



ANNUAL REPORT

2023 – 24



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About us

The Universities Admissions Centre (NSW & ACT) Pty Ltd provides admissions services to higher education providers in NSW and the ACT. It processes applications for entry to most undergraduate courses and coursework-based postgraduate courses.

UAC also works with universities to widen participation in higher education. It assesses and manages applications for equity programs that aim to help applicants overcome educational and financial challenges: the Educational Access Scheme (EAS) and Equity Scholarships (ES).

UAC also administers the Schools Recommendation Scheme (SRS) early offer program.

UAC supports school leavers transitioning to tertiary study and calculates the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) for NSW HSC students.

While UAC has been a provider of admissions services for more than 55 years, it has evolved to become a developer of leading-edge technologies that support lifelong learning, including bespoke solutions for direct admissions to education institutions, course credit and credentials management.

Part 1: Overview

History of UAC

The history of UAC is one of adaptability and innovation.

UAC was founded in 1968 as an administrative clearing house for New South Wales' three metropolitan universities – the University of Sydney, the University of New South Wales and Macquarie University.

The creation of a joint admissions office by these universities eliminated the duplication of work caused by potential students lodging multiple applications. This streamlined approach benefitted students by allowing them to submit a single application and helped universities more accurately forecast the number of offers needed to fill available places.

The higher education sector expanded in the 1970s with the growth in alternative tertiary education providers and the introduction of a no-fee policy. As a result, applications for higher education boomed and the demands on public funds increased. Attention turned to ways of continuing this expansion while reducing costs, and the three founding institutions were joined by 18 colleges and institutes.

In the 1980s, the NSW Government pushed higher education providers to broaden their admission procedures beyond the scaled aggregate. UAC played a leading role in coordinating a new system for its institutions and the Technical Committee on Scaling was established.

The 1990s was a decade of technological development, with the implementation of a centralised admissions system, including centralised assessment, and data management. As the focus shifted to ensuring equity in education, the creation of a centralised application scheme for educational access schemes was created.

In 1995, UAC became a not-for-profit company overseen by the NSW Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NSWVCC).

The early 2000s saw the launch of UAC's website and then the move to online applications. As the decade progressed, UAC's services expanded

to include mid-year admissions, centralised postgraduate applications, fee-paying courses and an application gateway for overseas students studying local Year 12 programs. At this time UAC became a founding member of the International Association of Admissions Organisations.

As the sector became more competitive in its student recruitment, UAC diversified and, in 2012, welcomed private providers. UAC launched the Schools Recommendation Scheme (SRS) in 2014 to help institutions process early offers for Year 12 students.

As an innovation leader, UAC used blockchain technology to release digital ATAR notices in 2017.

In recent years, the nature of UAC's business has expanded from its historical single admissions platform to include UAC Connect: bespoke solutions for direct admissions to individual education institutions.

It has broadened its operations to become a provider of technological solutions – including credit and credentials management – and data-based platforms that support the higher education sector and facilitate the pursuit of lifelong learning for everyone.

Our vision and values

Across our service platforms, we provide opportunities for institutions to engage with prospective students.

For learners, UAC represents a cost-effective, impartial and convenient means by which to apply for further study.

For other stakeholders, we provide services that are aligned with our mission of making participation in lifelong learning easier for all.

At its core, our value proposition relies on the position of trust we have with our partners, and that remains central to our operation.

Our mission

To be a leader in technology and services that make participation in lifelong learning easier for all.

We care about learning and we value the role we play in helping people access it. It's why we exist and it's why we'll continue to deliver platforms and services that meet the needs of all communities.

Our vision

To be the trusted partner of choice to connect people with lifelong learning.

Providing trusted services at the transition points of the education journey is at the heart of what UAC does. We will build on those partnerships and that position of trust to make the education journey seamless and rewarding for learners and in so doing help institutions fulfil their missions too.

Our values

Collaboration

We value teamwork and we share our knowledge. By working with each other and with our partners we achieve so much more.

