Agenda for the Seventy-fourth Meeting of ARC APG
11am on Friday 14th June 2019
Tavistock Room, Woburn House, 20 Tavistock Square, London, WC1H 9HQ
http://www.woburnhouse.co.uk/contact

Tea/coffee will be available from 10.30 am; a light sandwich lunch will also be available.

1	**Welcome** To welcome any new members to their first meeting.	Chair of APG	11.00am
2	**Apologies for Absence** Apologies are recorded on the attendance sheet.	Secretary of APG	
3	**Minutes of the Previous Meeting** To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on Friday 15th February 2019.	Chair of APG (APG/19/07)	
4	**Matters Arising Not Elsewhere on the Agenda** To discuss any matters not arising elsewhere on the agenda.	Chair of APG	
5	**UCAS update** To include: • Operational Update • HEP satisfaction survey 2019 – improvement plan • Admissions Conference 2019 – feedback • Student Hub and Career Explorer – an update on UCAS' information and advice project • UCAS Corporate Strategy 2020 – 2025 – early consultation	UCAS representatives (APG/19/08)	11.10am
	Lunch A light lunch will be served for members and invited guests		12.30pm
	1.30pm onwards: Confidential Discussion for ARC APG members only		
6	**Update from UCAS Council**	Chair of APG	

7 **Hot Topics**   Deputy Chair of APG

A discussion of issues faced by members, which can be sent in advance or raised on the day. Priority will be given to the most requested/supported items

12 **UCAS Groups**   Chairs of UCAS Groups

To note updates on UCAS Groups   (APG/19/10)

13 **Any other business** (preferably to be sent to the Secretary in advance of the meeting)

Finish   3.00pm (approx.)

Next Meetings:
25 October 2019, Woburn House, London (provisional)
February 2020, London (date and venue tbc)
June 2020, London (date and venue tbc)

ACADEMIC REGISTRARS COUNCIL

Admissions Practitioners Group

Minutes of the Seventy-Third Meeting

Tavistock Room, Woburn House, 20 Tavistock Square, London, WC1H 9HQ

Friday 15th February 2019

Present: Steve Wiggins (University of Portsmouth, Chair), Paul Teulon (Kings College London, Deputy Chair), Richard Emborg (University of Durham, Secretary), Sarah Whitehead (Aberystwyth University), Wendy James (Birkbeck, University of London), Stephen Grice (Birmingham City University), Rebecca Farmery (Bishop Grossteste University), Amanda Jeram (Bloomsbury Institute), Michelle Magee (Canterbury Christ Church University), Lisa Bowen (Cardiff Metropolitan University), Chris Davis (DfE), Rachel Hope (DfE), Anne Wilson (Edge Hill University), Jo Ladwa (Keele University), Alice Smalley (King's College London), Ed Beales (Kingston University), Matt Birkett (Lancaster University), Emma Turner-Lindley   (Leeds Trinity University), Mark Fry (Liverpool Hope University), Louise Drinkwater (London South Bank University), Kathryn Gilmore (London South Bank University), Dave Norton (Loughborough University), Sue Allen (Middlesex University), Dawn Bell (Newcastle University), Micheala Artingstall (Newman University), Julia Crawford (Oxford Brookes University), Laura Kishore (Oxford Brookes University), Michelle Butcher (Queen Mary, University of London), Karen Gruhn (Queen's University Belfast), Alex White (Ravensbourne), Amy Fenton (Royal Holloway, University of London), David Atkins (School of Oriental and African Studies), Philip Bloor (Sheffield Hallam University), Thomas Snell (Teesside University), Claire Jones (Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance), Peter Derrick (UCAS), Louise Evans (UCAS), Ben Jordan (UCAS), Fraser Nicoll (UCAS), Bella Malins (UCL), Sarah Simms (University for the Creative Arts), David Howells (University of Bath), Nicholas Ranford (University of Birmingham), Claire Pryke (University of Bradford), Helen Basterra (University of Brighton), Jodie Palmer (University of Bristol), Helen Reed (University of Cambridge), Rebecca Leech (University of Central Lancashire), Bob Savill (University of Chichester), Alix Delany (University of East Anglia), Mandy Chetham (University of Essex), Jilly Crosby (University of Hertfordshire), Sarah Elstub (University of Huddersfield), Elizabeth Brook (University of Hull), Graham Rees (University of Leeds), Phil Dalby (University of Leicester), Philippa Hill (University of Lincoln), Jude King (University of Liverpool), Ben Goldblum (University of Manchester), Paul Tebbutt (University of Northampton), Rosalyn Dobrzanski (University of Nottingham), Marianna Asatryan (University of Oxford), Isobel Rossiter (University of Plymouth), Chris Giles (University of Portsmouth), Samantha Drage (University of Reading), Tony Flaherty (University of Sheffield), Kathryn Matthews (University of South Wales), Alison Stanton (University of Southampton), Joanne Bainbridge (University of Sunderland), Laura Sands (University of Surrey), Sue Sivill (University of Sussex), Gemma Prichard (University of the Arts London), Kerry Fey (University of the West of England), Kim Eccleston (University of Warwick), Mike Youlton (University of Warwick), Dean Leow (University of West London), Sam Matthews (University of Westminster), Alistair Garmendia (University of Winchester), Dan Wake (UUK).

