

**KNOW WHAT.  
KNOW WHERE.  
KNOW WHO.  
KNOW WHY.  
KNOW HOW.**

Discover how our data-driven insights can solve your higher education challenges.

**UCAS**

Student recruitment is a fiercely competitive landscape with fast-changing challenges. At UCAS, we have the solutions. Our data-driven products and expert consultancy deliver deep insights that enable many leading providers to tackle their challenges and seize new opportunities. We can do the same for you.

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# WHY UCAS?

## WE UNDERSTAND YOU

As the student recruitment and admissions specialists, we gather vast volumes of data from across the sector. We understand everything from the latest macro HE trends, to specific details about courses and institutions – yours and your competitors.

## WE TAKE A HOLISTIC APPROACH

At UCAS we combine data, student behaviour and sector expertise into a range of powerful solutions. You'll find ready-to-use products for everyday questions. In-depth services for tricky issues. And bespoke consultancy for your most complex challenges.

## YOU'LL GET REALISTIC ACTION PLANS

Everything we do is focused on enabling you to take action, from quick-win plans to long-term strategies. Our insights, reports and recommendations are underpinned by raw EXACT data, so you can trust them to deliver results every time.

## WE TURN DEEPER INSIGHTS INTO TRUSTED PRODUCTS

Working closely with providers and other clients, we understand your unique situation, uncover your challenges and deliver the solutions you need. Our data products evolve from our consultancy; by responding to trending challenges, we create solutions that enable everyone to benefit from our insights.

## IT'S A SMART INVESTMENT

Our solutions are all about helping you focus your efforts and budgets. With our data, insights and recommendations at your fingertips, you can target your activities and allocate your spend where you know it will give you the best return on investment.

**What are your challenges? Take a look at our products and services, and discover how you can use our insights to drive your success. Pricing where applicable can be found at [ucas.com/data-solutions](https://ucas.com/data-solutions)**

“

We have very open and regular communication. It's a genuinely equal partnership – UCAS really feels like an extension of our team.

**Steve Minney,  
Swansea University**

“

UCAS holds data that we can't get elsewhere. It really allows us to get a more granular understanding of recruitment trends and patterns at competitors down to a level of aggregation within timeframes that we can't get elsewhere. The immediacy within 3 months of closing the cycle is a great benefit.

**Aled Pugh,  
University of South Wales**



# KNOW WHO YOU'RE UP AGAINST

To succeed, you really need to understand the competition. We'll show you how your top and emerging competitors are impacting your performance. And we'll give you actionable insights that will enable you to seize the advantage.

Our products

## COMPETITOR INSIGHT DASHBOARD

**The challenge:** You're losing applicants to your competitors. You feel you understand the competition but not at subject level. Or maybe there are other existing or emerging competitors you're unaware of?

**Our solution:** Discover how you win or lose when directly competing for an applicant over three cycles. Fine-tune your strategies at subject level, see which subject areas are at risk, and find out who makes offers to rejected applicants. With our insights, you can compare your activities against your competitors, and adapt your offer-making and entry requirements, based on solid evidence.

## STUDENT DECISION REPORTS – COMPETITOR PACKAGE

**The challenge:** Your competitors are gaining traction in specific subjects but you don't know why. Or maybe you want to see how perceptions have evolved compared to the competition?

**Our solution:** We provide a five-year review of your offer holders' feedback, compared to that of your competitors. This reveals your relative strengths and weaknesses across everything from courses to social life, student experience, facilities and more. Brought to life through easy-to-understand word clouds and other methods, our expert insights show you how perceptions compare, how they're evolving – or being impacted by your marketing efforts – and where you can take action to improve future perceptions.

## COMPETITOR ANALYSIS REPORT

**The challenge:** Are you losing applications and want to understand this at an individual row per choice level?

**Our solution:** We provide a choice of a 1 or 5 years' raw data file of your applicants and where else they applied, which course, and by which route. At individual level, this data enables you to do your own in-house analytical data crunching.

Our consultative approach

## CONSULTANCY

**Example challenge:** You're losing market share, or you're unaware or unprepared for emerging competitors. Or perhaps you have different competitors at subject, demographic and regional level, but don't have time to dig into the granular detail?

**Our solution:** We'll combine data and student insights at competitor and subject level, to give you the full picture of who's outperforming and who's becoming an emerging threat. We'll then give you valuable insights and recommendations on where to focus your future efforts.

## HOW WE'VE HELPED

# +10%

conversion rate for business and admin courses

- Although aware of their top competitors, this provider needed to know how they were performing against them. Our deep-dive review found that their offer-making strategy differed from their competitors, and that an emerging competitor's win rates were an increasing threat of which they were unaware. The provider was then able to adjust their offer-making strategies and carry out further research into their emerging competitor's activities.

Looking for a bespoke data solution?  
See page 14

# PLACE AT THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME TO REACH THE RIGHT STUDENTS IN THE RIGHT PLACE

Your ideal candidates are out there somewhere. We can help you reach them, by providing the actionable geographical and demographic insights you need to identify applicants who meet your recruitment strategies.

