Minutes

CHEAG/17/M2

College HE Advisory Group meeting

held on Thursday 22 June 2017, at UCAS, Cheltenham.

Chair:	Paul Featonby	Hartpury College
Present:	Andrea Shepherd	York College
	Jennifer Thorpe	The Manchester College
	Jenny North	Birmingham Metropolitan College
	Jon Hall	South Devon College
	Rhys Thomas	Kingston College
	Susan Watkins	Lakes College West Cumbria
Apologies:	Arti Saraswat	Association of Colleges
	Boota Singh	Warwickshire College Group
	Chris Cockerton	Loughborough College
	David Robertson	Loughborough College
	Debbie Lister	Heart of Worcestershire College
	Debbie Toseland	Cornwall College
	Diane Workman	City of Bristol College
	James Marczak	Myerscough College
	Kristine Murray	Blackpool and the Fylde College
	Kiran Rami	Uxbridge College
	Matthew Shough	New College Stamford
	Michael Addison	Medipathways College
	Sharon Dowling	Henley College Coventry
UCAS in attendance:	Adam Glaudot	Technology Relationship Manager
	Deniz Gosai	Groups and Forums Administrator
	Giles Ursell	Strategic Product Manager (presenting)
	Janet Warne	Relationship Manager
	Peter Derrick	Head of Service Delivery (presenting)
SPA in attendance:	Jeni Clack	Admissions Support Manager

A2/17/01 Welcome and apologies

The Group was welcomed to the meeting, and the apologies were noted.

A2/17/02 Minutes and action log from previous meeting

The minutes were approved as a correct reflection of the last meeting.

The open actions from the log was discussed:

CHEAG045 – it was confirmed that City and Guilds qualifications were in ABL again this year. However, results would be shown as a pass or fail only. It was noted that there was an issue with City and Guilds qualifications last year, particularly with the Extended Diploma. It was asked whether module information could be provided in future.

JW
CHEAG091

CHEAGA061 and CHEAG063 – these were covered during the meeting.

DG
CHEAG092

CHEAG069 – the Dates and Deadlines Working Group proposal would be submitted to UCAS' Executive Team shortly. The proposal was discussed later in the meeting, as the college perspective was required.

JW
CHEAG093

CHEAG073 and CHEAG079– a paper on the direct contact service (DCS) was given to the Group. Although the sample of applicants for the pilot of Extra was small, colleges found the quality was better. It was confirmed that DCS would be available on A level results day, and not beforehand. Colleges were disappointed it didn't start earlier, as it was a good opportunity to recruit BTEC and Scottish students. Janet agreed to feed this back to internal colleagues

CHEAG080 – the Group had not sent any information about the data they used, and what they did with it. It was confirmed that UCAS would like to increase providers knowledge of available data. The service catalogue at www.ucas.com/providers/services/our-products-and-systems, gave examples of data available from UCAS. The Group also noted that having a dedicated Media Account Manager, who knew individual providers, was beneficial. This action remained opened.

CHEAG081 – a guide to UCAS' test and training environments was sent with the minutes.

CHEAG083 – it was confirmed that the Data Collection Team (DCT) was not logging feedback received from phone calls. Therefore, providers were asked to use the feedback button if they had any comments on the collection tool. The Group still felt

this was not providers' responsibility, and asked for it to be fed back again. This action remained opened.

CHEAG084 – no information, case studies or videos had been sent to UCAS to improve the information and advice about what it was like to study at a college. The Group asked how recording would be transmitted. It was confirmed a link to the recording would suffice. Career Pilot had some videos which UCAS could use. This action remained open.

CHEAG086 – no agenda items had been received to include on the College Regional Forums. This action remained open.

All other actions were closed.

A2/17/03 Discussion on how the search and collection tool were working for colleges

The Group felt that the new collection tool was easier and better to use, and praised the phone support provided by DCT. Although some colleges listened to webinar recordings, they found it difficult to decide which webinar was the best one to share with colleagues, as information was often repeated. Colleges were also struggling with updating the collection tool, as their curriculum had not yet been set, so course information was not available.

The Group requested that a preview option should be given, so they could see how the course details would look in the search tool. This is already on a priority list. In addition, there was not an option for bursary information. Although there was a sponsorship information section, this was not the same, and the Group asked for it to be added.

JW
CHEAG094
JW
CHEAG095

Finally, the Group also noted they were struggling to find the information required for KIS returns.

JW
CHEAG096

A2/17/04 Apprenticeship update and discussion

It was noted that an Apprenticeship Steering Group had been set up, between UCAS and providers. Two presentations were shared with the Group, and sent out with the minutes. A meeting with UCAS and the Skills Funding Agency was taking place, and UCAS was also talking to employers about apprenticeships. An apprenticeship strategy was also being written – a draft version would be sent to the UCAS Executive Team in July 2017.

DG
CHEAG097

The Group would like to apprenticeships to be listed in the main search tool. There was a discussion on how higher level apprenticeships were not widely understood, and employers were required to support these apprenticeships. If apprenticeships were

added to the search tool, UCAS would need to consider the size of employers, as some regions (such as Devon) would not have large employers, and would be unable to compete against the larger ones, especially if they were both listed in the search tool. It was agreed that a deeper discussion would take place during the next meeting.

DG
CHEAG098

A2/17/05 Entry requirements filter in the search tool, including search by campus

A presentation on the search tool was given to the Group.

There was a detailed discussion on entry requirements. UCAS had not yet come to a decision on how this filter would work, however, learners and advisers still very much required this functionality. Colleges would not be against introducing the filter, but asked that BTECs were also included. It was confirmed that 'Which Uni' used information from Course Collect, not historical data, for their entry requirement filters.

It was asked whether the UCAS Tariff could be used as a benchmark, but many providers did not use it, and therefore this would not be an option.

The disadvantages of using entry requirements as a filter was discussed, including how widening participation applicants would be affected, and that there was a difference between the entry requirements published, and those that were actually considered to make an offer. The Group agreed that the latter point should be addressed by the sector, but did not believe it was for UCAS to get involved with.

Furthermore, it was asked whether the Tariff calculator could be used to help the entry requirements filter. It could be used as a 'middle-man translation', but UCAS would need to weigh up how much information would be lost. In addition, providers all displayed entry requirements differently, and the Group agreed they should educate learners on this, as they could miss potential opportunities. It was asked whether user testing with mature students had been carried out.

Search by location was still on UCAS' backlog. This filter could become more important as more colleges merge. The different options were shown to the Group, and it was noted that awarding body was not relevant. Some providers would be required to input two regions, if they were situated on the border. The Group agreed the most important search by location filter was the area (town/city) in which the course was taught. It was requested that this filter be given high priority, as the current lack of location information affected recruitment. It was agreed that wireframes of what a location filter could potentially look like would be drawn up for the next meeting.

GU
Finally, the Group requested filters for sponsorships, bursaries and/or costs.   CHEAG099

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The Group was asked to send any addition feedback to Janet Warne – j.warne@ucas.ac.uk.

It was confirmed that the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) would only be displayed on the search tool pages for providers who had opted into it. At present, there was not a TEF filter in the search tool.

A2/17/06 Application management system (AMS) development update

A presentation on AMS was given to the Group. AMS would allow applicants to build up a profile, and add additional information at a later point.

The open beta for AMS was available on the website, and the Group was encouraged to feedback on it – https://hep-digitial.ucas.com/search.

Only accredited qualifications could be entered. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, or volunteering qualifications were examples of non-accredited provision.

It was hoped that UCAS would gather data from Ofqual, Qualifications Wales, NARIC etc. to build a Master Data System (MDS). The intention was that this would help guide applicants in selecting the right qualification they were studying. In the future, it was hoped that applicants would be able to enter the school or college they were studying at, and be presented with a list of qualifications linked to them.

There was a discussion on personal statements. Ideally colleges would like to have more than one personal statement, as it would help focus applicants on what they wanted to study. However, the Group understood this could restrict some widening participation applicants from making numerous applications.

A2/17/07 AMS dates and deadlines discussion

The Dates and Deadline Working Group proposal was discussed. The word 'deadline' was felt to be confusing for applicants, and UCAS was considering removing the 24 March deadline. The Group confirmed that applicants, particularly for audition courses, worried about deadlines, and welcomed not having deadlines these courses. The Group did not feel the college cycle had been captured in the proposal. Paul Featonby, Hartpury College, welcomed the Group's feedback on the dates and deadline proposal, and the variable start date proposal.

All
CHEAG100

A2/17/08 ABL embargo breach discussion/college perception

The Group was asked whether they would like to opt out of future embargo training, as A level results were not as important to them, as they were to universities. Although

many colleges would have to consider this on a year-on-year basis, the majority of the Group agreed they would complete the training each year, if asked to.

A2/17/09   The impact of college mergers on the sector

A number of colleges had, or were in the process of merging. Some were keeping separate identities with UCAS, but many were merging, meaning courses would have to also be merged in the collection tool. UCAS confirmed that ideally, it would prefer not to make changes to the collection tool mid-cycle. Many providers were merging without considering the UCAS perspective, and had not informed UCAS.

A2/17/10   Update from the Undergraduate Advisory Group

Paul Featonby explained that as well as Chairing the College HE Advisory Group, he was also the college representative on the Undergraduate Advisory Group (UAG). The UAG last met on Wednesday 7 June 2017, and had similar agenda items to that of the College HE Advisory Group. He explained there had been a discussion on preparations for Confirmation and Clearing, and confirmed that eligible applicants could add a Clearing choice from 15:00 on A level results day. It was agreed that future UAG agendas would be sent to the College HE Advisory Group for its input prior to the meeting.

DG
CHEAG101

A2/17/11   Update from regional forums

UCAS was trying to encourage the forums to feed into the relevant advisory groups. In November, the College HE Advisory Group would take place after the college regional forums. These forums would focus on testing AMS.

The following feedback had been received from the latest Midlands College Regional Forum:

- Currently the bulletins UCAS sends colleges are too lengthy. The forum asked for shorter, snappier information which they could forward on to colleagues. Paul Featonby agreed to send Janet Warne a copy of the HEFCE newsletter, which he felt had the right format.

    PF
    CHEAG102

- Additional emails from UCAS all looked the same, and colleges asked if the information could be summarised on ucas.com.

    JW

- The forum attendees would like to receive key information, details of new staff CHEAG103 at UCAS, and a clear and easy link to MOVEit.
- The new ucas.com search facility was confusing and did not work effectively.

The forums also raised the question as to why colleges pay the same capitation fee for progression applicants as they did for external applicants, as UCAS did not actually have any part in this recruitment. It was confirmed that all new applicants must be processed through UCAS, but if they had already been through the process once, and were progressing onto a different course, they would not be required to apply through UCAS again. The same discussion was had at the SPA College Forum, and Jeni Clack, SPA, agreed to share findings with the Group.

JC
CHEAG104

A2/17/12 Any other business and close

12.1   Discussion on unconditional offer on the mail base

Unconditional offers being made to applicants before results were received was becoming the norm. This concerned advisers, but in fact, many colleges were participating in this practice too. The Association of Colleges (AoC) was gathering feedback. As many providers, including colleges, were making unconditional offers, some applicants were losing sight of how important it was to pass examinations. Some providers were also offering a cash incentive, if applicants with an unconditional offer still achieved their predicted grades.

