

Security marking: PUBLIC

Document owner: Strategy, Policy, and Public Affairs (published May 2021)

AN INTRODUCTION TO UCAS

As a highly trusted, independent charity, UCAS helps over 700,000 people from more than 200 countries and territories to explore the opportunities and benefits of higher education, further education, and apprenticeships every year. We are proud to enable over half a million people to change their lives by embarking on their next step in education or training.

Our technology capability and customer service expertise also mean that we can support individuals interested in exploring apprenticeship opportunities, and we currently run admissions services for conservatoires, postgraduate courses, and support those considering training as a teacher.

UCAS has a turnover of circa £50m. Income is partially generated by UCAS Media Ltd – our wholly-owned commercial subsidiary – all of which is gift aided back into the charity allowing UCAS to invest in innovation and improve our service. The remaining income for the charity is generated from the application fees paid by individuals, and a fee paid by universities and colleges for students placed.

UCAS International Ltd is our other wholly-owned commercial subsidiary, created in 2020 in line with UCAS' renewed focus on supporting the international student journey to UK higher education and a primary goal is to support International postgraduate taught (PGT) students on their journey.

THE UCAS BOARD, COMMITTEES, AND UCAS COUNCIL

UCAS has a skills-based board of 13 trustees. Our trustees provide strategic guidance and scrutiny, and are accountable for ensuring our strategy demonstrably meets our charitable objectives and delivers public benefit. The board is supported by the Audit, Finance, Remuneration, and Nominations committees. Trustees are selected and appointed based on their specific skills, experience, and expertise.

The Board is also supported by the UCAS Council, which was established in 2013 to represent UCAS' customers and stakeholders. The Council comprises about 35 Council members, sourced through nominating organisations and bodies as well as open recruitment at the discretion of the CEO.

KEY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE UCAS COUNCIL

The role of the UCAS Council is to provide expert input into the discussions of the UCAS Board; to give feedback to the UCAS Executive Team on strategic issues facing the organisation; and to inform the strategic direction of UCAS.

The Council will:

- > establish specialist smaller groups to support the Board on one-off projects, if required;
- > have the power to convene its own meetings and to request a meeting with the Board if there are specific matters it wishes to raise;
- > be expected to represent a range of views from different customers and stakeholders;
- > be accountable and transparent and support the Charity's engagement with customers and stakeholders with a view to increasing engagement;
- > Shape and inform UCAS' position on public policy matters relevant to UCAS's charitable objects.

COUNCIL MEMBER PERSONAL SPECIFICATION

A successful candidate will have some or all of the following:

- > Expertise and insight in an area relevant to UCAS' charitable objects, such as education, training and skills. These are outlined further on page 2.
- > a high level of understanding and interest in UCAS' business, our markets and customers, and a commitment to our charitable goals and values.
- > effective communication and interpersonal skills, and experience of influencing senior stakeholders, fostering productive relationships across complex and wide-ranging stakeholder groups.
- > evidence of strategic planning and decision-making, commercial acumen, and understanding of risk and performance management.
- > a breadth of vision, and a demonstrable understanding of the principles of good governance, including understanding of the proper separation between governance and executive management.
- > the ability to commit to the time requirement of the role, devoting adequate time to prepare for meetings and to develop an understanding of UCAS and wider higher education issues, and through this establishing credibility amongst colleagues and peers.
- > the ability to act ethically, possess sound independent judgement and the highest levels of integrity, independence, and confidentiality with a demonstrable commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

UCAS COUNCIL ROLE PROFILE

TERM AND COMMITMENT

The Council meets up to five times a year virtually, in Cheltenham or, from time to time, at other locations in the UK. The appointment is without remuneration but reasonable expenses for travel will be reimbursed.

Council members are expected to attend a minimum of 75% of Council meetings each calendar year. Where this is not the case, membership may be reviewed.

Membership of individual Council members shall not normally exceed three consecutive years.

MEETING FORMAT

Council members are asked to consult, where appropriate, with their respective stakeholders on key discussion agenda items ahead of each meeting. Meetings will take place under Chatham House Rule and in a 'discussion' format whereby Council members are asked to share their respective stakeholders' feedback with the group when debating the issues on the agenda. Council's collective feedback and advice is then shared with the UCAS Board.