



UAC Centralised

Excellence in admissions services



Contents

<u>Admissions management</u>	<u>02</u>	<u>Marketing and promotion</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Other application services</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>Industry representation</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>Reporting and data</u>	<u>07</u>	<u>Government relationships</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>Account management</u>	<u>08</u>		
<u>Extensive consultation</u>	<u>09</u>		

About UAC

The Universities Admissions Centre (UAC) has been a provider of admissions services for more than 50 years.

Growing from an association of Sydney metropolitan universities, it was formally established in 1995 by the New South Wales Vice-Chancellors' Committee to process applications for admission to undergraduate courses offered by participating universities in NSW and the ACT.

UAC's services have since grown to undertake admission services for a select group of international undergraduate applicants, postgraduate applicants, and a number of student equity access schemes.

UAC has established itself as a trusted business partner to dozens of institutions, including universities, colleges and other higher education providers.

By participating in UAC Centralised admissions, your organisation benefits from the experience, credibility, industry connections and market exposure of the largest tertiary admissions centre in Australia.

Mission

UAC's mission is to provide excellence in admissions services and promote equity of access to tertiary education. Central to that mission is our belief in the value of education and our commitment to providing opportunities in higher education for all members of our community. We're a registered charity and driven by a strong culture of meeting the needs of our stakeholders.

Admissions management

UAC Centralised provides complete online application services for:

- admission to undergraduate courses (for domestic and international Year 12 school leavers undertaking Australian qualifications, and domestic non-Year 12 (post-school) applicants)
- admission to postgraduate coursework programs (for domestic applicants)
- tertiary access schemes, including Equity Scholarships (ES), the Educational Access Scheme (EAS) and the Schools Recommendation Scheme (SRS).

UAC Centralised processes more than 80,000 undergraduate applications annually.

UAC applicant portal

The starting point of the centralised admissions process is the UAC applicant portal.

Accessed through UAC's website, it is a tried-and-tested system that has serviced more than a million applicants since 2001.

The portal employs a simple and intuitive user interface. It captures personal information, offers post-application review and update facilities (including the ability for applicants to change their course preferences) and electronic document upload (eg personal statements or CVs) as required by the institution.

Domestic undergraduate applicants can nominate up to five course preferences in their application. Applicants can modify these preferences as many times as they like – at no cost – up until a published preallocation deadline.

The portal is integrated with UAC's backend system, wUAS, and the receipt of an application triggers the commencement of the admissions process.

wUAS

wUAS is UAC's web-based university admissions system. It operates as the interface between applicants, UAC and institutions.

wUAS contains all the information required to admit an applicant. This includes the information entered via the applicant portal as well as the institutions' selection requirements, including schedules for assessing qualifications (Australian and overseas secondary and post-secondary, professional, paraprofessional and employment).

All schedules used to rank qualifications are developed in-house by UAC's expert research and statistics team.

Course reports

The operational foundation of wUAS is course reports. Every course offered through UAC has an associated course report that contains all relevant details, including: course code, course type and category, course name, campus, and commencement date.

Additional course requirements

UAC can manage institution-specific requirements for admission. For example, UAC administers a centralised assessment of applicants to courses related to health, welfare and teaching, where additional requirements are required.

Comprehensive assessment

UAC offers a streamlined end-to-end assessment service, underpinned by cost-effective automated systems. The process offers a seamless experience that reduces the need for institution staff to follow up with applicants.

Once an application is received, wUAS's automated workflow system undertakes pre-assessment checks. Work is then allocated to UAC or institution staff to action. All criteria that an applicant needs to meet to be eligible for an offer has its own task and workflow based on admission rules integrated into wUAS.

Once automated pre-assessment checks are complete, personalised, in-house assessment is undertaken by highly experienced and trained UAC staff, backed by extensive resources.

Each institution's assessment manual contains business admission rules: an institution's policies and procedures for admitting students and ensuring offers are made to eligible applicants (eg rules around levels of English proficiency, prerequisites and applicants with previous enrolments).