Fairness

We actively promote a culture of equity and diversity, and value access to learning for all who seek it. We treat everyone fairly.

Innovation

We are creative and agile in our approach to solving problems. We're inquisitive and want to understand how we can improve things.

Integrity

We care about people; we value honesty and respect and will strive to uphold the highest ethical approach in all that we do.

Passion

We love what we do, and we have a passion for education and for helping people achieve their life goals. We want to be the best and inspire others to be their best too.

Strategic priorities

UAC's strategy to extend its capabilities and become an organisation that facilitates lifelong learning is a response to significant environmental forces. We will reinforce our market-leading position in admissions and become established as a leader in emerging areas related to the support of lifelong learning.

The four key pillars in achieving this goal are to:

- strengthen established services
- pursue new opportunities
- develop our people
- position ourselves among stakeholders.

Products and services

UAC Centralised

UAC Centralised processes applications for university admission for more than 80,000 applicants annually.

It provides complete online application services, including a centralised application and assessment process; management of the allocation process; and the provision of associated resources, information and services for applicants, potential applicants, other interested parties and the general public. UAC Centralised processes applications for:

- domestic and international Year 12 students undertaking Australian qualifications and seeking admission to undergraduate courses
- domestic post-school applicants seeking admission to undergraduate courses
- domestic applicants seeking admission to postgraduate coursework programs.

The ATAR

Each year more than 55,000 school leavers apply through UAC for admission to courses offered by universities in NSW and the ACT. For most courses there are more applicants than places. Applicants must be ranked to allow selection to take place. This ranking is determined by the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR).

The ATAR is calculated solely for use by tertiary institutions, either on its own or in conjunction with other criteria.

In 2023, UAC piloted providing ATAR data to schools to help them to support their students. This builds on applicant preference and offer data already provided.

Calculation of the ATAR is the responsibility of the Technical Committee on Scaling on behalf of the NSWVCC. The Technical Committee on Scaling is responsible for translating policy decisions into processes, and for developing and maintaining programs that ensure the integrity of the data and the accuracy of the individual ATARs.

ATARs are calculated and distributed to NSW students by UAC, which also provides education and resources to support the ATAR, including online resources, information sessions for students and schools, and a dedicated ATAR Enquiry Centre following the release of the results.

Equity programs

UAC supports and promotes equity of access to tertiary education through various programs.

Educational Access Scheme

Most of UAC's participating institutions offer programs under the Educational Access Scheme (EAS) to help students who have encountered significant educational challenges gain admission to tertiary study.

UAC administers EAS applications on behalf of institutions, including the provision of centralised applications and assessment, the distribution of eligibility letters and the provision of associated resources, information and services.

Equity Scholarships

UAC administers Equity Scholarships (ES) on behalf of institutions to help university students who are financially in need with the costs associated with tertiary study. It provides centralised applications and assessment, offer processes and the provision of associated publications, information and services.

Schools Recommendation Scheme

The Schools Recommendation Scheme (SRS) is one way institutions make early offers to current Australian Year 12 students who have applied for undergraduate admission through UAC. SRS applications are assessed centrally at UAC using criteria other than (or in addition to) the ATAR, including school recommendations and senior secondary studies results.

Qualifications Assessment Service

UAC's Qualifications Assessment Service (QAS) enables prospective applicants to have their qualifications assessed before they apply for tertiary study.

UAC Connect

UAC Connect is a bespoke admissions solution that provides full or tailored coverage of the admissions process from application to offer generation within the customer's environment and brand. UAC provides various levels of admissions services to 12 institutions and processes more than 100,000 applications annually.

UAC Reach

Reach is a data-based marketing solution offering direct messaging and display advertising opportunities that connect to Year 12 students, UAC applicants, influencers and 1.5 million web visitors as they make important decisions about their tertiary education.

UAC Advance

UAC Advance is designed to streamline and simplify the process of awarding credit for previous study and recognition of prior learning or advanced standing. It integrates existing admissions, student management and enquiry tools to verify prior learning directly from national tertiary record databases. It provides consistent, reliable and fast credit outcomes for staff and applicants and enhances student recruitment and the student experience for universities.

