

Terms of Reference

Open Data – Task and Finish Group

September 2020

Purpose:

The Open Data Task and Finish Group (“the Group”) provides a mutually beneficial forum for UCAS, higher education providers (HEPs) and experts from the HE data sector to facilitate dialogue and discuss a framework for UCAS’ approach to publishing open data. UCAS wishes to maximise the utility of the data that is published but must protect the rights of its data subjects, the commercial sensitivities of providers and competition law.

The group will:

- Provide UCAS with a set of principles that are used to set the future direction of UCAS’ publishing of open data.
- Assess the principles against the Code of Practice for Statistics with a mind to disclosure control.
- Contribute ideas and proposals for change.

Membership Composition:

Membership of the Group will be drawn from: a range of provider types within UCAS membership, specific bodies with a vested interest in UCAS’ statistical outputs, data experts and users of UCAS’ open data.

- The Group is expected to comprise of up to 15 voluntary members.
- The term served by group members will be up to one year
- Members of the group will be listed in the groups and forums section of the UCAS website, along with its terms of reference and the outcomes of meetings.
- Various members of UCAS staff may be invited to attend meetings or provide ad-hoc context on specific issues.
- Membership of the group is by invitation.

- If unable to attend a meeting, members are to advise UCAS and provide an agreed deputy if possible. Members of the Group who miss two consecutive meetings will be considered to have resigned and will no longer be invited to future meetings. Absence will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- Members who leave the Group will be replaced.

Group Chair:

- The group chair will be the chair of UCAS Data Group.

Membership Responsibilities:

- Advise UCAS on its schedule of open data, specifically aligned with the pillars of the Code of Practice for Statistics (public value, are high quality, and are produced by people and organisations that are trustworthy)
- Require that UCAS considers and responds to any representations made by the Group.
- Discussions at meetings will be kept confidential and communications from the group will be agreed in advance.
- Be expected to represent a range of views from different stakeholders acting as representatives of the sector.
- The Group shall not be responsible for building a sector consensus.

Secretariat:

UCAS will provide the secretariat to support this meeting who shall endeavour to ensure that:

- Summary notes are circulated no later than four weeks after each meeting to the group.
- Agendas and papers are received by all members no later than five working days prior to meetings.
- Members of the group will be listed in the groups and forums section of the UCAS website, along with its terms of reference and the outcomes of meetings.

Proceedings:

- The Group will meet for a year, on at least three occasions from Autumn 2020.
- The group will meet virtually.
- Meeting agendas will be set and agreed with the Chair.
- Notes will be approved by the Chair and then the Group via email.