UAC can customise its processes to your institution or faculty needs, including incorporating professional registration body requirements (eg for teaching and nursing) into the assessment process.

Electronic results information

UAC has access to electronic results that allow for accurate, fast and verified assessment. This includes Year 12 results for NSW, ACT and interstate students, International Baccalaureate Diploma results from International Baccalaureate, and New Zealand NCEA results from the New Zealand Qualifications Authority.

For non-Year 12 applicants, UAC uses the Automated Results Transfer System (ARTS), which provides electronic access to full academic records of previous study.

Applicant communication

UAC corresponds directly with applicants about their application and offers via an automated email system.

Institutions can view the correspondence sent to an applicant, the date and time the item was produced and sent, and the date the applicant opened their email.

Application tracking

A tracking code enables applicants to track the progress of their application, including assessment of their qualifications and the current state of their eligibility for each course preference.



Allocation

Allocation is the final step in the process. It provides a systematic and equitable approach to evaluating – and allocating places to – applicants with wide-ranging educational, employment and personal skills.

It also accommodates different institution philosophies as to the qualifications they choose to include in determining who will receive offers.

The process generates a rank for each applicant for each of their course preferences. This ranking, coupled with an applicant's eligibility, is the basis for determining offers.

Offers

Offers are made by considering an applicant's course preferences according to the order in which they have listed them.

To aid institutions in their planning, a number of simulations are undertaken before each offer round to fine-tune inputs and obtain the number and type of students the institution desires.

Domestic undergraduate applicants receive one offer per offer round but can receive an offer in multiple rounds. There are approximately 20 offer rounds in the admissions year as well as 20 alternative offer (slipback) rounds. International applicants can receive multiple offers in each round.

After the December and January main ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank) offer rounds for Year 12 students, applicants are advised of the lowest selection ranks for each course and whether courses still have vacancies. This enables applicants to change their preferences to target suitable courses for later offer rounds if they wish.

At key points towards the end of the admissions period, applicants are advised if they did not receive an offer and the reasons why.

UAC's centralised environment provides an efficient way for us to process a large number of offers.

Asako Clonaris
Manager, Admissions and
Scholarships Enablement
UNSW

Postgraduate applicants have regular offer rounds throughout the year, with applicants able to receive multiple offers in each round.

Applicants receive their offer from UAC via email but accept their offer through direct communication with the institution and, from then on, they liaise with the institution for the enrolment process.

Slipback offers

Institutions have the opportunity to include pathway courses (lower than a bachelor degree) in the courses offered to undergraduate applicants. These can be used in two ways:

- 01.** The course is listed on UAC's website and selected by applicants to be included in their list of preferences, in the same way as a preference for an award course.
- 02.** The course is not listed on UAC's website and not selectable, but if an applicant doesn't meet the entry requirements for their preferred degree course, institutions can make a 'slipback' offer. Students can receive a slipback offer to a lower-level course than the one they had applied for.

Other application services

Access and scholarship programs

Part of UAC's mission is to promote equity of access to tertiary education. UAC works with universities to widen participation in higher education by coordinating equity programs that assist applicants who have faced educational and financial disadvantages.

UAC administers two equity schemes on behalf of its participating institutions: Equity Scholarships (ES) and the Educational Access Scheme (EAS).

UAC also administers the Schools Recommendation Scheme (SRS), which allows institutions to make early offers to Year 12 applicants.

These three schemes are free to applicants.

Equity Scholarships

ES are scholarships awarded to students from low socio-economic backgrounds, particularly those who receive Centrelink income support payments.

They are awarded to undergraduate, postgraduate and some international applicants who are enrolled at, or applying for admission to, a UAC participating institution.

UAC operates an online application portal for ES. Applicants submit one scholarship application during the admissions period and their application remains 'live' throughout the period. They are considered for all available scholarships for which they're eligible.

UAC assesses ES applications on behalf of institutions and corresponds with applicants directly via email, including notifying them of the outcome. Applicants can also access their offer correspondence through their ES application.

Applicants receive and accept their scholarship through direct communication with the institution.