CredNet

UAC's CredNet platform is an industry-leading credentialing platform that issues verifiable credentials using distributed ledger technology. It supports lifelong learners and provides assurance to those faced with the challenge of credential verification.

CredNet offers credential creation, credential verification and credential management via a self-service portal for credential issuers, and a tamper-proof digital wallet for credential holders to safely store, access and share their credentials.

Insights

UAC's Insights dashboard is a subscription service that provides institutions with high level views of application statistics, demographics, course preferences and offers, both current and historical. It highlights applicant trends to help with informed decision-making based on accurate business intelligence.

UAC in numbers



31

Participating institutions



5

Apply direct institutions



157

UAC staff



2,400

Undergraduate courses offered



405

Postgraduate courses offered



74,404

Undergraduate applicants



4,159

Postgraduate applicants



47,990

Year 12 applicants



102,555

Undergraduate offers made



3,669

Postgraduate offers made



124,901

UAC Connect applications received



2,115

Quality Assessment Service applications received



6,830

Equity Scholarships applications received



26,090

Educational Access Scheme applications received



22,726

Schools Recommendation Scheme applications received



55,523

ATARs released

Corporate governance

UAC's corporate governance framework enables the company to meet expectations of transparency, probity, accountability and integrity. UAC's risk management framework focuses on risk identification, risk mitigation and integration into business planning and operations.

The UAC Board is UAC's prime decision-making body. The Board determines UAC's strategies for operations and future development, and oversees risks, internal controls and regulatory activities. It reports to the NSWVCC on overall organisational performance.

The Board receives advice from:

- the Executive team, which monitors the management and performance of UAC and provides advice on corporate and strategic issues as needed
- the Audit Committee, which provides independent assurance to the UAC Board on the adequacy of UAC's governance processes, financial reporting, risk management, control frameworks and external reporting obligations
- the Nomination and Remuneration Committee, which assists the UAC Board in discharging its responsibilities in relation to the selection, appointment, remuneration and performance evaluation of the Managing Director, UAC Board and Board committees
- the Business Development Committee, which assists the UAC Board in discharging its governance and fiduciary responsibilities in relation to the pursuit of business opportunities.

UAC's external auditor is the Auditor-General of NSW. The Auditor-General provides an independent opinion on whether UAC's financial statements are true and fair and comply with applicable Australian Accounting Standards.

UAC's main operational groups are the Executive team and the Users Committee. The Users Committee comprises representatives from each participating institution and provides advice to the Managing Director.

Our Board

Chair

Professor Denise Kirkpatrick

President
Nan Tien Institute
Appointed July 2020

Other directors

Professor Tyrone Carlin

Vice-Chancellor and President
Southern Cross University
Appointed January 2017

Mr Rob Chard

State Manager
Sales Director, Fujitsu
Appointed January 2017

Dr David Christie

Managing Director
Universities Admissions Centre
Appointed March 2015

Ms Nicole Grainger-Marsh

Chief Executive Officer
Asuria Australia
Appointed January 2016

Professor Eric Knight

Executive Dean and Professor of Strategic
Management
Macquarie Business School
Appointed April 2022

Ms Cathy Kovacs

Company Director and Board Adviser
Appointed July 2020

Mr Scott Nichols

Director, Management Consulting
KPMG Australia
Appointed September 2014

Professor Grady Venville

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Australian National University
Appointed January 2019

Management



Managing Director Dr David Christie

David Christie joined UAC in 2015, bringing with him experience in developing business opportunities, strategy and organisation planning in the higher education sector.



Chief Operations and Products Officer Nerida Bewick

Nerida Bewick oversees the Operations and Products team, responsible for developing policies and procedures for admissions, assessing all applications and schemes processed by UAC, responding to applicant queries and using the data UAC generates to drive analytical decision-making and business planning. The team also manages the continued improvement of UAC's products and services.



