



ACCESS: INSIDE KNOWLEDGE

**ADMISSIONS: ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE
BASICS AND TOP TIPS**



ALISON CHARLES
UCAS

SAMANTHA SYKES
UCAS





PROVIDER RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROLES



Responsibilities

- Adhere to the UCAS terms of service and business rules and principles (see the **Admissions Guide**)
- Operate within the relevant legal information and data security standards, and ensure that your employees, contractors and agents comply with Data Protection Act principles.

Roles

The **Primary Correspondent** at your provider is our main and first point of contact and is responsible for:

- ensuring your provider abides by our [business rules and principles](#)
- upholding the UCAS results embargoes on behalf of your provider
- Acting as a key point of contact with UCAS and cascading UCAS information to colleagues

THE APPLICANT JOURNEY: HOW UCAS SYSTEMS LINK UP

Collection tool

Higher education providers (HEP's) add information about their courses

Hub

Learners research choices, save search results, bookmark choices, apply and track their application

Apply via the Hub

Learners make applications; advisers/agents support applications

Web-link/ Student records system

HEP manages applications and records UCAS decisions

Hub/ Adviser Portal

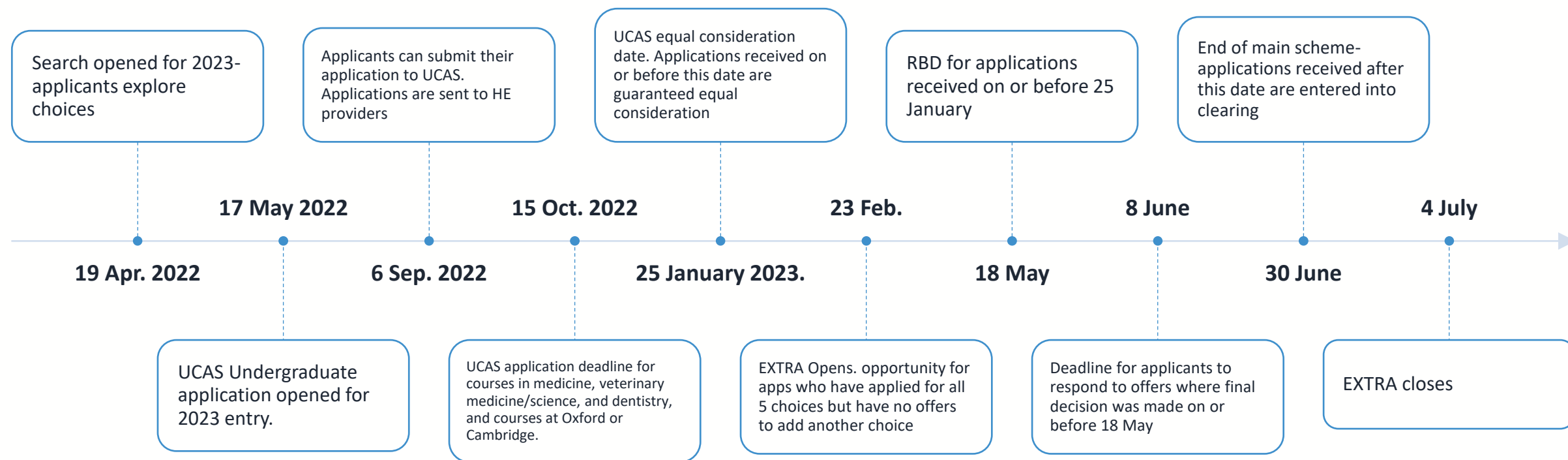
Learners/advisers manage applications



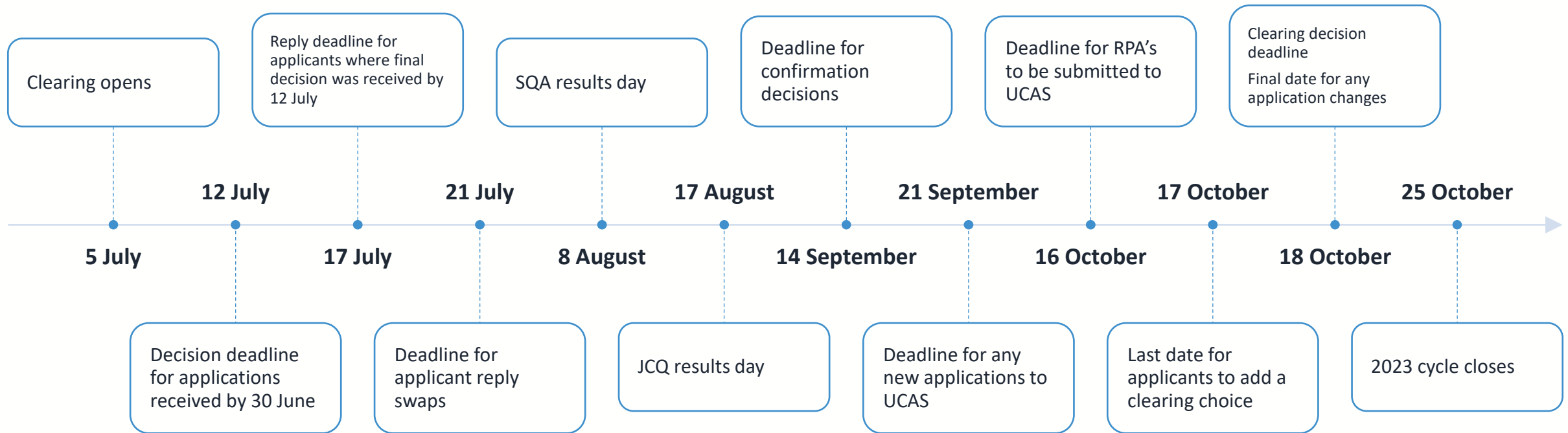
THE UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS CYCLE



