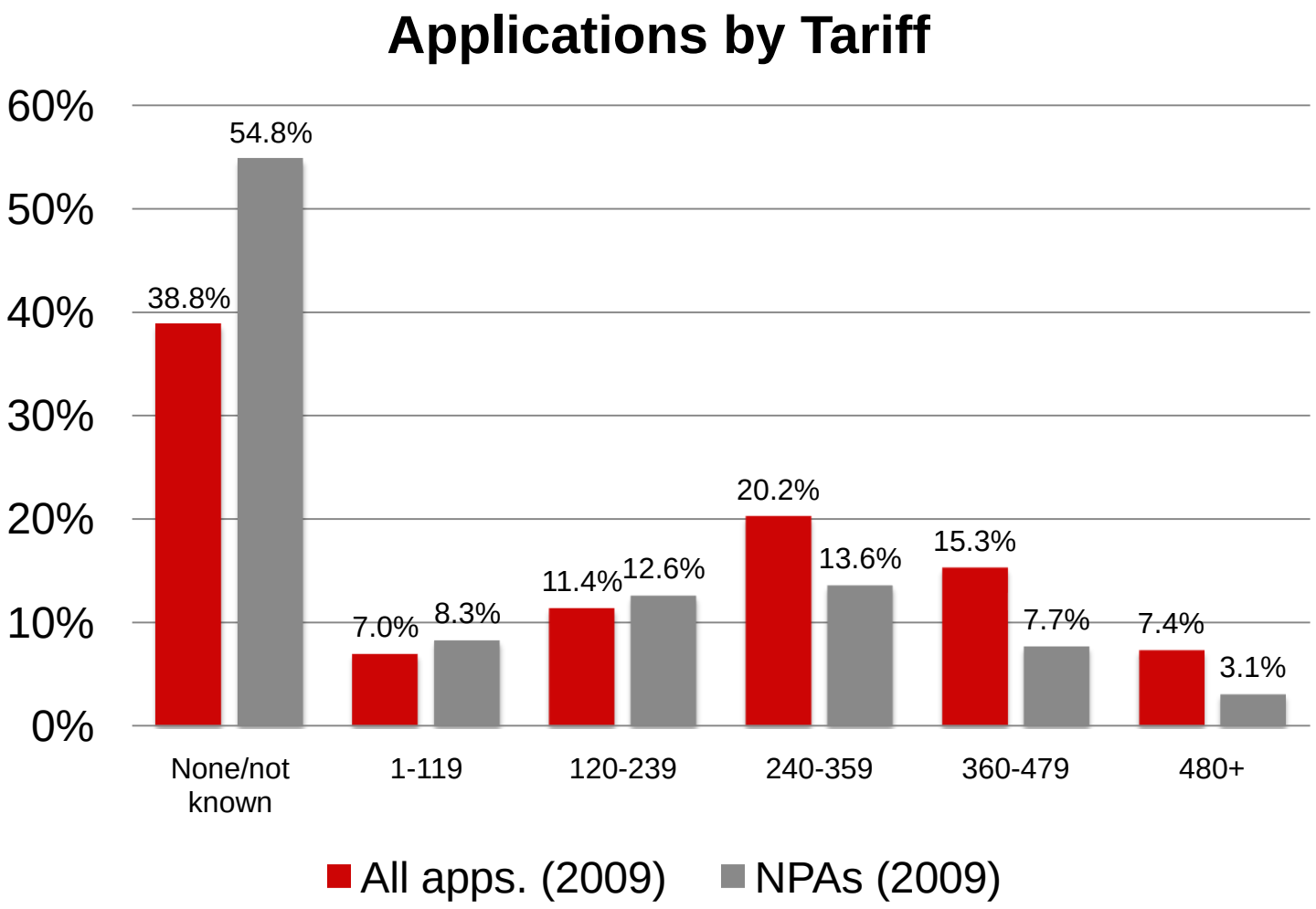
The profile of NPAs from the 2009 cycle



Source: UCAS Research Team & Statistics

