

**Title of Paper: IDENTIFICATION AND PRIORITISATION OF DATA GROUP ACTIVITIES****Paper number: DG/14/005****15 May 2014****Author: Helen Thorne, Director Policy & Research**

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**1. Issue**

To make real progress in improving the quality of UCAS' data assets and improving the effectiveness and efficiency of data collection, management and exchange UCAS will need to prioritise where it focuses its resources. This paper seeks views from the Data Group about the current issues which need to be addressed and the relative priority which should be placed on these.

**2. Recommendation**

The Group is invited to discuss the paper, identify other issues which need to be addressed, and provide advice about the relative importance of these.

**3. Report**

The remit of the Data Group is a wide one which includes:

- Improving data quality
- Improving data collection, management and exchange
- Improving the understanding and use of UCAS data to inform the development of products and services

It is evident from the work of the Group's predecessor that there are numerous issues to be addressed relating to specific data assets (e.g. schools data) as well as specific UCAS services (e.g. \*J and the contextual data service) and broader sector activities (e.g. HEDIIP). To enable UCAS to plan more effectively and to make the most of the meetings of the Data Group we need to identify and prioritise those issues which are of most value to our customers. This will also help us to manage expectations about what changes are possible and when. For example, some improvements will simply be too expensive and time consuming for us to make until we have delivered a number of the components of our next generation of admission services capability and infrastructure.

In addition to an ongoing programme of work that will include discussions about the development of UCAS' services including the potential for shared services with other sector organisations, HEDIIP, legislative and regulatory change, and identification and sharing of good practice it has been previously suggested that the following topics should be considered by the Data Group:

- Improving the quality of:
  - schools data (see agenda item 8)
  - Unicode data
  - Qualifications data
  - ODBC-link Star files and XML GET transactions
- Coded Value Files: Providing input into the continuous review of coded value files, ensuring consistency and relevance of content
- Development and enhance of the contextual data service
- Improvements to the supply of data by UCAS used for government reporting and mandatory provision of data to third parties

The Group is invited to discuss these topics, identify other issues which need to be addressed, and advise about the relative importance of these.