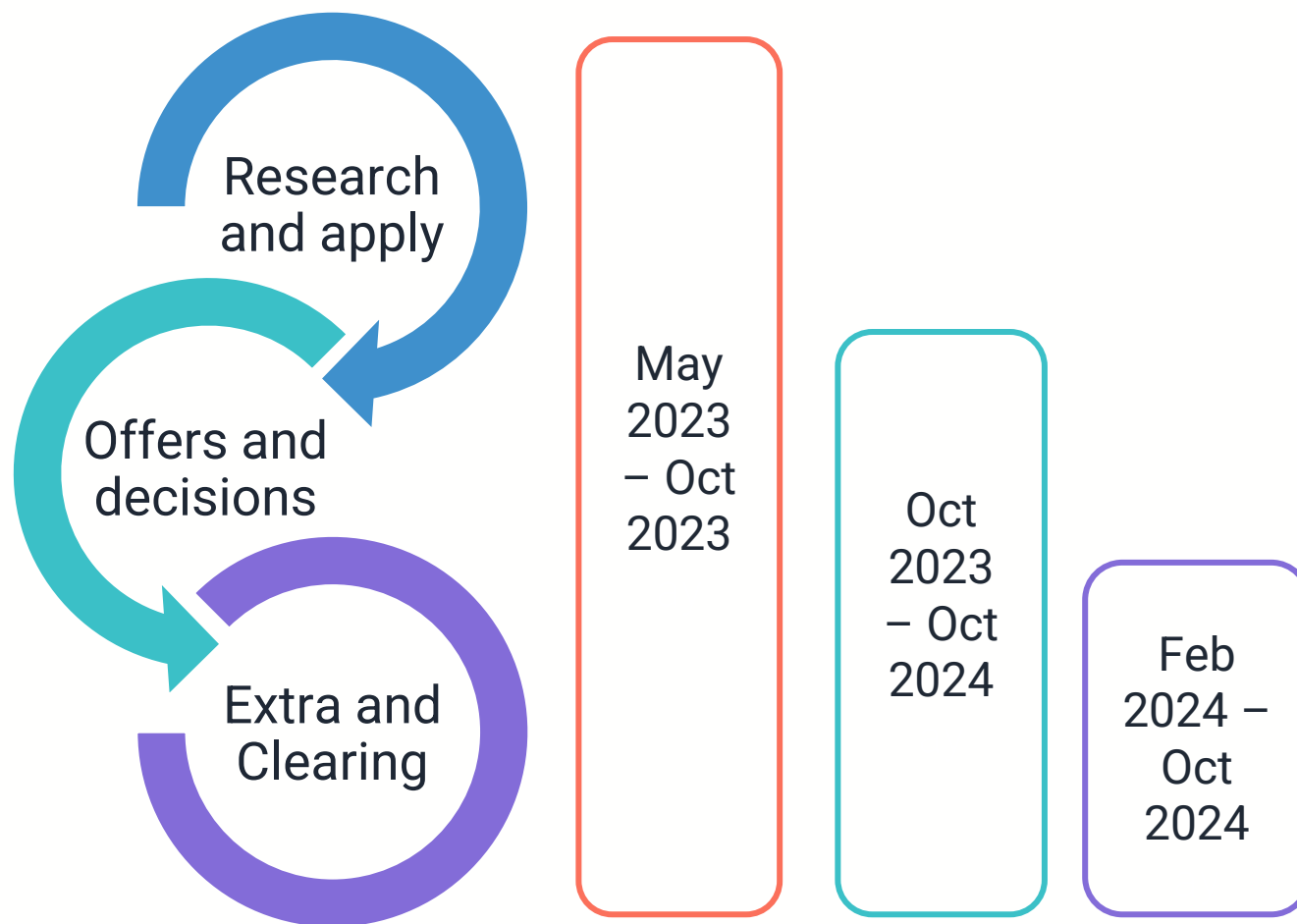
THE 2023 ADMISSIONS CYCLE



2023 ADMISSIONS CYCLE- CLEARING TO CLOSE OF CYCLE



2024 CYCLE KEY DATES





THE UCAS APPLICATION PROCESS





APPLICATION KEY FACTS



Our application process opens each year in May, for applicants to register and start completing their applications for the following admissions cycle.

The application is entirely online



via a web-based application system. Students register for an account on the UCAS Hub

Number of choices

Applicants can make a maximum of 5 choices of course and/or institution. There's no requirement to use all 5 choices initially. Additional choices can be added at a later date

Choice restrictions

Applications for medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or science are restricted to 4 choices. A fifth choice can be added for another subject



EQUAL CONSIDERATION- WHAT IS THE ECD?

ECD = Equal consideration date

Providers must consider all applications received before this date equally and fairly

Promotes fairness and parity for applicants, particularly to over-subscribed courses

Providers must not close courses to applications before this date

Applications can still be made after the ECD if there are vacancies on a course

2023
16 October

Medicine, Veterinary, Dentistry
courses
plus University of Oxford and
University of Cambridge entry

2024
31 January

All other undergraduate
courses

THE RECORD OF PRIOR ACCEPTANCE

Designed for applicants who meet the requirements for entry

AND

Who are not already in the UCAS system

AND

Who only wish to apply for a single choice at a single provider

Learners don't pay an application fee

Key points

- Accessed via the provider dashboard on UCAS.com
- Available from November throughout the cycle
- Capitation fee is paid for acceptances via RPA

Consider

- Verification is important as applicants don't have prior checks
- The quality of data entered is critical
- The system does not check if applicants are already in UCAS. You need to check before you input.



