Minutes

DG/17/M2
Data Group meeting
held on Monday 19 June 2017, UCAS, Cheltenham

Chair:	Daniel Farrell	University of St Andrews
Present:	Alex Ingold	The London School of Economics and Political Science
	Helen Fawcett	Higher Education Strategic Planners Association (dialling in)
	Lisa Machin	Nottingham Trent University
	Paul Ashby	University of Birmingham
	Richard Bartlett	University of Cambridge
	Steve Walsh	Aberystwyth University
	Wendy Webster	University of Dundee
Apologies:	Carolyn Charlton	Keele University
	Christine Giles	University of Portsmouth
	Gurjit Nijjar	University of Derby
	Jo Hamilton	University of Exeter
	Judith Davison	University of Huddersfield
UCAS in attendance:	Clare Cozens	Technology Relationship Manager
	Deniz Gosai	Groups and Forums Administrator
	Fraser Nicoll	Strategic Product Manager (presenting)
	Louise Cyprien	Business Change Lead
	Mike Spink	Enterprise Data and Applications Architect
	Nigel Parr	Information Governance Manager (presenting)
	Peter Derrick	Head of Service Delivery
	Richard O'Kelly	Head of Analytical Data (presenting)
UCAS apologies:	Helen Thorne	Director, External Relations

A2/17/01 Welcome and apologies

The Group was welcomed to the meeting, and the apologies were noted.

A2/17/02 Minutes and action log from previous meeting

The minutes were approved as a correct reflection of the last meeting.

The actions from the log were discussed.

DG094 – A paper on EXACT pricing was submitted prior to the meeting. Paul Ashby, University of Birmingham, who raised the initial concern, was looking at their internal data, and therefore could not comment on the EXACT data. This action was closed.

DG096 – No further examples had been sent through. The issue was to do with the design of UCAS' legacy system, and would be resolved as part of Digital Acceleration. This action was closed.

DG097 – This was a known issue and would be addressed following the change freeze during September, ahead of *X 2017. The Group asked for this information to be circulated to the wider sector through the UCAS Correspondents' bulletin. This action was closed.

CC DG099

DG098 – A deputy Chair was still needed for the Group, and members were encouraged to put their names forward.

All other actions were closed.

To ensure the meetings were not too UCAS-heavy, the Group agreed they would like a provider-led 'workshop' style item on future agendas for at least an hour.

A2/17/03 Membership update

The Group was informed that two providers had put their names forward to join the Group, and agreed to invite them to join.

DG DG100

It was requested, and agreed by the Group, to hold meetings at other locations. The London School of Economics and Political Science offered to host the next meeting. The date of the next meeting was discussed later.

A2/17/04 Introduction and discussion on the UCAS service catalogue

As noted in the past, many providers did not realise what data UCAS provided, and how they could obtain the information. As a result, a number of workshops and consultations had been held, with the aim of creating a service catalogue. The Group was shown a copy of the catalogue in a draft state. It was hoped that in future, the

Action

catalogue would become more interactive. Each of the four service categories would have its own service owner. The catalogue would include contact details, although this was still being agreed. The target was for data to have a self-service dashboard. It was confirmed that the service catalogue was aimed at providers, not applicants.

UCAS welcomed feedback on the document, to ensure improvements could be made. The Group noted that the first draft was good. It was hoped that the next version would be available shortly, which would include more details on the products, what data would be included in the capitation fee, and what data would be paid for.

FN DG101

The Group noted that they were not aware that App Tracker was a paid for service, and asked whether the campus code could be added to it. A user group for App Tracker was being set up, and this request would be fed back. The Group asked for a further update on the service catalogue at the next meeting.

DG DG102

The level of engagement providers had with UCAS' data products was discussed. The conclusion was that the amount of information/documentation on products was insufficient to support proper engagement. The Group also asked for the strategy behind the products to be shared. This is something UCAS was now addressing.

A2/17/05 UCAS service development update

The Group was informed that the postgraduate release of the application management service (AMS) was due in September 2017. A demonstration on AMS was given to the Group. It was noted that once an applicant had submitted an application, they would still be able to update it (except for personal statements and references). The Group mentioned an issue regarding applicants inputting incorrect passport numbers, often because the applicant did not have a passport. It was confirmed that in AMS, different fields would become mandatory at different points in the application, although this was still being worked on.

Work was being carried out with the collection tool, and the HEP test environment was a good place for providers to have a look at this.

Application document management was being worked on for postgraduates. All documents would be virus scanned at UCAS before being made available to the provider. HEPs confirmed that they looked at documents with the application, and therefore required the document with the application. UCAS confirmed it was taking the approach that if an application required an attachment, it must be supplied.

The list of mandatory and non-mandatory fields was currently being worked on. The list had previously been discussed during a webinar, and it had been noted that different mandatory questions would be required depending on the application type (home or overseas). It was also requested that a 'Don't know' option should be included, and the Group confirmed that providers would find it useful seeing which fields were mandatory when the application was received. The current list of fields would be sent out with the minutes.

DG DG103

In addition, UCAS would be using data from Ofqual, as well as working with Qualification Wales, SQL, and NARIC to provide applicants with a complete list of qualifications to use in their applications.