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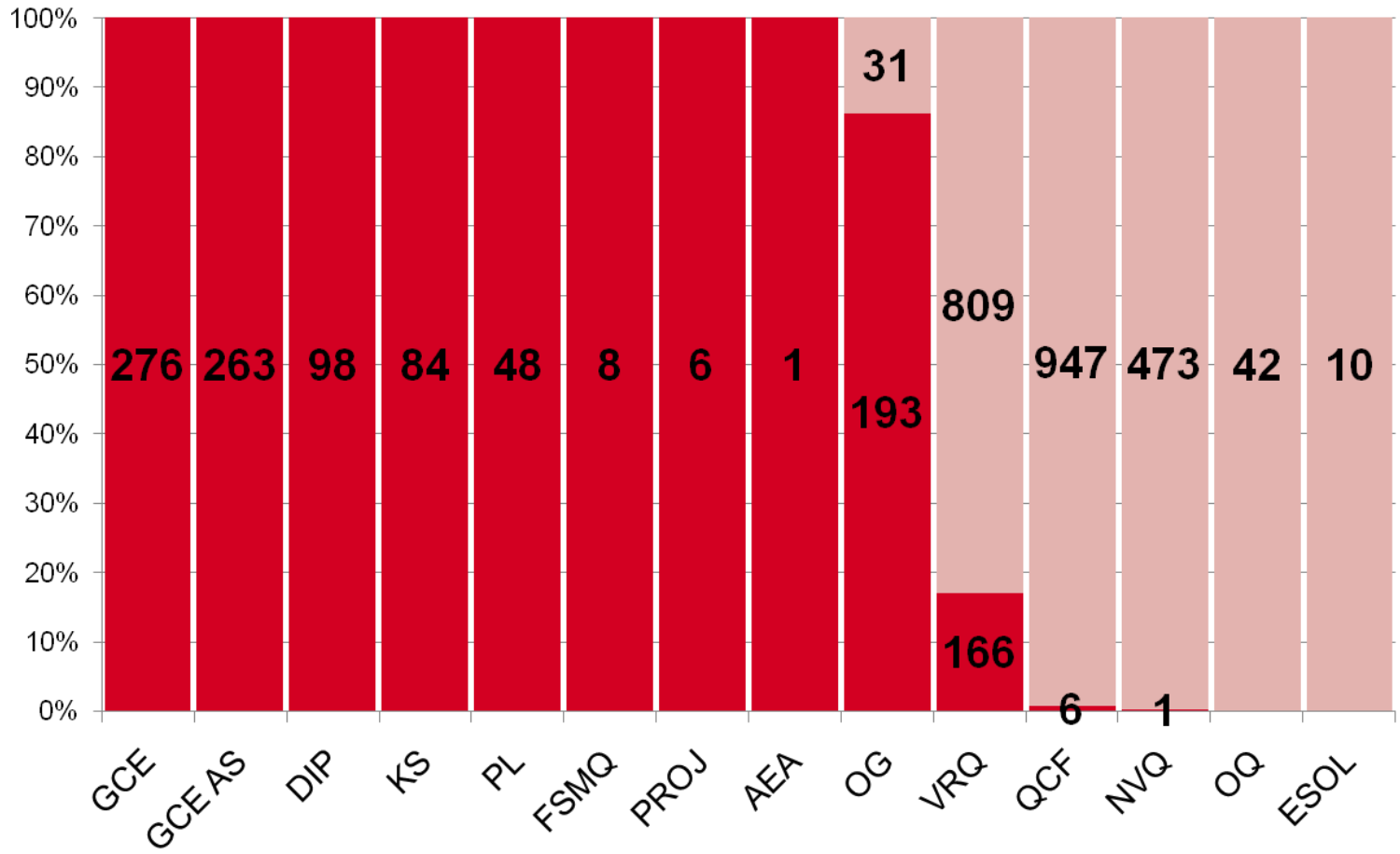
Qualifications on UCAS Tariff



