Half of current A-level students would be 'too embarrassed' to admit using Clearing

The university Clearing system needs to change, say current A-level students, with 48% of them saying they would not tell their uni friends if they got in through Clearing.

In research conducted by The Student Room, the world's largest online student community, more than 6,000 A-level students were asked what they think about the current university application system.

Half would be too embarrassed to admit to using Clearing, with comments including:

"It makes you look like a failure"
"I wouldn't want pity or people to look down on me for not achieving my goals"
"It would make me feel as though I wasn't smart or able enough to get in on my own"

The research revealed more than half would get rid of Clearing altogether with 52% saying it has a bad reputation. Of those, 19% said Clearing is "for people who are desperate to still get into university".

More than half of students (59%) would favour switching to a system that enables them to reapply in September with their actual grades.

However, despite their mistrust of the system, 81% of A-level students say they plan to check Clearing vacancies when they go live in July to see what is available.

Many feel they are unlikely to need Clearing anyway. 80% of students think the removal of the cap on university places has made it easier to receive an offer.

Hannah Morrish, Education Community Manager, at The Student Room says "Students feel the university they choose and the offer they get defines what they can hope to achieve. Clearing reinforces that despite their best efforts they weren't good enough and missed the goal they've been working towards over the last year. That can be really disheartening. Unis and schools must work together to reassure students about Clearing.

Students have picked up on the increase in offers that are lowered on results day which is making them question the value and honesty of the offers they're receiving. Some students are asking their teachers to predict higher grades so they can apply to higher tariff universities that are known to discount offers at the last minute."

The Student Room surveyed 6,310 current A-level students between 19th Feb – 02nd Mar 2016

ABOUT THE STUDENT ROOM
Founded in 2001, The Student Room is the world's largest online student community and the UK's no.1 education website according to ComScore data. The Student Room has over 3 million registered members, primarily aged between 14-24 and attracts over 8 million visitors a month. It provides student-to-student advice on studying, educational career choice and lifestyle issues. The Student Room works directly with most UK universities as well as a wide range of leading brands and companies.