Apologies: Michelle Wilcox (Coventry University), Philip Bailey (Cranfield University), Sarah Walker (Falmouth University), Liz Rooker (Harper Adams University), Alex Ingold (LSE), Sharon Blaylock (University of Cumbria), Shane Collins (University of Dundee)

19.01 Welcome to New Members
The Chair welcomed all new members to their first meeting, who were invited to identify themselves and which institution they represented.

19.02 Apologies for absence
Apologies were noted from seven institutions (see above).

19.03 Minutes of the Previous Meeting (APG/18/14)
With the addition of the representative from the University of Winchester to the attendance list, the minutes of the meeting held on 26 October 2018 were approved as an accurate record.

19.04 Matters Arising Not Elsewhere on the Agenda

18.30: UCAS update

Clearing and Confirmation
- UCAS has circulated information on 2018 embargo breaches
- UCAS welcomes future information on breaches to better minimise future cases

Analysis and Insight
- UCAS reported positive feedback has been received from members about the reports
- 28 providers participated in contributing to the UCAS guidance on unconditional offers. Feedback notably included definition of terminology.

18.34 Any Other Business
- ARC APG members welcomed the addition of the Hot Topics item to the previous meeting

19.05 UCAS update
Received: an update on current activities, new developments and responses to queries posed by members in advance of the meeting (APG/19/01).

Noted and discussed:

Web-chat
>   UCAS piloting web chat with applicants as they engage more and more with this medium to ask questions

Embargo:
- Exam boards are still really concerned
- BTEC issues around reformed and unreformed qualifications, unhelpful that results released the day before A levels
- Embargo dates confirmed for 2019: 2nd (Scottish) and 9th (others) August

Verification Service review:
- UCAS has just published report
- Session planned at 2019 Conference; providers encouraged to participate

Admissions Management System developments:
- Big milestones
  - Agent portal
  - Adviser portal
  - UG AMS for next cycle
    - Members encouraged to follow and feedback on PG AMS as many design principles will be carried forward to UG AMS

Clearing WG recommendations:
- Self-release – might be possible this summer, will be confirmed in Confirmation Bulletin

Analysis and insights:
- 15th October deadline applications
  - Oxbridge +6%
  - +13% medicine, dentistry and veterinary science
- UCAS shine light without passing judgement
- MEM – learning more – please speak to UCAS if members are interested
- Unconditional offers –
  - KCL suggested further refinements to the data query to reduce small numbers declared.
  - UCAS will keep the reporting methodology under review – feedback to Ben Jordan.
  - UCAS did allow contextual statements – was a blank canvas – 65 providers provided them, including highlighting the counting of applicants taking A levels early
  - OfS seemed to use different terminology. UCAS have shared this and will follow it
- 15th January deadline applicants:
  - Application increased by +0.4%
  - Non-EU applicant numbers have increased – maybe Tier 4 settled down?
  - EU – question asked if the significant changes at country level were non-traditional suppliers. UCAS was unsure.
  - Number of Chinese applicants same as number from Wales and Northern Ireland combined

Satisfaction survey
- This year much higher proportion of admissions respondents
- Satisfaction is down (-5%), probably because this year nothing shiny and new delivered
- UCAS conscious that we are waiting for some significant new developments to AMS
- 3 customer groups who have different needs (providers, applicants, advisers)
- Applicants' satisfaction is up
  - Really tried to pin down information
  - Results day personalised messaging
  - Student journeys – modelling personas and how their journey runs
- Advisers also more satisfied
  - Because C&C results delivery robust UCAS is able to provide more information on results day, e.g. open up advisers track early and telling them who is not unplaced on results day
- Providers