12.2   Network within the sector on IT security

The Group was informed that Bradford College would like to set up a group under the umbrella of AUA, to share knowledge about systems integration such as ABL imports and other data from UCAS, and asked the Group if it would be interested in joining. A paper with further information was sent with the minutes, and many of the members agreed to be part of the network. It was agreed to have this as an agenda item at the next meeting.

DG
CHEAG105
All
CHEAG106
DG
CHEAG107

12.3   Study visits

UCAS arranged study visits to providers, to help develop staff knowledge, and was looking for colleges to host a visit. Several members of the Group volunteered to take part in, and an email with information would be sent to them.

JW
CHEAG108

12.4   End of Cycle Report

The Group requested that the End of Cycle Report be split by colleges and universities. It was agreed this would be investigated.

JW
CHEAG109

12.5   Date of next meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday 23 November 2017, at Birmingham Metropolitan College.

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Minutes

CAG/17/M2

Conservatoires Advisory Group meeting

held on Monday 5 June 2017 at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, SE10 9JF

Chair:	Gerry Godley	Leeds College of Music
Present:	Alison Pickard	Conservatoires UK
	Amanda Owen-Meehan	Birmingham Conservatoire
	Anthony Bowne	Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance
	Catherine Jury	Royal Academy of Music
	Dominic Tulett	Royal Central School of Speech and Drama
	Iestyn Henson	Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama
	Kevin Porter	Royal College of Music
	Mark Beards	Royal Northern College of Music (in replacement for Stuart Sephton)
	Suzanne Daly	Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
Apologies:	Amanda Layne	Leeds College of Music
	Jeffrey Sharkey	Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
	Joanna Charnock	Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama
	Stuart Sephton	Royal Northern College of Music
UCAS in attendance:	Claire Cakebread	Scheme Delivery Owner
	Deniz Gosai	Groups and Forums Administrator
	Janet Warne	Relationship Manager
	Peter Derrick	Head of Service Delivery
SPA in attendance:	Amy Smith	Admissions Support Manager

A2/17/01 Welcome and apologies

The Group was welcomed to the meeting. Each member introduced themselves.

A2/17/02 Minutes and action log from previous meeting

The minutes from the previous meeting was approved as correct and accurate. It was confirmed that some bulk upload, as mentioned on page 7 of the minutes, was available during February 2017.

The open actions from the log were discussed:

ConsAG082 – the 2016 data resources did not report on SIMD, as numbers had been very small. If UCAS reported on SIMD in future conservatoire data resources, it would explain the difference between SIMD and POLAR across all schemes. This action was closed.

ConsAG083 – it was agreed that this action would be ongoing, as communication regarding changes in the scheme should be discussed during both advisory and user group meetings.

ConsAG085- it was confirmed that all priorities were covered off during the story book. It was agreed to close this action, although the Group would keep it under review. It was also agreed that UCAS' Aha roadmap would be shared at the next meeting.

DG
ConsAG094

ConsAG086 – examples of differences between the new conservatoire contract, and the old contract with CUK, were shared during the meeting. It was reiterated that UCAS would be working closely with all the conservatoires to agree any decisions. Additionally, the UCAS Conservatoires Admissions Guide would be available online by the end of August.

ConsAG088 – currently there was limited data available on the scheme, but this would change during the 2019 cycle. It was agreed that the data discussion would be reopened at this time. This action was closed.

ConsAG089 – a question capturing whether an applicant was interested in applying to a conservatoire would be added to PAD 18 shortly. It would also be available from the beginning of the PAD 19 cycle. It was also noted, that with the new GDPR laws, UCAS was not anticipating any difficulties with its PAD data, as permission from applicants had been sought. An update would be provided at the next meeting, if required.

DG
ConsAG095

The CUK Board would be holding a conference from 24 – 25 October 2017, and would like to know what data was available, particularly relating to black and minority ethnic groups. UCAS was invited to attend the conference.

JW
ConsAG096

The Group raised a question around adverts in the UCAS search tool, in particular one for Guildhall School of Music and Drama, as they were not part of the UCAS scheme. It was confirmed that adverts in the UCAS search tool were paid for, and available for external clients not using the scheme. The rules which UCAS Media followed when selling advertising space would be sent to the Group.

JW
ConsAG097

A2/17/03   Update on staff changes at UCAS

The Group was informed that UCAS' new Chief Executive, Clare Marchant, would begin her role on 3 July 2017.

David Brack, Head of Education Providers, had left UCAS. Louise Evans had taken on his role, as Head of Adviser and Provider Experience.

A2/17/04   Update from the UCAS Conservatoires User Group

An update from the last UCAS Conservatoires User Group meeting was provided. The Group's discussions included payments, and business rules. A workshop was held on 16 May 2017 for conservatoires to view and feed into the new application management system.

It was agreed that the decline by default (DBD) date, which had been scheduled for Friday 14 July, was being moved to Monday 17 July 2017. This was to ensure that essential maintenance over the weekend could take place.

The Group had also asked whether the scheduled maintenance taking place in the last week of September could be permanently moved to the week earlier, so it would not affect the 1 October deadline. It was confirmed that this would be changed from 2018.

A2/17/05   Update from CUK Board meeting, including the current situation with Conservatoire for Dance and Drama relationship with UCAS

It was confirmed that Hilary Boulding was leaving the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, and consequently was no longer the Chair of CUK. Linda Merrick, Royal Northern College of Music, had been appointed as the new Chair.

The last Board meeting had been dominated by the conservatoires upcoming conference, especially regarding how to increase BAME student participation. Gerry

Godley, Leeds College of Music, stated that he would be interested in having a discussion on data about this outside the meeting, with Janet Warne.

<div align="right">JW
ConsAG098</div>

Although no decision had been made, it looked likely that the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama would join UCAS for the 2019 cycle, whilst Guildhall School of Music and Drama was still considering it.

A2/17/06 General discussion and feedback from the Group on the 2016 annual data resources

The annual data resources had been provided to conservatoires. Alison Pickard, CUK, asked whether the resources could also be sent to CUK. Janet Warne, Relationship Manager, said she thought not – as CUK was not a customer of UCAS, and the data belonged to each conservatoire. The data was also filed on the secure file which CUK would not have access to, but would check this.

<div align="right">JW
ConsAG099

DG
ConsAG0100</div>

It was confirmed that, from 2019, the End of Cycle Report, would be tailored to the needs of conservatoires. This would be discussed in more detail at the next meeting. In the meantime, example templates of the current UCAS Undergraduate deadline reports would be circulated to the Group.

<div align="right">PD
ConsAG101</div>

A2/17/07 Update from the application management services (AMS) workshop held on 16 May 2017

All conservatoires, including staff from some of the schools within the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama, attended the workshop held on 16 May. The Group confirmed they liked the look of the application management service (AMS). They requested a summary detailing what was agreed during the workshop, so they could comment on this. A follow-up workshop would also be required, and it was agreed this would take place either the day before or after the next User Group meeting.

<div align="right">JW
ConsAG102

JW
ConsAG103</div>

A2/17/08 The purpose and role of Supporting Professionalism in Admissions (SPA) and how it supports providers

Amy Smith, SPA, joined the meeting and explained the purpose of SPA. A copy of Amy's presentation was sent with the minutes. SPA was located at UCAS, and solely funded by UCAS, although it carried out independent research. SPA was very happy to visit any conservatoire. Although its role was to work with HE providers, UCAS carried out numerous research projects with students, which SPA also had access to.

<div align="right">DG
ConsAG104</div>

SPA was currently carrying out work on care leavers and estranged learners, and asked the Group to send case studies to a.smith@spa.ac.uk.

<div align="right">All
ConsAG105</div>

It was not known whether conservatoire staff were on the distribution list for SPA email bulletins, this would be investigated to ensure all Conservatoire Correspondents were added.

A2/17/09 Any feedback, to date, on the new UCAS search, and collection tools

The Group confirmed they liked the collection tool, but, reiterated that they would like a preview function. It was confirmed that UCAS was working on this.

A member of the Group questioned the new ruling that conservatoire staff could now make up their own new course codes. It was explained that that course codes would always be 'in the background', but when the new AMS was introduced for 2019 cycle, applicants would not see courses codes – so they did not need to follow a particular format. It was noted that JACS was being replaced by HECoS codes, as these were required for HESA returns and league tables. A copy of a HECoS presentation given at the HESPA conference was sent with the minutes.

JW
ConsAG107

It was also noted that conservatoires' courses did not follow consistent naming conventions, and this needed to be addressed. In addition to this, there was a question around how the relevancy within Search worked. Peter Derrick, Head of Service Delivery, agreed to provide a plan of how subjects were allocated as key words.

PD
ConsAG108
PD
ConsAG109

A2/17/10 Review of the counter fraud service

The Group was informed that UCAS have a Fraud and Verification team, to detect fraud and plagiarism in applications. The tool used to detect this carry out this was very old and needed replacing – as part of this review, UCAS was using this opportunity to understand how valued the service was for providers. Currently UCAS looked for three types of fraud: fraudulent qualifications, financial fraud, and ID/immigration fraud. Approximately 5,000 applications were investigated per year, with 2,000 being cancelled. In addition, only 0.01% of applications were cancelled due to plagiarism in the applicant's personal statement.

The Group confirmed that for conservatoires fraud was not a high risk, as all applicants require an audition. The Group was also asked whether they thought UCAS should do more to check ID, but conservatoires asked to see all passports for international students and of courses audition each applicant in person, so they were confident their ID was legitimate.

A2/17/11 Update on ABL embargo, followed by discussion

The embargo agreement letter had now been sent to all providers, and they had been asked to sign and return it. Confirmation on what the penalty sanctions would be if there was a breach would be made available as soon as possible, but not until after UCAS' new CEO had joined the company.

The embargo training would also be available to all staff by the end of June 2017. If providers had any questions, they were asked to contact the ABL Team. Conservatoire staff felt that information on sanctions should have been made available in the agreement.

A2/17/12 Any other business and close

The next meeting would be held in November at Royal Central School of Speech and   DG
Drama. A calendar invitation would be sent to the Group shortly.   ConsAG110

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Minutes

DG/17/M2
Data Group meeting
held on Monday 19 June 2017, UCAS, Cheltenham

Chair:	Daniel Farrell	University of St Andrews
Present:	Alex Ingold	The London School of Economics and Political Science
	Helen Fawcett	Higher Education Strategic Planners Association (dialling in)
	Lisa Machin	Nottingham Trent University
	Paul Ashby	University of Birmingham
	Richard Bartlett	University of Cambridge
	Steve Walsh	Aberystwyth University
	Wendy Webster	University of Dundee
Apologies:	Carolyn Charlton	Keele University
	Christine Giles	University of Portsmouth
	Gurjit Nijjar	University of Derby
	Jo Hamilton	University of Exeter
	Judith Davison	University of Huddersfield
UCAS in attendance:	Clare Cozens	Technology Relationship Manager
	Deniz Gosai	Groups and Forums Administrator
	Fraser Nicoll	Strategic Product Manager (presenting)
	Louise Cyprien	Business Change Lead
	Mike Spink	Enterprise Data and Applications Architect
	Nigel Parr	Information Governance Manager (presenting)
	Peter Derrick	Head of Service Delivery
	Richard O'Kelly	Head of Analytical Data (presenting)
UCAS apologies:	Helen Thorne	Director, External Relations

A2/17/01 Welcome and apologies

The Group was welcomed to the meeting, and the apologies were noted.