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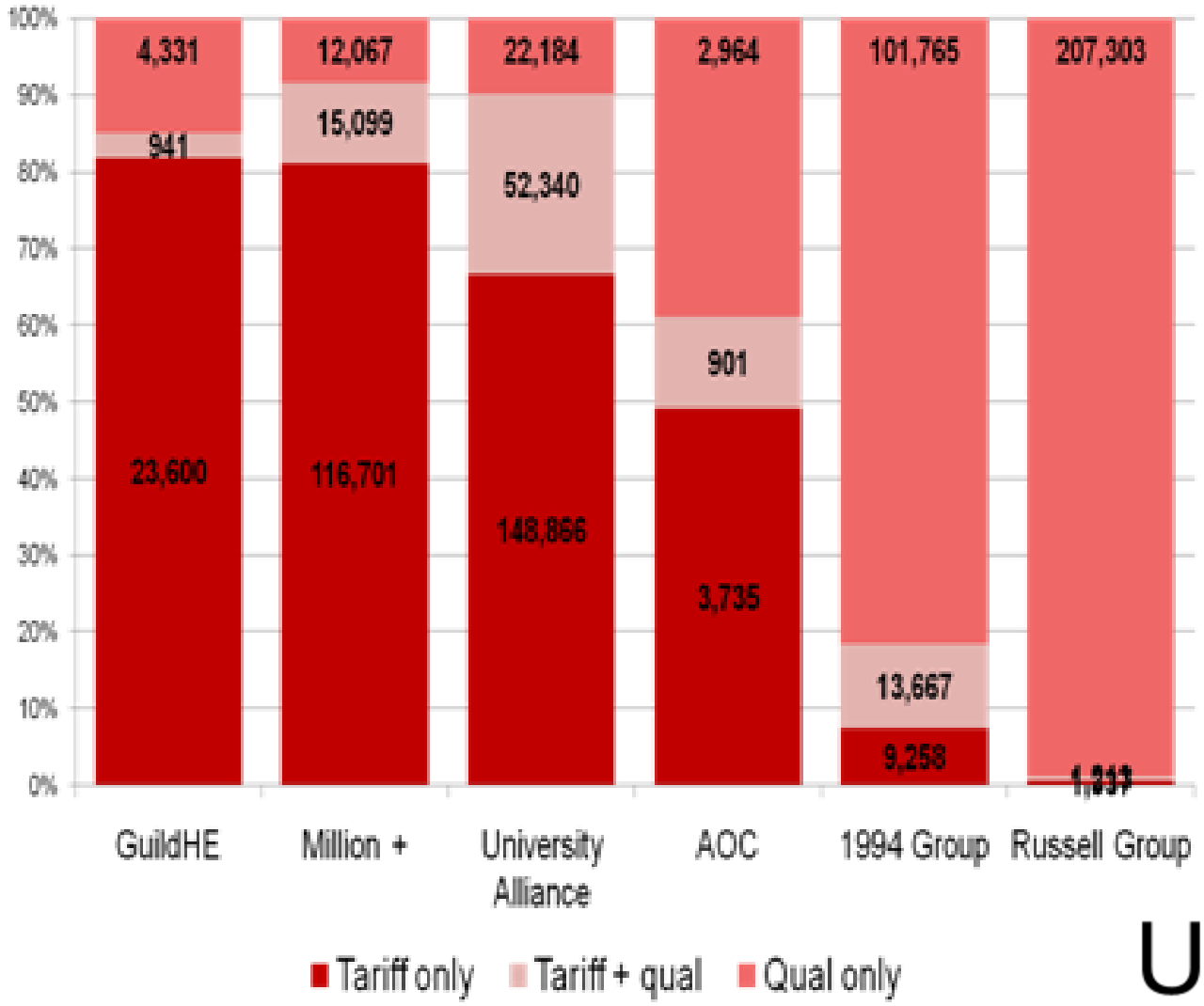
Offer making using the UCAS Tariff



