

UAC SUBMISSION

May 2018



REFORMING THE TRANSITION FROM SECONDARY TO TERTIARY EDUCATION

About us

The Universities Admissions Centre (UAC) was established in 1995 and is the largest tertiary admissions centre in Australia. Owned by universities in NSW and the ACT, our mission is to provide excellence in admissions services and promote equity of access to tertiary education.

Insights

UAC considers the following as important steps towards better supporting senior secondary students as they transition into tertiary education:

- A national approach to admissions that would yield consistency across the various state-based systems.
- The provision of better advice to students about their study options through the use of digital technologies and access to professional career advice.
 - UAC is currently developing prototypes for the use of machine learning in the education context, specifically around informing the prospective student journey and offering advice to applicants that will guide their decision making.
 - All secondary students need to have timely access to professional careers advice in order to make informed decisions about their post-school destinations (including study options and career pathways).
- Better integration between VET and higher education.
 - UAC believes in the importance of a robust vocational system, so that the entire tertiary sector is working effectively to add value to students and the community, with recognized and clearly communicated pathways between VET and tertiary education.
- More nuanced admissions mechanisms (eg interview, portfolio, essay) to assist universities in selecting appropriate students for their courses.
- Greater emphasis on alternative entry schemes such as Schools Recommendation Schemes (SRS). SRS are one way universities make early offers of undergraduate admission to Year 12 students, using criteria other than (or in addition to) the ATAR.
- Targeted information leading to greater understanding about the ATAR and its effectiveness as a tool only for ranking students for the purpose of university admissions, and not applicable more broadly.

Leading the way forward

UAC has a trusted and valued position in the higher education sector. Applicants, in particular Year 12 students, turn to UAC for unbiased and authoritative information about university admissions and courses. We are committed to helping students and the sector as we seek to improve the transition from secondary school to tertiary education.

UAC would like to thank the Mitchell Institute and Australian Learning Lecture for the opportunity to contribute to this important conversation.