A2/17/02 Minutes and action log from previous meeting

The minutes were approved as a correct reflection of the last meeting.

The actions from the log were discussed.

DG094 – A paper on EXACT pricing was submitted prior to the meeting. Paul Ashby, University of Birmingham, who raised the initial concern, was looking at their internal data, and therefore could not comment on the EXACT data. This action was closed.

DG096 – No further examples had been sent through. The issue was to do with the design of UCAS' legacy system, and would be resolved as part of Digital Acceleration. This action was closed.

DG097 – This was a known issue and would be addressed following the change freeze during September, ahead of *X 2017. The Group asked for this information to be circulated to the wider sector through the UCAS Correspondents' bulletin. This action was closed.

CC DG099

DG098 – A deputy Chair was still needed for the Group, and members were encouraged to put their names forward.

All other actions were closed.

To ensure the meetings were not too UCAS-heavy, the Group agreed they would like a provider-led 'workshop' style item on future agendas for at least an hour.

A2/17/03 Membership update

The Group was informed that two providers had put their names forward to join the Group, and agreed to invite them to join.

DG DG100

It was requested, and agreed by the Group, to hold meetings at other locations. The London School of Economics and Political Science offered to host the next meeting. The date of the next meeting was discussed later.

A2/17/04 Introduction and discussion on the UCAS service catalogue

As noted in the past, many providers did not realise what data UCAS provided, and how they could obtain the information. As a result, a number of workshops and consultations had been held, with the aim of creating a service catalogue. The Group was shown a copy of the [catalogue](#) in a draft state. It was hoped that in future, the

catalogue would become more interactive. Each of the four service categories would have its own service owner. The catalogue would include contact details, although this was still being agreed. The target was for data to have a self-service dashboard. It was confirmed that the service catalogue was aimed at providers, not applicants.

UCAS welcomed feedback on the document, to ensure improvements could be made. The Group noted that the first draft was good. It was hoped that the next version would be available shortly, which would include more details on the products, what data would be included in the capitation fee, and what data would be paid for.

FN DG101

The Group noted that they were not aware that App Tracker was a paid for service, and asked whether the campus code could be added to it. A user group for App Tracker was being set up, and this request would be fed back. The Group asked for a further update on the service catalogue at the next meeting.

DG DG102

The level of engagement providers had with UCAS' data products was discussed. The conclusion was that the amount of information/documentation on products was insufficient to support proper engagement. The Group also asked for the strategy behind the products to be shared. This is something UCAS was now addressing.

A2/17/05 UCAS service development update

The Group was informed that the postgraduate release of the application management service (AMS) was due in September 2017. A demonstration on AMS was given to the Group. It was noted that once an applicant had submitted an application, they would still be able to update it (except for personal statements and references). The Group mentioned an issue regarding applicants inputting incorrect passport numbers, often because the applicant did not have a passport. It was confirmed that in AMS, different fields would become mandatory at different points in the application, although this was still being worked on.

Work was being carried out with the collection tool, and the HEP test environment was a good place for providers to have a look at this.

Application document management was being worked on for postgraduates. All documents would be virus scanned at UCAS before being made available to the provider. HEPs confirmed that they looked at documents with the application, and therefore required the document with the application. UCAS confirmed it was taking the approach that if an application required an attachment, it must be supplied.

The list of mandatory and non-mandatory fields was currently being worked on. The list had previously been discussed during a webinar, and it had been noted that different mandatory questions would be required depending on the application type (home or overseas). It was also requested that a 'Don't know' option should be included, and the Group confirmed that providers would find it useful seeing which fields were mandatory when the application was received. The current list of fields would be sent out with the minutes.

DG DG103

In addition, UCAS would be using data from Ofqual, as well as working with Qualification Wales, SQL, and NARIC to provide applicants with a complete list of qualifications to use in their applications.

The Group was encouraged to have a look at the AMS prototype and feed back on it. The Group was shown an example of how to make a decision on an application. The aim was to keep the conditions for an offer as flexible as possible initially, but with plans to implement a built-in wizard tool in the future. There were also plans for an audit trail showing when changes were made.

Clare Cozens, Technology Relationship Manager, explained her role. All the new Digital Acceleration (DA) systems were available in the HEP test environment, so providers could take a look. Software providers were very engaged in the current developments. The next step was to set up an API working group to help software providers understand how UCAS would be developing its products.

The visioning strategy was nearly completed, and would be shared at the next webinar. Each scheme would have the same APIs.

A2/17/06 HECoS update

A HECoS presentation was shared with the Group. A copy would be sent with the minutes.

DG DG104

It was confirmed that HECoS would replace JACS for the 2019 cycle onwards, and that they would not run in parallel. The difference between the two coding systems was detailed in the presentation. UCAS' intention was to validate the HECoS codes as they were collected.

UCAS would be redesigning its App Tracker product as part of DA, and this would include deciding how subject coding would be incorporated. Providers would be responsible for reclassifying their courses using HECoS rather than JACS.

Detailed information was available on the [HESA website](#), and the Group was encouraged to look at it.

It was confirmed that the application code was being maintained as four digits, and would be up to the provider to create. The old JACS codes would be available to see, as read only, for as long as providers would find that useful. It was asked whether programme codes could be also visible.

MS DG105

The search tool was scheduled for launch in early May 2018. Providers would therefore have from autumn 2017 until the search tool went live to input the HECoS codes.

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A2/17/07 UCAS' analytical reporting

No changes were planned for Confirmation and Clearing, with the exception that nursing courses would be published as an addition. The Group confirmed they had access to the Confirmation and Clearing portal on ucas.com.

The precision marketing data service (PMDS) had been rebranded to the direct contact service (DCS). Providers would have early access, via MOVEit, to applicants who UCAS suspected would not be successful, so they could be pre-screened. Providers would then be allowed to call applicants from 11:00 on A level results day. It was noted that some providers did not realise they used MOVEit, and it was not clearly labelled, or easy to locate. Clare Cozens, Technology Relationship Manager, agreed to feed this back.

CC DG106

It was confirmed that new UCAS Teacher Training reporting was not currently a priority, however existing reports could be updated.

Finally, it was noted that the embargo training had a good uptake, and the embargo agreement had been sent out to all providers for signature. All colleagues at providers could now take part in the training.

A2/17/08 General Data Protection Regulation implementation update

A presentation on the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) was shared with the Group. Providers were actively taking onboard the GDPR implications.

The Group was encouraged to see that UCAS was happy to play a flagship role, and share guidance with providers. UCAS currently had a two-page guidance document which they would send to providers. HESA also had guidance which they would be sending out. It was noted that UCAS was receiving low level concerns from providers, but currently did not see an issue with sharing their data with providers.

NP DG107

A short update on mandatory breach reporting was provided. Initially, it had looked like every breach (regardless how small) would need to be reported to the Information Commissioner, however, this might not be the case, and only serious breaches would need to be reported. With regards to embargo breaches, it would need to be decided whether the breach caused harm to the individual, and only if it did would it need to be reported. Currently, there was no legal regulation saying that breaches needed reporting.

The Group questioned how the shared service would be affected by GDPR. It was noted that fundamentally, the shared service was to be a more efficient admissions service, and therefore should be OK. The Group asked for a further update at the next meeting.

DG DG108

A2/17/09 Provider-led discussions

9.1 Contacts and schools update

The Group noted that a mechanism needed to be put in place to maintain schools' contact details, as HEPs did not currently have the confidence that the data that was held was correct. It was noted that UCAS did have a contacts database, but were now moving away from the reliance on this, and was now implementing a CRM system.

In addition, UCAS used external data sets (such as the Department for Education) to ensure the information was correct. However, it also relied on schools to inform them of any changes.

WW
DG109

Wendy Webster, University of Dundee, wrote a paper on this previously, and agreed to share it with Peter Derrick, Head of Service Delivery. It was also agreed that this would be an agenda item at the next meeting.

DG DG110

9.2 UCAS test data request and supply

It was noted that although requesting test data was easy, the data returned wasn't always what the provider was after. It was asked whether the guidance UCAS provides around this could be improved. Daniel Farrell, University of St Andrews, agreed to send Clare Cozens, Technology Relationship Manager, some suggestions to improve the process, which could then be added to the test form request.

DF DG111

9.3 Star files

The Group asked how Star files would work in the future. It was confirmed they would be replaced by APIs.

In addition to this, the HESA Data Futures initiative would impact this as more data was collected directly from providers. It was agreed to have a detailed conversation on APIs and how they would be put together at the next meeting. In addition, an update from the Technology Group around APIs would become a standard item on the agenda.

DG DG112

A2/17/10 Any other business and close

10.1 Update on the UCAS HESPA conference

A UCAS HESPA conference had been held. The feedback received had proven useful, and the meeting itself was a success. The hope was that the meetings would now take place biannually.

There was a discussion session on Star files, as well as the Data Futures going live during 2019. Forecasting of products and services, including EXACT was also discussed.

DG DG113

10.2   Date of the next meeting

The next meeting would take place on Tuesday 14 November at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Groups and forums

Minutes

IAG/17/M2
International Advisory Group meeting
held on Tuesday 6 June 2017, 11:00 – 12:50, at The Principal Hotel, Manchester.

Chair:	Enzo Raimo	University of Reading
Present:	Annie Brunt	Lancaster University
	Charley Robinson	Goldsmiths, University of London
	Cliff Hancock	HEFCE
	David Hibler	British Council
	Jo Attwooll	UUK
	Katy Scott	University of Glasgow
	Rachel O'Connell	BUILA
	Tino Santonocito	University of Buckingham
Apologies:	Adrian Dutch	University of Westminster
	Cathy McEachern	Queen's University Belfast
	Dominic Scott	UKCISA
	Gary Rawnsley	Aberystwyth University
	Mostafa Rajaai	National Union of Students
UCAS in attendance:	Deniz Gosai	Groups and Forums Administrator
	James Durant	International Professional Development Executive
	Mark Wilson	International Market Manager
	Peter Derrick	Head of Service Delivery

A2/17/01 Welcome and apologies

The Group was welcomed to the meeting. Each member of the Group introduced themselves. The apologies were noted.

The Group was reminded that all minutes and papers from the meeting were available on the secure providers' section of ucas.com. If any members of the Group did not have access to this page, they were asked to inform Deniz Gosai, who could arrange access. If providers who were not on the Group wished to feed in to the agenda or see the Group's membership, they could do so through the groups and forums page on ucas.com.

All papers could be shared among the members' networks, provided they had not been explicitly told not to do so.

A2/17/02 Minutes and action log from previous meeting

The minutes were approved as an accurate reflection of the last meeting.

The open actions from the log were discussed:

IAG082 – An event on pathways was still being considered. This action remained in progress.

IAG087 – The Digital Acceleration Team at UCAS was not in a position to start developing TNE progress. This action remained in progress.

IAG97 – It was confirmed that further statistical information on whether providers or students were declining offers, and where students ended up studying, was available through EXACT. This was a paid-for service, and more information could be found on the EXACT web page. This action was closed.

IAG098 – This was covered during the meeting. The action was closed.

IAG100 – The international survey results were being analysed by the Market Intelligence Team. This action remained open.

IAG101 – New members had joined the Group. It was noted that Sioned Evans had left her role at BUILA, and Rachel O'Connell was now the new BUILA representative. This action was closed.

