

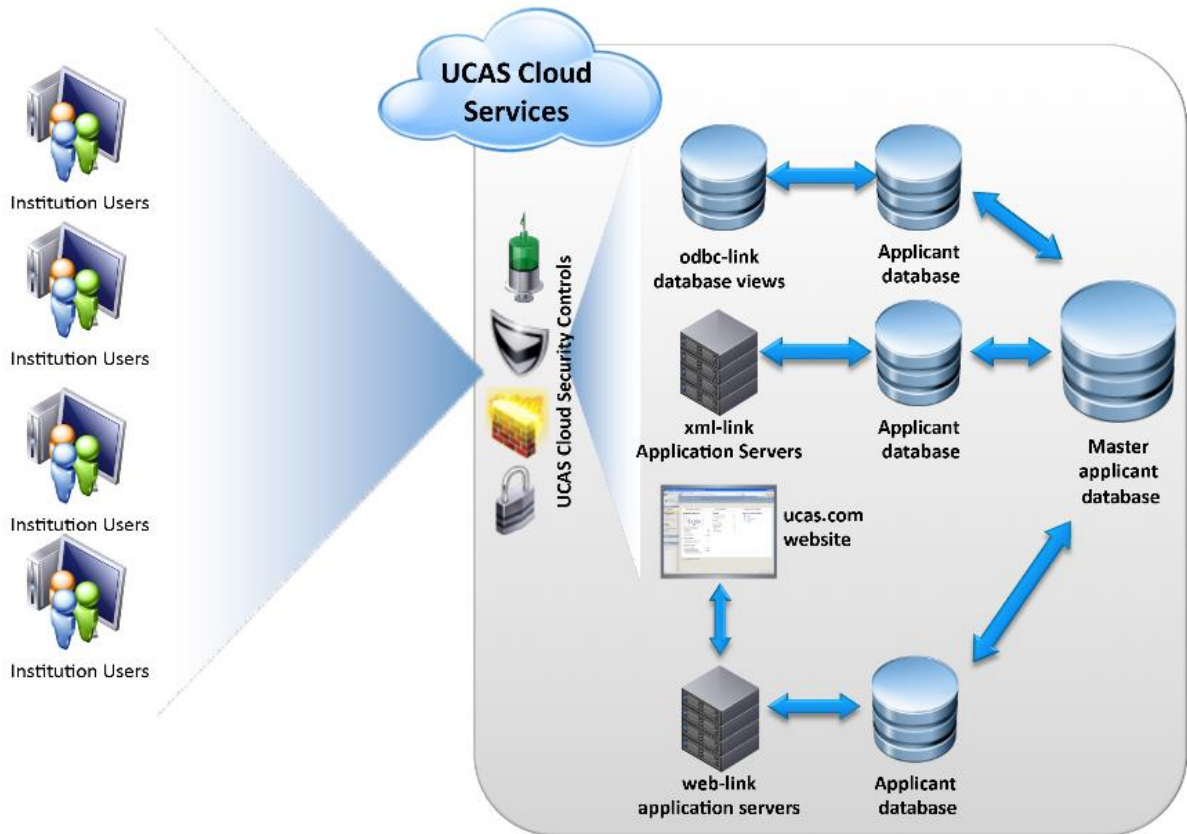
# Changes to UCAS link systems

UCAS

A technical guide for providers

Updated March 2016

This document relates only to the odbc-link, xml-link and web-link products as hosted in the cloud.  
The diagram below provides a high level view of the new system architecture developed by UCAS in the cloud which has supported Confirmation and Clearing from 2013 onwards.



**odbc-link**

If your admissions system is using odbc-link to exchange data with UCAS, your systems administrator will need to make the following changes to the way that your system(s) connect to UCAS.

The UCAS ODBC Link server (now odbclink1.ucas.com) provides SQL\*net services through the SQL\*net port (1524), using an Oracle SID of ODBCFE1.

The TNSNAMES.ORA settings for the new production odbc-link environment are below. These settings are for use with Oracle9i client and beyond.

Update TNSNAMES.ORA to have the following configuration, note a SID "SID=ODBCFE1" entry should be used in place of the SERVICE\_NAME:

```
ODBCDB.UCAS.COM=
(DESCRIPTION=
(AADDRESS_LIST=
(AADDRESS=(PROTOCOL=TCP)(HOST=odbclink1.ucas.com)(PORT=1524))
)
(CONNECT_DATA=
(SID=ODBCFE1)
)
)
```

Note that the port is now 1524 and not 1521.

In some case the host name will be an IP address e.g. HOST=192.168.11.245. This IP address will no longer work and must have been replaced as above.

In addition to this, we request all providers configure their firewalls to allow TCP port 1524 through to the IP address ranges below. This is to enable providers to take advantage of the new connection point if outbound firewall rules are used. And also to use UCAS' disaster recovery capability in the unlikely event that we need to deploy systems at our secondary site.