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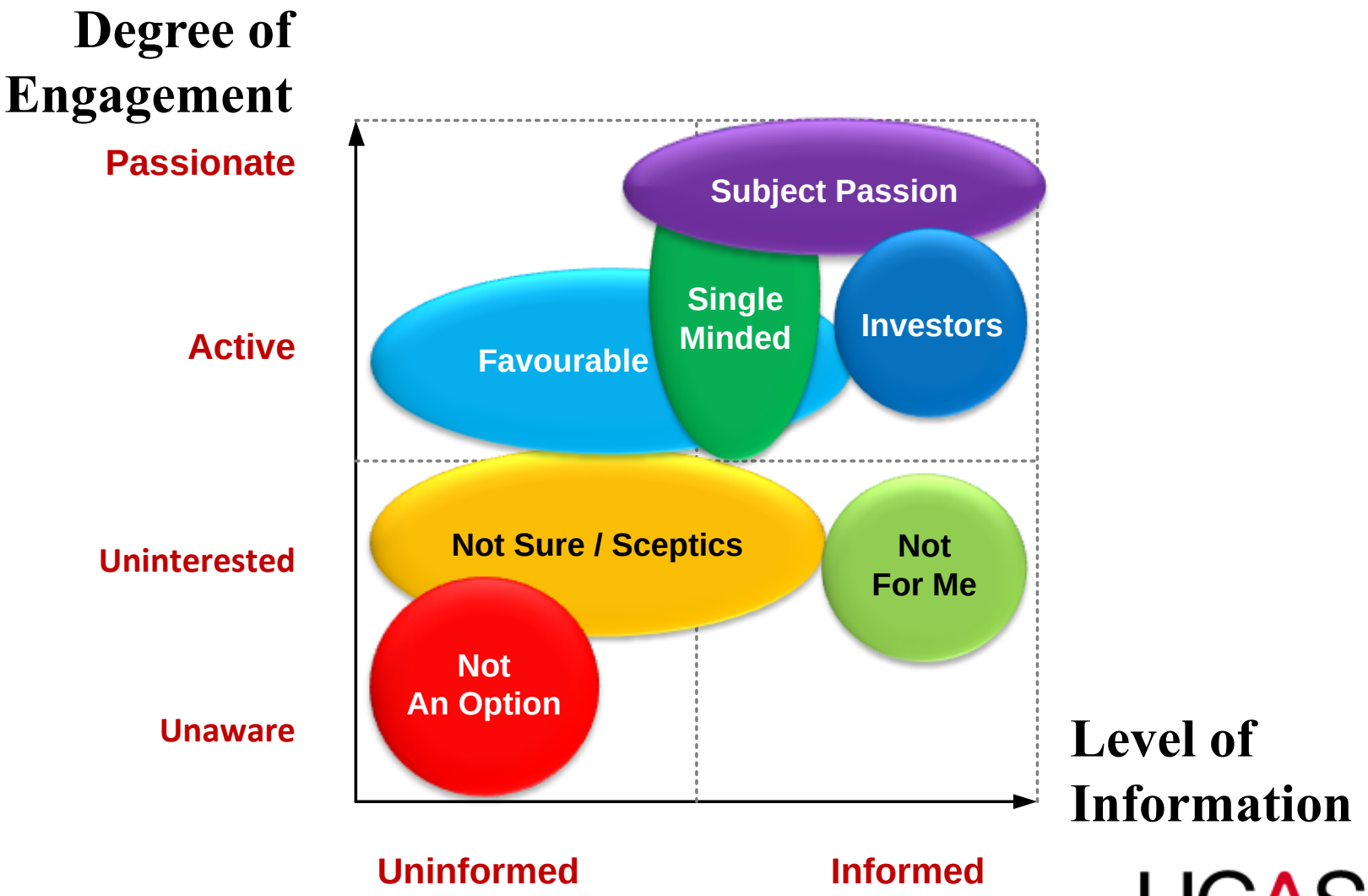
> Individual segmentation



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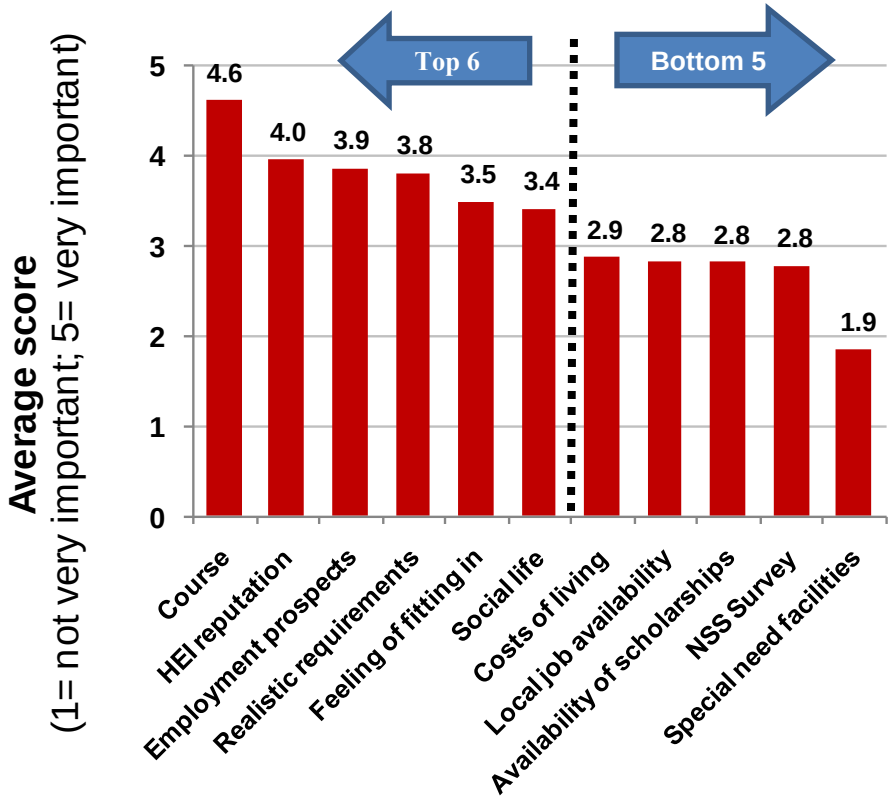
Factors in decision making