IAG102 – Mark Wilson was liaising with Rachel O'Connell. This action remained in progress.

IAG103 – Digital document uploads had been added to the priority list. This action was closed.

IAG104 – The Analysis and Research Team had fed back that reporting on RPA statistics gave a breakdown by domicile but not individual, country-specific overseas domicile. This action was closed.

IAG107 – This action was covered in detail during the meeting. The action was closed.

A2/17/03   Update on International Admissions Review implementation

A general overview of the International Admissions Review (IAR) was provided. It was noted that 15 recommendations had come out of the IAR. UCAS was currently working on the recommendations by adding details, as some were quite broad. In addition, a RAG (red, amber, green) rating was provided for each recommendation, which had not changed since the last meeting.

Previously, the International Advisory Group had mixed views on whether UCAS should develop a full range of services related to pathway provision. UCAS raised the same questions during the Admissions Conference in April, and again providers' responses were mixed. Many saw the benefits to learners, however they were also aware of the risks this would pose for UCAS, and how a centralised service may disrupt individual providers' arrangements. The Group members were again asked for their opinion, and even with new members on the Group, a consensus could not be reached. It was concluded that, although this was a recommendation from the IAR, it should not be added to the list of priorities.

A2/17/04   UCAS' view on Brexit

A presentation on UCAS' view on Brexit was sent out prior to the meeting.

The Group noted that, although statistics revealed students from Cyprus often applied for a loan, it should not be assumed that all students actually needed the money, with some parents able to afford the fees.

Statistics revealed that higher Tariff providers had not seen a decrease in applications from home students compared to lower Tariff providers. All Tariff groups had seen a decrease in applications from EU applicants. This could be due to the anxiety felt in the EU regarding funding, although funding for the 2018 cycle had now been confirmed.

It was confirmed that UCAS' findings on advisers' and learners' outcomes was not currently in the public domain. Jo Attwooll confirmed that UUK was looking at the 'worst-case' scenarios for 2019, and having early sight of the trends had proved to be very important. In addition, UUK had asked the Government for future reassurances.

Although HEFCE confirmed that tuition fee increases had affected EU students in the past – but the effect was only short-lived – it was reiterated that the past could not indicate future trends, given the continued availability after 2012 fee increases for EU students' tuition fee loans.

The Group asked whether it would be possible to split the low, medium, and high Tariff statistics by country for the next meeting.

MW
IAG110

The Group also considered whether providers had thought out what would happen if they enrolled reduced numbers of EU applicants, at the higher international fee rate. It was noted that a HEPI/Kaplan/London Economics report had modelled this possible outcome, and few providers would see a net increase in income. Regarding postgraduate (PG) recruitment of EU students, the Group considered the sources of PG course funding for EU applicants, and noted that there was relatively low take-up of PG tuition fee loans by EU students. The information which Davina Foord, UUK, had provided the Group during the last meeting was very useful. Finally, it was noted, based on feedback from UCAS registered centres, that international advisers were very anxious to understand what the future costs of fees would be.

A set of FAQs, which UUK had previously published online, was also very useful for addressing the wider Brexit-related concerns for the higher education sector.

A2/17/05 UCAS international engagement 2017/18

A presentation on UCAS' international engagement for 2017 – 2018 was submitted prior to the meeting.

As application numbers were down across the whole of the country, UCAS was cutting back on international visits over the coming years, as part of a UCAS-wide review of costs. UCAS remained committed to international engagement and supporting international customers. UCAS was aware of its customer group in the EU, and that it needed to support the international sector. During the next year, UCAS would look at implementing a 'zero-budget' engagement approach. This would be possible due to a range of approaches – including webinar engagement, collaboration with British Council offices and other networks/intermediaries overseas, and by supporting colleagues who interacted with international offices.

The Group suggested that UCAS could use providers as key international ambassadors to raise UCAS' profile abroad. Mark Wilson, International Market Manager, agreed to discuss this further outside the meeting.

MW
IAG111

In addition, the new Chair of the Office for Students was keen to develop the international sector, and Cliff Hancock, HEFCE, agreed to contact him.

CH IAG112

It was confirmed that, although videos on ucas.com were not translated, UCAS was renewing its browser-led license, which was used to translate websites.

The presentation mentioned that engagement with priority countries would be UCAS' focus. It was confirmed that the following markets would be assessed when deciding priority countries:

1. The four largest sending markets – China, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Malaysia
2. The EU market
3. New markets for UCAS, including Kuwait and Indonesia

The recommendations on how to engage with the above markets would be passed to UCAS' Executive Team for approval. The Group asked UCAS to be mindful not to let a dependency country become an overload.

Mark Wilson was happy to take any further suggestions on how to increase engagement with the sector.

All IAG113

A2/17/06 Digital Acceleration demonstration

The Group was informed that the strategic product managers at UCAS had held workshops on the role of agents. Once they had a clear strategy on the future for agents, they would pass their findings to the product owners at UCAS, who would dive deeper before any development work took place. It was agreed that the findings of the workshop would be circulated to the Group.

MW
IAG114

The Group was informed that the new collection tool for providers had been launched, as well as the multi-destination search tool for applicants. Feedback received to date had been positive. There had been some criticism, however, around the algorithms used when determining the relevance of courses in the search tool. This was being looked into by UCAS. In addition, UCAS was carrying out work with learners to understand their searching methods. The Group was encouraged to look at the search and collection tools, and use the feedback tab if they had any suggestions for improvement.

The new application management service (AMS), which would be available for postgraduate courses in autumn 2017, and undergraduate courses from May 2018, was shown to the Group. Details such as how agents' details would be captured, the supporting information page, and the diversity and inclusion page were shown. It was confirmed that UCAS was lining up data definition with HESA, and in early discussions with NARIC, which would help international students find the right qualifications.

The Group was also informed that the fee assessment section would be enhanced.

The test environment for AMS could be found here - https://hep-digital.ucasenvironments.com/. Details on how to register were sent out with the minutes. The Group was encouraged to have a look at it.

Although feedback from providers was encouraging, UCAS was struggling to receive feedback from learners on Apply. However, UCAS did track the IP addresses from which feedback was received, and international IP addresses (especially from India, and initially the USA) ranked highly.

A2/17/07 Any other business and close

The next meeting would be held on 3 October 2017, at the British Council's offices in London.

The University of Buckingham was holding a Festival of Education on 25 – 26 June. Tino Santonocito informed the Group that he would try and get discounted tickets for IAG members.

Finally, the Group was reminded that, from 1 April 2018, HEFCE would become the Office for Students.

Minutes

QAG/17/M2

Qualifications Advisory Group meeting

held on Tuesday 10 October 2017 at UCAS, Cheltenham

Chair:	Ian Sutherland	University of Edinburgh
Present:	Catrin Verrall	Qualifications Wales (in replacement for Kate Crabtree)
	Clare McNicholl	CCEA
	James Morgan	SQA (replacement for John Lewis)
	Lucy Hemsley	Bournside School and Sixth Form College
	Peter Chetwynd	Kings College London
	Phil Bloor	Sheffield Hallam University
	Sally Dodsley	Association of Colleges (replacement for Liz Wyman)
	Simon Perks	Ofqual
Apologies:	Alison Matthews	University of Oxford
	Andy Walls	JCQ
	James Seymour	University of Buckingham
	John Lewis	SQA
	Kate Crabtree	Qualifications Wales
	Liz Wyman	Association of Colleges
	Michael Kitcatt	Worcester Sixth Form College
	Olivia Kew-Fickus	HESPA (planning)
	Stephen Wright	FAB
	Suzanne O'Farrell	ASCL
UCAS in attendance:	Amy Smith	Senior Policy Executive
	Ben Jordan	Senior Policy Executive
	Caroline Kendal	Business Analyst (observer)
	Deniz Gosai	Provider Engagement Co-Ordinator
	Jochen Pichler	Senior Policy Executive
	Margaret Farragher	Head of Policy and Qualifications

A2/17/01 Welcome and apologies

The Group was welcomed to the meeting, and apologies noted.

A2/17/02 Minutes and action log from previous meeting

Minutes were approved as an accurate reflection of the last meeting.

Open actions were discussed:

QAG021 – Simon Perks agreed to pick this action up with Alison Matthews outside the meeting. The action remained open.

QAG022 – James Morgan, SQA, agreed to pick this action up with Ben Jordan outside the meeting. The action remained open.

A2/17/03 Tariff points nominations for 2018 – QAG/17/002: appendices A and B

Paper QAG/17/002 was circulated to the Group prior to the meeting. 16 qualifications were part of the fast-track process, and automatically went through for Tariff point allocation. The further 16 qualifications were for QAG to consider, as part of the standard process.

The Group agreed to the proposals put forward that high quality QIPs should be a condition to have Tariff points published, and the Qualifications Information Sub Group would input into the quality assurance process for QIPs. In future, the QIPs would be published before July, around the same time as Tariff points.

It was noted that qualifications 12, 13 and 14 listed on page 2 in appendix A, formed part of the graded qualifications in speech and drama, whilst qualifications 15 and 16 on page 1 replaced existing TLM qualifications.

In future, the nominations criteria for standard qualifications may need to be reviewed, e.g. whether they were the mainstream secondary school exit qualification in a country, contained a licence to practise, or contributed to widening participation. The Group asked UCAS to review the standard qualifications presented in light of the above, and the value they would bring by being added to the Tariff. It was noted that Tariff points were used by school governors when setting the curriculum, and it was proposed that UCAS work with ASCL and bodies supporting governing bodies, to further improve communications in this area.

JP QAG023

CF QAG024

Appendix B listed qualifications on the Tariff which were still in existence or legacy, but did not have QIPs. It was agreed that UCAS would review the list, focusing on which qualifications were still available, and provide a 'key points' QIP for the remainder. UCAS should work on a timeline for getting this work done with existing resources.

JP QAG025

It was noted, at the last International Advisory Group (IAG) meeting, one new member provided some feedback concerning the inclusion of international qualifications in the Tariff. It was confirmed that a separate discussion would take place with the IAG member, to explain the Tariff principles and criteria.

JP QAG026

In response to a query from CCEA, it was confirmed that new regulated qualifications did not automatically appear in the UCAS search tool or Apply. However, the process was being improved as part of the Qualification Information Services procedure. In future, regulators would be prompted to provide updated qualification lists to the Policy Team, to help manage Tariff, Apply, and ABL updates. It was also agreed the next regulators meeting should consider how regulated qualifications in other UK countries were shared with UCAS, to support the same annual updates.

JP QAG027

MF QAG028

A2/17/04 Confirmation and Clearing update

Confirmation and Clearing was successful this year. The ABL documentation had been changed to mirror the Tariff document, and was well received. The zero-breach project would be continued. Queries received from providers, due to a message sent out by Pearson about new Applied General qualifications, had been managed successfully, and the science practical results error was addressed through an amendment file. Providers suggested that future communications concerning erroneous files should be clearer, to enable unaffected providers to close the case promptly.

BJ QAG029

The feedback from provider members of the Group was positive, but it was suggested that UCAS should investigate providing more information about missing A level results.

BJ QAG030

A2/17/05 Qualification reform resources – discussion

It was confirmed that UCAS would update the qualification reform resources, including new videos. A revised qualifications guide had been published at the end of October 2017.

