



Access Applicants to Higher Education, 2006 entry

Anne Marie Watson, UCAS

Introduction

This report investigates applicants and accepted applicants holding an Access qualification in the UCAS 2006 cycle. A range of applicant characteristics are analysed, including age, gender, ethnicity, MOSAIC lifestyle, and socio-economic status. The report also includes some tables based on applicants through the Nursing and Midwifery Admission Service (NMAS), since a large number of Access applicants apply to courses through NMAS.

UCAS data includes applicants to full-time degree, foundation degree, DipHE, HND or HNC courses at UCAS member institutions. There were 325 member institutions in the UCAS scheme in 2006 entry cycle. Only applicants with an area of permanent residence of England or Wales are included in this report as Scotland and Ireland have alternative Access schemes. UCAS Access applicants are defined as any applicant who held an Access qualification, regardless of other qualifications held - UCAS does not distinguish between QAA recognised Access qualifications and other Access qualifications. NMAS Access applicants are defined as applicants through the NMAS system who held an Access qualification as the main qualification.

All tables in this report are based on UCAS applicant or accepted applicant data unless otherwise stated. NB For the purposes of this report mature applicants are defined as those aged 21 or above.

1) Overview

Table 1A shows the number, and proportion, of applicants and accepted applicants who held an Access qualification. 19,773 applicants held an Access qualification in 2006, representing 5.2% of all UCAS applicants. Overall, 67.8% of applicants with an Access qualification were accepted.

TABLE 1A – UCAS applicants and accepted applicants by qualifications held, 2006

Qualification held	Applicants	%	Accepted applicants	%
Access only	16,280	4.3%	10,947	3.6%
Access and other	3,493	0.9%	2,465	0.8%
<i>Access subtotal</i>	19,773	5.2%	13,412	4.4%
Other	359,697	94.8%	292,965	95.6%
Total	379,470	100.0%	306,377	100.0%

Table 1B shows the equivalent NMAS picture. The proportion of Access applicants who were accepted through NMAS was 51.4%, compared with 46.0% of non-Access applicants.

TABLE 1B – NMAS applicants and accepted applicants by qualification held, 2006

Qualification held	Applicants	%	Accepted applicants	%
Access	1,638	5.0%	842	5.6%
Other	30,985	95.0%	14,236	94.4%
Total	32,623	100.00%	15,078	100.00%

2) Age and gender profile

Table 2A illustrates the difference in age profile of Access applicants compared with non-Access applicants. Nearly half (47.7%) of Access applicants were aged between 21 and 29 years. Only 8.9% of Access applicants were aged under 21. In contrast, 79.8% of non-Access applicants were aged under 21. Access applicants accounted for 19.9% of all mature UCAS applicants in England and Wales.

TABLE 2A - Applicants and accepted applicants by age, 2006

Age	Applicants					Accepted applicants				
	Access	%	Other	%	Total	Access	%	Other	%	Total
Under 21	1,758	8.9%	287,186	79.8%	288,944	1,196	8.9%	243,360	83.1%	244,556
21-24	5,325	26.9%	36,442	10.1%	41,767	3,648	27.2%	25,959	8.9%	29,607
25-29	4,105	20.8%	15,011	4.2%	19,116	2,766	20.6%	9,809	3.3%	12,575
30-34	3,106	15.7%	7,667	2.1%	10,773	2,058	15.3%	4,874	1.7%	6,932
35-39	2,755	13.9%	5,540	1.5%	8,295	1,881	14.0%	3,620	1.2%	5,501
40 or over	2,724	13.8%	7,851	2.2%	10,575	1,863	13.9%	5,343	1.8%	7,206
Total	19,773	100.0%	359,697	100.0%	379,470	13,412	100.0%	292,965	100.0%	306,377

Table 2B gives the gender profile of Access applicants by age. 72.6% of Access applicants were female. Female Access applicants dominate each of the age ranges shown in table 2B, increasingly so in the older age bandings. Table 2C provides the same data for accepted applicants.