Chief Information Officer Dudley Collinson

Dudley Collinson oversees the Information Technology team. The team provides infrastructure management, system support, application development, service management and project delivery to UAC's clients and customers.



Chief People Officer Jennie Edwards

Jennie Edwards leads the People and Culture team. The team provides advice and guidance to the organisation on a range of key matters including recruitment, engagement, training and development, industrial relations, compliance and payroll.



Chief Customer and Commercial Officer
James Kevin

James Kevin leads the Customer and Commercial team in the areas of business development, marketing, student engagement and account management. The team focuses on customer experience for learners and partners, as well as being responsible for driving UAC’s commercial growth and promoting the companies products and services.



Chief Operating Officer
Mary O’Leary

Mary O’Leary joined UAC following senior finance and commercial leadership roles in the education, media, financial services and social justice sectors. The Finance and Corporate Governance team holds responsibility for UAC’s financial, governance, legal, risk and facilities management requirements.



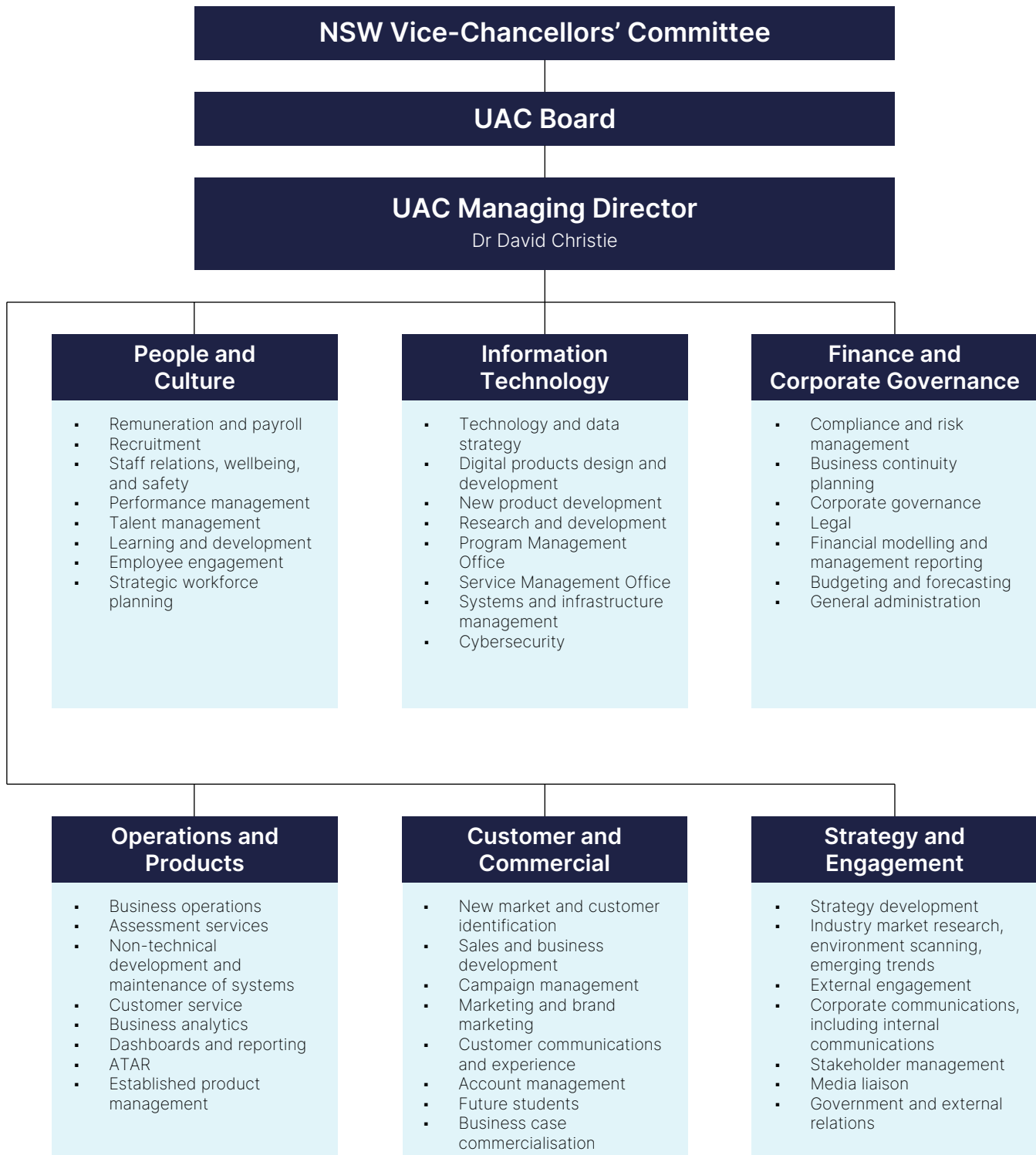
Chief Strategy and Engagement Officer
Kim Paino