It was suggested that UCAS also provided materials explaining different approaches to curriculum planning, in the form of case studies. It was hoped this would encourage two-way understanding between providers and schools, as to why certain qualifications were taken. QIPS could be found here - https://qips.ucas.com/. A UK-wide 2019 qualifications provision survey would be sent out, and UCAS would invite QAG members to help promote it.

A2/17/06 Qualification Information Services update – discussion

A presentation on Qualification Information Services (QIS) was given to the Group. The key points included:

- the impact of adding more qualifications, and whether a question regarding this should be included in the satisfaction survey

- a QIS page, bringing together qualification reform, QIPs, Tariff, and ABL would be created on ucas.com. The Group welcomed the idea of all the information being in one place
- the Group suggested to connect the number of Google analytics page views with calls received from learners, advisers, and HEPs, to find out the views of surveyed, unsatisfied customer groups, and to investigate the breakdown of the types of advisers responding to the survey (e.g. if they were international)

JP QAG031

An update on the Management Data Service (MDS) was given. This would sit below UCAS' products and services, and provide a more comprehensive data set.

It was confirmed the qualifications list in Apply would only include regulated qualifications. The Group was happy with this change. However, UCAS needed to provide guidance on where other provisions should be placed in Apply. It was also noted that enrichment programmes would be taken off the Education Information Profiles (EIPs) web page, and only EIPs concerning replacement programmes for Level 2 and 3/SCQF Level 5 and 6 qualifications maintained. The Group agreed to this change.

UCAS would produce QIPs aimed at learners. The Group thought this was a good idea, but as the QIPS would be for a large audience, UCAS should not assume any prior knowledge.

A2/17/07 Apprenticeship update

On Thursday 12 October 2017, UCAS was hosting a discussion with all UK regulators and government representatives, to discuss how apprenticeships should form part of the Tariff. A paper outlining the three options was sent to the Group after the meeting.

A2/17/08 Any other business and close

ASCL raised a question about what GCSE grades universities were accepting for English language requirements, now students with either a grade 4 in English language or English literature did not need to resit post-16. It was confirmed there was no universal answer. However, providers needed to consider whether students had been given the option to resit, due to funding. Provider Group members confirmed they would not be changing their rules, but would consider each case individually. UCAS would provide some guidelines.

BJ QAG032

In response to a further question, it was confirmed the End of Cycle Report would look at unconditional offers in relation to grade attainment.

The next meeting would be held at UCAS on Tuesday 20 March 2017.

Minutes

SEAG/17/M2

Secondary Education Advisory Group meeting

held on Thursday 8 June 2017 at UCAS, Cheltenham

Chair:	Guy Nobes	Marlborough College
	Nick Spring	Felsted School, Essex
Present:	Alison Woolley	The Sixth Form College Farnborough
	Anthony Fitzgerald	Careers Development Institute
	Beth Linklater	Queen Mary's College, Hampshire
	Charlotte Glanville	Sevenoaks School (in replacement of Wendy Heydorn)
	Hilary Munday	Royal Grammar School, High Wycombe
	Jane Mackay	South Wilts Grammar School for Girls
	Jenny North	Birmingham Metropolitan College
	Justine Hale	Cheltenham Ladies' College
	Phil Davis	St Cyre's School, Penarth
	Robbie Pickles	HELOA
	Sally Armstrong	Bishop Wordsworth's School
	Steve McArdle	Association of School and College Leaders
Guest attendee:	Alison Wilde	Nottingham Trent University
Apologies:	Anna Rogers	Tonbridge School
	Emma Bell	Stratford Girls' Grammar School
	Louise Croft	Exeter College
	Mhairi Moore	School Leaders Scotland
	Mike Stratford	Cheltenham Bournside School and Sixth Form Centre
	Ruth Wootton	Anglo European School
	Wendy Heydorn	Sevenoaks School
UCAS in attendance:	Callie Hawkins	Adviser Experience Manager
	Charlie Smith	Professional Development Officer (observing)
	Deniz Gosai	Groups and Forums Administrator
	Hashmita Patel	Business Customer Service Manager
	Louise Evans	Head of Adviser and Provider Experience
	Magnus Rabarts	Team Lead Product Owner (presenting)
	Mark Corver	Director of Analysis and Research (presenting)
	Peter Derrick	Head of Service Delivery (presenting)
	Yvette Fallows	Business Customer (observer)
	Samantha Sykes	Professional Development Executive

A2/17/01 Welcome and apologies

The Group was welcomed to the meeting. Charlotte Glanville, Sevenoaks School, attended instead of Wendy Heydorn. Robbie Pickles was the new HELOA representative. Alison Wilde, Nottingham Trent University, had joined the meeting as a guest representing the Undergraduate Advisory Group.

A2/17/02 Talk and discussion on the new application management service (AMS)

Peter Derrick, Head of Service Delivery, apologised for not directly contacting those SEAG members who had previously volunteered to feed into the recommendations of the Clearing Working Group. However, those volunteers would be contacted when UCAS was ready to take them forward.

It was noted that development focus had previously been on the new collection tool (for universities and colleges) which fed directly into the new search tool. Now they had both been launched, the new application management service (AMS) was the priority. AMS included the redesign of Apply, Apply for advisers, and how universities and colleges view applications. This was due for release for the 2019 cycle.

Magnus Rabarts, Team Lead Product Owner, led the demonstration of the postgraduate AMS from the learners' perspective and went through the various sections a learner would need to complete. Many of the functions would be replicated for the undergraduate AMS. Although sections were not fully developed, the following functionality was highlighted to the group:

DG
SEAG118

Function	Notes	SEAG comment
My profile	Applicants can build their profile in the 'my profile' tab, which updates throughout their applicant journey.	
Applicants' details	These questions have been revamped, but questions will be familiar to advisers.	
Shortlist feed into Apply	Applicants can pull data from the search tool/shortlist to populate their profile and application (in essence, a single sign in procedure).	Most felt it would be unwieldy to cater for applicants applying to universities individually, and are happy with the current arrangement of a choice of five under one application.

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		One member supported applicants applying to choices one-by-one with multiple personal statements.
Apply and Track combined	Apply and Track will no longer be separate. Applicants will only require one sign in to see the dashboard of their status at any point during the application cycle.	
Withdrawal	An applicant wanting to 'withdraw' an application will be asked to insert a reason, and will also need to manually write 'withdraw' in a text box.	
Qualifications	Learners will be guided to select and enter correct qualifications from a master list.	
ULN	UCAS will capture the ULN number.	There was recognition this is not holistically used.

The development for the adviser dashboard had not yet begun. Engagement with advisers would take place, and the dashboard would be suited to their needs.

Further thought was required in the 'activities in preparation for HE' section of the application form, as, although universities would like this information, schools did not feel it was as relevant and applicants struggled to know what to write here.

Feedback from an SEAG member highlighted the transgender question might need rewording, following feedback he had received from students.

SEAG members were asked to go into the digital test environment and have a play with the postgraduate AMS. Any feedback would be welcomed, to really help UCAS understand the issues learners face in completing their application form. The Group was asked to either email Callie Hawkins at c.hawkins@ucas.ac.uk, or use the feedback button (located in the upper right corner) to feed back directly to the product developers.

Peter Derrick presented the feedback from a widening participation workshop held during March 2017, to consider the questions and sections in the new application management service.

All
SEAG119

The workshop included an in-depth discussion on those questions designed to collect information on diversity and inclusion, previously called 'additional information'. Discussions included why some questions were mandatory and others were not. It was envisaged, with the introduction of the new undergraduate AMS, that clear explanations and help text would be provided to ensure applicants fully understood the reasons for being asked those questions. As previously, responses would not be made available to universities and colleges to inform their decision-making process, but received after an applicant replied to their offers.

The following sections were looked at and discussed:

- Criminal convictions – the new criminal conviction question had been reviewed, and would be tailored for courses that required additional checks. The new question was shown, and it was agreed that it looked a lot better than before, as it gave learners context and explanation of what was needed to avoid legacy issues of ticking the box by mistake. After SEAG feedback, the order of the questions would be revisited.
- References – UCAS was looking into how to carry out electronic referencing for applicants who were not linked to a centre. The character size of the reference would not be changed for the initial launch. The Group requested that information on the school should not be in the reference, but instead a separate section should be provided for the school's profile and its qualifications.
- Personal statement – there would be no changes to the personal statement in terms of having one statement for all choices. However, the user experience would be improved:
    o An interactive character count would be available on the statement page. It would count down as the user typed.
    o The textbox would allow a user to go over the character count of 4000 characters. This was to allow users to edit within the statement box, instead of any text that took them over the character limit being chopped off.
    o If the user entered more than 4000 characters, the interactive character count would show minus numbers and turn red.
    o Users could enter and save up to -2000 characters (total of 6000) during draft stage. This would mean learners could edit within the system save, and return to it.
    o Applicants could not complete the statement until they met the character limit of 4000.
    o The line limit would be removed, now showing a character limit.
    o A spellchecker would be added.

SEAG members fed back they would like universities and colleges to publicly acknowledge the value of personal statements. In the past, students had been informed by university representatives that statements would not be read, contradicting advice from teachers and advisers. This had made it extremely difficult for advisers to motivate their students to focus on their personal statement. The university representative on the Group confirmed that at her university, although personal statements were always read, they might not be used during the selection process. SEAG members were asked to inform university admissions teams immediately if they heard this advice being given to their students at events and presentations.

A2/17/03 Policy update

Ben Jordan, Senior Policy Executive, presented the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) to the Group. A copy was sent with the minutes. TEF was voluntary for higher education providers to participate in, and currently one third of providers on the UCAS search tool found themselves outside the TEF assessment. At the time of the meeting, the TEF results were due to be available to providers under embargo on 12 June 2017, and then published on 14 June 2017. Following the General Election, the publication date of the ratings had been postponed. The TEF rating should come into force for the 2018 cycle. It was noted that advisers and learners should fully understand what the TEF rating was about, to ensure an informed decision was made.

UCAS had carried out learner research, and the feedback received showed learners usually considered location and the availability of accommodation as key factors in their decision. User research showed neither learners nor providers wanted to see a filter by TEF in the search tool. It was agreed that a filter on TEF would not be available for 2018, however this might be revisited if feedback requested it. Providers' TEF ratings would be shown in the search tool, on the provider information section in the bottom right-hand corner of each course page, and links would be provided for further information. Non-participating providers would not have any information regarding TEF on their page.

It was confirmed that UCAS was still waiting for 2018 fee status information, however until 2020, the TEF would be a blanket award; after this, the sector could see differentiated fees by course. It was noted that some universities were predicting their results and playing down the value of the TEF. Finally, it was confirmed the award lasted for three years, however providers could resubmit each year if they chose.

A [communication regarding the TEF](#), which linked to FAQs, was sent to advisers on 22 June.

A2/17/04 Offer rate calculator and the data set

Mark Corver, Head of Analysis and Research presented to the Group the offer rate calculator (ORC). A copy of the presentation was sent with the minutes.

Offer rates were at an all-time high from providers. However, high Tariff providers were not giving as many offers to 18 year olds, as they were not going for growth. In addition, mature students had seen an increase in offers, especially for nursing.

Findings had revealed learners who received offers with conditions did better than those who didn't receive an offer at all. Furthermore, if an applicant received an offer from an aspirational provider, they often made this offer a firm choice, and would in turn perform better in their exams.