Rate the importance of these factors in your decisions regarding institution and course



Based upon survey results from the whole cohort of 5,342 respondents:

Courses are the most important factor driving applicants' choices in higher education

Interestingly, applicants rank social factors higher than financial considerations

Reputation, employment prospects and realistic entry requirements are the next most important

While financial considerations: **cost of living, job availability of work, and scholarships, are of less importance and rank 15th, 16th and 17th respectively** (from a total list of 19 factors)

Fitting in and social life are ranked 5th and 6th

These are of broadly equal importance, indicating well rounded, considered approach to higher education

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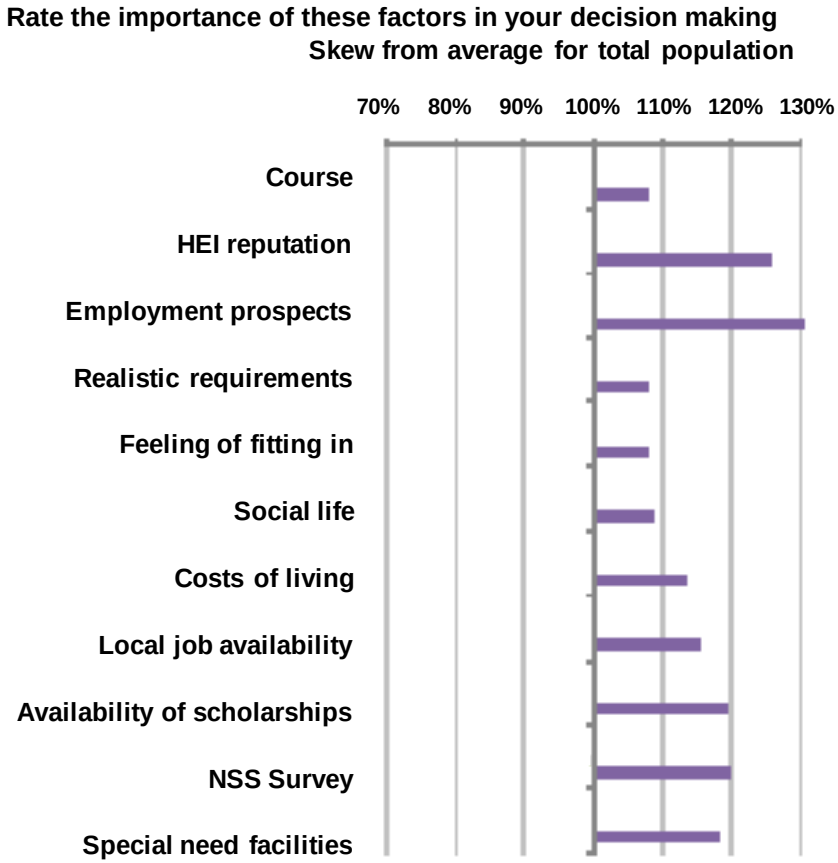
Survey results by segment



Insight segment

By design is most likely to rate course, HEI reputation and employment factors highly, but they are also the most likely group to use all information sources available to them.

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> Applicants level of satisfaction

- **57% of applicants (Favourable and Single-Minded) are still making less well informed decisions, based on only a limited assessment of the role of higher education on their career**
- **International students are more likely to feel uninformed or unsupported and are far less likely to use our website**
- **Technology-savvy younger applicants are less likely to rate our online services highly**
- **Mature students believe that I&A is geared towards younger applicants yet this group say they'd like more help with their choices**
- **Part-time students are not currently served by us, and have distinctive I&A needs**

"Full-time undergrads have UCAS – everyone else has Google!"