TABLE 2B – Applicants by age and gender, 2006

Age	Access						Other					
	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Under 21	670	38.1%	1,088	61.9%	1,758	100.0%	130,724	45.5%	156,462	54.5%	287,186	100.0%
21-24	1,860	34.9%	3,465	65.1%	5,325	100.0%	17,702	48.6%	18,740	51.4%	36,442	100.0%
25-29	1,149	28.0%	2,956	72.0%	4,105	100.0%	6,666	44.4%	8,345	55.6%	15,011	100.0%
30-34	689	22.2%	2,417	77.8%	3,106	100.0%	3,234	42.2%	4,433	57.8%	7,667	100.0%
35-39	501	18.2%	2,254	81.8%	2,755	100.0%	2,043	36.9%	3,497	63.1%	5,540	100.0%

Age	Access						Other					
	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
40 or over	542	19.9%	2,182	80.1%	2,724	100.0%	2,629	33.5%	5,222	66.5%	7,851	100.0%
Total	5,411	27.4%	14,362	72.6%	19,773	100.0%	162,998	45.3%	196,699	54.7%	359,697	100.0%

TABLE 2C – Accepted applicants by age and gender, 2006

Age	Access						Other					
	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Under 21	458	38.3%	738	61.7%	1,196	100.0%	112,032	46.0%	131,328	54.0%	243,360	100.0%
21-24	1,362	37.3%	2,286	62.7%	3,648	100.0%	13,378	51.5%	12,581	48.5%	25,959	100.0%
25-29	838	30.3%	1,928	69.7%	2,766	100.0%	4,638	47.3%	5,171	52.7%	9,809	100.0%
30-34	488	23.7%	1,570	76.3%	2,058	100.0%	2,131	43.7%	2,743	56.3%	4,874	100.0%
35-39	367	19.5%	1,514	80.5%	1,881	100.0%	1,335	36.9%	2,285	63.1%	3,620	100.0%
40 or over	374	20.1%	1,489	79.9%	1,863	100.0%	1,769	33.1%	3,574	66.9%	5,343	100.0%
Total	3,887	29.0%	9,525	71.0%	13,412	100.0%	135,283	46.2%	157,682	53.8%	292,965	100.0%

3) Ethnic origin

Ethnic origin data is requested from UK domiciled applicants through the UCAS application process, although provision of the information is not compulsory. The proportion of applicants with an unknown ethnic origin in 2006 was lower for Access applicants (1.9%) than for non-Access applicants (5.4%).

Tables 3A provide the proportional ethnic breakdown of Access applicants compared with non-Access applicants by gender. A higher proportion of Access applicants (29.9%) were from non-white backgrounds compared to their non-Access (21.8%) counterparts. The proportion of Access applicants from a Black background was nearly three times higher than the non-Access applicant proportion. There was a lower proportion of white male Access applicants (61.4%) compared to white female Access applicants (73.4%).

TABLE 3A – Applicants by qualification, gender and ethnicity*, 2006

Ethnic Group	Access			Other			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Asian	571	759	1,330	19,521	19,617	39,138	40,468
Black	1,137	2,284	3,421	8,819	11,455	20,274	23,695
Mixed	212	523	735	4,622	5,945	10,567	11,302
Other	121	192	313	1,986	2,275	4,261	4,574
White	3,241	10,353	13,594	117,832	148,151	265,983	279,577
Total	5,282	14,111	19,393	152,780	187,443	340,223	359,616

Ethnic Group	Access			Other			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Asian	10.8%	5.4%	6.9%	12.8%	10.5%	11.5%	11.3%
Black	21.5%	16.2%	17.6%	5.8%	6.1%	6.0%	6.6%
Mixed	4.0%	3.7%	3.8%	3.0%	3.2%	3.1%	3.1%
Other	2.3%	1.4%	1.6%	1.3%	1.2%	1.3%	1.3%
White	61.4%	73.4%	70.1%	77.1%	79.0%	78.2%	77.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

*Excluding applicants with unknown ethnicity

TABLE 3B – Accepted applicants by qualification, gender and ethnicity*, 2006

Ethnic Group	Access			Other			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Asian	508	392	900	15,901	15,749	31,650	32,550
Black	1,363	743	2,106	8,027	6,505	14,532	16,638
Mixed	359	136	495	4,675	3,736	8,411	8,906
Other	130	81	211	1,721	1,532	3,253	3,464
White	7,016	2,444	9,460	119,003	98,288	217,291	226,751
Total	9,376	3,796	13,172	149,327	125,810	275,137	288,309

Ethnic Group	Access			Other			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Asian	5.4%	10.3%	6.8%	10.6%	12.5%	11.5%	11.3%
Black	14.5%	19.6%	16.0%	5.4%	5.2%	5.3%	5.8%
Mixed	3.8%	3.6%	3.8%	3.1%	3.0%	3.1%	3.1%
Other	1.4%	2.1%	1.6%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%
White	74.8%	64.4%	71.8%	79.7%	78.1%	79.0%	78.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

*Excluding applicants with unknown ethnicity

Table 3C shows the ethnic breakdown for NMAS Access accepted applicants. A higher proportion of Access NMAS accepted applicants (25.7%) are from an ethnic minority background compared to non-Access NMAS accepted applicants (17.2%). There are a greater proportion of male Access NMAS accepted applicants (38.4%) than female (24.4%) from an ethnic minority background.