A2/17/05 Minutes and action log from previous meeting

The minutes were approved as a correct and accurate reflection of the last meeting.

The open actions from the log were discussed:

SEAG001 – It was confirmed that Louise Evans, Head of Adviser and Provider Experience, had visited most of the schools on the Group. Louise would be happy to revisit a school if they asked. In addition, it was noted that some schools found it useful when Callie Hawkins, Adviser Experience Manager, visited an area and hosted a network meeting.

SEAG100 – Discussions were still taking place regarding running an apprenticeship conference. Some HEPs had also shown an interest in attending the conference. This action remained open.

SEAG112 – A request asking for expressions of interest from Welsh FE colleges had been included in the latest schools newsletter. To date, no expressions of interest had been received. This action remained open. Louise Evans agreed to ask the relationship manager for Wales and the South West for potential contacts. This action remained open.

SEAG113 – Work was still being carried out to see whether it was possible to produce a report showing which universities offered and accepted applicants who achieved below their course entry requirements. This action remained open.

SEAG116 – No update was available as Mike Smith, Conferences and Events Manager, was currently off work. This action remained open.

All the other actions were closed prior to the meeting.

A2/17/06 Experience update, including an update on current operations statistics

Callie Hawkins, Adviser Experience Manager, gave an adviser experience update. A paper was handed out, outlining the context of the 24 March deadline statistics. A copy of the paper and presentation were also sent with the minutes.

<div align="right">DG
SEAG122</div>

The Group was asked to inform Callie Hawkins if they would be happy to host a visit with Clare Marchant, the new CEO. UCAS thanked the Group members who had already been in touch.

<div align="right">All
SEAG123</div>

The Group was informed that the new search tool for 2018 entry had been launched, and reminded to submit feedback on the search tool. Initial feedback included the following:

- Could a filter for colleges and universities be included?
- Could a map be included to filter by region?
- Could a PDF search result be created, which advisers could use to email their students?
- Could the entry requirements for GCSEs be clearly highlighted in the course description?
- Could links on the search tool open in a new window?
- The tabs used on the old search tool were preferred.

There was a discussion about the way universities explained their entry requirements in the search tool, and a complaint that some universities included these as long paragraphs. Alison Wilde, Nottingham Trent University, explained this was due to the way the university had entered the information in the collection tool, and stated that her university had gone to great lengths to state the entry requirements in a clear and easily identifiable way. It was agreed this would be fed back to the product owners.

<div align="right">CH
SEAG124</div>

The key adviser dates for Clearing were available online. The latest Applicant Status Report for results days would be available from 29 July. SEAG members were advised to download this report before results days.

Group members were asked whether they would like to receive an email on results day confirming the status of all their learners, or just those who had not secured a place. It was confirmed that schools were more interested in learners who had not received a place initially. The members stated they would prefer the list to also include the learners' email addresses, so they could contact them more easily. However, due to

<div align="right">CH
SEAG125</div>

data protection regulation, it was unlikely UCAS would offer this personal data in an email, but they would take this request on board for the new AMS.

Finally, it was confirmed that Adviser Track would be advertised as opening at 07:00 on 17 August, A level results day. Previously, this time was 07:30.

A2/17/07 Update from an Undergraduate Advisory Group member

Alison Wilde, Nottingham Trent University, had been invited to attend the meeting as a representative from the undergraduate sector. Alison sat on the Undergraduate Advisory Group (UAG), and provided an update to the Group on what UAG had discussed during their meeting on 7 June 2017. It was explained the UAG members sat on the Group for up to four years, and the Group had a strong representation from across the sector. The following items had been discussed during the meeting:

- Recommendations from the Variable Start Dates sub group had been brought to UAG, where they agreed the idea in principle. Details of the suggestions would be taken forward, and consultation with the wider sector would take place.
- Updates and discussions on Confirmation and Clearing.
- Updates on the zero breach embargo project. HEPs' senior managers had completed an online training module prior to signing the embargo agreement.
- A demonstration of the new collection and search tools was provided.
- An update on TEF and the digital contact service was given.
- Update on the offer rate calculator – some providers had concerns about the tool.
- A workshop on fraud and verification was held, where risks were considered, alongside what could be done to improve the service.
- A discussion on the future of business rules, and the consequences of breaking the rules and guidelines.

The Group had a lengthy discussion on the use of unconditional offers. It was noted that many HEPs had to give unconditional offers to remain competitive, however there was the view that they could be phased out over the next few years.

A2/17/08 Regional/national strategic update

A discussion was held on the increase in year zero courses, and whether this was becoming the alternative to unconditional offers, as it was allowing applicants an extra year to reach the right level. It was noted that some colleges would not allow their learners to progress unless they had received a GCSE grade C or above in maths and English, whereas schools typically allowed the learner to retake these qualifications parallel to progressing onto the next level.

A2/17/09 Any other business and close

Regional training

The Group was informed that UCAS was looking at reviewing the training delivered by the Professional Development Team. Samantha Sykes, Professional Development Executive, joined the meeting to ask the Group whether there were any regional specifics which might influence training needs. The Group was asked to contact Sam at s.sykes@ucas.ac.uk if they would be happy to have a phone call about this. In addition, Sam would be interested in liaising with collaborative network groups which SEAG members might be part of.

All
SEAG126

Date of the next meeting

The next meeting was originally scheduled for Tuesday 7 November, however this now clashed with the Annual UCAS Update meeting. A new date would be set, and a calendar invitation would be sent out shortly.

DG
SEAG127

Group membership and terms of reference

It was noted that the current terms of reference for the Group stated 'the term served by group members would be reviewed on an ongoing basis and would be renewable for up to five years'. As a member was leaving the Group, she asked whether her successor could replace her on the Group. It was agreed, on this occasion, UCAS would accept this, however moving forward, expressions of interest would be sought for to encourage new schools to join the Group.

Checking the entered qualifications

The Group discussed the new 'welcome to 2018 entry' email to those centres who had set up for 2018 entry. This letter contained three key messages for UCAS registered centres:

- the centre's responsibilities
- how to keep updated on UCAS news
- UCAS training on offer

A member highlighted the section under 'a centre's responsibilities' and questioned whether it was indeed responsible for checking the qualifications entered in Apply from their applicants. There was also a question as to what happened when the 'qualifications checked' box in Apply for advisers was not ticked.

Feedback from some members of the Group confirmed they absolutely checked the qualifications rigidly, and some members confirmed they did not have the resource to undertake such a task.

Callie Hawkins confirmed, if the box was not ticked as qualifications checked, universities and colleges would see 'No', and if the box had been ticked, where qualifications had been checked, it would clearly state 'Yes'. However, it was noted that universities made the assumption learners' qualifications were all checked if they came through a registered centre. The wording for this question would be reviewed when developing the new application management service.

Callie Hawkins highlighted that qualifications entered on Apply were by far the most common error UCAS encountered from applicants. To put this into context, UCAS' Awarding Body Linkage (ABL) Team manually matched up to 50,000 qualifications a year, and a further 4,000 learners updated their qualifications after submission (as a direct result of a campaign to learners and advisers). [Note – a further 8,486 emails were sent to learners in June asking them to confirm their GCE A level qualifications to enable matching.]

If an applicant's entered qualifications were not consistent with those taken, it could lead to that applicant being unplaced, due to them not being matched with their results. This could potentially delay Confirmation of their place on results day.

Callie Hawkins reiterated that the qualification tick box was not mandatory and therefore advisers' own practice should still continue for 2018 entry. It was noted that some SEAG members would not like checking qualifications to become a mandatory requirement.

In light of the discovery that both sectors had assumed the other sector was checking qualifications as a mandatory measure, it was agreed that improved guidance needed to be communicated to all parties.

CH
SEAG128

Groups and forums

Minutes

TG/17/M2

Technology Group meeting

held on Tuesday 20 June 2017 at UCAS, Cheltenham.

Chair:	Peter Service	Newcastle University
Present:	Ashley Sargeant	University of Greenwich
	Beata Ferris	University of Southampton
	Fiona Sanders	University of Leicester
	Garry Main	University of the Highlands and Islands (by VC)
	Emily Kreetzer	University of East Anglia
	Laurence Dupont	Aberystwyth University
	Lisa Machin	Nottingham Trent University
	Liz Shillito	Lancaster University
	Peter Fox	The University of Manchester (by VC)
	Suzanne Grosvenor	Newcastle University
Apologies:	Ben Furlong	University College Birmingham
	Helen Savigar	University of Portsmouth
	Mike McConnell	University of Aberdeen
	Richard Wilcox	Coventry University
	Rob Stanton	University of Sheffield
	Sarah Swindell	Sheffield Hallam University
	Simon Pownall	University of Hull
UCAS in attendance:	Adam Glaudot	Technology Relationship Manager
	Barbara Kilmister	Head of Admissions Delivery (presenting)
	Clare Cozens	Technology Relationship Manager
	Deniz Gosai	Groups and Forums Administrator
	Giles Ursell	Strategic Product Manager (presenting)
	Mike Spink	Enterprise Data and Applications Architect (presenting)
	Sam Wathen	Product Owner (presenting)
	Tom Gromski	Technology Relationship Manager

A2/17/01 Welcome and apologies

The Group was welcomed to the meeting, and the apologies were noted. Each member introduced themselves.

A2/17/02 Minutes and action log from previous meeting

The Group was reminded that, to ensure the meetings were not too UCAS-heavy, there was an open invitation for each member to lead on a discussion item.

It was confirmed that updates on the embargo project, changes to the results, odbc-link security programme, and HESA would be provided during the meeting. It was asked whether the timestamp of results against an applicant during Clearing could be changed. Barbara Kilmister, Head of Admissions Delivery, agreed to take this up with Peter Service, Newcastle University, outside the meeting.

<div align="right">BK/PS
TG111</div>

The Group asked for an update on the Admissions Conference. All presentations and workshop notes were available on our website. If members of the Group had specific questions, they were asked to email d.gosai@ucas.ac.uk, who would pass them on.

The open actions of the log were discussed:

TG098 – Helen White, University of East Anglia, had changed job roles. Emily Kreetzer agreed to contact Helen White regarding the action. This action remained open.

TG099 – It was not possible to stop reminders being sent out for surveys. A new customer relationship management (CRM) system had been implemented at UCAS, which incorporated Marketing Cloud. This could be used to explore whether reminders could be stopped. This action remained open.

TG101 – UCAS would not publish the list of the nominated embargo contacts, however if providers wanted to know their individual nominated contact, they were asked to email b.kilmister@ucas.ac.uk. This action was closed.

TG102 – UCAS was working with HESA on the new ABL qualifications. There were still some concerns among the Group about the data from HESA and UCAS. It was noted that, as part of Digital Acceleration, HESA and UCAS would both be working from the Ofqual lists.

TG103 – It was confirmed that BTEC results would be sent first. If an applicant also had an A level result, their BTEC result/s would be re-sent. However, if they did not have any additional qualifications, they would not. This action was closed.

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TG108 – This action was covered during the meeting.

TG110 – Most larger providers had sent their senior IT contacts. This action was closed.

All other actions were closed.

A2/17/03 **UCAS service development update**

The Group was informed that the new search and collection tools and application management service (AMS) would cater for all schemes, but could be adapted for specific schemes. Providers were encouraged to have a look at the test systems, which also included APIs. Currently, API access was only available to software providers and in-house developers. If other providers wanted access, they were asked to email their technology relationship manager.