- o Capitation fee – work needs to be done – e.g. messages about what capitation fee pays for
- o Suggested that providers think about where the capitation fee is paid from – with budgets static or reducing
- o Any comments on performance welcome by email

ACTION: ARC APG members

- o UCAS.com website a continued source of dissatisfaction- UCAS is working on this
- o Providers seem to be struggling to use products and services – UCAS is concerned about this
- o Generally, very positive comments about working with UCAS as people
  - Staff changes were noted
- Improvements
  - o Things that are problematic are not new
  - o Single sign on – UCAS need AMS to solve this
  - o Website navigation – project starting next week
  - o Accessibility of data services – probably a lot of the dissatisfaction is caused by MOVEit
  - o Small fix it groups
    - MOVEit has 37,000 files over a year old, only UCAS can delete. Anything pre-01/12/19 will be deleted and UCAS will share schedule
    - Communications – named contacts but not always shared within the provider. Need to ensure contacts are getting consistent information.
- Next steps
  - o Sharing feedback internally and with providers
  - o Conference – delivering AMS demo sessions, bookable first-come first-served, releasing two sets of further sessions to meet demand
- Questions
  - o UCAS conservatoires – no test data available – UCAS Head of Admissions and Service Delivery will follow up as it should be available

ACTION: UCAS

UCAS Teacher Training
- Recruitment strategy released
- DfE intends to launch its own application service
- UCAS has been working with DfE for the past year to meet their requirements, delivering
  - o Subsidised application fee
  - o Support for application preference
- UCAS had offered services since 1991
  - o Schools say they value this
  - o UCAS disappointed the DfE wish to take this over but will work on ensuring a successful handover
  - o UCAS to continue offering services, will consult with sector [starting by April, including advisory groups, round tables. Any immediate ideas should be sent to Ben] (also including health and medicine course, to tailor that provision)
- DfE remit for English schools only

Brexit
- UCAS.com – Brexit page telling students about fee status, UCAS revamping information about settled status, more information about deal/no deal outcomes (applicant-friendly)

- UCAS engaging with stakeholders, OfS, DfE, UUK etc – to make sure information is as uniform as possible
- UCAS doing scenario-planning
  - Deal
  - No deal
  - Individual trade agreement
  - What it means for
    - Admissions process
    - Operation of UCAS – data storage etc
- Providers are welcome to contact Ben about this
- Considerations include fee status and future number controls
- Interesting to see other countries messaging – Dutch publicising the Brexit monster
- Comment: some applicants perhaps waiting until just before DBD deadline before deciding on whether to accept as firm or insurance (deadline is after 29 March) – accepts might not be a problem, but later conversion may be

Criminal Convictions

- Good practice has been published – seems well received
- But before HEIs doing this
- UCAS issued a survey this week
  - Inform part of the evaluation

    ACTION: UCAS Senior Policy and Qualifications Manager to circulate survey to members

- Session at 2019 Conference
- Questions and comments:
  - What is next stage? – UCAS good practice very much about admissions process. UCAS discussions about once student placed, exploring what looks like, what advice is out there.
  - UUK were taking this forward with Association of University Legal Practitioners but have now decided not to progress with this – feel they can't get involved, so the Chair of APG took this forward
  - Future of Question 2(Q2)? ICO questioning this with UCAS. Commitment from UCAS to continue to ask for this because of obvious efficiencies to providers
  - If student changes course within 14 days to Q2 programmes they don't currently get asked Q2. It was suggested that UCAS make this clearer to the sector, also differences in Clearing

    ACTION – UCAS will highlight this in Clearing information.

  - Data collection team checking where Q2 is asked to make sure it is being asked where needed – some HEIs were relying on Q1 covering it – also not asked
  - Are applicants making more mistakes in declaring this? Yes, because tick box. In new AMS system much more guidance is included. UCAS will invite feedback on any continued miss-declaration – all in test and training environment
  - Re-applicants picked up Q1 from last year, any fix plan? Yes, message in correspondents' bulletin. Fix in development, scheduled deployment for May 2019,

Unconditional offers

- UCAS published good practice considerations
- 13 different types
- Resources on website

- "For the sector, by the sector" approach
  - Looking at other topics to use this approach:
    - Fraud and verification