Kim Paino leads the Strategy and Engagement team and is responsible for company strategy development, external engagement and government relations, stakeholder management and corporate communications. Kim is also UAC’s media spokesperson.

Workplace profile

Occupational category	Employees female	Employees male	Total employees
Managers	10	11	21
Professionals	21	35	56
Clerical and admin	53	20	73
Sales workers	1	2	3
Total	85	68	153

Organisational structure



The admissions year in review

April 2023

Undergraduate applications open

Undergraduate applications for semester 2, 2023 and semester 1, 2024 opened on 1 April. More than 2,400 undergraduate courses were offered by 29 participating institutions.

The Guide

As UAC's main audience of students source their information from digital channels, the last print edition of the UAC Guide was published. The decision also reflected corporate responsibility and sustainability, addressing the impact of printing and distributing tens of thousands of copies of this publication, each with hundreds of pages.

May 2023

Community Engagement began the admissions year with visits to the VCE and Careers Expo in Melbourne and a range of events in regional NSW, including Young, Forbes, Dubbo, Bathurst, Griffith, Wagga Wagga and Armidale, where they presented information on the ATAR, subject selection and uni entry to community groups, parents and students.

June 2023

Digital transformation

UAC's database project commenced with the Ingres primary database management system upgraded to PostgreSQL. The upgrade provided opportunities for innovation and integration with newer technologies, cloud readiness, and advanced features offering improved flexibility, maintenance, performance, productivity and security.

Busting ATAR myths

UAC participated in the HSC Study Guide 2023, published by the *Sydney Morning Herald*. Research and Statistics Manager Helen Tam appeared in a video message and busted the top 5 myths about the ATAR.

UAC on TikTok

To establish a more approachable, relatable image among Year 12 students, UAC launched its presence on TikTok, leveraging the platform's popularity with our key audience.

July 2023

The third UAC *Student Lifestyle Report* was published and featured insights from more than 14,000 Year 12 students from across Australia. It found students' main focus when starting uni in 2023 was to study something they loved on campus and to secure employment after completing their studies.

August 2023

ATAR workshop

UAC's Research and Statistics team attended the inaugural national ATAR workshop, hosted by our Victorian counterpart, VTAC. Attendees included those responsible for calculating the ATAR in each Australian jurisdiction. Despite the different ways each state calculates its ATAR, there are many commonalities across scaling methodologies.

SRS School Access

The new School Access portal, designed to streamline the SRS rating process for schools, was launched. Along with a simpler rating system, the process is much easier and more time efficient for schools.

New ways of assessment

Looking to broaden admissions criteria, UAC attended the We are More workshop in Adelaide. The forum explored ways to acknowledge the whole student and broaden admissions assessment beyond academic achievements.

September 2023

New structure

UAC transitioned to a new corporate structure to help us achieve our strategic goals and position us for the future. This included the establishment of a new area, Strategy and Engagement. The Business Solutions and Marketing and Community Engagement teams merged into the Customer and Commercial department. The Customer Service and Business Analytics teams merged with Operations to form Operations and Products. Access became a standalone unit under Operations and Products.