Educational Access Scheme

EAS facilitates offers of admission to Year 12 applicants whose studies were negatively affected for a significant period as a result of circumstances beyond their control or choosing. Some institutions accept applications for EAS from those who are currently undertaking, or who have previously undertaken, tertiary study.

EAS operates by increasing an applicant's selection rank for a course.

A simple application for consideration under EAS is integrated into the UAC applicant portal.

UAC assesses EAS applications on behalf of institutions, corresponds with applicants directly, and notifies applicants of their eligibility for EAS at each of UAC's participating institutions.

UAC also generates automatic EAS applications. These are for applicants from low socio-economic areas based on the Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage and the Index of Education and Occupation, as well as applicants from schools in regional, rural and remote areas, all based on data provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Being eligible for EAS consideration doesn't guarantee applicants an offer to a course; they still need to meet any published lowest selection rank for that course and compete with all other applicants for a place. If they successfully compete against other applicants, they receive an offer as part of the standard UAC undergraduate offer process.

Schools Recommendation Scheme

SRS offers Year 12 applicants the opportunity to be assessed for admission to tertiary study on criteria other than, or in addition to, the ATAR.

UAC operates an online application portal for SRS. Applicants submit one SRS application during the admissions period and they are considered for SRS at all participating institutions.

This scheme also requires input from schools and UAC administers the school rating process through through a dedicated school portal.

UAC assesses SRS applications on behalf of institutions and corresponds with applicants directly via email, including notifying them of their offers. They can also access their offer correspondence through their SRS application.

Applicants will receive a conditional (they still need to meet criteria) offer or unconditional (firm) offer as part of an early undergraduate offer round in November.

Applicants accept their offer through direct communication with the institution.

Qualifications assessment

UAC offers a Qualifications Assessment Service (QAS), which provides prospective applicants with an assessment of their qualifications. This may be used as a guide by admissions officers for determining eligibility for courses offered by UAC's participating institutions.

We also provide a customised qualifications assessment as part of the admissions process for institutions.

Australian Tertiary Admission Rank

UAC calculates and administers the release of the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) for NSW HSC students on behalf of universities.

A dedicated team of research and statistic professionals work as part of an inter-university committee to oversee its calculation every year.

UAC also publishes comprehensive information about the ATAR and its calculation in printed and online form. Publications include the annual *ATAR Essentials* and the *Report on the Scaling of the NSW Higher School Certificate*.

When the ATAR is released in December UAC operates the ATAR Enquiry Centre to provide specialised, professional advice to callers.

ATAR innovation

In December 2017 UAC released over 74,000 ATAR Advice Notices to NSW HSC students using blockchain technology. This technology, the first of its kind in Australia, ensures the credential is authentic, tamper-proof and valid.

In 2022, UAC issued the ATAR as a digital credential in a digital wallet, CredFolio. Students have immediate access to their ATAR and the ability to create a portfolio of educational achievements over their lifetime.



Reporting and data

System reporting

UAC Centralised offers a rich set of reporting tools to support the operational and business decision-making needs of institutions.

Institutions have access to a data warehouse of applicant information. The data warehouse provides a comprehensive suite of reports to support selection and offer generation processes, and enable informed business decision making and planning. These include:

- scheduled reports (including allocation, threshold, offer statistics and acceptances)
- bulk reporting (including predefined reports, ad hoc reports and general statistics).

Data insights

Institutions have access to Insights Basic, UAC's analytics dashboard. From here, institutions can view a report on traffic to their UAC website course pages.

UAC also offers deeper data analysis through its subscription-based dashboards. These bring together live and historical applicant data, NSW/ACT Year 12 and ATAR results, as well as UAC website and application data. Using data visualisation, analysis, and segmentation tools, these dashboards map out an institution's applicant journey, from the awareness phase through to application, preferencing, offers and enrolment.

UAC Centralised admissions offers a rich set of reporting tools, supporting our operational and business decision-making needs.

Sally Kwan
Admissions Manager
Australian College of Physical Education

Applicants can be profiled and student engagement strategies can be finely targeted by drilling down into details of applicant demographics, choices and behaviours.