UCAS Strategy
- Refreshed released last year up until 2020
- Started work on next one, 2020-2025
- Evolution not revolution
- Want to work with sector on this
- Further meetings planned: expect to have updates and invitations to meetings/focus groups

Information and advice
- UCAS showed a series of versions of UCAS website landing page
- Showing evolution and increase in content
- Up until now the website has grown, but way of displaying it hasn't changed
- Students want to filter down information - changes
- Dashboard – own home page
- New way of exploring course information (responding to other competitors)
- Looking at content
- Intended benefits for all customers
- UCAS demonstrated a wireframe version of:
  - Dashboard
    - What level?
    - Where are you from?
    - What do you want to study?
  - Then landing page, based on personalisation
    - Building in different customer stories
    - Included to-do list on left hand side
    - Helps students increasingly personalise information
- Goal is September 2019 this year, year 12 cohort will be able to use this, then AMS live next May that can draw information from their profile
- Intention with putting in subjects is to widen future choice, not restrict this
- Questions
  - Wide spread (e) – yes
  - Asking about other issues e.g. student satisfaction, how building that into functionality? UCAS committed to using public data within their systems. Will test that with applicants
- Dates and deadlines – working with advisers to personalise this to the school
- Potential postcode link with contextualised offers
- A notes pad added so students can save URLs, also a personal statement builder
- Competitors include UNIFROG – 25% of advisers recommend this
- Provider information – commitment from UCAS to send them to our website
- Feedback – will have beta link
- Question – builder – how can work experience help inform choices? The design is starting out with most common information. What will happen from now, isn't an answer, but could have other information that contributes. Commitment not to exclude non-traditional students.

19.06 Changes to PG Teacher Training applications process

Received: a presentation from representatives from the DfE (APG/19/06)

Noted and discussed:
- DfE is a service-user organisation, bringing together policy and practice
- Research with schools about the teacher journey
- Quite a complex process to become a teacher
- DfE have designed a quicker process to update changes to programme names
- DfE stressed the accuracy of their maps with information on distance to travel to provider
- Providers will have to update listings on DfE Publish
  - DfE showed examples of pages for updating information
- DfE are confident that the course rollover process had been tested with providers
- DfE plan to use researchers in team and discussions with a selection of people to design the system. Then build it, then review how it's working and being used
- DfE do have a test system
- Anticipated Timescales:
  - Programmes starting September 2019 – currently updated on UCAS, from April 2019 this will be via the DfE Search service
  - Applications submitted for 2019 entry via UCAS Apply
- Applications submitted for 2020 entry via DfE system if it is ready. Going to test and learn over the next year and discuss this with providers
- A view was expressed that having multiple providers has introduced confusion in the Teacher Training market
- DfE to send providers information on what is being consulted on and who with so we can help inform the developments

ACTION: DfE

- Suggested that a workgroup of ARC APG could be formed to help inform design – volunteers requested

ACTION: Secretary of ARC APG

- Trial will involve mainly schools that don't have own systems
- DfE promised it will also trial with big providers
- Noted that there is a big distinction between small providers and large ones
- Comment made: biggest block to teacher training recruitment is the skills test
- DfE team is 53 people strong and growing
- No success measures and metrics have been set yet
- Satisfaction surveys will be used
- Questions
  - Q: Queried 51k who register to find out more information about Teacher Training but don't register at UCAS - what is being done about that?

A: Nothing was planned but DfE highlighted they would in future have data on the whole student journey.

- o Q: How can providers manage our risks and policies? What assurances do we have from DfE that the system will be successful?
  A: At each stage DfE will check in with providers to find out how the revised process is working. Noted there is a risk that providers will stop providing teacher training

- o Q: How is DfE funding it and will there always money in the pot to improve it?
  A: Budgets approved for 5 years, but no guarantees as they will be subject to Government Spending Reviews

Confidential Discussion (for HEI representatives only)

19.07   Hot Topics

Noted and discussed: issues currently being faced by members:

Group 1: Unconditional offers
- Participants discussed reactions to the publication of data and guidance, noting some HEIs had changed offer making practices
- Some institutions were happy with their practice, some were now withdrawing from using conditional unconditional offers
- There were differing levels of published information on the nature of unconditional offer schemes, with some not publishing any information.

Group 2: BREXIT
- Issue of PGR courses students starting 1 April – recommended consider start dates for these students
- Some settlement schemes are 3 years in length which creates issues for longer degrees (4 year degrees e.g. Integrated Masters, Foundation)
- ERASMUS is a big concern. One institution is thinking of underwriting the costs, with concern over CMA compliance being one factor in this decision. One institution was thinking about underwriting costs for current students <u>and</u> current applicants.