SRS applications

UAC's Schools Recommendation Scheme applications closed on Monday 18 September. SRS is the largest early offer scheme in Australia with nearly half of Year 12s in NSW and the ACT applying to gain admission to university using criteria other than, or in addition to, the ATAR.

Postgraduate opens

Postgraduate applications opened. More than 900 courses at 15 institutions were offered for study in 2023 and 2024.

October 2023

Access update

The Access Unit held an Equity Scholarships (ES) information session for institution staff wanting to understand more about this scheme.

November 2023

Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing sessions were held for all staff, giving an overview of what whistleblowing is plus whistleblower rights and protections.

Future strategy

Staff workshops were held to aid in the development of UAC's next Strategic Plan.

ISO accreditation

UAC was re-accredited to ISO standard 27001, an internationally accepted standard of information security practices.

December 2023

ATAR

ATARs were released to 55,523 students on Thursday 14 December. The night before, ATAR live sessions on Facebook and Instagram reached just over 6,000 people and responded to questions about the ATAR calculation and next steps for students in managing their application.

This year, UAC also provided ATAR data to schools to help them in supporting their students.

The ATAR Enquiry Centre had more than 450 calls on its first day of operation. The main questions fielded were:

- How is the ATAR calculated?
- Why were certain subjects included in my ATAR calculation?
- Why is my ATAR lower than my HSC marks?

For the second year, students were able to access and store their ATAR in a free digital wallet, CredFolio. As at 4pm, more than 11,600 ATAR credentials had been claimed.

ATAR offers

On 21 December more than 35,880 offers were released in the main offer round for Year 12 students.

Educational access

More than 25,000 Educational Access Scheme eligibility letters were sent to applicants. Across all of UAC's access schemes, there were over 66,000 applications received, over 30,400 assessments conducted and over 4,000 email enquiries answered.

January 2024

Offers released

UAC released a further 14,700 ATAR-based offers to applicants.

February 2024

Applications close

Applications for undergraduate semester 1, 2024 study closed on Friday 2 February.

March 2024

Final offers

The final offers for semester 1 admissions were made.

Part 2: Strategic achievements

Key achievements

UAC undertook many projects in 2023–24 to support its broader mission to be a leader in technology and services that make participation in lifelong learning easier for all.

Strengthened established services

Starting in June 2023, UAC renewed its IT service infrastructure through the transition of the core admissions database from Ingres to PostgreSQL – a critical first initiative and foundation for digitally transforming UAC’s admissions system.

Pursued new opportunities

UAC welcomed new clients onboard our bespoke admissions service, UAC Connect, with two new portals launched.

The University of Newcastle general admissions portal

The University of Newcastle general admissions portal launched in April 2023. In its first year it received more than 12,000 applications.

Its early offer portal opened in May 2023 and had 5,500 applications, well exceeding its target of 4,000. It is the first institution to run two UAC application schemes concurrently.

The UNSW Gateway Admission Pathway portal

Launched in May 2023, the UNSW Gateway Admissions Pathway Connect portal provides opportunities for traditionally under-represented students to access higher education at UNSW Sydney.

The early offer scheme is open to domestic Year 12 students who either attend a UNSW Gateway school or live at a low-SES address. This complex project, which included an online application and a Gateway-optimised predicted rank component, launched on time with tight timelines. With an initial target of 2,000 applicants, applications closed with more than 4,400 applications.

CredNet US

UAC worked with existing client Big Picture Learning Australia and its US partners to deliver CredNet US in September 2023. The project team delivered a new version of CredNet with storage and other resources hosted in the US.

This partnership offers the opportunity for further opportunities in the North American region. The project outcomes were achieved in four weeks.

Developed our people

Introduced a new organisational structure with clear accountabilities to support the delivery of UAC’s strategic goals and add value to our external and internal stakeholders.

Positioned UAC among stakeholders

UAC published the third annual Student Lifestyle Report in June 2023 with key insights into student attitudes, habits, expectations and hopes. This year, being on campus studying something they love and securing employment after completing their studies were the main themes from students who entered university in 2023.