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Hypothesis: students are early adopters of technology

12. Which brand of handset do you currently own?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Apple	11.2%	3,940
Blackberry	11.9%	4,188
Google	0.3%	107
HTC	4.3%	1,509
LG	7.8%	2,730
Motorola	1.5%	535
Nokia	20.4%	7,148
Samsung	**21.9%**	**7,667**
Sony Ericsson	16.9%	5,909
Not applicable	1.5%	512
Other (please specify)	2.3%	811
answered question		35,056
skipped question		1,834

13. Is your handset a 'smartphone'?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	36.9%	12,923
No	**41.1%**	**14,400**
I don't know	20.8%	7,293
Not applicable	1.3%	440
answered question		35,056
skipped question		1,834

10. What do you use your mobile for? (tick all that apply)

	Response Percent	Response Count
Texting	**96.9%**	**33,893**
Phone calls	94.6%	33,086
Taking photos	59.4%	20,766
Recording video	28.8%	10,080
Web access	44.4%	15,515
Downloading Apps	21.7%	7,596
Games	27.0%	9,450
Music player	39.0%	13,654
Not applicable	0.3%	115
Other (please specify)		409
answered question		34,969
skipped question		1,921

> Hypothesis: students are always online

- **90% of our applicants have a Facebook** account (vs. 40% of the UK population)
- **19% use Twitter** (vs. Almost 6% of the UK population)
- **40% of our applicants use their mobile phone to access social networking sites**, followed by 18% using their phone to read the news or play games

57. How do you most often access the internet?

	Response Percent	Response Count
PC	89.5%	29,809
Mobile phone	10.1%	3,370
Not applicable	0.4%	142
answered question		33,321
skipped question		3,569

58. What platform do you use to visit the following types of website?

	PC	Mobile	Not applicable	Response Count
Social Networks	84.6% (27,442)	39.2% (12,732)	4.6% (1,500)	32,452
Shopping	93.5% (29,911)	4.0% (1,270)	5.6% (1,796)	31,987
Sport	51.4% (15,008)	11.4% (3,342)	43.6% (12,739)	29,214
News	80.8% (25,255)	18.2% (5,680)	11.2% (3,497)	31,272
Games	63.8% (18,961)	18.7% (5,567)	24.5% (7,269)	29,719
Other types of website	85.5% (21,214)	11.8% (2,929)	11.4% (2,838)	24,801
answered question				33,154
skipped question				3,736

59. On average how long do you spend on the internet each day?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 1 hour	7.6%	2,529
1-2 hours	32.1%	10,636
2-4 hours	37.2%	12,329
4-6 hours	15.2%	5,046
More than 6 hours	7.9%	2,615
answered question		33,155
skipped question		3,735

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Student concerns

- Students are most concerned with the things that affect them directly
- This cohort less worried about tuition fees

63. Do you intend to take a student loan when you go to university or college?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes - I'll need it to pay living expenses	71.7%	23,818
Yes - I would like to invest or save the money	10.4%	3,441
No	13.8%	4,580
Don't know	4.2%	1,394
answered question		33,233
skipped question		3,657

71. Out of the following list, which items are you concerned about? (tick all that apply)

	Response Percent	Response Count
Animal welfare	29.6%	9,747
Buying a house	55.9%	18,401
Graduate career prospects	66.0%	21,723
Cost of living increases	63.0%	20,728
Finding love	27.1%	8,914
Getting a job	78.6%	25,858
Global poverty	37.0%	12,177
Global Warming	33.7%	11,097
Raising of Tuition fees	39.2%	12,900
Student Debt	60.3%	19,849
UK Economy	44.8%	14,749
Other (please specify)	2.1%	692
answered question		32,914
skipped question		3,976

64. Do you intend to get a part-time job or holiday work during your studies at university or college?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	79.3%	26,368
No	7.6%	2,512
Don't know	13.1%	4,353
answered question		33,233
skipped question		3,657