Group 3: Modules changes and CMA compliance
- Lack of awareness of difficulties in changes late in cycle amongst academic community
- Challenge of how to define major/series change – are a range of interpretations
- Good practice cited of CMA Working Groups within institutions to bring together stakeholders
- Discussion of how communicating major and minor changes to prospective and current students
- Sector is still working through how to administer this
- Southampton have a table of major/minor changes

- Importance of striking a balance between being too officious and working with academic community.

Group 4: DfE changes to Teacher Recruitment

- Worry about how DfE is engaging with sector, we know they are reluctant to engage with UTT contacts, admissions professionals therefore need to be proactive to seize opportunity to engage
- Worry about DfE working with SCITTs initially as they have fairly small numbers of applications. DfE needs to engage more widely with larger providers
- Worried that DfE seem to be ignoring retention issues in this conversation
- DfE may not appreciate the complexity of the admissions process and underestimate the task.

19:08 Update from Chair of ARC APG

Received: an update from the Chair on various items (APG/19/04)

Noted:

Changes to PG Teacher Training

- Providers need to steer the debate

UCAS Council (December 2018)

- Augar review
  - SNC will almost certainly return, based on 1 of 3 methods
    - Leo data on earnings
    - 2018 student numbers
    - Minimum UCAS tariff pints
  - Fees will almost certainly change – to find money for FE fees for HE will drop or vary
- Unconditional offer making
  - Government ministers concerned
  - Government view is too many people go to University
  - A year in FE, linked to University, meets assertion of 50% of people have 'experience of HE'
- UCAS pricing strategy
  - Model retained
  - Capitation fee remaining
- PQA
  - Back on agenda, partly in response to unconditional offers and schools over-predicting (perhaps to secure unconditional offers)
  - Noted that discussion comes around every 5 years
  - Technology and automation now there
  - Fairness and transparency consideration will come to fore if there are number controls
  - Timeframe for school year and HE year is primary barrier
  - WP students would be disadvantaged by PQA
- UCAS media and data services
  - Possibly moving into the sphere of trends/analytics
  - Providing more website functionality and leading the conversation
  - Student earnings metrics – primary measure for success according to ministers!

Criminal convictions

- UUK Roundtable December 2018
    - Agreed that UUK would produce sector-wide guidance in 3 parts
    - But UUK reconsidered and passed to ARC etc because complexity of sector (but much that is consistent!)
    - Chair of APG worked directly with colleagues
    - Outcome is guidance from Counsel:
        - We can ask legitimately the question but should ask it at offer or later
        - Also legally acceptable for UCAS to ask that on our behalf (so might be offered by UCAS)
    - Need to go ahead and now ask it and share information with applicants
        - Members invited to feed back if they want any more guidance or not

        ACTION: ARC APG members

    - How do we engage with professional bodies over asking the question? Knowing how each of bodies views this might be helpful
    - UCAS have said if anything was to happen with Question 2 there would be proper lead in time to allow providers to prepare

19.09   UCAS Groups

Received: written updates from UCAS Groups (APG/19/03)

19.10   Any Other Business
None raised

19.11   Dates of Future Meetings
14 June 2019 at Woburn House, London

Report – UCAS update

ARC APG

14 June 2019

1. Operational update

The 2019 cycle is continuing to run as planned. By 28 May UCAS had received 619,047 Undergraduate applications, which is +0.2% on the same point in 2018. The first decline by default (DBD) of the 2019 cycle for took place on 1 May. Improved communications with applicants resulted in fewer applicants being subject to this process than last year.

C&C 2019
Preparations for C&C are well underway; these started in September 2018 with a review of the lessons learned from last year's activities.

Fortnightly C&C risk review meetings are taking place with mitigating actions in place to ensure this C&C is as successful as last year. Delivery Confidence Reviews will be held in July, during which teams from across the organisation will present their plans and preparations to the Executive and respond to any challenges that are raised.

The Customer Experience Centre will draw upon a pool of trained colleagues across the company to answer enquiries on SQA and JCQ results days. This approach helps to ensure that call wait times and spend on temporary staff resource is kept to a minimum. So far, over 70 volunteers have been recruited from across the business.