TABLE 3C – NMAS accepted applicants by ethnicity*, 2006

Ethnic Group	Access			Other			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Asian	3	20	23	40	359	399	422
Black	22	136	158	225	1,240	1,465	1,623
Mixed	2	18	20	33	251	284	304
Other	1	6	7	10	51	61	68
White	45	557	602	1,092	9,924	11,016	11,618
Grand Total	73	737	810	1,400	11,825	13,225	14,035

Ethnic Group	Access			Other			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Asian	4.1%	2.7%	2.8%	3.0%	2.9%	3.0%	3.0%
Black	30.1%	18.5%	19.5%	10.5%	16.1%	11.1%	11.6%
Mixed	2.7%	2.4%	2.5%	2.1%	2.4%	2.1%	2.2%
Other	1.4%	0.8%	0.9%	0.4%	0.7%	0.5%	0.5%
White	61.6%	75.6%	74.3%	83.9%	78.0%	83.3%	82.8%
Grand Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

*Excluding applicants with unknown ethnicity

4) Socio-economic status

UCAS derives socio-economic status from an applicant's parental occupation (or their own occupation if they are aged 21 or over) and uses a simplified version of the National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC). The method employs the Standard Occupation Classification 2000 (SOC2000) for coding occupations.

From Table 4A, there were 17.5% fewer applicants from Higher managerial and professional occupations with Access qualifications (4.7%) compared to those without Access qualifications (22.2%). There were more applicants from a Semi-routine occupation background with an Access qualification (34.6%) than their non-Access (13.8%)

counterparts, a 20.8% proportional difference in this category. As these differences may be due to the majority of Access applicants being over the age of 21 and therefore having a socio-economic status derived from their own occupation, rather than that of a parent, Table 4B shows the socio-economic status of mature (applicants those aged 21 years or over) and accepted applicants only. From Table 4B for the semi-routine occupations category there were proportionally more mature Access applicants (34.6%) compared to non-Access applicants (13.8%).

Note: Care should be taken when drawing conclusions from Socio-economic status data since there were a large proportion of applicants who did not supply their occupational information. For Access applicants the proportion of applicants with an unknown Socio-economic status was 52.3% and for non-Access applicants 25.8%.

TABLE 4A – Socio-economic status* of applicants and accepted applicants by qualification, 2006

Socio-economic status	Applicants				Accepted Applicants			
	Access	%	Other	%	Access	%	Other	%
Higher managerial and professional occupations	443	4.7%	59,190	22.2%	309	4.8%	50,525	23.0%
Lower managerial and professional occupations	2,118	22.4%	83,608	31.3%	1,445	22.3%	69,226	31.5%
Intermediate occupations	2,054	21.8%	38,041	14.3%	1,432	22.1%	31,026	14.1%
Small employers and own account workers	447	4.7%	20,299	7.6%	305	4.7%	16,676	7.6%
Lower supervisory and technical occupations	212	2.2%	12,766	4.8%	155	2.4%	10,552	4.8%
Semi-routine occupations	3,270	34.6%	36,936	13.8%	2,183	33.8%	28,964	13.2%
Routine occupations	895	9.5%	15,925	6.0%	639	9.9%	12,824	5.8%
Not known	10,334	-	92,932	-	6,944	-	73,172	-
Total	19,773		359,697		13,412		292,965	

*Percentages are based on applicants with known socio-economic status only

TABLE 4B – Socio-economic status* of mature applicants and accepted applicants by qualification held, 2006

Socio-economic status	Applicants				Accepted Applicants			
	Access	%	Other	%	Access	%	Other	%
Higher managerial and professional occupations	443	4.7%	59,190	22.2%	309	4.8%	50,525	23.0%
Lower managerial and professional occupations	2,118	22.4%	83,608	31.3%	1,445	22.3%	69,226	31.5%
Intermediate occupations	2,054	21.8%	38,041	14.3%	1,432	22.1%	31,026	14.1%
Small employers and own account workers	447	4.7%	20,299	7.6%	305	4.7%	16,676	7.6%
Lower supervisory and technical occupations	212	2.2%	12,766	4.8%	155	2.4%	10,552	4.8%
Semi-routine occupations	3,270	34.6%	36,936	13.8%	2,183	33.8%	28,964	13.2%
Routine occupations	895	9.5%	15,925	6.0%	639	9.9%	12,824	5.8%
Not known	10,334	-	92,932	-	6,944	-	73,172	-
Total	19,773		359,697		13,412		292,965	

*Percentages are based on applicants with known socio-economic status only

5) Subject group

Table 5A gives the preferred subject group of Access and non-Access applicants, together with a percentage breakdown. The most popular subject group for Access applicants was Subjects allied to medicine, with more than 31.1% of Access applicants applying for this area. The second most popular subject group for Access applicants was Social studies with 16.1%.

As applicants can apply for up to six courses which can be across different subject groups, table 5A uses the overall preferred subject group. Where applicants apply to subjects in more than one group, the group listed most frequently on the application form is counted (preferred subject). For some subject groups, such as Physical sciences, this can create the impression that there are more people accepted than applied. Where a preferred subject group cannot be established, the applicant is categorised as belonging to the 'No preferred subject group'.

TABLE 5A – Applicants by preferred subject group, 2006

Subject Group	Qualification					
	Access	%	Other	%	Total	%
A Medicine and dentistry	339	1.7%	15,149	4.2%	15,488	4.1%
B Subjects allied to medicine	6,142	31.1%	27,394	7.6%	33,536	8.8%
C Biological sciences	1,241	6.3%	26,654	7.4%	27,895	7.4%
D Veterinary sciences, agriculture and related subjects	71	0.4%	3,444	1.0%	3,515	0.9%
F Physical sciences	274	1.4%	11,400	3.2%	11,674	3.1%
G Mathematical and computer sciences	577	2.9%	17,877	5.0%	18,454	4.9%
H Engineering	187	0.9%	11,204	3.1%	11,391	3.0%
J Technologies	19	0.1%	1,206	0.3%	1,225	0.3%
K Architecture, building and planning	82	0.4%	5,693	1.6%	5,775	1.5%
L Social Studies	3,185	16.1%	23,487	6.5%	26,672	7.0%
M Law	780	3.9%	14,107	3.9%	14,887	3.9%
N Business and administrative studies	888	4.5%	32,967	9.2%	33,855	8.9%
P Mass communications and documentation	156	0.8%	7,433	2.1%	7,589	2.0%
Q Linguistics, Classics and related studies	352	1.8%	10,618	3.0%	10,970	2.9%
R European languages, literature and related stud	23	0.1%	3,694	1.0%	3,717	1.0%
T Non-European languages and related studies	34	0.2%	989	0.3%	1,023	0.3%
V Historical and philosophical studies	398	2.0%	12,357	3.4%	12,755	3.4%
W Creative arts and design	949	4.8%	45,709	12.7%	46,658	12.3%
X Education	1,271	6.4%	12,996	3.6%	14,267	3.8%
Combined sciences	64	0.3%	1,664	0.5%	1,728	0.5%
Combined social sciences	91	0.5%	1,766	0.5%	1,857	0.5%
Combined arts	337	1.7%	7,177	2.0%	7,514	2.0%
Sciences combined with social sciences or arts	386	2.0%	7,248	2.0%	7,634	2.0%
Social sciences combined with arts	169	0.9%	5,075	1.4%	5,244	1.4%
General, other combined and unknown	61	0.3%	959	0.3%	1,020	0.3%
No preferred subject group	1,697	8.6%	51,430	14.3%	53,127	14.0%
Total	19,773	100.0%	359,697	100.0%	379,470	100.0%

The subject group of the course onto which applicants were accepted is shown in Table 5B. Nearly a quarter of accepted Access applicants gained a place on a course within the Subjects allied to medicine group - Access applicants accounted for 15.5% of all accepted applicants in this group. Other subject groups for which large proportions of Access applicants were accepted were social studies, biological sciences and education.

