Report

UC/15/R1
UCAS Council
Report of the fifth UCAS Council meeting, held on Wednesday 17 June 2015

Introduction

The fifth meeting of the UCAS Council ('Council') was held on Wednesday 17 June 2015 at Woburn House, London. The meeting was chaired by Paul Jagger MBE (Pro-Chancellor and Council Chair, University of Bradford) and was attended by 18 Council members (including three alternates), the UCAS Chief Executive ('CEO'), Director of Operations and Interim Director of IT, Director of External Relations and Director of Analysis and Research. Dr David Ashton (UCAS trustee) deputised on behalf of the UCAS Chair. The full delegate list is attached to this report.

Report from the UCAS Chair and Chief Executive

Corporate strategy 2015 – 2020
UCAS trustee Dr David Ashton informed Council that the corporate strategy 2015 – 2020 had been published following agreement by the UCAS Board in February 2015. The Board had valued Council's feedback and input during the strategy's development, which had helped to shape the strategy. Council's advice and feedback had also been reflected in the final version.

Membership
New Council member Dr Millan Sachania (Head Master of Streatham and Clapham High School) was appointed to Council in June 2015 to replace Bobby Georghiou (Headmistress of Bury Grammar School for Girls).

Council members John Ryan (University Secretary & Pro Vice Chancellor Students, University of Worcester), Professor Alan Speight (Pro Vice Chancellor for Student Experience, Swansea University) and Ellen Thinnesen (Deputy Principal, Tameside College) had also resigned from Council since the last meeting.

The full UCAS Council membership can be found at
www.ucas.com/corporate/about-us/corporate-governance/ucas-council.

UCAS Board appointments
Council noted that new trustee Andrew Forbes (Principal, College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London) had been appointed to the UCAS Board following the resignation of the previous head of a higher education (HE) and further education institution trustee, Michele Sutton OBE, earlier in the year.

It was also noted that UCAS trustee and Deputy Chair Professor David Fleming (Vice Chancellor, York St John University) was retiring in August 2015 and his successor would be confirmed at the next meeting.

Supporting Professionalism in Admissions (SPA) Review
The CEO updated Council on the findings and recommendations of the independent review of SPA which had reconfirmed the value placed on SPA's work by the HE community. This had resulted in a decision by the UCAS Board to fund SPA which would enable SPA to continue to support good practice and fair admissions across the whole of the UK.

Development of UCAS' products and services
The CEO informed Council of the rationale for UCAS' redevelopment of its postgraduate products and services before the undergraduate service. Postgraduate is considered to be a less risky option because the size of the current user base, the relative simplicity of the service, and the lack of an annual cycle with deadlines and peak periods of activity. The CEO emphasised that UCAS' new agile methodology allowed for continuing engagement with users of its products and services throughout the development process.

Consumer protection
Council was notified of the steps UCAS had taken to respond to the advice provided by the competition and markets authority (CMA) to help higher education providers (HEPs) ensure they were complying with consumer protection law in their dealings with students. This included revising the applicant-facing letters to ensure consistency with the CMA guidance, ensuring information concerning consumer rights could be located easily on ucas.com and that applicants can easily find information about the UCAS complaints process.

Council noted that HEPs had been consulted about how UCAS could assist them in complying with the CMA guidance early on in the learner's journey and SPA was also raising awareness of the issues with HEPs through various workshops and events, which HEPs had found useful.

The 2015 admissions cycle / Confirmation and Clearing (C&C) 2015

The Director of Operations and Interim Director of IT gave an overview of the delivery of the 2015 admissions cycle, including preparations for Confirmation and Clearing, which were progressing well for all schemes with no significant issues anticipated.

The following three Clearing initiatives for 2015 were highlighted:

- The launch of Clearing vacancy search from early July, instead of waiting for Scottish and A level results days.
- The opening of Clearing on Scottish results day at 10:00 (from 14:30) which was implemented following the request of Scottish schools and universities.

- The launch of a precision marketing data service (PMDS), which will help put HEPs with vacancies in contact with unplaced applicants who hold a suitable mix of qualifications and grades and who have given their consent to be contacted.

The Director of Operations and Interim Director of IT gave an update on UCAS' technology readiness for Confirmation and Clearing, outlining the testing, supplier management and risk mitigation activities which had been undertaken. Council welcomed the feedback and were confident that everything possible was being done to ensure a successful Confirmation and Clearing for students, parents and HEPs.

Personal data sharing framework

The Director of Analysis and Research introduced this item, noting that the Board had specifically requested advice from Council on this issue.

Council was given an overview of the personal data sharing framework proposals recently agreed by the UCAS Board and a presentation on the context for the discussion. The presentation, given by the Director of Research and Analysis, included public perceptions about the use of personal data; the increasing pressures on UCAS to provide data to third parties for research and a range of other purposes; the necessity for UCAS to retain the trust of applicants in order for the admissions service to operate effectively; and the results from UCAS' recent survey of undergraduate applicants.