CONSIDERING THE APPLICATION AND MAKING DECISIONS



ONCE AN APPLICATION ARRIVES AT UCAS

- Once we receive a completed application, it's checked and processed and sent to providers, usually within 48 hours.
- We check to ensure all key information is completed, and we also run fraud and similarity checks.
- Once an application has been processed, the applicant can follow the progress of their application via the Hub.
- UCAS Apply centres subscribe to the Adviser Portal. This allows advisers to check the progress of their applicants and help support them through the process.
- The application is then sent electronically to each of the providers listed.

ONCE AN APPLICATION ARRIVES AT A PROVIDER

- All applications are received electronically, either in web-link OR via import into a student system
- The electronic forms are either distributed, or admissions staff have access to view in their system or print.

Some decisions are made solely on consideration of the application

- Prior achievement: GCSE's
- Predicted achievement: examinations taken in the future
- Personal statement
- Reference

In addition, one or more of the following may be required

- Skills or entry test
- Portfolio
- Interview
- Audition

DECISIONS

Admissions staff may initially make one of 5 decisions:

- Invitation: to an interview or audition
- Withdrawal
- Rejection
- Unconditional offer
- Conditional offer



INVITATION (INTERVIEW) DECISIONS

- Invitation to interview, audition, portfolio or work submission may be processed as an initial decision on a referred applicant
- The decision can be used in addition to, or instead of your own communication
- There are reports available in the Management Information menu in web link to track this:

Management Information Menu

Choose the list to view:

Applicants - Invited to interview [2018](#) | [2017](#)

Applicants - Declined interview request [2018](#) | [2017](#)

Applicants - Awaiting response to interview request [2018](#) | [2017](#)

Applicants - Requesting alternative interview date [2018](#) | [2017](#)

WITHDRAWAL

Used where:

- The applicant has requested withdrawal OR
- You believe an applicant has withdrawn from the choice, because they haven't
- attended an interview or audition

OR

- provided requested information (e.g. portfolio or additional work)

OR

- replied to your request for additional information to consider their application (e.g. confirmation of qualifications)

Note: The Withdrawal decision is considered helpful for reporting purposes to identify where the admissions process could not be completed.

Reason code	Reason for withdrawal
.W1	Withdrawn at your request
.W2	You did not attend an interview, test or audition
.W3	You did not reply to their correspondence
.W4	Course withdrawn and no alternative requested
.W5	You wish to enter Extra. This can only be used by UCAS staff.
.W6	Failed to attend interview or did not reply to letter

REJECT*(UNSUCCESSFUL)

- Used where the admissions process is completed and the applicant does not meet the requirements for entry
- Sometimes applicants are offered an alternative course to the one applied for originally
- We encourage providers to indicate the reason for rejecting an application. This helps applicants to continue with their application, perhaps using Extra or Clearing. The feedback will provide the applicant with information to help them with further choices and may prevent them from contacting you separately.

For this purpose, you can add a free text reason OR a rejection code of your own

These are set up as an own offer abbreviation in Web link, and added either when you process the decision or later on, provided the applicant is not holding any offers.

UNCONDITIONAL OFFER

- An Unconditional offer is usually given where you are satisfied that an applicant has fulfilled the academic entry requirements
- Unconditional offers can have NON-ACADEMIC conditions attached, which might need to be met prior to enrolment or before placements commence

Examples of these include

- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks
- Medical checks
- If an applicant firmly accepts an unconditional offer, they are regarded as PLACED and must therefore decline any other offers received

CONDITIONAL OFFER

A conditional offer is made to an applicant who is taking examinations and will have results before the end of the admissions cycle.

The conditional offer should be used to communicate the requirements that you want the applicant to meet.

- Requirements can be purely academic, but can also include non academic conditions such as DBS checks, health checks and payment of fees
- Academic offer conditions can be framed as qualifications and grades/scores; OR Tariff points; OR a mixture of both
- Specific exclusions and/or specific requirements should be included in the conditions of an offer



PROCESSING DECISIONS



Standard offers and offer libraries - are a set of user created, pre coded offers

Own offer abbreviations - are pre-determined user created abbreviations that can be included within an offer.

