

Minutes

DG/18/M1

Data Group meeting

held on 21 March 2018 at UCAS, Cheltenham

Chair:	Daniel Farrell	University of St Andrews
Present:	Alex Ingold	The London School of Economics and Political Science
	Andy Fidler	Keele University
	Jo Hamilton	University of Exeter
	Lisa Machin	Nottingham Trent University
	Louise Hussain	The University of Manchester
	Paul Ashby	University of Birmingham
	Steve Walsh	Aberystwyth University
Apologies:	Amy Butterworth	University of Bristol
	Caroline Low	HESPA (planning)
	Christine Giles	University of Portsmouth
	Judith Davison	University of Huddersfield
	Richard Bartlett	University of Cambridge
	Wendy Webster	University of Dundee
UCAS in attendance:	Clare Cozens	Technology Relationship Manager
	Claire Feeney	Admin Support Officer (observing)
	Deniz Gosai	Provider Engagement Coordinator
	Fraser Nicoll	Lead Strategic Product Manager (presenting)
	Georgina Venman	Provider Engagement Coordinator
	James Harley	Lead Data Scientist – EXACT and Data Products (presenting)
	Mat Evans	Senior Data Steward
	Mike Spink	Enterprise Data and Applications Architect
	Nigel Parr	Information Governance Manager (presenting)
	Peter Derrick	Head of Admissions and Service Delivery

A1/18/01 Welcome and apologies

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

A1/18/02 Minutes and action log from previous meeting

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

The open actions from the log were discussed:

DG111 and DG125– these actions were covered during the meeting.

DG118 – the list of document file types had been circulated to the Data Group, Postgraduate Advisory Group and Undergraduate Advisory Group. UCAS would add to the list if required. This action was closed.

DG120 – UCAS had a database of contacts, which was being used for multiple purposes, and so not very efficient. As a result, UCAS was in the process of moving this database into its CRM system. The Group confirmed they would like this mapped to the DfE list. UCAS would look into this, and the action remained open.

DG121 – from a total of 7,000, 192 applicants were affected by Pearson’s Science Practical error last year.

DG122 – Jo Hamilton, University of Exeter, was asked to send a couple of paragraphs to UCAS to be included in the HE providers’ bulletin. There was discussion on how UCAS and the sector used HECoS codes, and it was noted that UCAS needed to be clear on this. It was asked that an update was provided through the bulletin, as soon as possible, on what the Analysis & Insights Team would be using HECoS codes for. In addition, it was asked if UCAS could share the plans for analytical cycle reporting, and Peter Derrick PD DG130 would feed back to UCAS that HECoS reports from UCAS did not match those produced by providers.

DG128 – the response provided in the action log stated which report groups UCAS currently used, but it was asked if domiciles could be included (e.g. the top ten). This would be requested again to Andy Harrison.

All other actions were closed.

A1/18/03 Corporate strategy update

It was confirmed that UCAS' core purpose was to concentrate on its undergraduate service. Other schemes would still be offered, but would need to align with the core purpose. A communication had gone out to the wider sector, and an update would be provided at the Admissions Conference.

UCAS was hoping to release some new products, including a new agents' and advisers' portal, and a new application and decision tracker.

It was noted that the Analysis and Research Team had been renamed to Analysis and Insights, and a new director would be starting shortly.

APIs would be used for transferring data, when UCAS Postgraduate AMS went live. The data would also be available through odbc-link for two cycles after the API roll-out. After this, odbc-link would be decommissioned.

A1/18/04 Efficiency list discussion

The Data Group's efficiency list was circulated to the Group prior to the meeting. The Group was asked to confirm if the list was still relevant.

UCAS was upgrading to the latest version of Hunter, which would be used for the fraud service.

Efficiencies needed to be transparent across all schemes. It was too late to change efficiencies highlighted yellow, as they would be released in June 2018.

Efficiency DG1 – it was asked if the efficiencies in DG1 could be separated into two: data collection would be delivered with postgraduate, and included with undergraduate developments, but the tariff calculator was not currently in scope.

PD DG131

Efficiency DG9 – collections scholarships – a scholarship link was available in Unistats, and the group recommended that UCAS also linked to this.

It was agreed that the efficiency list would be broken down further, and discussed in detail at the next meeting.

GV DG132

A1/18/05 Application Tracker

Sarah Barr Miller, Head of Insight Sales, joined the meeting, to provide an update on Application Tracker. Last year, UCAS had raised the price of the tool, but the sector was not wholly in agreement with this decision. The new Application Tracker was now set to

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go live in 2020, and due to this delay, UCAS had decided to reduce the cost of the current tool to £4,500 for larger providers. A formal communication would be sent out shortly.

UCAS did not want to change the current tool too much, but would like to make some improvements, such as the look and feel. UCAS was looking for feedback from providers on how to improve the tool, and offers of help to roll it out.

The Group suggested UCAS should first contact a few providers, to gather their thoughts, before carrying out a survey with the wider sector.

