

Post-incident analysis report – October 2014

Brief description	Final Destination Report 2 (FDR2) unavailable	UCAS Apply 2015 data unavailable	UCAS and CUKAS Search not returning results	Digital copy forms unavailable via web-link	Application & Decision Tracker report unavailable	Xml-link connection
Date	2 - 6 October 2014	2 October 2014	8 October 2014	22 – 23 October 2014	27 October 2014	29 October - 4 November 2014
Details of problem experienced	<p>At approximately 10:20 schools reported they could not view their FDR2 on Staff Apply 2015.</p> <p>This prevented schools from carrying out their own reporting, including information to OFSTED.</p> <p>This followed the release of Staff Apply 2015.</p>	<p>At approximately 12:15 connections to UCAS Apply, Staff Apply and Apply for advisers were generating blank screens for 2015.</p> <p>This prevented applicants and advisers from creating or updating applications.</p>	<p>At approximately 15:20 applicants were unable to generate any results when searching on the UCAS search tool.</p>	<p>At approximately 09:50 providers were not able to download digital copy forms from web-link.</p> <p>This prevented providers from viewing pdf versions of applications.</p>	<p>At approximately 09:30 providers notified us that the latest report showing App-Tracker data was unavailable.</p>	<p>At approximately 16:00 on 28 October 15 providers were unable to access the xml-link service.</p> <p>This prevented providers from importing applicant and other related data via xml-link.</p>
Resolution	<p>An error occurred with the link between the Apply application server and the FTP server that hosts the Final Destination reports.</p> <p>A workaround was put in place by making the report available through Staff Apply 2014.</p> <p>The incident was closed at approximately 15:07 on 6 October.</p>	<p>A change that was implemented to resolve the availability of the FDR2 on Staff Apply 2015 was identified as the root cause.</p> <p>The change was subsequently backed out and full service was restored at approximately 15:30.</p>	<p>A log file limit was reached on the service, causing the issue.</p> <p>The log file was manually cleared and service restarted successfully at approximately 15:50.</p>	<p>The incident was resolved by restarting the scheduled job that runs overnight generating PDF copy forms.</p> <p>The incident was confirmed as resolved at approximately 09:15 on 23 October.</p>	<p>Providers were unable to access the most recent data set as the job that refreshes that data was showing as running, but was actually in a hung state.</p> <p>The incident was resolved by restarting the weekly scheduled job. Although from approximately 1300-1400, the application unavailable while it updated.</p> <p>Full service was restored at approximately 15:10.</p>	<p>As a result of a third party partner updating our firewall security certificate, providers were unable to import applicant and other related data via xml-link.</p> <p>To restore service, we implemented a temporary firewall solution enabling the service to restart.</p> <p>It was confirmed that full service had been restored at approximately 09:30 on 4 November.</p>
Actions taken to prevent a repeat incident	<p>A review of the link between the Apply application server and FTP server has been scheduled.</p> <p>If a permanent fix requires a change that impacts our customers, this will be communicated via the weekly bulletin prior to the change being implemented</p>	<p>A review of our change and release impact assessment process has taken place with lessons learned fed into an amended process.</p> <p>Long term UCAS are mapping the configuration of our services to thoroughly understand their dependencies.</p>	<p>Additional monitoring on the log files will be implemented and checked regularly.</p>	<p>We continue to investigate the root cause to establish why the scheduled job failed and a further update will be provided should this be identified.</p> <p>To mitigate this incident in future additional monitoring will be put in place to ensure that failure of the batch job is captured and rectified proactively.</p>	<p>Monitoring will be enhanced to cover situations where the job still appears to be running but will not complete.</p> <p>The job itself is being refactored to run faster and more reliably.</p>	<p>We are working with Ellucian to ensure that users of their system (Banner) upgrade their Oracle Software version to enable it to work with the SHA2 certificates. Once complete we will revert back to the original firewall service provided.</p> <p>In addition any future firewall changes will be done in conjunction with student record system vendors.</p>

We appreciate that these incidents will have caused you some inconvenience and would like to assure you the resolutions were implemented in such a way as to maintain applicant data integrity. Full assessments were also carried out to ensure there was no impact on the data integrity for those providers affected.

As you can see, the incidents are not related and, for each, we have been able to put measures in place to ensure that we do not experience these again. If you have any questions or concerns please contact your dedicated Technical Relationship Manager.

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