Report for Admissions Officers Conference

MARCH 2010

Chief Executive's report

This leaflet sets out for you a short summary of UCAS' achievements over the last year. In some ways it doesn't do justice to the sheer scope and volume of interactions we have with HEIs, schools, colleges, stakeholders and, of course, hundreds of thousands of aspiring applicants to higher education courses. UCAS is proud of what it has achieved and this summary represents a solid platform of strengths for me to build on in planning our future.

The past 12 months have seen many improvements in the operational delivery of UCAS services. The introduction of electronic Clearing and Adjustment, and the highly publicised increase in applications, affected every part of the organisation.

Although challenging, the year was also characterised by great successes, with record numbers of applications received and applicants placed, the acquisition of VIS (which expands our reach into 14-19 admissions), and the achievement of a number of national awards – public recognition of the commitment and professionalism of the people who work at UCAS.

Providing a high quality service is an enduring passion for everyone here. Making the right choice for higher education is a life-changing decision for applicants, so improving our services to advisers, the information within Entry Profiles and Course Search, and the availability of Unistats, are at the heart of what we do. In parallel, we have a continuous focus on improving our service to member institutions through the development of the Tariff, our international work, statistical research, training and data services, as well as our day-to-day technical and help desk operations.

MARY CURNOCK COOK
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

UCAS' financial position

UCAS, as a company that is also registered as a charity, is required to produce group accounts which incorporate the results of trading undertaken by the wholly owned subsidiary, UCAS Media Limited.

THE FINANCIAL YEAR OPERATES BETWEEN 1 AUGUST AND 31 JULY AND AUDITED ACCOUNTS FOR THE ORGANISATION HIGHLIGHT THE FOLLOWING RESULTS:

	2009 £'000	2008 £'000
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	30,048	27,186

	2009 £'000	2008 £'000
TOTAL FUNDS AT 1 AUGUST 2008	16,240	14,097
NET INCOME, GAINS AND LOSSES	2,143	2,143
TOTAL FUNDS AT 31 JULY 2009	18,383	16,240

Copies of the consolidated annual accounts can be obtained from the Company Secretary.

Delivering the best possible service

On **A level** results day alone, **100 expert UCAS advisers** answered **11,421 phone calls,** with GTTR, CUKAS and UKPASS generating an additional **2,000 calls.**

The introduction of a Course Search to UKPASS, the UK Postgraduate Application Service, has seen traffic to the site more than double.

'The process was swift and efficient; and though, understandably, UCAS is dealing with hundreds of thousands of students, the service still feels very personalised.'

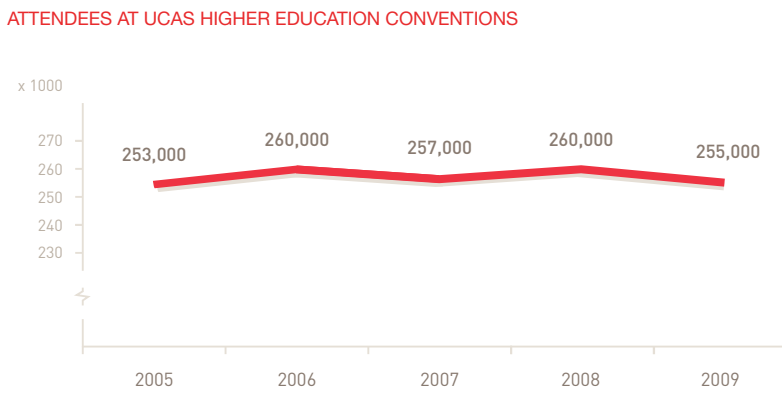
49 exhibitions and conferences were delivered to the sector, attended by over **275,000 pre-applicant visitors.**

1 March 2010 saw a **309%** increase in **UKPASS** applications compared to the same point in time last year.

Last year, UCAS **Professional Development** delivered training, consultancy and presentations to over 20,000 teachers, parents, advisers and admissions staff.