Council was invited to discuss the risks and opportunities in the implementation of the personal data sharing framework and made a number of useful comments and suggestions.

The Chair thanked Members for participating in the discussion and it was noted that this would be an issue for Council to return to at a later date. Council was also informed that the results of the UCAS survey on the attitudes to personal data sharing would be published later in the year.

UCAS Progress (Progress)

The Head of Post-16 Development gave a demonstration of Progress, UCAS' post-16 admissions service that provides high quality information and advice about qualifications, progression routes and careers on ucas.com. The Progress service provides a comprehensive database of post-16 destinations in England and Wales, and an integrated application service for post-16 providers.

Council was informed of the objective of Progress to become a UK-wide service to support young people and those helping them to make the right choices about post-16 progression. Council noted the difference UCAS was making through the provision of Progress to address the deficit in accessible, clear, non-technical

information for young people at a critical transition point in their lives, as well as its benefits for teachers and parents/advisers.

Council members were invited to discuss Progress, giving particular focus to:

- the other actions UCAS might take to increase the uptake and coverage of the Progress service
- how Progress can best serve the needs of Council members' organisations

Council raised several useful points which would be followed up on.

Chair's Business

The Chair thanked Council members for their contributions, acknowledging the value of Council's deep dive analysis of the substantive discussion items.

Next meeting

The next Council meeting would be held on 27 November 2015 at UCAS, Cheltenham.

Delegate list
UCAS Council meeting held on Wednesday 17 June 2015

present:
Paul Jagger MBE, Council Chair; Pro-Chancellor and Council Chair, University of Bradford
Dr Tim Westlake, Deputy Council Chair; Director for the Student Experience, University of Manchester
Matthew Andrews, Academic Registrar, Oxford Brookes University
Philip Bloor, Head of Admissions, Sheffield Hallam University; Chair of the UCAS Teacher Training (UTT) Advisory Group
Hilary Boulding, Chair of Conservatoires UK (CUK); Principal of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama
Marie-Noël Earley, Assistant Registrar, University of St. Andrews
Rod Francis, Head of Milford Haven School (Wales)
Heidi Fraser-Krauss, Head of IT Services and Deputy Director of Information, University of York
Janet Graham, Director of Supporting Professionalism in Admissions (SPA)
Dr Richard Harvey, Academic Director of Admissions, University of East Anglia
Mike Nicholson, UK Chair of the HE Liaison Officers Association (HELOA); Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions, University of Bath
Steven Quigley, Academic Registrar, Regents University; Member of the Association of University Administrators Board of Trustees
Dr Millan Sachania, Head Master of Streatham & Clapham High School (for Minutes
Bob Savill, Head of Admissions, University of Chichester; Chair of the Undergraduate Advisory Group (UAG)
Fiona Waye, UUK Policy Adviser
Robert Wilson, Principal of Limavady Grammar School (NI)

alternates:
Michelle Magee, Senior Admissions Manager, Admissions and Marketing Services, University of Westminster; Deputy Chair of the Postgraduate Advisory Group (deputising for Dr Wendy Webster)
Steve McArdle, Assistant Head (Post-16), Durham Johnston School (deputising for Sir Michael Griffiths)
David Morris, NUS (deputising for Jen Adamson and Joe Armer)

apologies:
Professor Sir Steve Smith, Chair of the UCAS Board; Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive University of Exeter
Jen Adamson, Vice President (Education) Manchester Metropolitan University
Martyn Annis, Chair of the Academic Registrars Council Admissions Practitioner Group; Director of Academic Services, University of Brighton
Joe Armer, Vice President (Education) at the University of Birmingham Guild of Students
Jennifer Dwyer, Head of Admissions and Access Service, Queen's University Belfast
Christine Giles, Deputy Academic Registrar, University of Portsmouth
Jonathan Godfrey, Hereford Sixth Form College Principal
Sir Michael Griffiths, Past President of the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL)
Professor Nigel Healey, Pro Vice Chancellor (International) Nottingham Trent University
Dr Mark Mabey, Principal of the London College UCK
Donna McMaster, Head Teacher of Inveralmond Community High School
Joe Vinson, NUS Vice President Further Education

Dr Wendy Webster, Operations Manager, University of Dundee; Chair of the Postgraduate Advisory Group

in attendance: Dr David Ashton, UCAS Trustee; Vice-President and Registrar, University of Surrey

Mary Curnock Cook, Chief Executive, UCAS
Mark Corver, Director of Analysis and Research, UCAS
Fatuma Mahad, Director of Operations and Interim Director of IT, UCAS
Helen Thorne, Director of External Relations, UCAS
Gina Bradbury, Head of Post-16 Development, UCAS
Kathryn Honeywill, Marketing and Events Coordinator, UCAS
Sara Smith, Corporate Governance Coordinator / Council Secretary, UCAS
Danya Young, Corporate Governance Manager, UCAS