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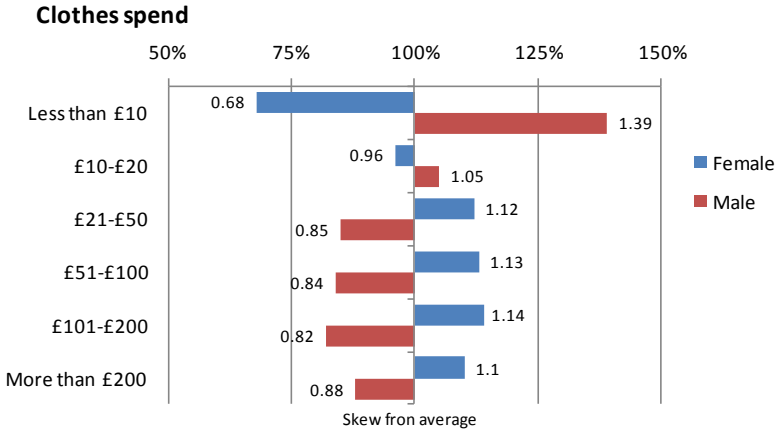
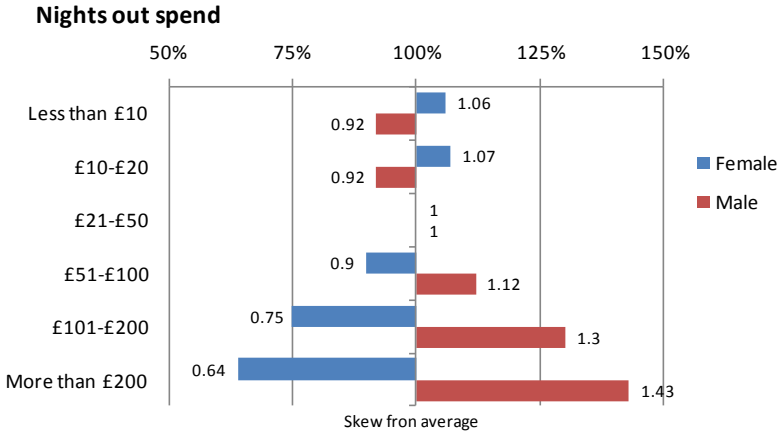
> Hypothesis: Students just want to have fun

4. In an average month how much do you spend on the items listed below?

	0	Less than £10	£10-£20	£21-£50	£51-£100	£101-£200	More than £200	Response Count
Clothes	2.4% (859)	13.0% (4,638)	29.5% (10,502)	**35.2% (12,511)**	14.8% (5,259)	4.0% (1,415)	1.1% (394)	35,578
Music	22.6% (8,001)	**53.2% (18,881)**	18.9% (6,719)	4.5% (1,593)	0.6% (211)	0.1% (29)	0.1% (32)	35,466
Books	15.0% (5,310)	**46.1% (16,324)**	26.8% (9,499)	9.4% (3,346)	2.2% (785)	0.4% (132)	0.1% (52)	35,448
Homewares	26.5% (9,337)	**42.0% (14,783)**	20.3% (7,133)	8.0% (2,819)	2.2% (787)	0.6% (212)	0.4% (128)	35,199
Confectionery (e.g. sweets, crisps)	5.4% (1,897)	**56.5% (20,021)**	28.6% (10,152)	8.1% (2,858)	1.2% (419)	0.2% (66)	0.1% (34)	35,447
Cosmetics/toiletries	4.0% (1,416)	37.9% (13,404)	**41.7% (14,741)**	14.0% (4,957)	2.0% (705)	0.3% (97)	0.1% (35)	35,355
Eating out	5.1% (1,824)	15.6% (5,517)	**36.5% (12,929)**	32.2% (11,409)	8.5% (3,022)	1.7% (614)	0.4% (137)	35,452
Nights out	9.9% (3,499)	11.0% (3,895)	21.9% (7,755)	**33.5% (11,851)**	16.9% (5,982)	5.4% (1,923)	1.4% (481)	35,386
							answered question	35,701
							skipped question	1,189





More accurately girls want to look good and boys want to drink beer!

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Applicant journey

Motivation phase	Research phase	Application phase	Post Application phase
Proposed solutions			
• Communicate the benefits of UK Higher Education • Provide careers advice and guidance • Support decision making in Level 2 and 3 course choices to keep options open	• Facilitate user research of Higher Education options • Provide tools, data and statistics to support decision making • Drive peer to peer and peer to HEI comms	• New, seamless application tools and processes • Supported by regular, active communication • Provide tools to test and optimise course and institution choices	• Help placed applicants prepare for the move to university or college • Support non-placed applicants in identifying the right next steps