AMS was being developed initially for postgraduate, but undergraduate functionality would be developed shortly. A presentation on how the systems would work was given. DG TG112 Configuration by provider would be done by course level, and bulk updates would also be added. The questions providers asked in the course and provider questions would be analysed to see if similar questions were being asked. UCAS would work closely with SPA on best practice.

UCAS held monthly webinars with software providers. These were recorded and the Group was encouraged to listen to them.

A presentation and update on the service developments was given. The search tool was shown, and the displaying of results was explained. UCAS was looking into whether results could be passed on to providers. In addition, the expression of interest boxes were still on UCAS' backlog, however further consultation was required.

For providers who opted out of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), or were not eligible to take part, there would be no TEF rating, or mention of TEF, on their page. Consultation with learners had taken place, and they had confirmed they would not be looking for this information. The TEF ratings would go live on Thursday 22 June 2017, and would be updated in August for any appeals.

UCAS' current pieces of work were noted, including qualification and entry requirement filters, open days and subject guides, and data set information. The Group was happy with the update, and was asked to send any questions to g.ursell@ucas.ac.uk.

An update on APIs was given. The test version of the postgraduate AMS had been available since the end of 2016 in HEP3. All software providers and in-house developers had access to this. Monthly technical development webinars were held, which covered questions raised in previous webinars, as well as the latest developments and upcoming 'sprints'. It was confirmed that webinars were open, and everyone was welcomed to submit questions. UCAS would like to increase the feedback received on APIs. An API working group was being established, which would be a monthly forum sharing best practice. It would also be used as an opportunity to see what providers would like to achieve from the service. The launch of the working group was dependent on the software providers accessing APIs and coming to UCAS with questions. The members of the Group were encouraged to ask their software providers to start engaging with UCAS.

UCAS was currently working on the versioning strategy. It was noted that, if major changes were made, a new API would be created, however the old version would still be available to pull data from for up to 12 months.

A presentation on the test environments was given. It was noted that the HEP3 test environment was available on a separate section of ucas.com. When UCAS cleaned data, a message would be sent out to ensure everyone knew which data would be wiped. It was confirmed that there would always be data in the fields which providers would expect to see data in, although it might not be identical information.

A2/17/04 Confirmation and Clearing readiness including zero breach embargo project update

A presentation and update on Confirmation and Clearing 2017 was given. It was confirmed that the 200 extra exam types had been added to ABL, and no additional ones would be added this year. The CIE and main boards would be released at the same time on the same day, however if there was a problem with one, it would not hold the other results up. The Group had mixed processes as to whether members acknowledged two individual embargo periods or just one long one.

The mandatory embargo training would now be rolled out to all colleagues within providers. As many breaches were IT-related, IT contacts were encouraged to complete the training.

An IT Confirmation and Clearing readiness presentation was given. It was noted that Oracle would not be on-site, but UCAS had a direct line to Oracle if required. UCAS was still looking into when providers would need to update the SMS messages.

It was noted that contacting Infosys during their 24-hour period over Confirmation and Clearing should be done through the self-service portal.

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A2/17/05 Update on UCAS' relationship with HESA

A presentation on the Higher Education Classification of Subjects (HECoS) was given.

It was confirmed that JACS would be replaced by HECoS from the 2019 admissions cycle. Work which the Higher Education Data & Information Improvement Programme (HEDIIP) was working on had been passed on to HESA. The Data Landscape Steering Group was looking at HECoS codes in deeper detail, and the Group was encouraged to look at the HESA website for further information.

It was confirmed that, from the 2018 cycle onwards, UCAS would no longer generate course codes, and it was now up to providers to create these. Providers could continue using the old course codes if they so wished.

From the 2019 cycle, HESA was planning to collect data from providers on an in-cycle basis throughout the year. This was called the HESA Data Futures initiative. UCAS was not very heavily involved in this. However, it was confirmed that UCAS was looking into using the best reference data moving forward, to ensure consistency.

A2/17/06 Tour of Digital Acceleration

The Group went on a tour to meet the Digital Acceleration Team at UCAS.

A2/17/07 Provider-led topic – The challenges and benefits of agile development

Lisa Machin gave a presentation on how Nottingham Trent University incorporated agile working. A round-table discussion took place, including the advantages and disadvantages of this way of working.

A2/17/08 Any other business and close

It was asked whether UCAS had any changes planned for next year's Clearing. It was confirmed that the only changes taking place would be the mandatory changes. UCAS Undergraduate APIs would go live during the 2019 cycle.

It was asked that an update on the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) was added to the next agenda. Some presentation slides on this subject were circulated to the Group with the minutes.   DG TG113

If the Group had any questions on UKPASS, members were asked to send them to Tom Gromski (t.gromski@ucas.ac.uk) or Deniz Gosai (d.gosai@ucas.ac.uk), who would pass them on to the Postgraduate Advisory Group.

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There were a couple of vacancies on the Group, and a communication asking for expressions of interest would go out in the weekly bulletin shortly.

The Group was informed that UCAS would like to expand its network within the sector on IT security. If members knew of anyone who would be interested in joining this network, they were asked to email Tom Gromski (t.gromski@ucas.ac.uk).

The next meeting would take place on Thursday 12 October at the University of the Highlands and Islands.

Minutes

UTTAG/17/M2

UCAS Teacher Training Advisory Group meeting

held on Wednesday 5 July 2017, at UCAS, Cheltenham

Chair:	Lisa Bowen	Cardiff Metropolitan University
Present:	Abby Evans	AGCAS (in replacement for Christine Smith)
	Chris Whitehead	All Saints' Primary School Teacher Training Partnership
	Freya Cioffi	School Direct for Lambeth Teaching School Alliance
	James Noble-Rogers	UCET
	Julie Lambourne	University of Exeter
	Phil Bloor	Sheffield Hallam University
	Tim Connole	Gloucestershire Initial Teacher Education Partnership & St Peter's High School
Apologies:	Christine Smith	AGCAS
	John Howson	Independent member
	Kate Sida-Nicholls	Suffolk and Norfolk SCITT Centre, University Campus Suffolk
	Karen Hudson	Northumbria University
	Martin Thompson	NASBTT
	Peter Talbot	Edge Hill University
	Simon Smith	Nottingham Trent University
	Suzanne Lawson	University of Worcester
	Vanessa Combeer	University of Reading
UCAS in attendance:	Adam Glaudot	Technology Relationship Manager
	Deniz Gosai	Groups and Forums Administrator
	Fiona Watts	UCAS Teacher Training Manager
	Harry Haines	Scheme Delivery Owner

A2/17/01 Welcome and apologies

The Group was welcomed to the meeting, and the apologies were noted. Each member introduced themselves.

A2/17/02 Minutes and action log from previous meeting

The minutes were approved as a correct and accurate reflection of the last meeting.

The actions from the log were discussed:

UTT097 – It was confirmed that UCAS had investigated all possible options for extending the delivery of the HESA data file to schools as well as universities. Unfortunately, UCAS was not able to find an appropriate solution that would enable them to provide the data securely and in a format that would be useful for all training providers. Requirements for this data have been shared with UCAS' Strategic Product Management Team, and this would be looked at as part of the future delivery of new products and services for UCAS Teacher Training.

UTT105 – SPA and UCAS' Policy Team were looking at rewording the disability question in Apply for the UCAS Undergraduate scheme. This would also be developed for the UCAS Teacher Training scheme, and a further update would be provided when available. This action was closed.

UTT106 – The Analysis and Research Team confirmed they could not develop the direct contact service (DCS) for the UCAS Teacher Training scheme for the current cycle. However, they would look into adapting DCS for future cycles. This action was closed, but an update would be provided when available.

UTT107 – Research had not yet been carried out with applicants regarding their understanding of how long courses were open for, however, the Learner Experience Team would be carrying out user testing. This action was closed, and an update would be provided when available.

UTT110 – A new end of cycle table had been released, and the Group agreed it was much clearer. Fiona Watts, UCAS Teacher Training Manager, asked for feedback from school representatives on this.

UTT111 – This was covered during the meeting as part of the best practice guidance workshop.

UTT113 – The UCAS Teacher Training key information guide was sent out with the July 2017 agenda.

All other actions were closed.

A2/17/03 Best practice guidance workshop

A UCAS Teacher Training key information sheet was sent to the Group prior to the meeting. Fiona Watts, UCAS Teacher Training Manager, talked the Group through the current guidelines.

The Group was reminded that applicants were not asked to place their choices in preference order. It was requested whether the numbering could be changed to letters (e.g. A, B, C instead of 1, 2, 3). It was confirmed that technical change to current legacy systems was not possible, but this feedback had been provided to our strategic product managers. A further suggestion was made that applicants input their choices alphabetically by provider name. It was noted that this would be reliant on the applicant being aware of this, and would not be consistent.

There was a discussion around GCSE requirements set by training providers, as a number of calls had been received from applicants who were unable to apply due to not meeting the set GCSE requirement, although training providers had informed them their application would still be considered. This often caused confusion, so advice was being provided by UCAS to ask training providers to consider these requirements carefully at the beginning of the cycle.

With regards to making decisions, it was reiterated that a condition could not be based on a successful interview. Likewise, a school placement should not be a condition of a place. These were both outside the applicant's control.

The current key information only covered specific UCAS scheme rules, and it was acknowledged that there were many areas of admissions practice not covered by the scheme rules where training providers may not know the best approach. A workshop was held during the meeting to try to create a document outlining what applicants should expect from the application process, and what processes training providers should be following. Four key areas were discussed:

- Communications between training providers and applicants   FW UTT116
- The application process
- Post-offer
- Offer-making strategies

A verbal summary of what was discussed was provided. Fiona Watts agreed to type up the feedback and send it to the Group for comments.

A2/17/04 Scheme open dates update and discussion

There had been some discussions on when the UCAS Teacher Training scheme should begin. One suggestion was to move the date from a Tuesday to a Thursday, and to be opened during half term. This would be to ensure applications would start to come through when schools returned back from the holidays. It was agreed that Thursday 26 October 2017 was a good date to open the scheme.

It was confirmed that UCAS was currently considering an earlier open date for the UCAS Teacher Training search tool, and this would potentially open on Thursday 5 October. Applicants would not be able to start completing their applications during the period of search opening, however, this might still be considered for future cycles.

It was clarified that all dates were subject to change, and should not be considered final at this point.

The Group was reminded that UCAS profiles should be completed by 21 July. UCAS would begin to send out the onboarding emails on Thursday 6 July 2017. Training videos produced in previous years would also be available in one place on ucas.com, which will help providers with onboarding.

The Group was happy with all the above suggestions. All dates would be confirmed during September, after consultation with NCTL.

A2/17/05 Update and discussion on the UCAS Teacher Training Annual Update meeting

Over the years, the UCAS Teacher Training Annual Update meetings had seen a decline in attendees. A suggestion was put to the Group about holding this year's meetings as a one day event, immediately after the UCAS Undergraduate Annual Update meeting. The date of this was still to be confirmed, but was likely to be during the second week of November, and held in Bristol. The Group agreed that this was a good idea.