Our products

## UNTAPPED GEOGRAPHIES



**The challenge:** You're losing market share in specific regions, and you need a growth strategy that shows you where to focus your efforts. Or perhaps your geographical reach is shrinking and you're unsure exactly where to target?

**Our solution:** We'll give you a deep analysis of your current position, growth potential, and future priority areas. You'll discover where to regain your market share, by understanding the reasons for your losses, and planning activities to reverse them. We'll help you build on current successes by finding out why you're winning and how you can stay ahead. And we'll enable you to expand your reach into potentially successful new locations by postcode, schools, and application centres.

## OUTREACH EVALUATOR



**The challenge:** You have no clear tracking of how your Widening Participation or outreach activities have achieved your aims, so you're unable to demonstrate success on your WP activities.

**Our solution:** We'll give you evidence of your success in brand awareness, engagement, WP and outreach activities. You can match your data with university applicant data to benchmark your performance against the national average and a control group. You'll gain insights from application to acceptance. We'll measure the impact of your interventions, from campaigns to engagement and open days. With our EXACT data, you can even go granular at course level, or via benchmarking the A-level results of student groups.

Our consultative approach

## CONSULTANCY



**Example challenge:** You need time and resources to focus on your subject or course level strategies, or perhaps you have a specific area or audience you want to focus your attention on?

**Our solution:** We'll give you in-depth insights about your recruitment trends, offer-making strategies, and how you're connecting and performing versus your competitors. You can then translate these insights into targeted campaigns to demonstrate your ROI.

## HOW WE'VE HELPED



# +25%

WP applicants over 5 years

- To help set faculty benchmarks, this provider needed to know how their WP recruitment compared to their competitors. We applied their WP applicant definition to competitor faculties, showing underperforming areas and revealing that their definition needed bringing into line with the sector. We also highlighted faculties with below-par WP recruitment, and recommended where they could make improvements.
- This remotely-located provider wanted to increase recruitment from further afield. We investigated their non-local competitors, establishing which demographics and subject areas to focus on to increase conversion. We found that certain age groups were influenced by travel costs and difficulties attending open days. The provider used these insights to adapt their connection and conversion strategies for their target cohorts.

Looking for a bespoke data solution?  
See page 14

# WHY ARE YOUR NUMBERS

# DROPPING OFF?

Wondering what's stopping students from choosing you? We'll help you understand your drop-off data and assess your applicants' experiences, so you can maximise conversion at every stage of the process.

Our products

## STUDENT DECISION REPORTS



**The challenge:** Your applicants are choosing competitors, but you need to know why. Maybe there are issues or misconceptions about your courses that you're not yet aware of?

**Our solution:** Our student decision reports are a unique way to discover why students make their decisions. You'll get qualitative and quantitative feedback as students reply to offers, showing your strengths and weaknesses on courses, social life, experiences, facilities and more, compared to your closest competitors. If you're looking for an in-depth competitor review, check out our Competitor Package on page 6.

## APPLICATION & DECISION TRACKER



**The challenge:** You're not sure of your market position, or you have no clear view as you're unable to benchmark against previous years. Yet you still need to regularly report to your leadership teams.

**Our solution:** You'll get weekly data across your application and decision-making activities, via online updates that are easily shareable with colleagues. We'll benchmark you against six aggregated competitors and the wider sector at subject level, enabling you to compare market share. And you'll get access to decision flowcharts to benchmark against competitors and the sector. You can use our reports to analyse your applicants – including demographic and geographic profiles – by course, application centre, postcode, and WP criteria.

Our consultative approach

## CONSULTANCY



**Example challenge:** You just don't have the time or resources to look at every stage of the conversion journey. Or maybe you have a specific problem course or subject area you need to focus on?

**Our solution:** We'll combine in-depth data with our unique student insights to provide a complete picture of when you're losing applications, and most importantly why. With the opportunity to focus on specifics rather than the full conversion journey – and drill down into a specific stage, course, subject or campus – you'll gain bespoke analysis of the reasons, along with potential evidence-based solutions.

## HOW WE'VE HELPED



# 47%

Highest volume of firm replies from those who apply in November & December

- To tailor their outreach and marketing, and improve their strategic planning, this provider needed to know how applicants behave at different stages of the recruitment cycle. We provided a week-by-week comparison to enable the analysis of behaviours and patterns for distinct groups; this revealed that applicants' A-levels differed by up to five grades depending on when they applied. By highlighting which cohorts convert best, we enabled the provider to refocus their marketing efforts.

Looking for a bespoke data solution? See page 14

# BESPOKE INSIGHTS

PERFECTLY TAILORED **TO FIT**

YOUR **UNIQUE  
CHALLENGES**

When you need bespoke support for a particularly tricky issue, talk to our consultants. From analysing your whole cycle to focusing on a specific stage, we'll help you solve any challenge you face.

## OUR INSIGHT CONSULTANTS

With a wealth of expertise gained across the HE sector and the commercial world, the UCAS Insights Consultancy Team is the best in the business. Our skillsets include everything from brand insight, to commercial strategy, marketing, advertising and much more. Together we have many decades' experience in data-based strategic problem-solving, and the ability to apply innovative creative thinking to swiftly identify and leverage your advantage.

