UCL Academic Manual

Chapter 1: Student Recruitment and Admissions Framework

Annex 1.1.8

Student Recruitment Good Practice

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Introduction

Student recruitment good practice is informed by the **QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education,** *Chapter B2: Recruitment, Selection and Admission to Higher Education (QAA B2).*

Process prior to application

QAA B2, Indicator 5: Recruitment activities undertaken by higher education providers assist students in making informed decisions about higher education.

1. Good practice in this context means the following:
   - Provision of accurate information through publication of the UCL prospectuses in print and on the web.
   - Provision of clear information about how to make an enquiry by email; online form; phone; social media.
   - A friendly, helpful, and prompt response to enquiries from prospective students.
   - A person in each Department and Faculty readily available to answer prospective student enquiries.
   - Appropriate open days for prospective students.
   - Representation at appropriate recruitment events to give prospective students the opportunity to speak to a member of UCL staff in person.
   - Appropriate presentations (in person or virtual) for prospective students.
   - Use of the CRM and associated products to manage registrations for student recruitment events.

- Actively engaging with enquirers to promote UCL as a study destination and to provide them with the information they need to convert them to high quality applicants.
- Supporting prospective students' advisers to help them research their options.

2. Good practice in student recruitment is based upon the collection of high quality enquirer data from prospective students, allowing prospective students to be supplied with information that is tailored to their own circumstances.

3. Enquirer data should always be collected, stored, and processed in a way that is compliant with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Further information can be found at www.ucl.ac.uk/gdpr

4. All UCL staff involved in student recruitment activities should endeavour to collect enquirer data whenever interacting with prospective students, e.g. at recruitment events. Enquirer data should be collected via activities and interactions that are managed at faculty level, as well as centrally.

5. There should be a consistent approach across all methods of collecting enquirer data. Standardised fields, options, and drop-down lists should be used wherever possible. Such an approach allows for consistency of data on prospective students which in turn permits comparison and analysis. The Student Recruitment team can provide details of data formats used in enquiry collection.

6. Prospective students visiting the UCL website, including departmental and faculty pages, should be encouraged to submit their data by completing enquiry forms. Faculties or academic units can request bespoke enquiry forms to embed on their website from Student Recruitment. Data submitted via these forms will be automatically uploaded to the CRM.

7. The Student Recruitment team can provide faculty staff, academics, or representatives of academic units with enquiry forms in various formats for use at events to ensure that enquirer data collected fits the format required by the CRM.

Engaging with enquirers

8. Since enquirers are prospective students who have actively expressed an interest in UCL, it is important to engage with them in order to provide them with the specific information and encouragement that they need in order to apply.

9. In this context, good practice means the following:

- Providing targeted, personalised information according to the enquirer's specified requirements to deliver an excellent prospective student experience.
- Sending attractive and engaging emails to enquirers via the CRM.
- Inviting enquirers to relevant events and activities, e.g. open days, presentations, virtual events, and recruitment fairs.

Open Days

10. CAM organises institution-wide open days for prospective undergraduates and graduates, both in person and virtual.
    The following good practice relates to Faculty and/or departmental open days.
    - provision of relevant information about the open day including clear instructions on how to find the venue;
    - a programme of events made available in advance of the open day;
    - information on what arrangements there may be, should parents or carers decide to accompany the visitor;
    - ensuring that all staff and students involved are fully aware of their responsibilities and are available at the required times and venues.
    - a welcome point;
    - well-briefed staff (academic and professional services);
    - representation from professional service departments, faculties, and academic departments;
    - an informal tour of UCL;
    - the opportunity to meet current students; and
    - sending a follow-up email to attendees and non-attendees alike (these emails should have different content).

    The following good practice relates to Faculty and/or departmental virtual events:
    - a clear indication of what students are signing up to eg presentation, Q&A etc
    - use of appropriate platform: Zoom Webinar, Zoom Meetings and Teams Live are recommended
    - Clear joining instructions sent prior to the event
    - Use of UCL-branded material and adherence to accessibility guidelines
    - Well-briefed staff attending the session
    - The involvement of current students is highly encouraged, to allow for the student perspective
    - Send a follow-up email to attendees and non-attendees alike
    - If recording the session for future use, ensure that it is captioned

Departmental physical and virtual events should not be held in the month before institution-wide events; Faculty/departmental events are more effective as follow-ups or as conversion activity.