The results processing team are preparing for the receipt of results starting on 5 July with the International Baccalaureate. Pearson results day has been confirmed for 14 August 2019 (the day before JCQ results day). The JCQ embargo will remain in place until 15 August 2019 at 6:00 inclusive of RQF BTEC results.

Upcoming operational events include:

- 20 June – Declined by Default (DBD) for last decisions received by 6 June (Undergraduate)
- 30 June – Undergraduate main scheme closes, and applications made after this date are in Clearing
- 4 July – Extra closes
- 5 July – Clearing opens and applicant release into Clearing becomes available
- 11 July – Reject by Default (RDB) for applications received by 30 June (Undergraduate)

- 16 July – RBD for all outstanding decisions on applications received by 1 May will be rejected by default, including Audition Pending (AP) transaction (Conservatoires)
- 18 July – DBD for last decisions received by 11 July 2019 (Undergraduate)
- 23 July – Last day for amended decisions (Undergraduate)
- 29 July – SQA Embargo period begins
- 30 July – DBD for outstanding applicants' replies where the last decision was received by 16 July (Conservatoires)
- 6 August – SQA Results Day
- 6 August – DBD for all outstanding decisions on applications received by 1 June will be rejected by default, including AP transactions (Conservatoires)
- 9 August – JCQ Embargo period begins
- 14 August – Pearson Results Day
- 15 August – A Level Results Day
- 15 August – Adjustment goes live

2. Results and application services

Preparations for Embargo 2019
UCAS has an agreement with the awarding bodies to ensure that the results they provide will be under embargo until results days, and it is understood that the awarding bodies allow UCAS, and subsequently providers, privileged access to these results. The regulators, Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), and Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), have expressed serious concern at the number of breaches in 2018, which were in excess of those reported in 2017.

This year UCAS has revised the mandatory training module for provider Nominated Contacts (NC) and Primary Correspondents (PC); and encouraged them to share the training with their colleagues. This year more examples of actual breaches from 2018 were featured in the module.

Most NCs and PCs had completed the training by the NC/PC deadline of Friday 3 May 2019. Well done to the top ten providers ranked by number of completions (as of 6/6/2019):

1. Kingston University
2. University of Gloucestershire
3. University of York
4. Cardiff University
5. University of Northampton
6. University of East Anglia
7. University of Hull
8. Keele University
9. Durham University
10. Ulster University / Aston University

Provider completions by role showed that, after Admissions staff at 1,754; the highest number of completions were from Academic staff at 654, followed by Recruitment at 562.

Sixty days after the training was launched, a total of 4,707 trainees had completed the module. At the same point in 2018 and 2017, there were 1,489 and 733 completions respectively. A 216% increase in completions from 2018, to 2019.

The training module was well received and feedback from providers suggested it was "clear, precise and to the point" with "a great use of examples". This year the module was carefully designed to be easier to follow and a transcript was available to make the training more inclusive. Other feedback points included:

- User friendly and easy to navigate
- The specific examples improved the understanding of what providers needed to be doing and how to secure internal processes
- Great for staff who had not previously worked in admissions to help them understand the implications of aspects outside of admissions processes
- Promotes the message about cross-departmental communications being fundamental

3.   Applicant Self Release into Clearing

In 2018, 26,823 applicants were released into Clearing by providers. Historically the process required applicants to call their firm choice and request that they were released from their place, they could then apply elsewhere through Clearing. Applicants having the ability to release themselves into Clearing was one of the recommendations of the Clearing Working Group.

The applicant release into Clearing feature will be available from 5 July. Eligible (placed) applicants will be able to decline their places and add a Clearing choice if this is what they want to do. This is not being actively promoted to applicants; however, they will be signposted to information and guidance on the website if they have changed their mind and wish to apply somewhere else via Clearing.

The last date applicants can release themselves into Clearing is 20 October 2019.

How will applicant release into Clearing work?

i.   The placed applicant signs into Track and clicks the 'Decline my place' button on their homepage.
ii.   They will be taken to a page which explains what they're about to do, they are given three options, they must decide on one of these:

- I want to go to my insurance choice
- I no longer wish to go to university this year
- I want to apply somewhere else in Clearing

Each option gives them information about what to do, only one option will allow the applicant to proceed; 'I want to apply somewhere else in Clearing'.

iii. They will then receive an email from us, confirming they're in Clearing, and advising them to phone the provider immediately if they've made a mistake in releasing themselves.