Our unique combination of sector knowledge and commercial awareness is what sets UCAS apart, and we're supported by a large in-house team of expert data analysts. We take a fully bespoke approach based on the nature of your challenge, and how we work together is up to you. We're always happy to collaborate as an extension of your team, or you can simply set us the task and we'll report back with the actionable insights you need to solve your challenge.

There are endless instances in which your organisation will benefit from our bespoke consultancy. Here are couple of examples of how we can help.

### RECRUITMENT CYCLE



**The challenge:** You need to reassess your recruitment cycle stages, reconsider your timing, or check your conversion funnel is strong enough to maintain acceptance numbers in certain subjects. Or perhaps you need to analyse and optimise your Clearing recruitment strategy?

**Our solution:** We can review your performance at crucial moments during the cycle, including the January deadline. We can analyse your recruitment over time to produce applicant profiles tailored to your needs at different stages of the cycle – including who they are, where they are, and what they want to hear from you. We can also review your Clearing performance relative to others, identifying priority subjects for your next cycle, and performing in-cycle forecasting for Clearing, to reveal subjects where you can maximise acceptances.

### APPLICANT SURVEYS



**The challenge:** You need to discover the latest student sentiment and understand what that means for your institution.

**Our solution:** At UCAS we constantly collect survey responses from applicants and students – throughout each cycle and across a range of topics – to deliver a wide range of insights. We can visualise the macro trends informing student decision making, to help you understand exactly what students and applicants are thinking right now. We can also launch and run bespoke surveys to ask applicants about the topics you're interested in.

**Whatever your challenge, our experts will help you solve it. Get in touch with our team today and let's start turning your challenges into opportunities.**

### HOW WE'VE HELPED



# 22%

increase in acceptances

- With steady growth in their home country, this Welsh provider wanted to grow market share in England. We delivered multiple learnings through data and insights, combining application geography, competitor analysis, student feedback and in-cycle behavioural changes – to inform hyper-targeted multichannel campaigns throughout the cycle. The partnership has delivered year-on-year growth, with a 22% increase in acceptances over six years, plus 215% more PAD acceptances and an 8% increase in PAD conversion over three years.

**Looking for a bespoke data solution?  
See page 14**





Harness the power of the sector's richest and most up-to-date admissions data. With access to billions of data combinations, you can really understand your market and get to grips with the competition.

Our products

### BESPOKE DATA (EXACT)



**The challenge:** You require bespoke granular detail on tap or need to solve a specific challenge that's not covered by our other products. Or maybe you just want the raw data so you can analyse it in your own way?

**Our solution:** Our bespoke data service gives you access to historical data, life cycle data or deadline data, from right across the sector. Drill down to granular detail and answer almost any question by choosing specific variables (eg course name, degree type, grades) and statistics (eg applicants, offers, replies). Understand course trends, market share, geographical movements – rationalise your strategies with data. You can also purchase bolt on analyst days to help visualise the data.

Working with planners, marketers, and insight teams, our Bespoke Data Team know the data inside out and how to make it work for you.

### PERS



**The challenge:** You haven't got a clear view of where you're at in terms of numbers throughout the year, making it difficult to track year-on-year trends.

**Our solution:** PERS (Provider EXACT Record Supplies) data is a great way to explore and understand the variables available through EXACT. This can help you to understand exactly where you are in terms of numbers at key points throughout the cycle, and benchmark and analyse your year-on-year trends.

### ONLINE DATA RESOURCES



**The challenge:** You need to know applicant numbers throughout the cycle, especially during Clearing.

**Our solution:** Our online data resources keep you up to date. From regular updates during the cycle, to daily updates during the Clearing period, we give you the data so you're fully informed.

Resources are available in both downloadable CSV and dashboard format on [ucas.com](https://ucas.com)

### Data at your fingertips when you need it – subscription packages

Access EXACT throughout the year – no need to wait for your planning team. Change your questions each time, so every department gets the answers they need.

Available daily, weekly or as a bundle.

### HOW WE'VE HELPED



# 28

new course choices introduced

- Aiming to punch above its weight in a highly competitive HE area, this provider has been using our data service for the past decade. EXACT is the only service that provides the level of data that enables them to interrogate hundreds of live and historical variables, from course titles to campus distance, levels of demand and acceptances, and much more. Now firmly embedded in their decision making, the data helps them ask the right questions, identify the opportunities, and highlight the potential pitfalls of launching unsuccessful programmes.
- This provider needed to better understand its market share at a highly granular level. Using our EXACT data revealed some often unexpected results about its market share percentage with particular schools and colleges. Building on these insights, the provider has been able to reinforce its strategy around current feeder schools and colleges, and reassess the specific potential of other feeders.

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KNOW WHO.  
KNOW WHY.  
KNOW HOW.

KNOW NOW.

Are you ready to start tackling today's challenges and preparing for tomorrow's opportunities?

Just speak to your Customer Success Director or email [educationservices@ucas.ac.uk](mailto:educationservices@ucas.ac.uk) and let's get things moving.

