

Minutes

AG/23/M1

Student Advisory Group

Held on Wednesday 15 virtually through MS Teams

Meeting scheduled to start at 10:30 until 12:00

Chair:	Wayne Gouro	University of Oxford
Present:	George Obolo Sophie Banks Molly Jenkins Abishek Saha Amy Vince Salma Ghassan Al Azmeh Lauren Jones	University of Manchester Lancaster University University of Oxford University of Oxford University of Hertfordshire Goldsmith University of London Swansea University
Apologies:	Amina Riasat Giula Folino Colin Omorodion Bethany Furlong	Manchester Metropolitan University Birkbeck University of London University of Southampton Edge Hill University
UCAS in attendance:	Samantha Sykes Laura Hawkins Siobhan Williams	Customer Success Manager (B2C) Customer Engagement Coordinator Business Engagement Manager
Presenting:	Dan Pilkington Kate Bevan Adam Solley Phill Howell	Senior Content Strategist Product Owner Service Delivery Manager Senior UX/UI Designer

Action

A3/20/01 Welcome and apologies

The Group was welcomed to the meeting and the apologies were noted. The Group introduced themselves. Samantha Sykes introduced herself as the new group owner.

A3/20/02 Minutes and action log from previous meeting

The minutes were approved as a correct and accurate reflection of the last meeting. The action log was discussed with updates of status.

A3/20/03 Discussion on entry grades tool

Kate Bevan presented an update on entry grades tool. It is being developed in increments and will be tested within the development process, with a plan to evolve and change in response to feedback.

The Entry Grades Report will be located alongside the entry requirements in the search tool. The data will be collated from previous years. A personalisation feature will be available to students to input their grades and qualifications, which display display to the user the percentage of applicants with your grades who were accepted onto this course. There will also be a most common grade representation, with a minimum and maximum grade profile.

The following feedback was shared by the group

- Clearing spaces – it was unclear whether the averages and generalisations were based off people who got accepted straight away, not from clearing.
- The years of data representation. If the courses change, will the data be skewed overtime – UCAS plan to provide a link to ‘more information’ to see what data is included or extenuating circumstances.
- What percentage of the data presents aggregated results rather than course specific results.
- It may be confusing for some students looking at data or overwhelming – accessibility for students who have learning disabilities. It may be best to guide them directly to universities for guidance.
- Discrepancy between entry requirements from the university, and common acceptance grades. How this would affect applicant’s reality with what to aim for. UCAS assured it will be as accurate as possible as they will be working closely with stakeholders. A drive is transparency of difference between published and actual entry grades.

A shared consensus from the group was that the entry grade tool was a positive addition. It would have saved a lot of stress and time and save having to use third party websites had this been available when they were applying.

A3/20/04 UCAS.com and Content

Daniel Pilkington delivered an information and guidance plan for students on UCAS.com and the Hub in 2023. The navigation will include all pathways and routes for prospective applicants. The discover and inspiration tools will all be in one place for applicants to discover and compare options easier, build favourite shortlists, and allow personalisation to preferences and activity.

Personalisation

The new onboarding process will allow UCAS to capture more information about student’s preferences and mindset or where they are in their journey, whether it’s a subject or career in mind. Allow student to book an event through the Hub.

Subject Guides

- There will be a new template and design for subject guides, with better signposting to all pathways.
- The entry requirements such as careers and salary data will be shared by UCAS.
- The subject list will be expanded from 60 - 75.
- Student and apprentice experiences along with first job case studies
- Application / personal statement tips

Apprenticeships

- New podcast series – degree apprenticeships
- Parents guide – myth busting
- New careers content - advice on CVs and covering letters
- User-friendly information on apprenticeship standards to simplify it and define across all nations
- Occupational maps – direct qualification to career outcomes.

Cost of living

- Better information on fees and funding e.g. a student loan calculator
- A cost-of-living hub which signposts information out there.
- Signposting to scholarships
- Living away from home tips – financial advice.
- New budget calculator by location – monthly outgoings in comparison to where applicants are studying

Fair Access

UCAS are simplifying the user journey and information being shared, to include questions and guidance on how applicant's data is shared. UCAS will be working with key partners such as the Government, Student Finance, and charities to increase accuracy.

SAG035

A point was raised to include a link to Student unions as a e.g. strikes and impact on their study.

A3/20/05 Design Framework

Adam Solley and Phil Bowell delivered a presentation giving an overview of the Hub showing some visual representation of what it will look like.

User Interface has been simplified by UCAS to make it more user friendly for applicants. Information such as progress of application and dates they can expect to receive a response by will be accessible. Users will also be able to reply to offers individually. Dark interfaces for night mode will be reflected, as will high contrast modes for those with visual impairment.

The future state will be changed overtime during the cycle, rather than one big transition. The tools and functionality are staying the same,

A3/20/06

Any other business and Close

UCAS are hoping to make the Student Advisory Group further integrated with internal and external stakeholders and deliver networking opportunities for members.

The following polls were completed during the meeting:-

- 1) Would you take up the opportunity to attend (as a delegate) a UCAS conference/event if provided? 7 out of 8 participants
100% Yes
- 2) Would you be happy to meet in person once a year and attend a networking dinner (UCAS to cover costs)? 7 out of 8 participants
100% Yes
- 3) Would more networking opportunities be a beneficial addition to your membership of the student advisory group? 8 out of 8 participants
87% Yes
0% No
12% Not sure

The members posed the following ideas to UCAS -

- The idea of merging these opportunities into one event big e.g. SAG meeting, networking meal in the evening and then a chance to join a UCAS team day / see the building and meet staff from specific to departments
- Use this as a 'handover' opportunity for transition of old - new members, rather than extending the term of service for another year for current members.
- The Conference opportunity was highly desired. However, could we provide a Conference 'credit' (e.g. 12 months) so that individuals can use it to attend post-graduation at a time when there is greater capacity to travel potentially long distance, or could be more valuable during that time.
- More virtual opportunities - Meetings with or being informed about UCAS' teams across the business.
- The opportunity to write blog posts or articles for UCAS.

SAG036

The first in person meeting will be held in October or November, and UCAS hope to deliver these opportunities alongside.

The group would like an update on discover brand and how UCAS are looking to engage younger students' pre-university.

SAG037

The placeholder for the next meeting is set for Monday 5 June.