Manual or 'free text' offers - use no pre-set offers or coding.



REJECT BY DEFAULT

- The Reject by Default (RBD) deadlines are set for providers to make decisions.
- There are several RBD deadlines throughout the year, relevant to application dates.
- UCAS automatically rejects any outstanding decisions on the deadline.
- One of the obligations of UCAS providers is to meet decision- making deadlines

Impacts

- Allowing an application to RBD gives learners a negative impression

Top tip!

- The Outstanding Decision Lists (ODL) in Web-link will help you monitor decisions



OFFER MAKING BEST PRACTICE

OFFER MAKING BEST PRACTICE

1. An offer should only be processed when the application has been fully considered, and all stages in the admissions process are completed

Offers should therefore not include:

- 'this place is subject to interview'
- 'Please complete the admissions test sent to you'
- 'Conditional on attendance at our open day'

2. The formal offer is the one communicated via UCAS

Offers should not include statements such as

- 'please see letter'
- 'Additional requirements will be sent to you'

DECISIONS: ACCURACY AND TRANSPARENCY

- The offer should be for the correct applicant and made in terms of the correct qualifications that the applicant is sitting.
- The offer should be set out in such a way that the applicant can understand exactly what is required in order for them to be awarded a place.
- State exactly what you need: Tariff points, qualifications, subjects and grades
- ALWAYS follow your institution's procedures- these should be informed by your institution's policy and should help ensure fairness and afford protection

CHANGES TO DECISIONS

- UCAS will allow you to make changes that are to the advantage of the applicant provided the application is in a status that will make this possible
- Where changes would be to the disadvantage of the applicant, they can still be made with the applicant's consent...and provided the application is in a status that will make the change possible

If in any doubt:

- Check the UCAS Undergraduate Admissions Guide
- Check with the Customer Success Team



ONCE DECISIONS ARE PROCESSED



DECLINE BY DEFAULT

- The Decline by Default (DBD) deadlines are set for applicants to respond once they have received decisions on all their choices.
- There are deadlines throughout the year, relevant to decision deadlines.
- Learners are advised of the date in their application and other communications

Applicants

A DBD can be reversed but requires action from the learner

Top Tip!

Web link includes a DBD report to help you monitor applicants Declined by Default. Check directly after a DBD!



- Extra begins at the end of February and runs until 18:00 on 30 June

Open to applicants who have:

- Used all 5 choices
- Are not holding any offers
- One extra choice can be added

Fee

Top-up fee required if only one choice was initially submitted

Deadline

Providers have until midnight on 12 July to respond

CONFIRMATION & CLEARING

- From early July – mid October
- Applicants with no offers can make further sequential choices
- Applicants are advised to speak to the provider before adding the new choice
- Confirmation happens when all pending qualification results and other conditions are met – some results are supplied via UCAS under embargo

Clearing

33,280 students were accepted by their Clearing choice in 2022

Results embargo

SQA: 31 July – 8 Aug

JCQ: 11 August – 17 August



FURTHER INFORMATION AND SUPPORT



Correspondents' bulletin

Circulated on a weekly basis to Primary Correspondents and UCAS Correspondents
The bulletin includes key information relating to the UCAS admissions process, including deadlines and operational information.

Admissions Guide

Essential for staff involved in making and processing decisions. [The guide](#) includes a comprehensive overview of admissions processes, business rules and principles and the admissions calendar

Provider training

Our [Professional Development Platform](#) gives you free access to self-paced digital learning sessions including a wide range of introductory sessions for those new to admissions.

UCAS.com

A wealth of information on the UCAS website for providers including; good practice resources; Data and analysis; Details of conferences and events

Support

For admissions process questions contact our **Customer Success Team: cst@ucas.ac.uk**
support with your courses update, contact our **Data Collection Team: coursesdata@ucas.ac.uk**

For



ANY QUESTIONS?
THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING

