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National cap may force York to turn away home undergraduates

● Home student increases banned for two years ● International and graduate students to fill expansion

Henry James Foy
EDITOR

THE UNIVERSITY of York may be forced into turning away undergraduate home students in favour of international and graduate applicants over the next two years to meet expansion goals following a Government ruling on student numbers.

A national ban on increasing the number of home students in higher education for the next two years is likely to force admission officers to look elsewhere for students to fill the £500 million Heslington East expansion project in the immediate future.

The University has admitted that postgraduate and international students will make up "a substantial proportion" of the increases required to populate the new site.

Under a strict ruling from John Denham, Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills, a rise in the recruitment of home students in 2009-10 is highly unlikely. In addition, there are no plans for this cap to be lifted in 2010-11.

Denham had already instructed the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), which regulates funding for students and universities to "bear down on over-recruitment" before demanding that institutions "preferably eliminate" increased recruitment in a letter last month.

A subsequent HEFCE letter to all Vice-Chancellors stated: "We will be making no further allocations of Additional Student Numbers (ASNs) for 2009-10, beyond those already approved or under consideration. In addition, we will make no further allocations of ASNs for 2010-11 at this stage."

The University have defended the viability of their expansion plans, claiming that as the constraints apply "only to home

undergraduate student growth", plans to fill Heslington East will be "unaffected by the Secretary of State's announcement."

University Press Officer David Garner said: "In the context of the Heslington East expansion, the undergraduate home market is only part of the picture. A substantial proportion of the increase in students associated with the development will be of postgraduate and international students."

According to the most recent figures available, international and EU citizens currently make up 11% of undergraduate students, while post-graduates account for just over 24% of the total student population.

Goodricke College, which moves to the new site this October, will see the number of beds swell to 600 from the current 350. In line with the HEFCE announcement, it is expected that the extra students required to meet the increased capacity will not be home undergraduates.

The new expansion-based departments of Law and Theatre, Film and Television will also begin accepting students in October.

"We have growth in student numbers already factored into plans and funded for 2009/10 and 2010/11," said Garner. "Demand for study at universities in general, and at this university in particular, is still extremely strong," he added.

To enforce the ruling, HEFCE has warned that increased admissions would result in severe penalties, threatening "further measures that we may consider could include constraining student numbers through changes to the operation of our funding method"

In previous years, institutions were allowed to overshoot figures without facing serious punishment.

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GEORGE LOWTHER

Heslington East will not increase home student numbers for two years

JCRCs attack bar management

DERWENT, Goodricke, Alcuin and Vanbrugh JCRC chairs have united in condemnation of Commercial Services, claiming that their lack of competitive edge is killing college bars in the face of the new Courtyard Venue. Alcuin JCRC chair Oliver Hutchings has described Commercial Services' position as "untenable" >> NEWS P3

Survey highlights YUSU apathy

A SURVEY has revealed that the majority of students at York don't feel represented by their Union. YUSU, which was criticised in a recent national assessment, was found to be disconnected from campus, with many students unable to name their elected officers. YUSU Sabbs have defended their position on campus >> NEWS P4-5

Library to adopt 24-hour opening

THE JB Morrell Library has agreed to begin investigating plans for 24-hour opening, following student interest and pressure. After a UGM motion last term calling on the library to adopt the always-open schedule, officials have agreed to implement the idea, planned for the upcoming year >> NEWS P7

Key Varsity fixtures face cancellation

POSTPONEMENTS and BUCS Cup progress have conspired to see many of the biggest fixtures of this year's annual Varsity competition against city rivals York St. John cancelled. The now heavily subdued contest will take place without the crucial sports of football, rugby, volleyball or tennis >> SPORT P23

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Behind
the
highs
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