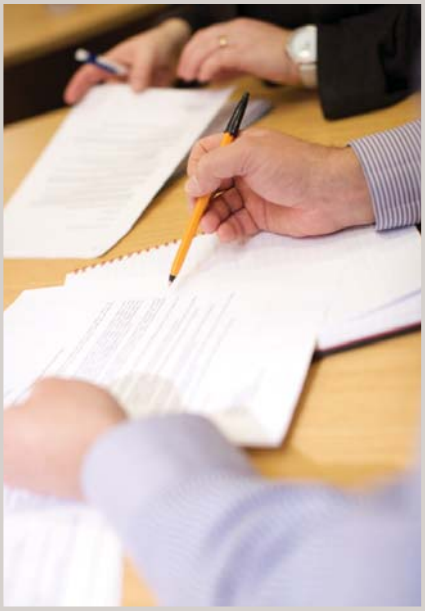
IT SERVICE DESK HAD AN AVERAGE OF 1000 REQUESTS PER MONTH IN 2009

UCAS designed and delivered regional training about Clearing and Adjustment to 600 advisers and HEI representatives.



Informing a changing landscape

The launch of the UCAS Research Forum generated debate on issues as diverse as widening participation and students' expectations and experiences, with up to 50 people attending each of the five sessions throughout the year.



UCAS has continued to develop collaborative relationships with key government agencies such as the Student Loans Company and UKBA, informing the development of services to support applicants and institutions in the collection of passport details and the application for student loans.

THE NEW UCAS SERVICE, ADVISER TRACK, PROVIDED 2,890 CENTRES WITH THE ABILITY TO MONITOR DIRECTLY THE PROGRESS OF THEIR STUDENTS' APPLICATIONS, REDUCING THE RISK OF DELAYS AND CONFUSION.

UCAS' International and Professional Development Teams visited 23 countries in 2009 - attending Education UK exhibitions, participating in schools visits, providing agents' training, and talking to students, counsellors and parents about the UCAS process and resources.

Our Data Matters Conference outlined the UCAS data strategy to 140 delegates, clearly placing **UCAS data** at the heart of the higher education sector's consciousness.

UCAS 14-19 launched following the acquisition of VIS Communications Ltd, specifically their Area Wide Prospectus and Common Application Process products. Starting with 22 local authorities, **UCAS 14-19** is providing services to an increasing number of providers and learners.

'... found the system easy to use, efficient and of exceptional quality.'

We processed **3.9 million** results over the Awarding Body Linkage period with record volumes handled at record speed.

Building a more efficient business

1million logins were successfully managed by the system on 20 August 2009 with over **1 million Clearing vacancy searches** performed on the same day.

'My application was processed by UCAS so quickly and forwarded onto my chosen universities the same day. Still can't believe it all happened so speedily! Fantastic!'

THE BUSIEST SINGLE SECOND WAS 20 AUGUST 2009 7:41:36, WITH **118 CONCURRENT LOGINS.**

Although applications increased by 9%, we used 7.5% fewer sheets of paper.

UCAS

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UCAS Quality Awards

Customer Service Excellence, a new government standard launched in March 2008, aims to bring professional, high-level customer service concepts into common currency with front-line services.

We received the Investors in People (IIP) in 2002. IIP is a national standard that recognises action and excellence in training and developing staff to achieve business goals. We successfully completed reassessments in 2005 and again in 2008.

In December 2006, we were successful in transferring from BS7799-2:2002 (Information Security Management Systems) to ISO/EEC 27001:2005.

Customer Contact Association Standard - The CCA Standard is an operating guide designed to assist organisations in delivering increased levels of efficiency and customer service. Contact centres are independently assessed by approved Accreditation Bodies and recommendations for accreditation are approved by CCA Standards Council.

In 2004, we gained ISO 9001 certification, a quality management standard, developed by the International Standards Organisation, which is increasingly recognised worldwide.

Beacon Company - Beacon South West brings together some of the South West's most forward thinking and ambitious companies to promote success and spearhead the growth of the region. Beacon Company status is an award given to those companies who can demonstrate outstanding achievement across a range of criteria.

The National Customer Service Awards celebrate the effect and impact of excellent customer service on the consumer and businesses. UCAS has received a Highly Commended award in the Customer Service Team of the Year – Public Services and Education category.

For more information on any of these facts, or for a Welsh translation, contact the UCAS Communications Unit
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