

Clearing 2015: UCAS' new service for applicants

What is it?

It is a new service, complementary to Clearing, to help match unplaced applicants with universities and colleges that have appropriate vacancies. The service works by comparing the qualification profiles of unplaced applicants to the profile of applicants that have been accepted on university and college courses in previous cycles. When an applicant's profile (courses applied to and qualifications) is matched, their data is shared with the matched university or college for consideration. Applicants may then be contacted directly by up to five universities and colleges where a match has been made. This service will be available from A level results day until Friday 4 September.

This service is in addition to Clearing and does not replace it.

Who can use this service?

All eligible applicants will have received an email invitation from us with a link to allow them to sign up. This deadline has now passed so even if an applicant still has the email, the link will no longer work.

Applicants were given up to five opportunities to sign up before results day. An email reminder was also issued to those who had signed up giving them more details. Applicants can always call the UCAS Contact Centre at any point if they have changed their mind or need more information.

Can applicants still use Clearing?

Yes – we strongly recommend applicants pursue their own search for courses in Clearing in the usual way, as a match is not guaranteed. If applicants haven't got a place after they've received their results, they can still use Clearing even if they have signed up to this service. Advice to applicants is to check the Clearing vacancy list online and contact any universities or colleges they may be interested in studying at to see if they will accept them through Clearing.

How do applicants accept an offer as a result of this service?

This service simply allows universities and colleges to proactively contact an applicant. The process of accepting an offer through this service is exactly the same as adding a choice in Clearing. Please remind applicants that a verbal offer from a university or college is not formal until they have added it as a Clearing choice in Track. Find out [how to add a Clearing choice onucas.com](#).

What is the protocol for a university contacting an applicant?

When a university makes contact with an applicant, during the conversation the applicant will need to ask them for a code word. This is to check and confirm the person they are speaking with is authorised to speak to the applicant. This code word is personalised and is on the most recent email UCAS has sent to the applicant. If the applicant has lost this communication, they should ask for a contact name at the university and call them back using the university's main Clearing number which will be publicised on their website.

Are applicants guaranteed a place as a result of this service?

No. Whilst an applicant's profile may be matched to a course, the university or college will consider a range of information on their application, and will only make contact with those they think are suitable for their course. Applicants **may** be offered a place as a result of this service, but a match is not guaranteed – hence the importance of advising your applicants to be proactive and follow the normal Clearing process as well.

When could applicants hear from matched universities and colleges?

UCAS will operate an embargo to ensure applicants are not contacted by matched universities or colleges until after 13:00 on A level results day.

Universities and colleges will contact applicants directly by telephone to make a verbal offer. Applicants can then take their time to consider the offer before adding the course as a Clearing choice on Track when the button becomes available.

Is there a change to the time that applicants can contact universities and colleges on A level results day? Is that 13:00 too?

No, the normal Clearing routine of applicants researching unis and contacting them still stands – university phone lines will be open from around 08:00.

Will universities and colleges use any other method to contact applicants?

This is a new service and this year initial contact will be made by phone, although universities will be able to use email if they are unable to reach an applicant. Normal marketing emails will still continue.

What applicant data/information will the universities see?

Universities and colleges will be sent details of matched applicants and will be able to access key parts of their UCAS application.

Would those universities that the applicant previously applied to be matched as a priority?

No – providers which the applicant previously applied to will not be matched as a priority, and we won't disclose details of an applicant's declined choices. An applicant's details will be given to a provider only if they are found to be a suitable match for a course which is being recruited for through this service. Providers will be aware of whether an applicant has previously applied to them.

What can I view in Adviser Track?

If you subscribe to Adviser Track, you be able to view details of all your applicants as normal. In Adviser Track, you will not be able to tell if an applicant has signed up to the new service. However you will be able to view those applicants in Clearing and those applicants who have added a choice in Clearing.

How should I prepare my applicants for telephone calls from matched universities or colleges?

When applicants sign up to use this service, they will be asked to provide **one** telephone number that universities and colleges can contact them on to discuss their application, and possibly to make them an offer. To ensure this goes as smoothly as possible, please share the following:

- **mobile phone** – if they give a mobile number, it goes without saying that they should keep it fully charged, switched on, and to hand at all times.
- **landline** – if they give a landline number, they will need to ensure they are near that telephone and ready to receive calls.
- **code word** – the applicant will have been provided with a code word in our recent email so they can confirm the person calling them is authorised to do so. If the applicant has lost this, they should ask for a contact name and call them back using the university or college's main Clearing number which will be publicised on their website.
- **pen and paper** – please encourage your applicants to **write everything down** during each call so they don't become confused between any offers made. They will also need to take down the course details and codes to be able to add the information in Track.
- **telephone call** – during the call, applicants may be asked questions about their application, so make sure they keep a copy to hand.

Who should I contact if I have a question?

Please contact the Schools Team at UCAS on 0345 1238001