The process does not currently allow applicants to choose a reason for release, so providers cannot capture this information. The reason code will be recorded as applicants release.

UCAS will be monitoring the use of this functionality daily and if behaviour is concerning or unusual, action will be taken. Applicant release into Clearing is configurable so that it can be switched off if required leaving applicants to follow the previous process by contacting the provider by phone.

4. Analysis and Insights update

Upcoming data release - June deadline
On 11 July the 2019 June deadline figures will be published. This year UCAS will expand reporting to include for the first time English, Welsh and Northern Irish Indices of Multiple Deprivation measures, alongside publications on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation and POLAR4 quintiles. As usual, UCAS will be publishing data on applicant domicile, sex, age, ethnic group, subject and provider country, alongside figures for nursing applicants.

5. Policy update

With the launch of the undergraduate application management service (AMS) in May 2020, for 2021 entry, UCAS is introducing several new questions to help HEPs identify students with particular support needs.

Applicants will be able to declare if they are estranged from their family, have parenting responsibility, are a carer, a refugee or an asylum seeker, or if they are a service child (from a military family). These questions will sit alongside the current care experience flag, which itself has been reviewed in order to be more inclusive of the wider definition of care experience across the UK.

Each new question is supported with a good practice briefing for HE providers that outlines how the new question will look, the key challenges for that group of students, some key HE provider considerations for the student journey, examples of good practice already in operation across the UK, and where providers can find further support. These briefings have been developed with the help of HE providers and expert organisations, including Stand Alone, NUS, Carers Trust, Refugee Support Network and STAR.

Following a sector-wide review, a new more inclusive gender question will be introduced into AMS in May 2020. Applicants will be able to select a non-binary option, and provide further information via a pre-defined list should they wish to do so. The review included representatives from a range of sector bodies (including Advance HE, UUK and HESA) and LGBT+ organisations (such as Stonewall, Gendered Intelligence and Equality Network).

The current disability question is also being reviewed to ensure that is it fit for purpose and more supportive of applicants who wish to disclose a mental health condition.

UTT update
In January 2019, the DfE released its new teacher recruitment and retention strategy, which set out the Department's vision of how it intends to attract more people into the teaching profession and support them once there. This confirmed that DfE will develop its own admissions service for postgraduate teacher training provision in England, with a small pilot due to run in the 2019/20 cycle.

UCAS will continue to deliver the teacher training admissions service in England for the 2019/20 cycle, with notification required by August 2019 should DfE require UCAS to deliver the service beyond this point. It is highly likely that UCAS will be delivering teacher training admissions services to a subset of the applicant cohort in 2020/21, with the specific requirements of this service to be confirmed in August.

As part of the transition, UCAS recently completed the transfer of course management functionality from Weblink to DfE Publish for teacher training courses in England. Customer groups were transferred in batches during April and May to avoid disruption and minimise risk.

UCAS will continue to offer teacher training admissions services across the UK, notably in Scotland and Wales, and has already started conversations with relevant government departments about what may be required from a future offering in this area as part of our future teacher training and corporate strategies.

6. Developments for advisers

The agent portal was made available to agents working with UCAS Postgraduate AMS provider customers on Thursday 14 February, and the adviser portal was launched to all UCAS Undergraduate registered centres on Tuesday 19 March.

Extensive engagement plans are in place to support these customers, and to ensure they are aware of the changes and the new functionality, designed to save time and enable more efficient support of applicants. So far 101 PG agencies have been onboarded to the agent portal with 111 registered users and 2771 centres have set up their school/college on the adviser portal.

UCAS continues to engage with the secondary education sector about continuous improvement for the adviser portal and the building of AMS functionality; recent conversations have taken place to inform the development of student facing features for Clearing. These conversations are complemented by user experience testing with students themselves, cross referenced with feedback from provider webinars and engagement.

7. Developments for providers

Tracker

UCAS has achieved code complete for the development of Tracker, the replacement service for Application and Decision Tracker. The new service now includes innovative visualisation implemented through Power BI and new filtering functionality on application and decisions data, alongside a new daily report delivering applications made direct to Clearing throughout July.

UCAS is trialling the first iteration of Tracker with a focus group, following which the service will be rolled out to all provider customers in the HEP3 training environment later in June. Further iterations of Tracker will be informed by customer feedback over the coming months before going live with the new service in October this year for the 2020 entry cycle.

