

## Minutes

SAG/21/M3

Student Advisory Group meeting

Held on Wednesday 20 October 2021 virtually through MS Teams

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Chair:	Callie Hawkins	Customer Experience Manager – Advisers and Students
Present:		Edge Hill University Swansea University University of Hertfordshire Lancaster University University of Oxford
UCAS in attendance:	Deniz Gosai Louise May	Provider Engagement Coordinator Head of Product Management
Presenting:	Aimee Okafor Finlay Willicott Mike Matuszczyk	Head of Events Marketing Product Lead Media Marketing Manager

**A3/21/01 Welcome and apologies**

The Group was welcomed to the meeting and the apologies were noted.

Due to other commitments Imaani Mitchell had stepped down as Chair for the Group. An email outlining the roles and responsibilities for the Chair would be sent to the Group after the meeting. If members were interested in chairing the meetings they were asked to email [groupsandforums@ucas.ac.uk](mailto:groupsandforums@ucas.ac.uk).

DG  
SAG025**A3/21/02 Minutes and action log from previous meeting**

The minutes were approved as a correct and accurate reflection of the last meeting.

The open actions from the log were discussed:

SAG023 – members had used My Application to make an application. Single sign on appeared to be working really well. This action was closed.

SAG024 –By declaring a disability UCAS could not confidently confirm answers would be shared or registered with the disability team within the universities and colleges due to differing processes. However, it was confirmed that the help text relating to the disability questions was lengthy and agreed to review to simplify. This action was closed.

**A3/21/03 Careers Quiz demo**

Finlay Willicott, Marketing Product Lead, joined the meeting to share UCAS' new careers quiz. The quiz could be accessed [here](#), and a presentation outlining the background of the quiz was shared.

The quiz was currently aimed at learners considering post 16 options, as this was traditionally UCAS' audience. However, the vision was to introduce it earlier in the learner's journey. The Group suggested that introducing the quiz earlier might help applicants explore different courses before they select their FE options.

Questions and feedback were received from Members of the Group:

- Could the quiz work if a learner knew which degree they wanted to study, but wanted to ensure they selected the right subjects to study to get onto the university course?
- It was pointed out when the quiz report highlighted 'typical jobs available' the number of jobs might not mean much if context wasn't available to give understanding, how many are competing for it was an example given.
- It was felt the related careers section was very clear.
- It would be helpful to be clear that other options were available other than a degree route (e.g. apprenticeships). It was noted that currently the quiz report did not currently pull through other options available, but UCAS was working with IFATE to standardised the data. It was suggested there be a banner on each page informing applicants that additional routes were available and linking them to the relevant pages.

- Members of the group complimented the report and would have found this extremely helpful when choosing subjects at school and courses at university.
- The quiz went live in September 2021 and feedback received had been positive.

Group  
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The Group was asked to send any additional feedback to Finlay Willicott – f.willicott@ucas.ac.uk

### A3/21/04 Events update

An events presentation was shared with the group. The Group fed back the following:

- Virtual events make it more accessible for students to attend.
- Events look more positive and inclusive. Being able to speak to other applicants and get more information seemed helpful.
- Could UCAS provide careers advice (such as the careers quiz) at events?
- Online polls which had been held at university open days was liked, and UCAS was asked whether they could do some polls too.
- UCAS could hold targeted events depending on where applicants were at in the journey (for example accommodation events when more applicants would be choosing their accommodation).

It was also asked whether universities could hold specific open days for mature students. UCAS agreed to feed this suggestion to HELOA.

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### A3/21/05 Accommodation discussion

The Group was asked a series of questions on the type of accommodation they used during their years at university and how they researched it. The [UCAS accommodation search website](#) was also shared and members were asked to take a look and give their immediate thoughts. This website featured university owned and privately owned student halls and applicants could search by location or university. It also included links to booking accommodation, and articles on tips for living away from home, finances, etc. The Group was asked for their views on whether private student housing should be added to the site.

- The website currently only shows accommodation from universities and private providers who had signed up to use the service. The group felt this was not clear and so it looked like some universities did not have available accommodation.
- The group agreed it was not distinct on what is private accommodation, the terminology was not helpful i.e. they associated 'halls' only with university owned accommodation.
- The group felt there should be a filter option, for university owned vs privately owned student halls for example.
- The group agreed that they would like to know if the accommodation was part of an approved partnership. The website showed only accredited accommodation and the group felt this should be made clear.

In answer to a question it was confirmed the website was a public website and could display accommodation available by location (i.e. not just that linked to a specific university) therefore available to any learner.

Feedback on the questions would be collated and used to improve the website.

**A3/21/06 Any other business and Close**

UCAS had recently introduced a [guidance toolkit](#) for teachers and advisers. The Group was asked to review the toolkit and feedback to Callie Hawkins – [c.hawkins@ucas.ac.uk](mailto:c.hawkins@ucas.ac.uk) on how it could be shared with students.

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The Group was reminded to complete the [equality, diversity and inclusion form](#) if they were willing to volunteer their data.

Group  
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The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 16 February 2022 from 10.30 -12.30.

Members were thanked for attending the meeting.