Terms of Reference

Data Group
March 2017

Purpose

The group provides an advisory forum for UCAS and higher education providers (HEPs) to facilitate dialogue and discuss strategic and cross-scheme operational issues related to admissions data with the aim of improving the quality of UCAS' data assets and improving the effectiveness and efficiency of data collection, management and exchange between UCAS, HEPs and the wider HE sector.

Objectives

The Data Group will focus on the following six improvement areas:

- **Improving data quality**
  Identification and discussion of solutions for data assets where UCAS and/or HEPs have requirements for improvements to quality in terms of coverage, accuracy and completeness to enable the planning and delivery of admissions services and associated activities
- **Improving data collection and management**
  Identification and discussion of solutions for processes where improvements are needed to data collection and data management including data standards or terminology in order to optimise the currency of UCAS data assets and reduce burden for HEPs
- **Improving data exchange**
  Identification and discussion of solutions for processes where improvements are needed to data transfer or exchange mechanisms between UCAS and HEPs and HE sector bodies (e.g. HESA and funding councils) to support statutory reporting and related requirements
- **Improving the understanding and use of data supply**
  Appreciation and documentation of the uses HEPs make of UCAS supplied data so that UCAS products and services are developed in line with customer needs and training is tailored to customer requirements
- **Improving best practice**
  Discussion and documentation of operational best practice among members in relation to data management to maximise the value of information shared between HEPs and UCAS for admissions purposes
- **Improving change management**
  Identification and discussion of legislative and regulatory changes which affect data collection, management and supply including provision of policy updates and horizon scanning in response to sector-wide initiatives

Membership
The membership of the Data Group will comprise representatives nominated from a range of HEPs and the group will endeavor to reflect the widest possible variety of experiences and data-related roles and functions within its membership.

Opportunities for new members will be made available on the UCAS website and communicated through the appropriate channels.

Members of the Data Group will be named on the Groups & Forums sections of the UCAS web pages, along with terms of reference, meeting minutes and papers.

Representatives of HESA, the funding councils or other relevant third-parties may be invited to attend meetings or provide ad-hoc advice on specific issues.

Chair
The Data Group will be chaired by a nominated HEP representative. The Chair's term of service shall be two years. The Data Group elects its own Chair from among the representatives that have served a minimum of one year with regular attendance. The process for election of a new Chair will start at least one meeting prior to the Chair's last meeting. Nominations for Chair will be proposed and seconded by current members and the nominee should indicate willingness to serve. Elections can take place virtually. The incumbent Chair may choose to sit on the group for the remainder of their five year term.

Term of membership
The term of membership of the Data Group will normally be renewable for up to five years. Membership of the Data Group will be reviewed on an annual basis at the last calendar meeting of the year to ensure that membership remains as representative and appropriate as possible. If individuals move institutions, a discussion with the Chair will take place to agree whether continuation of membership is appropriate or not.

Attendance
If members are unable to attend a meeting they must seek approval from the Chair before sending an alternative representative. Members who miss two consecutive meeting without good reason will be contacted by the Chair for a discussion, following this a decision will be made regarding the members' continued involvement as a representative.

Responsibilities of HEP members
In order to function effectively and provide value to the wider sector, all of the HEP members are expected to:
- act as public representatives of the sector in terms of the scope of the group
- reflect the views of local and wider admissions communities
- feedback to the sector through their own networks

- contribute individually and collectively to the engagement activities that UCAS uses to plan, design and develop its products and services
- lead presentations to the group on subjects where they have particular expertise or experiences to share
- come prepared to add value to the agenda items including the provision of well-informed advice on development proposals where these have been notified in advance by UCAS
- put forward business items for discussion at meetings. Members should inform the Chair in good time and no less than ten working days before the next scheduled meeting

Administration
UCAS will provide the secretariat to support this meeting and will endeavour to ensure that:
- Meetings are calendared no less than six months in advance
- Agendas and papers are circulated no less than ten working days prior to scheduled meetings
- Approved Minutes are circulated no less than four weeks after each meeting