Social Media

11. The Student Recruitment team manages the central social media accounts.

	UCL central accounts
Twitter	@ucl
Facebook	/uclofficial
Instagram	/ucl/
LinkedIn	/school/university-college-london/mycompany/
YouTube	/UCLTV

12. Where student recruitment is concerned the social media accounts are used to promote UCL as a desirable institution at which to study, as well as to connect with students and to provide them with relevant information about studying at UCL. The social media accounts are thus used for, *inter alia*:

- information on student life at UCL
- notifications of attendance at recruitment events
- application deadlines
- announcement of scholarships
- announcements of new programmes
- photos of UCL that reinforce the brand identity of UCL.

13. The ultimate focus of the social media sites is to drive traffic to the UCL website where prospective students can gain more information and register their interest in studying at UCL.

Engaging with offer holders

Not all applicants who receive an offer from UCL will go on to accept the offer and enrol. Offer holders will often be in receipt of offers from multiple institutions. It is therefore important to engage with offer holders in order to provide them with the information needed to make an informed decision about whether to accept UCL's offer.

14. Good practice in this context means:
- provision of information highlighting the key benefits to the offer holder of studying at UCL / the Faculty / the Department / the Programme;
- information on scholarships and funding;
- information about the career benefits of a UCL education;
- appropriate offer-holder events (presentations, opportunities to talk to academics, current students, and alumni).
- attractive and engaging conversion emails; and
- invitations to join social media groups for offer holders in order to foster a feeling of being part of a UCL community.

Scholarships and Fee Partnerships

15. Fee partnership agreements are approved by Student Recruitment, Admissions and Funding Committee (StRAFC) and are signed by the Chair.

16. The Student Recruitment team takes the lead on developing new scholarships and co-funding agreements with overseas organisations. The organisations with which we sign agreements will have the approval of the Global Engagement Office. The agreements will be referred to UCL Legal Services for advice on content and wording. UCL Student Funding approves the proposed process and administration of the agreement.

17. The Student Recruitment team will work with the Admissions Office to provide prospective students with all necessary documentation required for a successful scholarship application. The same is expected of all other central professional services and faculties.

18. The Student Recruitment team acts as the point of liaison between individual prospective students that are in possession of a scholarship (or in the process of applying for a scholarship) and UCL Student Funding.

19. UCL Student Funding approves UCL's tuition fee contributions to the individual students who are in receipt of a scholarship covered by a co-funding agreement.

20. Upon confirmation of the scholarships from UCL Student Funding, UCL Admissions adds the 'sponsor note' detailing the UCL tuition fee contribution to the CAS record of the sponsored students.

21. UCL Student Funding advises UCL fees office of those students who are in receipt of a tuition fee contribution.

Embedding student recruitment good practice

22. The Student Recruitment team provides various resources in order to help embed student recruitment good practice throughout the institution:

23. The Communication and Marketing (CAM) website on the staff intranet provides a directory of key contacts for student recruitment, as well as a suite of resources for use by faculties and departments: www.ucl.ac.uk/staff/communications-digital-and-marketing/cam-teams-and-contacts.

24. Student Recruitment provides a Kano model of prospective student needs that is designed to ensure that CAM, in collaboration with the Faculties, maximises the potential for student recruitment.

25. The Student Recruitment Community of Practice brings together colleagues from across the institution who have a shared interest in student recruitment.

The Community will come together to work on specific projects aimed at improving UCL's student recruitment practices, and participation in these projects is recommended.

26. The Student Recruitment Community of Practice group is led by a member from CAM and a member from one of UCL's faculties. It meets termly to exchange best-practice advice. This is supported by a corresponding group in UCL's SharePoint and MS Teams environment which is used to report on student recruitment activities, to share market intelligence, and to exchange best-practice advice.

27. The Student Recruitment team runs termly workshops on topics related to student recruitment.

Further guidelines, references, and resources

UCL Communications and Marketing resources
www.ucl.ac.uk/staff/communications-digital-and-marketing

QAA Guidance about Providing Information to Prospective Undergraduate Students (Nov 2016)
http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication/?PubID=3132#.WNUEbEZIAVI

QAA Quality Code for Higher Education
http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code

UKCISA Code of Ethics
https://institutions.ukcisa.org.uk/Info-for-universities-colleges--schools/Publications--research/resources/41/The-UKCISA/AISA-Code-of-Ethics

UKCISA Code of Practice
https://institutions.ukcisa.org.uk/file_download.aspx?id=17150

HELOA, Training
www.heloa.ac.uk/training