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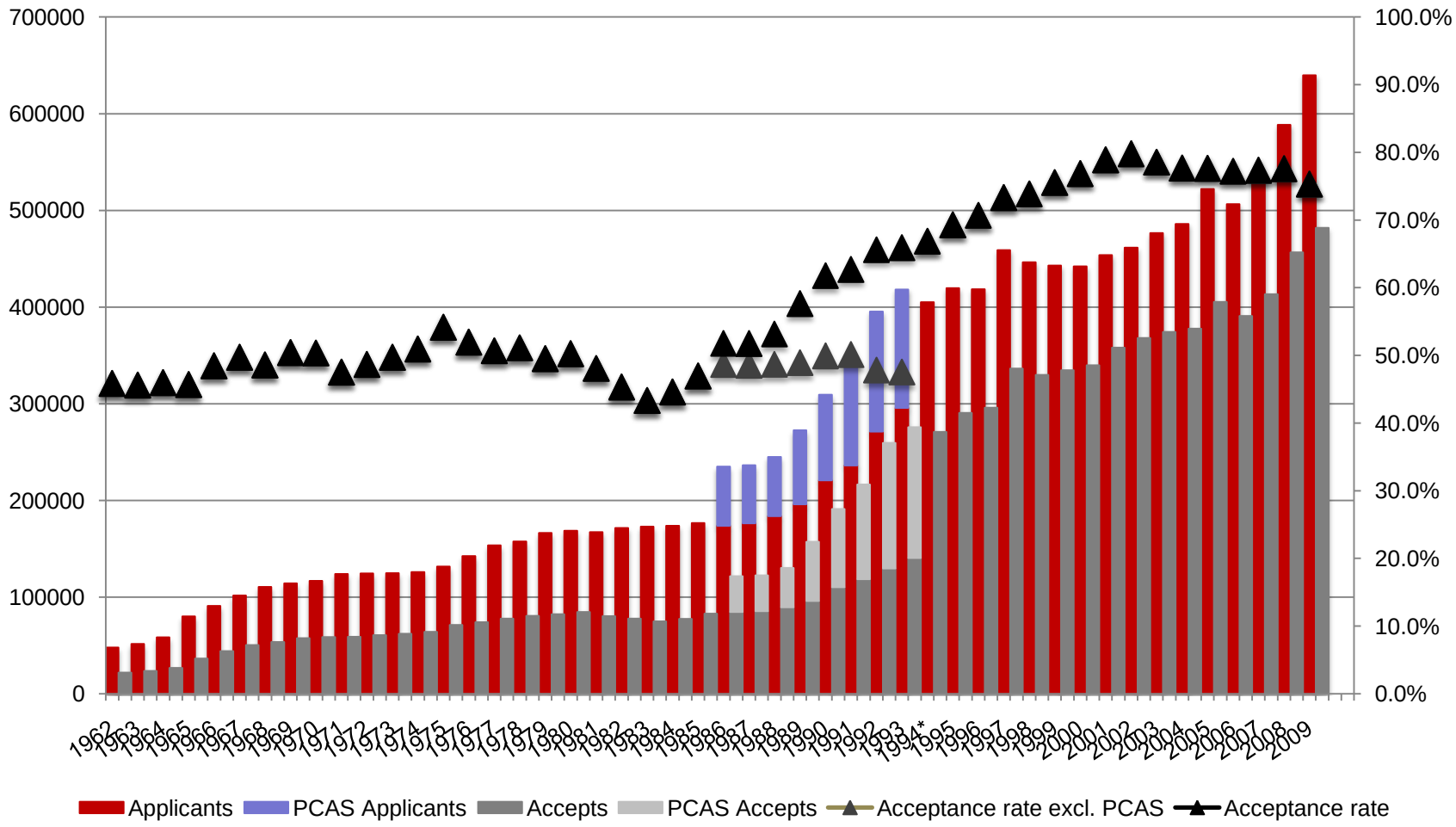
Acceptance rates



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Some observations

- Was the model created in 1961 scalable?
  - 22% drop out rate
    - 15% girls, 20% boys did not visit first
  - 42% of CI greater than or equal to CF
  - 6.29 choices to get to one acceptance
  - c. 90,000 rejected offers or withdrawn from 2010 YOE
  - 3,500 rejected with 3 x A grade A levels
  - No significant change in student satisfaction levels

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UCAS Plans

- Fundamental review of the tariff
  - Use for admissions
  - Use for MI
- New single portal for HE admissions
  - Opportunity to review admissions processes from ground up
- UCAS Data
  - NPD/UCAS/HESA data
  - Cycle Review
  - Contextual Data
- Improved IAG tools and support
  - Better access for all applicants
  - More sophisticated web-based tools
  - More targeted to different types of applicants

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Questions

Mary Curnock Cook

Chief Executive

+44 (0)1242 544 996

m.curnockcook@ucas.ac.uk

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