TABLE 5B – Accepted Applicants by subject group, 2006

Subject Group	Qualification					
	Access	%	Other	%	Total	%
A Medicine and dentistry	131	1.0%	6,822	2.3%	6,953	2.3%
B Subjects allied to medicine	3,335	24.9%	18,075	6.2%	21,410	7.0%
C Biological sciences	1,139	8.5%	24,839	8.5%	25,978	8.5%
D Veterinary sciences, agriculture and related subjects	66	0.5%	3,343	1.1%	3,409	1.1%
F Physical sciences	294	2.2%	11,896	4.1%	12,190	4.0%
G Mathematical and computer sciences	432	3.2%	18,066	6.2%	18,498	6.0%
H Engineering	175	1.3%	12,102	4.1%	12,277	4.0%
J Technologies	26	0.2%	1,990	0.7%	2,016	0.7%
K Architecture, building and planning	88	0.7%	5,812	2.0%	5,900	1.9%
L Social Studies	2,189	16.3%	20,839	7.1%	23,028	7.5%
M Law	654	4.9%	13,362	4.6%	14,016	4.6%
N Business and administrative studies	681	5.1%	31,684	10.8%	32,365	10.6%
P Mass communications and documentation	144	1.1%	7,446	2.5%	7,590	2.5%
Q Linguistics, Classics and related studies	367	2.7%	9,678	3.3%	10,045	3.3%
R European languages, literature and related studies	24	0.2%	3,239	1.1%	3,263	1.1%

Subject Group	Qualification					
	Access	%	Other	%	Total	%
T Non-European languages and related studies	32	0.2%	1,458	0.5%	1,490	0.5%
V Historical and philosophical studies	337	2.5%	11,168	3.8%	11,505	3.8%
W Creative arts and design	714	5.3%	36,639	12.5%	37,353	12.2%
X Education	923	6.9%	10,847	3.7%	11,770	3.8%
Combined sciences	157	1.2%	4,795	1.6%	4,952	1.6%
Combined social sciences	131	1.0%	3,660	1.2%	3,791	1.2%
Combined arts	395	2.9%	9,877	3.4%	10,272	3.4%
Sciences combined with social sciences or arts	589	4.4%	13,689	4.7%	14,278	4.7%
Social sciences combined with arts	263	2.0%	7,922	2.7%	8,185	2.7%
General, other combined and unknown	126	0.9%	3,717	1.3%	3,843	1.3%
Total	13,412	100.0%	292,965	100.0%	306,377	100.0%

6) MOSAIC profile

MOSAIC is a geo-demographic classification which clusters households on the basis of data such as census, electoral role, housing and financial data and provides lifestyle descriptions based on cluster profiles.

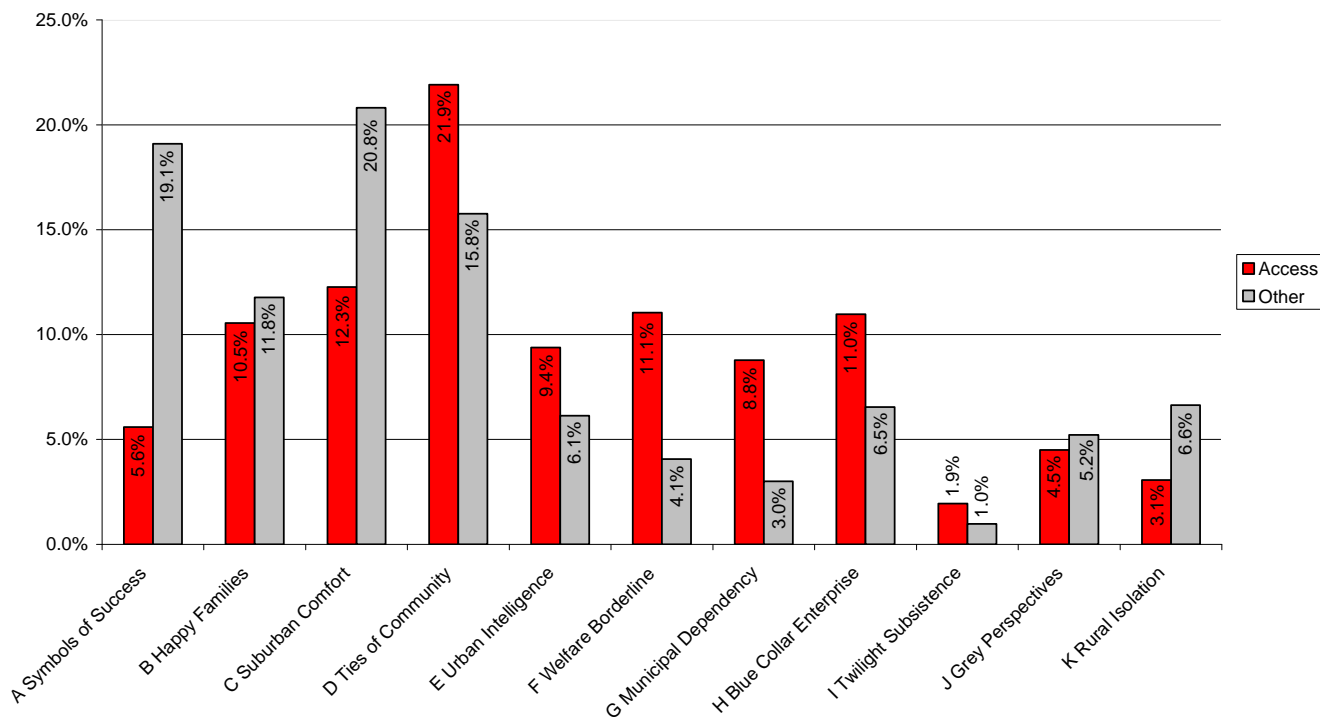
Table 6A compares the MOSAIC profile of Access applicants compared with non-Access applicants. There were a lower proportion of Access applicants within the Symbols of Success group and higher proportion within the Welfare Borderline or Ties of Community group, than their non-Access counterparts. Chart 6B illustrates graphically the difference in MOSAIC lifestyles between Access and non-Access accepted applicants.

TABLE 6A – Applicants and accepted applicants by MOSAIC Lifestyle*, 2006

MOSAIC Lifestyle	Applicants				Accepted Applicants			
	Access	%	Other	%	Access	%	Other	%
A Symbols of Success	1,023	5.3%	64,259	18.3%	731	5.6%	54,592	19.1%
B Happy Families	2,019	10.5%	41,047	11.7%	1,379	10.5%	33,627	11.8%
C Suburban Comfort	2,253	11.7%	71,501	20.4%	1,604	12.3%	59,491	20.8%
D Ties of Community	4,323	22.4%	56,470	16.1%	2,865	21.9%	45,073	15.8%
E Urban Intelligence	1,789	9.3%	23,134	6.6%	1,227	9.4%	17,515	6.1%
F Welfare Borderline	2,223	11.5%	15,348	4.4%	1,445	11.1%	11,595	4.1%
G Municipal Dependency	1,730	9.0%	11,028	3.1%	1,148	8.8%	8,579	3.0%
H Blue Collar Enterprise	2,131	11.0%	23,737	6.8%	1,435	11.0%	18,705	6.5%
I Twilight Subsistence	364	1.9%	3,470	1.0%	253	1.9%	2,790	1.0%
J Grey Perspectives	852	4.4%	18,278	5.2%	588	4.5%	14,915	5.2%
K Rural Isolation	581	3.0%	22,805	6.5%	400	3.1%	18,969	6.6%
X Unknown	485	-	8,620	-	337	-	7,114	-
Total	19,773		359,697		13,412		292,965	

*Percentages are based on applicants with known MOSAIC Lifestyle only

Chart 6B - Accepted applicants by qualification and Mosaic Lifestyle*, 2006



*Percentages are based on applicants with known MOSAIC Lifestyle only

7) Distance travelled

Data for distance travelled by an applicant is calculated as the direct distance between an applicant's home and the institution at which they were accepted. The location of an institution is derived from the postcode of the main campus published in the *UCAS Directory*.

Table 7 gives the distance travelled to the accepting institution using grouped distance bands. This table clearly shows Access applicants on the whole attend an institution closer to their home than non-Access applicants. This may also be an effect of the older age profile of Access applicants – older applicants do generally study closer to home. Over three-quarters of Access accepted applicants travelled less than 25 miles from their home to their accepting institution. Over 20% of non-Access applicants travelled 100 miles or more to their accepting institution, the equivalent figure for Access applicants 6.5%.

TABLE 7 – Distance travelled to institution by accepted applicants

Distance (miles)	Qualification		
	Access	Other	Total
>0 and <= 24	75.5%	42.9%	44.3%
>=25 and <= 49	11.5%	16.3%	16.1%
>=50 and <= 74	4.4%	11.1%	10.9%
>=75 and <= 99	2.2%	8.8%	8.5%
>=100 and <=124	1.6%	6.6%	6.3%
>=125 and <=149	1.4%	4.2%	4.1%
>=150 and <=174	1.2%	3.8%	3.7%
>=175	2.3%	6.3%	6.1%
Grand Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%