

# Report

UC/14/R2

## **UCAS Council**

Report of the fourth UCAS Council meeting, held on Friday 28 November 2014

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### **Introduction**

The fourth meeting of the UCAS Council ('Council') was held on Friday 28 November 2014 at UCAS, Cheltenham. The meeting was chaired by Paul Jagger MBE (Pro-Chancellor and Council Chair, University of Bradford) and was attended by 20 Council members, the UCAS Chief Executive ('CEO'), Director of Finance and Corporate Services, Director of Policy and Research, and Director of Marketing Communications. Professor Sir Steve Smith (Chair of UCAS) also attended the meeting. The full delegate list is attached to this report.

### **Meeting report**

#### **Membership**

New Council members Jen Adamson (Vice President Education, Manchester Metropolitan University Students' Union); Joe Armer (Vice President (Education), the University of Birmingham Guild of Students); Philip Bloor (Head of Admissions, Sheffield Hallam University; Chair of the UCAS Teacher Training Advisory Group); Jonathan Godfrey (Hereford Sixth Form College Principal); Bob Savill (Head of Admissions, University of Chichester; Chair of the Undergraduate Advisory Group (UAG)) were appointed to Council.

The above new Council members replaced Victoria Winterton (University of Hull NUS Higher Education Zone Committee); Lucy Bannister (Cleveland College of Art and Design); Jennie Murray (Principal Lecturer, University of Gloucestershire; previous Chair of the UCAS Teacher Training Advisory Group); David Adelman (Principal of Godalming College; member of the Sixth Form Colleges' Forum National Council); and Chris Carpenter (Assistant Registrar, Loughborough University; previous Chair of the UAG) respectively.

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

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## **Report from the UCAS Chair and Chief Executive**

### ***New UCAS corporate strategy 2015-2020***

The UCAS Chair informed Council that the Board had recently held its strategy away day to shape the development of UCAS' new five year corporate strategy. The outcomes from the day would be presented to Council for discussion later in the meeting.

The UCAS trustees had been grateful to the Council Chair for his attendance and participation at the awayday, which had enabled the Board to hear and take account of Council's views.

### ***15 October 2014 deadline courses***

Council was informed about UCAS' first statistical release for courses with a 15 October deadline, which covered applications to medicine, dentistry and veterinary courses, and applications to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. There had been a 2% fall in the number of applicants to 15 October deadline courses, and a 3% fall in the number of UK-domiciled applicants compared to 2014.

### ***UCAS funding model***

Council was notified that the Board had taken into account the advice Council provided at the June 2014 meeting on the UCAS funding model – when it had considered and agreed the new pricing structure for UCAS in September 2014.

### ***Supporting Professionalism in Admissions (SPA)***

The CEO provided an overview of the SPA review, which the Board had commissioned to evaluate SPA's effectiveness, impact, value for money and future demand for services. The results of the review, and recommendations for future funding and delivery of the services would be shared with Council after the February 2015 Board meeting. In the meantime, Council members were encouraged to complete the survey.

### ***Unconditional offers***

The CEO confirmed that the Board had taken into account Council's feedback and advice on unconditional offer-making and other incentives. It had agreed a course of action to ensure students had clear information and advice to help them understand and respond to unconditional offers.

### ***The 2014 admissions cycle / Confirmation and Clearing 2014***

Council was given an overview of the 2014 admissions cycle, including the successful delivery of Confirmation and Clearing, and the end of cycle position.

### **New corporate strategy 2015-2020**

Council noted the new strategic themes discussed by the Board including:

- the benefits of engaging with learners earlier in their education; putting the learner journey at the heart of the strategy; and the benefits this offers higher education providers for connecting and building relationships with a broader range of informed learners at a younger age
- the development of digital services where learners and advisers can access relevant and trusted information, advice and application services, and connect with a wide range of higher education providers and others offering useful services
- accelerated digital transformation

Council members were invited to discuss the key themes and proposed objectives of the new corporate strategy prior to its finalisation by the Board in February 2015. Council was asked to focus in particular on:

- identifying key risks associated with the recommendations which the Board should consider in its oversight of the delivery of the strategy
- any areas which may have a broader impact on the sector or contribute to the delivery of efficiencies in admissions and student recruitment

### **New analytical services**

Council was given an overview of the proposed developments to UCAS' analytical products and services.

Members were invited to discuss UCAS' new products and services and identify the information and analysis they considered should be prioritised in terms of published analysis.

Council was in agreement with the general direction of travel and offered a range of advice for the Board's consideration when developing the products and services.

### **Council Chair**

As the Council Chair was standing down as Deputy Chair of the Committee of University Chairs, he would be resigning from Council in November 2015.

### **Next meeting**

The next Council meeting would be held on Wednesday 17 June 2015 in London.

## Delegate list

### UCAS Council meeting held on Friday 28 November 2014

- 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; Chair of the UCAS International Advisory Board
- Martyn Annis, Chair of the Academic Registrars Council Admissions Practitioner Groups; Director of Academic Services, University of Brighton
- Joe Armer, Vice President (Education) at the University of Birmingham Guild of Students
- Philip Bloor, Head of Admissions, Sheffield Hallam University; Chair of the UCAS Teacher Training Advisory Group
- Hilary Boulding, Chair of Conservatoires UK (CUK); Principal of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama
- Jennifer Dwyer, Head of Admissions and Access Service, Queen's University Belfast
- Christine Giles, Deputy Academic Registrar, University of Portsmouth
- Marie-Noël Earley, Assistant Registrar, University of St. Andrews
- Heidi Fraser-Krauss, Head of IT Services and Deputy Director of Information, University of York
- Jonathan Godfrey, Hereford Sixth Form College Principal
- Bobby Georghiou, Headmistress of Bury Grammar School for Girls
- Janet Graham, Director of Supporting Professionalism in Admissions
- Sir Michael Griffiths, Immediate Past President of the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL)
- Dr Richard Harvey, Academic Director of Admissions, University of East Anglia
- Dr Mark Mabey, Principal of the London College UCK
- Donna McMaster, Head Teacher of Inveralmond Community High School
- 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
- Joe Vinson, NUS Vice President Further Education
- apologies:
- Jen Adamson, Vice President (Education) Manchester Metropolitan University
- Matthew Andrews, Academic Registrar, Oxford Brookes University
- Rod Francis, Head of Milford Haven School (Wales)
- Professor Nigel Healey, Pro Vice Chancellor (International), Nottingham Trent University
- John Ryan, University Secretary and Pro Vice Chancellor Students, University of Worcester
- Professor Alan Speight, Pro Vice Chancellor for Student Experience, Swansea University
- Ellen Thinnesen, Deputy Principal, Tameside College

Bob Savill, Head of Admissions, University of Chichester; Chair of the Undergraduate Advisory Group (UAG)

Fiona Waye, UUK Policy Adviser

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

Robert Wilson, Principal of Limavady Grammar School (NI)

in attendance:

Professor Sir Steve Smith, Chair of the UCAS Board of Trustees

Mary Curnock Cook, Chief Executive, UCAS

Andrew Hargreaves, Director of Marketing Communications, UCAS

Paul Robinson, Director of Finance and Corporate Services, UCAS

Helen Thorne, Director of Policy and Research, UCAS

Mark Corver, Head of Analysis and Research, UCAS

Danya Young, Corporate Governance Manager/Council Secretary, UCAS