Paul Ashby, University of Birmingham, agreed to help with developing the tool.

Steve Walsh agreed to share what Aberystwyth University was using as a replacement for the tool.

In future, UCAS wanted to be more transparent about price changes, and would consult on this, working closely with the Data Group. The Group was advised to direct any further questions to s.barrmiller@ucas.ac.uk.

A1/18/06 GDPR update

A presentation on GDPR was shown to the Group. A copy was sent with the minutes. GV DG133

The Group questioned whether 'issuing 'direct marketing' (specifically about UCAS services) to learners with whom we have an existing relationship (opt out/unsubscribe permitted)' was allowed. The Information Commissioner Officer (ICO) had implied that, if the information sent to applicants related to a UCAS service, it would be permitted. The same applied to providers sending accommodation information.

The Group was concerned that applicants could get bombarded for opt ins, and asked if UCAS was carrying out any work to educate applicants and advisers on what it actually meant. Although advice and guidance were available on ucas.com, UCAS agreed further work could be carried out. PD/NP
DG134

A GDPR briefing was shared with the Group prior to the meeting, and it was noted that this could be shared amongst colleagues. It was requested that a date should be added to the document, as updates would supersede some of the information. NP DG135

A1/18/07 Update on Data Futures

Due to time constraints, this item was not discussed. However, a paper was circulated to the Group prior to the meeting, and there were no questions.

A1/18/08 Update on qualification reference data

An update was given, and it was confirmed that UCAS was working on improving the qualification reference data set.

UCAS was improving this by consuming the ID numbers from qualifications, so applicants could enter a number to direct them to a list of relevant qualifications.

The master data service (MDS) was shown to the Group. MDS was being used to map the qualification reference data set. Qualifications were downloaded from Ofqual, and updated on a monthly basis.

It was hoped this would be sent to providers through APIs, to ensure that everyone was working from the same data sets.

A1/18/09 Service catalogue update

The second version of the service catalogue had been released. Copies would be available at the Admissions Conference, and a PDF version would be online from 26 March 2018. Feedback would be asked for after the Conference.

The Group asked for the catalogue to list product owners individually, to make it easier to find out who to contact.

The catalogue had been updated with all products, and clearly identified which services were free, and those with a charge.

A further update would be included on the next agenda, to include the Group's feedback.

A1/18/10 Update from the Technology Group meeting

The Technology Group last met on Tuesday 6 March 2018. The morning agenda focused on UCAS updates, and the second half of the meeting was more provider-led discussions. The key agenda items included:

- a review of the Technology Group's efficiency list
- an update on the corporate strategy

- a presentation on the provider satisfaction survey – focusing on what UCAS was doing well, but also could be improved (such as single sign on). UCAS was putting together fix-it groups to help the improvements
- an update on the renewal of the Infosys contract – until 2021
- a detailed, provider-led discussion on automated Confirmation, and good practice during the embargo period
- a roundtable discussion on technical innovation

The Group asked for an update to be a standing item at all its meetings.

A1/18/11 Update on UCAS test data supply

The test and training environment was shown to the Group: www.ucas.com/providers/services/our-products-and-systems/test-and-training-environments. It was explained that ‘dummy’ applications could be created in the test environment, and APIs were also available.

The Group had some positive feedback on the test environment, and further feedback from other providers would be gathered shortly.

The order form was available in the ServiceNow portal. The form did not identify that Scottish/Welsh providers had different qualifications to those in England, so getting test data was not as easy as it could be. It was agreed that this would be fed back to UCAS. Infosys would be invited to visit a provider, to understand how the service could be improved.

CC DG136

A1/18/12 EXACT questions from Group

EXACT licensing and the OFS transparency condition – the transparency duty framework was now available. UCAS was working with HEFCE on what services UCAS could provide in the future. If the Group had any comments on how UCAS could support providers, they were asked to email Ben Jordan at b.jordan@ucas.ac.uk. Ben would also speak to HEFCE about the presentation, and interpretation of the data.

BJ DG137

EXACT publication dates – it would be beneficial for providers if they received the EXACT publication dates earlier. The EXACT database was built during December, which was a busy period, so although UCAS could look into moving the data forward, it might not be possible. UCAS could share the long-term roadmap, so providers understood what would be available in the future. A discussion on this would be included at the next meeting.

JH DG138

Application Tracker change in subscription cost – it was confirmed that the ability to make bespoke requests would still be available, and there would not be any changes to

the cost in the near future. Details on the pilot were still being agreed, and could not be shared with the Group. The Group commented that, due to budgeting, providers would need to know before the financial cycle whether they would be taking part in the pilot.

It was asked if a self-service report builder could be implemented during the pilot, similar to HeidiPlus.

A1/18/13 Any other business and close

Business Rules and Admissions Principles Working Group

A paper on the Business Rules and Admissions Principles Working Group was circulated to the Group prior to the meeting, for information purposes.

Date and venue of next meeting:

The next meeting will be held on Monday 25 June 2018 at UCAS. It was agreed that providers would host one meeting per year.