Throughout the year UAC responded to several state and federal government reviews relevant to the education sector including the highly anticipated Accord, to ensure the perspective of Tertiary Admission Centres is heard. These were the:

- Higher Education Standards Panel Development in Higher Education Admissions Practices
- Australian Universities Accord
- NSW VET Review discussion paper.

Engagement

Schools, students, parents and carers

UAC attends hundreds of in-person events each year, including school information sessions, university open days and careers expos. The Community Engagement team travels the country to educate and advise students, careers advisers and school staff on the transition to higher education and promote and explain UAC's products and services.

In 2023, the team attended 358 events, answering queries and giving presentations on topics including the ATAR, subject selection and medicine entry.

Events included Western Sydney University's 2023 Careers Advisers' and Teachers' Day, the Macquarie University Careers Advisers & Teachers Day and the UTS Careers Advisers and Teachers Day as well as the Western Sydney Careers Expo and the HSC Careers Expo in May and June.

UAC attended the 'HSC and Beyond: Opportunities and Options 2023' information day at Westmead Children's Hospital. This is held for senior students with chronic health conditions and their siblings, parents, teachers, and medical and allied health professionals. UAC staff explained the ATAR and access schemes, and engaged in a Q&A session alongside NESAs, fielding questions on early offers, EAS, the ATAR and the impact of chronic illness.

Institutions

UAC welcomed staff and third-year students participating in the University of Sydney's Industry and Community Project unit. The project brief was to reimagine university admissions with the aim of incorporating assessment of personal attributes and improving access for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Higher education

In February, UAC attended the Universities Australia Solutions Summit in Canberra. Leaders in higher education, government and industry shared their insights under the theme 'Harnessing universities for national priorities'.

In May, UAC attended a series of ACTAC (Australasian Conference of Tertiary Admissions Centres) meetings at The University of Tasmania.

UAC also attended the HOSA (Heads of Student Administration) conference in Perth. The conference focused on exploring approaches to building inclusivity and community on college and university campuses.

International

UAC Managing Director David Christie visited the UK's centralised admissions organisation, the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS), in July 2023. He met with executives and the UCAS Board and attended their 30-year anniversary celebrations.

Several UAC representatives returned to the UK later in the year to attend the IAAO (International Association of Admissions Organisations) conference, hosted by UCAS.

Government

UAC continued to support the National Credentials Marketplace, Microcred Seeker. An initiative of the Australian Government. UAC was a proud partner in developing the platform.

UAC also continued to support Course Seeker, a joint initiative of Tertiary Admissions Centres and the Australian Government. It provides a single point of entry for information about higher education admissions policies and processes.

Media

As part of its media engagement program, UAC Media sends regular media releases, particularly in the key admissions months of December and January. Media interest peaks in December when school results, the ATAR and university offers are released. In 2023, there was also strong interest in early offers released in November through the Schools Recommendation Scheme.

UAC is regularly featured on key local media channels, including the *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Daily Telegraph*, as well as nationally on ABC news and radio. In December, UAC spokesperson Kim Paino was interviewed on ABC Sydney Mornings about applications and early offers with a potential audience of 138 million.

UAC Media also works closely with the Research and Statistics team to publish data and commentary at significant points in the application cycle, such as mid-year semester 1 applicant and offer numbers.

Part 3: Inclusivity and sustainability

Environment

UAC is committed to incorporating sustainability into its strategy. UAC's Sustainability Committee, known as the 'Green Team', has delivered several key initiatives to achieve this goal.

In December 2023, UAC engaged Shell Energy as its new electricity supplier for its Rhodes premises. This agreement includes a 100 per cent green energy commitment, which is audited by the Commonwealth Government under its GreenPower program.

In early 2024, a series, Sustainability Journeys, launched on UAC's intranet. The stories showcase projects that staff have taken to further reduce their energy footprints. Through sharing their initiatives, they aim to raise awareness and inspire others to implement sustainable solutions at home.