The Group was encouraged to have a look at the AMS prototype and feed back on it. The Group was shown an example of how to make a decision on an application. The aim was to keep the conditions for an offer as flexible as possible initially, but with plans to implement a built-in wizard tool in the future. There were also plans for an audit trail showing when changes were made.

Clare Cozens, Technology Relationship Manager, explained her role. All the new Digital Acceleration (DA) systems were available in the HEP test environment, so providers could take a look. Software providers were very engaged in the current developments. The next step was to set up an API working group to help software providers understand how UCAS would be developing its products.

The visioning strategy was nearly completed, and would be shared at the next webinar. Each scheme would have the same APIs.

A2/17/06   HECoS update

A HECoS presentation was shared with the Group. A copy would be sent with the minutes.   DG DG104

It was confirmed that HECoS would replace JACS for the 2019 cycle onwards, and that they would not run in parallel. The difference between the two coding systems was detailed in the presentation. UCAS' intention was to validate the HECoS codes as they were collected.

UCAS would be redesigning its App Tracker product as part of DA, and this would include deciding how subject coding would be incorporated. Providers would be responsible for reclassifying their courses using HECoS rather than JACS.

Detailed information was available on the HESA website, and the Group was encouraged to look at it.

It was confirmed that the application code was being maintained as four digits, and would be up to the provider to create. The old JACS codes would be available to see, as read only, for as long as providers would find that useful. It was asked whether programme codes could be also visible.   MS DG105

The search tool was scheduled for launch in early May 2018. Providers would therefore have from autumn 2017 until the search tool went live to input the HECoS codes.

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A2/17/07 UCAS' analytical reporting

No changes were planned for Confirmation and Clearing, with the exception that nursing courses would be published as an addition. The Group confirmed they had access to the Confirmation and Clearing portal on ucas.com.

The precision marketing data service (PMDS) had been rebranded to the direct contact service (DCS). Providers would have early access, via MOVEit, to applicants who UCAS suspected would not be successful, so they could be pre-screened. Providers would then be allowed to call applicants from 11:00 on A level results day. It was noted that some providers did not realise they used MOVEit, and it was not clearly labelled, or easy to locate. Clare Cozens, Technology Relationship Manager, agreed to feed this back.   CC DG106

It was confirmed that new UCAS Teacher Training reporting was not currently a priority, however existing reports could be updated.

Finally, it was noted that the embargo training had a good uptake, and the embargo agreement had been sent out to all providers for signature. All colleagues at providers could now take part in the training.

A2/17/08 General Data Protection Regulation implementation update

A presentation on the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) was shared with the Group. Providers were actively taking onboard the GDPR implications.

The Group was encouraged to see that UCAS was happy to play a flagship role, and share guidance with providers. UCAS currently had a two-page guidance document which they would send to providers. HESA also had guidance which they would be sending out. It was noted that UCAS was receiving low level concerns from providers, but currently did not see an issue with sharing their data with providers.   NP DG107

A short update on mandatory breach reporting was provided. Initially, it had looked like every breach (regardless how small) would need to be reported to the Information Commissioner, however, this might not be the case, and only serious breaches would need to be reported. With regards to embargo breaches, it would need to be decided whether the breach caused harm to the individual, and only if it did would it need to be reported. Currently, there was no legal regulation saying that breaches needed reporting.

The Group questioned how the shared service would be affected by GDPR. It was noted that fundamentally, the shared service was to be a more efficient admissions service, and therefore should be OK. The Group asked for a further update at the next meeting. DG DG108

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A2/17/09 Provider-led discussions

9.1 Contacts and schools update

The Group noted that a mechanism needed to be put in place to maintain schools' contact details, as HEPs did not currently have the confidence that the data that was held was correct. It was noted that UCAS did have a contacts database, but were now moving away from the reliance on this, and was now implementing a CRM system.

In addition, UCAS used external data sets (such as the Department for Education) to ensure the information was correct. However, it also relied on schools to inform them of any changes.

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DG109

Wendy Webster, University of Dundee, wrote a paper on this previously, and agreed to share it with Peter Derrick, Head of Service Delivery. It was also agreed that this would be an agenda item at the next meeting.

DG DG110

9.2 UCAS test data request and supply

It was noted that although requesting test data was easy, the data returned wasn't always what the provider was after. It was asked whether the guidance UCAS provides around this could be improved. Daniel Farrell, University of St Andrews, agreed to send Clare Cozens, Technology Relationship Manager, some suggestions to improve the process, which could then be added to the test form request.

DF DG111

9.3 Star files

The Group asked how Star files would work in the future. It was confirmed they would be replaced by APIs.

In addition to this, the HESA Data Futures initiative would impact this as more data was collected directly from providers. It was agreed to have a detailed conversation on APIs and how they would be put together at the next meeting. In addition, an update from the Technology Group around APIs would become a standard item on the agenda.

DG DG112

A2/17/10 Any other business and close

10.1 Update on the UCAS HESPA conference

A UCAS HESPA conference had been held. The feedback received had proven useful, and the meeting itself was a success. The hope was that the meetings would now take place biannually.

There was a discussion session on Star files, as well as the Data Futures going live during 2019. Forecasting of products and services, including EXACT was also discussed.

DG DG113

10.2 Date of the next meeting

The next meeting would take place on Tuesday 14 November at the London School of Economics and Political Science.