In addition, the Insights Platinum dashboard offers bespoke analytical information and the ability to build and use custom reports. A consultation service makes the expertise of UAC's data analytics team and data scientists available to help institutions with student admission or retention projects.



Account management

Institutions are at the heart of what we do. We offer regular, organised feedback and dialogue through individual relationships and wider committee structures.

Account management

Each institution has a dedicated account manager as their primary point of contact with UAC.

To ensure that we consistently meet and exceed expectations, your account manager schedules periodic reviews throughout the year. These reviews provide you with relevant data, performance analysis, and insights into new developments and opportunities. They also serve as an open platform for discussions, encouraging feedback and fostering a collaborative relationship between your organisation and ours.

Training and support

Onboarding

UAC offers institutions a comprehensive onboarding program, including orientation sessions, course profiles and assessment workshops, as well as allocation, reporting and IT system training.

Service desk

UAC's Service Management Office coordinates UAC's Institution Service Desk, which enables institutions to submit service requests and receive support in areas such as IT and system access, course and system configuration, application processing and communications.

Ongoing

We also offer continuous training and support with on-demand and scheduled training sessions to suit your needs.

The Centralised Services team is always available to discuss your assessment needs and requests for system improvements or changes before logging a formal service request.

In addition, we provide comprehensive supporting documentation for your staff, including assessment manuals customised for your institution.

Resources

Institution Hub

All participating institutions have access to the Institution Hub, a secure corporate website where they can access UAC's systems, allocation and scheduled reports, procedures and manuals, system timetables, training modules and videos, contact information and the latest UAC news.

From this secure corporate website, institutions can access UAC's systems, allocation and scheduled reports, procedures and manuals, system timetables, training modules and videos, contact information as well as the latest news.

Regular updates

UAC keeps institutions informed of the latest news, updates and important announcements through a regular newsletter, 'Update from UAC'. UAC also publishes weekly release notes on improvements to the features and functionality of UAC's Centralised systems.

Extensive consultation

Participating institutions have extensive and regular input into how UAC operates through a series of committees and working parties.

All participating institutions are members of UAC's Users Committee, relevant sub-committees and working parties.

The Users Committee meets every quarter to discuss operational needs, processes or policies.

The Common Assessment Procedures Sub-committee (CAPS) meets annually to ensure schedules and assessment guidelines continue to meet institutions' needs and the Results Equivalent Group (REG) working party meets annually to review interstate Year 12 subject equivalences.

There are annual meetings of the Equity Scholarships Sub-committee: the Educational Access Schemes Sub-committee and the Editorial Sub-committee to review admission year outcomes and processes.

To ensure best practice is maintained (eg system operations), UAC also holds workshops as required.

UAC's Service Management Office and Operations team play a crucial role in providing us with assistance and guidance to address any questions or issues regarding admissions.

Rebecca Kimber
Senior Manager – Admissions
University of Wollongong

Marketing and promotion

Central to UAC's mission is the belief in the value of education. UAC promotes the benefits of further education and undertakes comprehensive engagement with students, applicants and other stakeholders to encourage, support and provide impartial information on entry to higher education.

Participation in UAC Centralised offers the opportunity for your institution to engage with prospective students and support your student recruitment goals.

Contact centre

UAC operates a customer service centre, open every weekday, to handle queries received by telephone and email, through UAC's website and on social media. Our in-house, highly experienced customer service team is located in our Sydney office.

Community and school engagement

UAC is active in the community, representing its admissions services, the tertiary education sector and all our institutions.

UAC attends careers days and expos in NSW, the ACT and interstate. We are a key sponsor of the HSC and Careers Expo and attend the Western Sydney Careers Expo.

UAC Digital is an online information platform that presents a range of free webinars for students, careers advisers, parents and anyone navigating their path to higher education. Our institutions are invited to participate in these sessions.

The Community Engagement team works closely with schools to help them inform students of the admissions process. They attend dozens of in-school information sessions each year and offer staff development days.