Accessibility

UAC advocates for equity – not only in admissions but also through the content and systems we create. Our objective is to ensure all our products are inclusive and accessible to everyone, regardless of ability.

Ensuring that everyone in our community can access our information and use our products is now a core principle within our technology development process. Our IT teams are employing a suite of accessibility-compliant design platforms and we have implemented a comprehensive testing strategy within our Quality Assurance team. We have also made significant progress in selecting the appropriate accessibility testing tools.

To further embed a culture of inclusivity within our organisation and the work that we do, we have established an executive Accessibility Board that oversees and promotes accessibility initiatives. All new staff members are introduced to our accessibility principles and goals during onboarding. This year, a significant number of our technical staff completed training in development, UX design, and accessible content creation, including PDF, Word and web content. These efforts culminated in a Me2Accessibility seminar

open to all staff. We continue to maintain a dedicated section on our intranet as a repository for sharing knowledge and best practices.

Our Accessibility Committee organised an Accessibility Week, featuring published tips and in-house activities designed to spark conversations about the barriers faced by people with disabilities. This initiative highlighted Global Accessibility Awareness Day in May 2024.

Wellbeing

UAC launched a new employee support program in 2023. The program gives UAC team members access to perks and discounts from leading retailers.

In May 2023, the People and Culture team hosted the UAC Health Fair with a series of events, both online and in person. These included flu vaccinations, heart checks, seminars on wellbeing and nutrition, massages and gym membership offers. Mini massages are held throughout the year in the office and are a well-received staff benefit.

The Culture, Wellbeing and Happiness Committee supports the People and Culture team by promoting a positive culture and ensuring the wellbeing and happiness of staff. In this period initiatives have included a lunchtime session for International Women's Day. The topic of discussion was: 'If you could have lunch with any influential woman, past or present, who would it be and why?' Attendees shared stories and celebrated remarkable women and their lives.

Training and development

UAC offers ongoing internal and external training and development to support staff professionally and personally.

TELUS Health, UAC's employee assistance provider, hosted webinars in April and May on resilience for working parents and making a successful transition to retirement.

All staff were invited to attend an accredited mental health and crisis support training session run by St John Ambulance. The program aims to give participants the skills and knowledge to recognise imminent crisis situations.

Sessions on strengths-based training were held in October and November. After completing the CliftonStrengths assessment, staff received a report on their top five strength themes. The facilitator then took the group through various exercises to explore how these could be developed and used to improve performance, both at work and personally.

Award-winning broadcast and investigative journalist Sophie Scott visited UAC to discuss burnout using her communication experience and the latest medical research and neuroscience. She offered practical strategies on how staff can avoid and manage it.

Other training sessions and webinars held throughout the year included Unconscious Bias/ Building Awareness and Creating a Safe Workplace, Building Mental Self Fitness and How to Contribute to a Mentally Safe Team.

Our culture

UAC once again participated in Australia's Biggest Morning Tea and raised more than \$2,300 for vital cancer research, support services, prevention programs and advocacy.

For Pride Month in June, UAC showed its support and solidarity for the LGBTIQ+ community, with team members encouraged to wear a rainbow colour to the staff meeting.

In September 2023, staff once again participated in STEPtember. UAC's five teams raised more than \$1,800, took 6,325,250 steps and finished 668th overall on the STEPtember leaderboard.

A Pizza and Ping-pong event, also in September, was a great opportunity for staff to catch up with co-workers, have a bit of friendly competition and indulge in a casual lunch. As part of the event, a raffle was held to support R U OK?Day.

In October, staff participated in the local community BBBRun. This 10-kilometre all-inclusive charity run from Rhodes to Sydney Olympic Park raises awareness of those with mobility issues and incorporates events for wheelchairs, runners, families, walkers and framerunners.

The year ended with UAC contributing to a Christmas Gift Giving and Gold Coin Donation appeal to support children in hospital over Christmas in the Children's Ward at Royal North Shore and Westmead hospitals.

ACCESS YOUR POTENTIAL.

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