

New Student Realisation Survey

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Department of Institutional Planning and Research

Market Research Unit

Executive Summary

The realisation rate of new students in 2011 was 68.0%, compared to the 72.3% in 2010. The Management of the University of Pretoria commissioned a survey to investigate the reasons why new students who had been conditionally accepted did not register at the University of Pretoria in 2011.

The key findings were the following:

- A total of 900 prospective students were selected to participate in the survey and 850 responded to the survey, representing a response rate of 94.4%.
- Of the prospective students who responded, 96% received confirmation from the University that they had been conditionally accepted for the academic programme they applied for.
- Almost 72% of the respondents did not notify the University of their decision not to register in 2011.
- The names of the respondents, who did notify the University that they would not register in 2011 (23%), were not removed from the UP application and admission system. If the University had officially registered the cancellations and removed the names from the system, students on the waiting lists could have been notified of their acceptance sooner.
- Respondents reported a large variety of reasons for not registering in 2011. For analysis purposes the reasons were grouped in seven main categories namely:
 - Academic programme related reasons
 - Preference for other tertiary institution
 - Financial reasons
 - Administrative reasons (UP related)
 - Logistical reasons
 - Poor grade 12 results
 - Other reasons
- The main reasons (29%) for prospective students, not registering in 2011, were related to academic programmes, of which the most prominent one was the fact that students were not accepted for the academic programme of their choice at UP.
- The second most important category of reasons (22%) why prospective students did not register were administrative and placement problems, including the following:
 - Very late confirmation that a place in an academic programme was available;
 - Long waiting lists for residence accommodation and failure to inform applicants whether accommodation was available;
 - Placement in extended programmes or on the Mamelodi campus;
 - Poor communication, with students and generally unsatisfactory service by administration staff, including faculty staff;
 - Compulsory reservation fees for accommodation.

- Almost 16% of the prospective students applied at more than one university and registered at their institution of preference once they were accepted by the institution.
- Of the respondents that did not register, 9% cited convenience and logistical problems such as transport, accommodation, and location as factors that influenced their decision to prefer a university closer to their homes.
- Financial problems (8%) were also reported as an important reason why students had to cancel their plans to register at UP.
- The category “other reasons” included a large variety of more personal reasons such as family problems and health problems or the decision to take a gap year.
- Almost 81% of the prospective students who did not register at UP in 2011, continued with academic studies at other tertiary institutions, while the remaining 19% did not continue with any academic studies in 2011. The majority of these students took a gap year.
- The five most popular universities that prospective students chose as an alternative to UP were the following:
 - University of Witwatersrand (18%)
 - University of Cape Town (16%)
 - University of Stellenbosch (12%)
 - North-West University (9%)
 - University of Johannesburg (8%)
- The two most important reasons why students chose the above universities were the academic programmes offered and convenience.