IP Address	Range
176.32.104.0/21	176.32.104.0 - 176.32.111.255
176.34.128.0/17	176.34.128.0 - 176.34.255.255
176.34.64.0/18	176.34.64.0 - 176.34.127.255
178.236.0.0/20	178.236.0.0 - 178.236.15.255
185.48.120.0/22	185.48.120.0 - 185.48.123.255
46.137.0.0/17	46.137.0.0 - 46.137.127.255
46.137.128.0/18	46.137.128.0 - 46.137.191.255
46.51.128.0/18	46.51.128.0 - 46.51.191.255
46.51.192.0/20	46.51.192.0 - 46.51.207.255
52.16.0.0/14	52.16.0.0 - 52.19.255.255
52.208.0.0/13	52.208.0.0 - 52.215.255.255
52.30.0.0/15	52.30.0.0 - 52.31.255.255
52.48.0.0/14	52.48.0.0 - 52.51.255.255

52.92.40.0/21	52.92.40.0 - 52.92.47.255
52.94.5.0/24	52.94.5.0 - 52.94.5.255
52.95.244.0/24	52.95.244.0 - 52.95.244.255
52.95.255.64/28	52.95.255.64 - 52.95.255.79
52.95.60.0/23	52.95.60.0 - 52.95.61.255
54.154.0.0/15	54.154.0.0 - 54.155.255.255
54.170.0.0/15	54.170.0.0 - 54.171.255.255
54.194.0.0/15	54.194.0.0 - 54.195.255.255
54.216.0.0/15	54.216.0.0 - 54.217.255.255
54.220.0.0/16	54.220.0.0 - 54.220.255.255
54.228.0.0/15	54.228.0.0 - 54.229.255.255
54.231.128.0/19	54.231.128.0 - 54.231.159.255
54.239.100.0/23	54.239.100.0 - 54.239.101.255
54.239.114.0/24	54.239.114.0 - 54.239.114.255
54.239.32.0/21	54.239.32.0 - 54.239.39.255
54.239.99.0/24	54.239.99.0 - 54.239.99.255
54.240.197.0/24	54.240.197.0 - 54.240.197.255
54.240.220.0/22	54.240.220.0 - 54.240.223.255
54.246.0.0/15	54.246.0.0 - 54.247.255.255
54.72.0.0/14	54.72.0.0 - 54.75.255.255
54.76.0.0/15	54.76.0.0 - 54.77.255.255
54.78.0.0/16	54.78.0.0 - 54.78.255.255
79.125.0.0/17	79.125.0.0 - 79.125.127.255
87.238.80.0/21	87.238.80.0 - 87.238.87.255

### xml-link

If your admissions system is using xml-link to exchange data with UCAS:

xml-link is a web service provided by UCAS for providers to retrieve reference data, the details of an applicant and their application, and to then make decisions through the xml-link transactions. These transactions are done in real-time and are processed immediately.

Providers are required to provide their own web service client to make use of xml-link created directly or indirectly from the WSDL (Web Service Description Language) file provided by UCAS.

The URL for xml-link has changed for the cloud service and therefore any provider systems that connect to xml-link will need to be updated to make use of this new connection.

Your systems administrator will need to make the following changes to the way that your system(s) connects to UCAS - this change is limited to a modification of the (SOAP) end-point to which you connect.

Web service details for:

UCAS Undergraduate  
UCAS Conservatoires  
UCAS Teacher Training

- LIVE Environment: <https://xmlink.ucas.com/xml-link/XmlLinkWS>

### **web-link**

web-link is a web application provided by UCAS for providers to retrieve reference data, the details of an applicant and their application, and to then make decisions through the web-link interface. As part of the changes to our systems we have made a conscious decision to split the end user functionality and the management / administration web-link users into their own applications. Both applications will function as previously, but each will have its own location.

UCAS intends to simplify this in subsequent years as a part of our service improvement programme. There are now separate log in mechanisms for:

- web-link has a new URL ('Live Environment' below) for its main functionality – the running of reports, retrieval and update of application and applicant details.
- an additional URL for the maintenance and administration of user by providers ('web-link User Administration' below)

web-link is accessed through links on [ucas.com](https://ucas.com) or directly by entering the URLs below:

- Live environment: <https://weblink.ucas.com/ucaslinkauth/index.do>
- Web –link user administration:
  - Either to the website landing page: <https://www.ucas.com/providers> or direct to: <https://update.ucas.co.uk/netupdate2/Welcome.htm>

### **Frequently asked questions for UCAS-link in the cloud**

Here are the top questions requested from the UCAS service desk for the link-products and answered by the UCAS product development team:

Why have you moved to the cloud?

- As providers are aware, UCAS has suffered performance and availability issues during the Confirmation and Clearing period. This move to the cloud is intended to stabilise the service and ensure that providers have a high quality of service from UCAS' IT systems.

What do I have to do to use the link- products in the cloud?

- UCAS is providing new connection details for xml-link, web-link and odbc-link in a separate briefing paper. This will cover the connection changes required to enable access to the new systems.

Will we need to update the TNSNAMES.ORA file and allow access to our servers via the firewall to ODBCLINK:1524? Will we need to do any of the following once the tnsnames.ora file is updated: restart Oracle? Restart router?

- If you mean the Oracle Client tools – no, you do not need to restart this. Just add the tnsnames.ora config file with the TNS name entry in or add it to thought the UI.
- If the Uniface' urouter caches your TNS connection string, then it will need to be restarted.

Will users who are logged into SITs need to logout and back in again for the UCAS connection update change?

- We do not know enough about SITs to provide you with a definitive answer on this. Generally applications will need a reboot or a flush of cached meta data after something like a data source change. Your SITs / Tribal representative will be able to answer this for you.

Will the system be faster than the previous system?

- We have designed our system to accommodate the full stress placed upon it by Confirmation and Clearing. We have made specific optimisations to the system to ensure it can handle this load; however UCAS is not guaranteeing a specific improvement in performance for providers.

Do I need to alter any of my batch jobs?

- By following the changes outlined in the technical change note, you will be able to connect to the new UCAS systems. The running of batch jobs against these new systems remains unaltered. Should you encounter issues with batch jobs, raise a call with the UCAS service desk, as normal.