UAC's website also has a dedicated area for schools, School Hub, offering resources including the Insights School Dashboard, which provides student application, offer and enrolment data.

Institutions are encouraged to provide content for the bi-monthly newsletter, 'UAC News', sent to more than 2,000 careers and student advisers.

Publications

UAC provides comprehensive print and online resources for applicants.

UAC's flagship publication, the UAC Guide, is the key information source for over 80,000 NSW and ACT Year 12 students, their parents and carers, and schools.

UAC produces publications for students entering their senior years, including *Steps to Uni for Year 10 Students*, distributed to every Year 10 student in NSW and the ACT. This publication is supported by Subject Compass, an online portal where students input their interests, skills and career aspirations to discover the areas of study that suit them best.

In addition, UAC's community engagement program distributes thousands of publications each year, including *Steps to Uni for Year 11 and 12 Students*, the *Access Schemes and Scholarships* brochure, *Applying to NSW and ACT Universities* for interstate applicants, and *Steps to Uni for Non-School Leavers* for post-school applicants.



UAC website

UAC's primary information platform is the UAC website. It contains comprehensive information about UAC's participating institutions, courses available, requirements for selection, how to apply, and available scholarship and equity programs.

All applicants apply through UAC's website, making it the gateway to interacting with users.

UAC's course search receives more than 1.3 million views annually, and institution profile pages receive more than 300,000 views.

Institutions are invited to list key dates for students, such as open days, on UAC's key dates page. This is one of the website's most visited pages, receiving nearly 450,000 views every year.

Social media

All of UAC's communication channels are supported by strong social media engagement on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube. We also offer live social media sessions on topics of interest such as access schemes, changing preferences and the ATAR.

Supporting tools

UAC has used its vast stores of student data to create free tools that support students exploring their options in higher education.

Course Compass helps Year 12 students discover their study options by inputting their HSC subjects. ATAR Compass estimates a student's ATAR using scaling statistics from the past five years.

Bespoke marketing

UAC can offer institutions additional targeted, bespoke marketing solutions based on rich and detailed student and UAC applicant data.

Campaign channels include email marketing, print publication and website display advertising, and SMS marketing.

Media

UAC has a comprehensive media engagement strategy to promote awareness of UAC and its activities.

Strong media relationships, along with a reputation as a credible voice within the sector, result in UAC being featured regularly in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Australian*, the *Australian Financial Review* and the ABC.

UAC has also been covered by international outlets, including Times Higher Education and PIE News.

Industry representation

UAC is a trusted member of the higher education landscape and is valued for its expertise.

As a participating institution you will be part of this network and benefit from UAC's representation both nationally and internationally.

UAC has key sector relationships with its participating institutions, the NSW Vice-Chancellors' Committee, Universities Australia, TEQSA (Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency), and university advocacy groups such as Go8, Australian Technology Network, the Regional Universities Network and Innovative Research Universities.

It participates in the Australasian Conference of Tertiary Admissions Centres (ACTAC), a national body that meets biannually to promote best practice and close national collaboration.

As a member of the International Association of Admissions Organisations (IAAO), UAC develops networks and facilitates the sharing of information and exchange of ideas to establish international best practice in admissions.

For more than 50 years, UAC has been a trusted partner to tertiary institutions.

With an ongoing focus on innovation we are constantly extending our capabilities to ensure we remain a leader in technology and services that enable access to lifelong learning for all.

Government relationships

UAC works closely with governments of all levels. We regularly publish reports and prepare submissions to government to ensure the perspective of our institutions are represented in government policy making.

This has included responses to the Universities Accord, the NSW Curriculum Review and the Department of Education's Review of Senior Secondary Pathways into Work, Further Education and Training.

UAC's expertise is valued by government and has resulted in collaborations with the Commonwealth Government and other state admissions centres including the development of the national higher education admissions information platform, Course Seeker, with the Commonwealth Government and other state admission centres.

UAC also won the tender to develop and build the national microcredentials marketplace, MicroCred Seeker, an initiative of the Australian Government Department of Education.





Universities Admissions Centre
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