A2/17/06 Any other business and close

6.1 New website

The new teaching pages on ucas.com were shown to the Group. The landing page could be viewed at www.ucas.com/teaching-in-the-uk. The Group was asked for feedback on the pages.

All UTT117

UCAS' Communications Team was also looking at creating a tool which would ask applicants questions, then highlight the different routes that might be suitable for them. This would be different from the quiz which had been developed a few years ago, and would not restrict what information would be provided to them.

Finally, it was noted that UCAS was increasing its blogs from experts on its website. The Group was asked to send any blogs they thought applicants would like to read to groupsandforums@ucas.ac.uk.

All UTT118

6.2 Questions raised by Kate Sida-Nicholls, Suffolk and Norfolk SCITT Centre

Kate Sida-Nicholls, Suffolk and Norfolk SCITT Centre, could not attend the meeting, but had sent the following questions beforehand:

Would some kind of 'safeguarding' question be included in the references on the UCAS application form for 2017/18 applications? It was confirmed that there would be

no system changes to references for the following cycle. However, all feedback received on what should and should not be included has been fed back to UCAS, and would be taken into consideration when developing new products and services.

Could some explanation be provided for the increase in the UCAS fees for ITE providers, as it is above inflation? The frequently asked questions on the capitation fees would be sent out with the minutes.

DG UTT119

6.3   Date for the next meeting

The next meeting would be held at UCAS on Thursday 14 December 2017.

Minutes

UAG/17/M2

Undergraduate Advisory Group meeting

held on Wednesday 7 June 2017 at UCAS, Cheltenham

Chair:	Lynsey Hopkins	University of Sheffield
Present:	Alison Wilde	Nottingham Trent University
	Bob Savill	University of Chichester
	Claire Galliford	University of Exeter
	Claire Hamnett	BPP
	Graeme Slater	UCFB
	Ioan Evans	University of South Wales
	Jennifer Geary	Goldsmiths University
	John Wright	University of Law
	Kerry Fey	University of the West of England
	Kim Eccleston	University of Warwick
	Kirsty Knox	University of the West of Scotland
	Louise Foster-Agg	Aston University
	Paul Featonby	Hartpury College
	Richard Emborg	Durham University
	Sheila Dowling	University of Hull
	Susie King	Middlesex University
	Victoria Azubuine	University of Bedfordshire
Apologies:	Andrew Homer	Kingston University
	Ian Sutherland	University of Edinburgh
	Sarah Simms	University for the Creative Arts
UCAS in attendance:	Alexa Jones	Education Provider Experience Manager (observing)
	Andy Frampton	Relationship and National Engagement Manager
	Barbara Kilmister	Head of Admissions Delivery
	Ben Jordan	Senior Policy Executive (presenting)
	Deniz Gosai	Groups and Forums Administrator
	Kate Davidson	Senior Relationship Manager
	Hannah D'Ambrosio	Lead Data Scientist (presenting)
	Louise Evans	Head of Adviser and Provider Experience
	Peter Derrick	Head of Service Delivery
SPA in attendance:	Amy Smith	Admissions Support Manager

A2/17/01 Welcome and apologies

The Group was welcomed to the meeting. Each member introduced themselves and the apologies were noted.

A2/17/02 Minutes and action log from previous meeting

The minutes were approved as a correct and accurate reflection of the last meeting.

The open actions from the log were discussed:

UAG135 – The process of an applicant releasing themselves into Clearing would not be changed for this cycle. This action remained open.

UAG136 – App Tracker would be opened during Confirmation and Clearing, however, the last update would be at the end of July, as no further updates would be available after this date. A written response would be sent to the sector shortly. This action was closed.

UAG140 – Suggestions for a change in the name for Clearing was welcomed, however, it was agreed to close this action.

UAG144 – No feedback from providers on the reports sent by Greg Moody had been received. It was raised that not all providers had received the reports, and therefore they would be sent out again. This action was closed.

UAG146 – The list of third party data was still to be sent out to the Group, as well as ARC APG. It was also agreed that the ballpark figure of the revenue generated from third parties would also be sent out. This action remained opened.

All the other actions were closed prior to the meeting.

A2/17/03 Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

Ben Jordan, Senior Policy Executive, updated the Group on UCAS's engagement and use of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). A paper was sent out prior to the meeting, detailing UCAS' engagement plan and the development of the information and advice for learners and advisers.

UCAS held workshops with learners on the ability to filter by TEF rating, and following their feedback, would not be implementing a filter in the search tool for 2018. The Group welcomed, and supported, UCAS' decision not to use the TEF raring as a search criterion on the new Search tool. UCAS retained the right to revisit this for subsequent cycles based on feedback, and any potential impact from the proposed subject-level TEF proposed for 2019.

For providers who had opted not to participate in TEF 2018, there would be no reference to TEF on their profile page in the 2018 search tool. The information and advice would explain why some providers did not have a TEF rating.

Ben Jordan clarified that DFE had worked with both home and international learners to understand the impact and likely interpretation of TEF.

The Group asked UCAS to continue considering the value of providing no TEF details for a non-participating provider, versus the potential negative perception of having a bronze rating, and whether UCAS offered too much protection for them.

A1/17/04 Search and collection tools

The Group was joined by the strategic product managers and product owners for the search tool and collection tool.

The collection tool and multi-destination search tool had now been launched for 2018. The Group discussed their experiences with the tools so far. Initial feedback included the following:

Positives:
  ➢ The collection tool was generally more intuitive than Course Collect.
  ➢ Overall, the ability to bulk update information was a useful addition.
  ➢ The webinars were a useful way of engaging with developments.
  ➢ Colleagues in the Data Collection Team had been very helpful.

Concerns/developments:
  ➢ The agile development process had meant that some features were unavailable in February when the tool was launched.
  ➢ The specific focus of the webinars meant that it could be difficult to feed back on some areas that were not relevant to that particular webinar.
  ➢ The Group identified there were several items of the product roadmap that UCAS had not committed to delivering, or agreed a timescale to do so.
  ➢ Some members had raised concerns with the search relevancy. The Group felt that learners might not understand how the relevancy worked.
  ➢ Not enough manuals or guides were produced for launch, although the recent video guides had been useful.
  ➢ Learners would benefit from a notification when the details of a shortlisted course had changed.

The product owners confirmed that the ability to download course information and additional reports would be available soon.

A1/17/05 Operational update, including Confirmation and Clearing preparation, and the embargo project

Barbara Kilmister, Head of Scheme Delivery, provided an operational update. A paper had been submitted to the Group prior to the meeting. The Group queried whether the

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number of reject by defaults had been influenced by its delay. However, it was confirmed that numbers were similar to previous cycles.

Confirmation and Clearing planning – including ABL testing – was continuing as planned. The Group queried whether there were any concerns at UCAS following recent downtime to web-link and Track. It was confirmed there were no outstanding issues with these products, and that recent outages had been caused by issues with third party suppliers and were now resolved.

The Group questioned the training process for outsourced Customer Experience Centre staff at SERCO, following concerns about their activities last year. Again, it was confirmed that additional training and support was in place.

Members expressed concern at the inclusion of reference to financial penalties in the embargo agreement. The Group agreed that the agreement needed to indicate the level of importance of the agreement, but that it was not legally enforceable in its current format.

A1/17/06 Variable start dates

Andy Frampton presented an update on the work of the Variable Start Dates Group, which was supported by a paper submitted prior to the meeting. The Group was asked to endorse the outline proposals contained in the draft document.

Members queried the positioning of the final reject by default and decline by default, and whether this supported fair admissions.

Members queried the provision of information and advice to learners, especially around January to April start dates that could operate in two different cycles.

It was agreed to endorse the principles of the document, on the understanding this would be discussed in further detail at the upcoming regional forums, and presented back to the Group as a full document for final sign off before the next meeting.

A1/17/07 Analysis and Research update

7.1   Direct contact service

Fiona Johnston, Head of Analysis and Research, provided an update on the direct contact service (DCS). She clarified that the pre-selection process would be optional. It was confirmed that the distribution model of details being supplied to an initial five providers, would be followed by four additional if still unplaced. The Group asked whether the long-term future of DCS had been reviewed, with possible integration with AMS. It was noted that this would be discussed in due course.

The Group requested clarification on what information would be acceptable for exclusions.

FJ UAG156

7.2   Offer rate calculator

The Group was advised that the current metric of success for the offer rate calculator (ORC) was based on web usage, rather than changes to aspirational choice making from learners, due to a lack of engagement so far not providing a robust set of data to run this analysis. The Group requested data on usage of the tool so far.

HD'A
UAG157

It was confirmed there were no plans to remove the tool, and that UCAS was investigating further developments to the tool. This included changes to the subject clusters, as well as additional qualifications, and reviewing the placement of the tool.

The Group maintained its dissatisfaction with the tool, and the way the data was represented. UCAS was asked to consider further guidance to be included for interviewing/auditioning subjects, with potential reference to rejection rate rather than offer rate.

HD'A
UAG158

The Group reiterated that the tool was providing misleading information, and that UCAS was not listening to the sector concerns. In addition, some providers had told advisers not to use the tool due to the way it was displaying data.

A1/17/08 Fraud and verification workshop

The Group undertook a workshop session on the future of UCAS' Fraud and Verification service. The following feedback was given:

- ➢ The Group recognised the value of a shared service for the sector and appreciated the work that was currently undertaken.
- ➢ Different providers had different appetites for risk, which must be sorted by UCAS processes.
- ➢ A move away from, or reduction in fraud and verification services, would give a negative message to learners.
- ➢ The current service was struggling to respond to queries, and was too slow in notifying providers who may have already made offers.
- ➢ UCAS could do more to facilitate sharing of knowledge across the sector, including delivering training (some positive comments about training that NARIC had offered).
- ➢ Concerns were raised about GDPR and subsequent availability of training materials.
- ➢ The Group would welcome its extension into the postgraduate market, and some felt there was more that could be done to support fee assessments.

A1/17/09 Feedback on widening participation workshop and application management service (AMS)

Peter Derrick, Head of Service Delivery, provided an update on the developments to the application management service (AMS) following recent workshops with widening participation representatives and practitioners.

The latest developments to work on questions around carers, additional support needs, and criminal convictions were showcased. It was queried whether ethnicity data should be released to providers earlier to aid them with decision-making. UCAS agreed to review this with interested members. In addition, it was noted that some of the coding used for colleges was different to those used for universities.

PD/AJ
UAG159

Finally, it was confirmed that for the launch of the search tool, the personal statement process would remain in its current form (i.e. one single personal statement).

A1/17/10 Future of business rules

The Group was informed that there was appetite in the business to start looking at business rules, to help UCAS develop the new undergraduate AMS. ARC APG had started to undertake some work in this area, but UCAS continued to receive large numbers of queries about business rules, and how/if they were enforced. The Group felt it would be useful for UCAS to become more involved in this work, in collaboration with ARC APG.

LE/PD
UAG160

A1/17/11 Any other business

It was noted that some providers were experiencing concerns with some of their waiting list process, however, following the earlier conversation on business rules, felt this work would cover it.

A brief update on the feedback received from the Admissions Conference was provided, and it was noted that the Events Team would be working with the Undergraduate Advisory Group (UAG) to help shape the theme and agenda of the Conference at subsequent meetings.

The timings between the UAG meetings and regional forums would be re-aligned to develop a stronger flow of information between them.

Lynsey Hopkins was formally thanked for her work as Chair of UAG.

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