UG Provider Engagement Architecture Plan
What is it all about?

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Context

- We are making changes to our services

- We are starting with Postgraduate, but this work overlaps a lot with our other schemes

- We are using a different (agile) development methodology which enables us to make small iterations to products and then get feedback on this, before moving onto the next small iteration.

- The work on Undergraduate services is starting, and we need to take providers and our customers on this journey with us.

- We need to make sure that our customers and users of these products feel like they:
  - ➢ Have been involved and engaged with and feel effectively included in the changes we are making
  - ➢ Are clear about the feedback loops in place and that
  - ➢ A viable set of new UG admissions services are introduces to the sector for the 2018 cycle

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Scope and remit of engagement

Services covered:

- All elements of provider facing undergraduate admissions
- Postgraduate, Conservatoires and UTT admissions will also be covered

Stakeholders to be engaged with:

- HEPs (including admissions, international, planning, IT/technical, HE in FE, WP/outreach)
- Vendors and third party IT suppliers (Tribal, Hobsons, Capita etc)
- Third parties in receipt of UCAS data (e.g. HESA)
- ARC APG and the Change Steering Group (CSG)
- UCAS' groups and forums
- Schools and FE colleges

- No learner facing engagement
- No media/commercial facing engagement

What areas will we be engaging on?

We have identified 6 broad areas that we will need to be engaging on, these areas will cut across the different products that we will be developing and form the building blocks for the development of our products and services.

Area	What do we mean	How we will engage (high level)
1. Data	What UCAS collects: Scheme and operational data from providers and applicants (results, course and application data), 3rd party connections (e.g. data sent on to HESA), UCAS Analysis and Research reporting – post event analysis e.g. end of cycle report.	UCAS have already collected a significant amount of data requirements from providers. UCAS will use a range of its groups to validate and provide input into the data requirements and will look to its Data Group to provide the overarching point of feedback and consideration of the outcomes from validation exercises.
2. Link products	The products that UCAS use to connect with providers: Weblink; XML; ODBC and SMTP (Move it)	The UCAS Technical Group, as representatives of the sector and specialists in this area will act as the overarching point of feedback and consideration of the outcomes from sessions. Input from the Technical Group will be collated in conjunction with the software providers and other representatives.

What areas will we be engaging on?

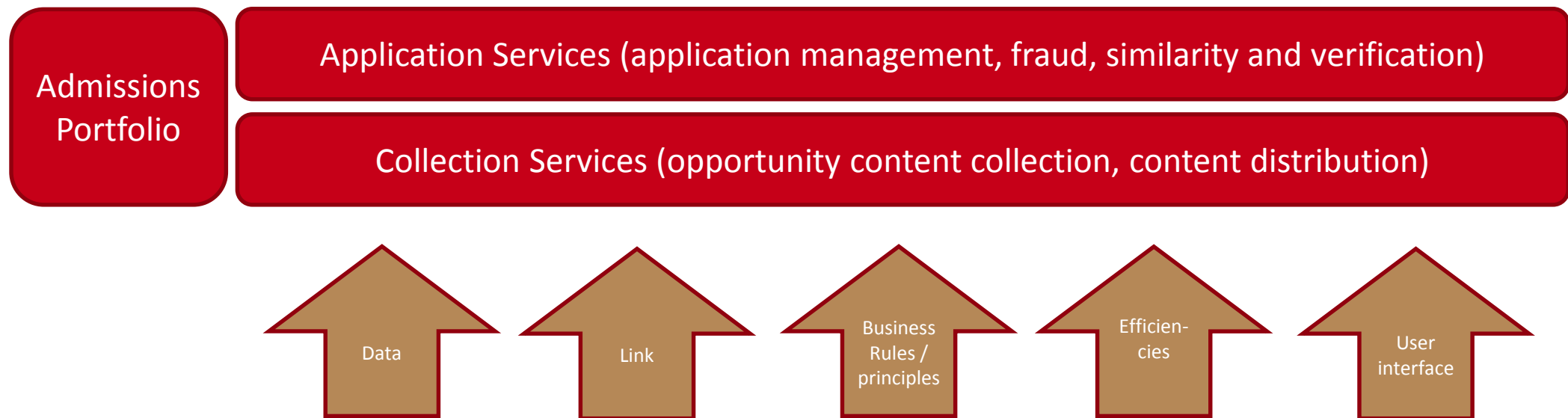| Area	What do we mean	How we will engage (high level)
3. Business Rules **and** 4. Admissions Principles	Rules which define how the UCAS schemes operates. This includes (but is not limited to): Cycle dates; Deadlines; RBD/DBDs; number of choices; offer and decision making rules. These rules are underpinned by Admissions Principles.	The ARC APG chair has been presented with the overarching business rule/ admission principles questions (which, it is assumed, will align in part to the work that the ARC working group is doing). We wait for ARC APG to give their steer in terms of how this area of work should be carried forward before we engage with providers on this area. This however does not stop us for starting work on our new services. UAG is setting up a Dates and Deadlines working group which will include representatives from across the schemes which will review all operational dates and deadlines and make recommendations.
5. Broader Efficiencies	Top ten improvements that once defined can be fed into relevant areas	Advisory Groups have been asked to develop a top ten list of efficiencies and improvements that we can feed into the development of products where relevant.
6. User Interface	How providers interface with UCAS products - The provider user journey through our products: Collect & link product	As part of the development of products we will use agile feedback loops to collect and action improvements as we have done with postgraduate.

How are we going to do it?

We have already got a lot of existing information collected from previous reviews (QIR, APR, IAR) and we will be using this and adding to our understanding though a series of engagement activities.

- ➢ **Webinars –** we have found them to be an effective way to gain regular and prompt feedback on product design features

- ➢ **Groups and forums** – key features of any new product may need to be considered by representative groups such as the scheme advisory groups, specially convened working groups and, as appropriate ARC APG

- ➢ **Sector bodies –** any potentially controversial decisions and fundamental changes to the admission system would need endorsement from the bodies above and beyond the Admissions representative bodies – here we would loo for input from ARC, UUK, AoC, Guild HE and the UCAS Board

The Change Steering Group, with input from the Advisory Groups, will play a central role in helping to direct where work should be done and where decisions should be made.

How does it all fit together?

- Data, link and business rules/admissions principles give us the foundations onto which we can start building our new services and this is where we are starting to work

- For example: by understanding what data providers need, we can make sure we are building products to collect the right information; an agile development methodology allows us to make sure *HOW* we collect that data works for providers

| Admissions Portfolio | Application Services (application management, fraud, similarity and verification) |
| | Collection Services (opportunity content collection, content distribution) |

Data

Link

Business Rules / principles

Efficien-cies

User interface

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What happens now?

- *The UCAS Data Group* have been working with UCAS to develop the data requirements for what we need to collect and report back to providers. These requirements will be validated by the Data Group and other advisory groups as representatives of the sector.

- *The UCAS Technical Group* and third party vendors has been involved in the discussions to help understand the barriers and requirements for link products (so how UCAS' customers access our systems e.g. via weblink).

- We have been asking *UCAS' Advisory Groups* to consider the top ten improvements/efficiencies they would like to see developed.

- *A Dates and Deadlines working group* is in the process of being set up as a sub group of the Undergraduate Advisory Group, this group which will include representation from across the sector and will have the remit to review all operational deadlines for the Undergraduate scheme.

- We will be adding to the information already available on the 'Development of our services' page on ucas.com so that information is easily accessible in one place.

- We will be talking about this more at the UCAS ARM and encouraging people to get involved