Business Rules and Admissions Principles Working Group Update

The engagement plan for changes to UCAS' admissions rules and principles will be tied in with sector engagement and readiness activity for AMS launch in 2020 for implementation in the 2021 cycle. This engagement will both highlight the significance of the admissions rules and principles work itself alongside the actual changes made. Due to the importance of this work, it is proposed to undertake engagement activity at all levels of UCAS governance.

The recommendations have been RAG rated for Executive consideration dependant on the business implication of the change; suggested changes vary from small word changes to those requiring external advice that are linked to legal and compliance aspects of the UCAS Terms of Service. The UCAS Executive is also considering this activity in parallel with work on developing the corporate strategy for 2020 - 2025.

Customer engagement continues with a recent roundtable taking place to consider the possible development of waiting list functionality on the back of the BRAP recommendations. This was a useful session with representation from a diverse group of providers and the school sector, all sharing views on current practice and how this might be formalised for the future. Waiting list functionality will not be made available as part of AMS at launch, but recommendations made by the roundtable will be considered for 2022. A working group with sector representation will be drawn together presently to inform this development.

This item will be further discussed at the meeting.

AMS readiness and engagement

In order to fully understand providers' plans for adoption of the APIs, or new user interface, UCAS sent out a survey that requires completion by all provider customers. UCAS will use the data generated by these surveys to further inform plans for provider engagement. Please ensure that the survey is completed; relationship managers will be following up with those providers who are yet to complete.

UCAS colleagues in the relationship management team are keen to hear from providers who want to discuss their transition and implementation strategies to support the launch of AMS in May 2020, please get in touch with your relationship manager if you would like to have a conversation.

The technology relationship managers and transition team are also leading extensive transition activity with vendors to ensure that they are ready to support providers progressing to their new APIs.

Please keep an eye on provider bulletins for continued activity and resources to support AMS implementation and readiness. UCAS will be delivering several face-to-face events in early 2020 to facilitate this work and ARC APG will be kept informed of timelines.

8.   Developments for students

Information and advice project
UCAS has spent the past 6 months iterating its information and advice service, including the Search tool, newly titled Student Hub, and recently developed Explore. The project aims to help students with their decision making with other tools as well and data plays a big part in this. UCAS is developing various tools to help students choose the right course for them and has also been working as part of the Bell Quartet which comprises Prospects, HESA, JISC and UCAS, to build the Career Explorer tool.

An update on this activity will be delivered in the meeting. In addition to sharing progress on the information and advice service, colleagues will share the product roadmap alongside plans for post launch to ensure continuous improvement beyond 'go live'.

Build UK Apprenticeship pilot
Beyond UCAS' experience and well-established delivery of HE application and admissions management systems, it has had significant success in establishing a service in the apprenticeships market. This includes:

- Apprenticeships Information and Advice hub for UK and Careers and job roles tool (Explore Jobs)

- Apprenticeships 'Career Finder' vacancy listing: which has offered over 24,500 vacancies so far during this cycle.

- Apprenticeships and careers 'zone' at four of UCAS' events and exhibitions

In response to growing calls from industry, employers, teachers and students for a 'UCAS-style' apprenticeship application service, UCAS is now planning the delivery of a pilot project as a 'proof of concept' service.

Proof of concept Apprenticeships application pilot:

- UCAS is collaborating with a group of employers on a proposal for a proof of concept application management service for higher and degree apprenticeships.
- The proposed pilot service is planned for launch in autumn 2019 and to run through to September 2020.
- The service will start with several employers in the construction sector, and UCAS will offer the pilot service to an extended range of employers from other

sectors. The pilot may include a 'talent pool' service to enable UCAS to test the value/viability of providing an apprenticeship 'matching' service in addition to/as an alternative to a full application service.

- The outcomes and evaluation of the pilot will enable UCAS to assess the appetite and requirements of employers for this service, and the feasibility for UCAS to provide a scaled-up apprenticeships application service in future as part of a multi-destination AMS.
- When the pilot proposals are approved, UCAS will be engaging with HEPs and schools to provide information about the pilot and to seek feedback and insight which, together with the pilot evaluation, will be used to inform UCAS' future apprenticeship service development plans.

9. UCAS presentation at meeting

At the meeting, the following items will be covered:

- Operational Update
- HEP satisfaction survey 2019 – improvement plan
- Admissions Conference 2019 - feedback
- Student Hub and Career Explorer – an update on UCAS' information and advice project
- UCAS Corporate Strategy 2020 – 2025 – early consultation