POSITION: Research Analyst (Full-time Continuing Appointment)

The information package for the above position includes a copy of the Nature and Scope of UAC, the Position Description, a Privacy Issues document, and a brief summary of the UAC working conditions and remuneration of this position. If you decide to make an application for this position would you please provide a written response to each of the selection criteria contained in the position description in your application letter.

Summary of UAC working conditions and remuneration

The successful applicant will receive a copy of the UAC Enterprise Agreement 2013-2016, which details all the conditions of employment.

Business hours - UAC staff work a 35 hour week. Our business hours are 8:30 to 4:30 Monday to Friday, with an hour lunch break.

RDO System - Permanent staff can participate in a Rostered Day Off (RDO) system where staff are able to work an extra 22 minutes per day in order to receive an RDO every four (4) weeks.

Probation Period - The probation period for permanent positions is three (3) months.

Sick Leave - Permanent staff are entitled to ten (10) days paid sick leave in the first year of employment, and receive fifty (50) days in the following years (with conditions).

Annual Leave - Permanent staff receive twenty (20) days annual leave per year.

Superannuation - UAC offers permanent staff 20% employer superannuation contributions. Staff have the option of taking a portion of their employer superannuation contribution as a cash component of their salary. However, a minimum 9.5% of employer superannuation contribution is required to meet Superannuation Guarantee obligations. All employer contributions will be paid into your nominated superannuation fund.

Remuneration - The salary range for this position at Grade 8 is $119,514 - $134,788 (includes base salary plus 20% employer superannuation contribution and annual leave loading). Initial appointment to a step within Grade 8 will be based on relevant knowledge and experience.
1. **Background information**

The Universities Admissions Centre (NSW & ACT) Pty Ltd (UAC) is the central office that processes applications for undergraduate and postgraduate courses, Educational Access Schemes and Equity Scholarships. UAC also notifies current NSW HSC students of their Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) and administers the Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT).

UAC operates in an environment of ongoing change as it responds to the needs of its participating institutions and to changes generated by external sources including the Australian Government and the NSW Government. As a consequence UAC’s role is constantly evolving as it takes on new responsibilities and realigns itself strategically to meet future demands on its services.

It comprises the Executive Unit and four departments: Client Services, Corporate Services, Information Services and Information Technology. The Research, Statistics and Development (RSD) Unit is part of the Information Technology department.

The Research, Statistics and Development Unit is a new unit, created to meet UAC’s developing needs in the key functional areas of research and statistics.

The Unit is responsible for undertaking high-level research for UAC and its participating institutions; for the analysis and reporting of relevant statistical data; and for the management of major cross-departmental projects. The Unit also contributes to UAC’s strategic and business planning processes and collaborates in fulfilling UAC’s statutory reporting obligations.

For further information about UAC’s structure and functions, see *Nature and Scope of Universities Admissions Centre (NSW & ACT) Pty Ltd*, available from UAC’s Human Resources Unit.
2. **Job purpose**

The Research Analyst is responsible for contributing in the development and management of effective research and statistical analysis functions across the organisation, and for implementing innovative business projects approved by the UAC Board. Research functions will include the management of high-level research projects in areas such as the outcomes of the tertiary application and selection process, the comparative analysis of national and international qualifications and selection indices.

3. **Reporting and other relationships**

The Research Analyst reports directly to the RSD Manager. Within UAC, RSD operates within a flexible and collaborative team-based environment, with team members from the Unit and other departments varying according to the nature of each project/task. In particular the Research Analyst will liaise closely with the Business Analyst, the Assessment Manager, the Operations Manager and the Software Manager. There will also be opportunities for the Research Analyst to work with staff at the executive level.

Externally, the Research Analyst liaises with staff from institutions and other organisations, including the NSW Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards, Australian and NSW government departments, and other tertiary admissions centres. This occurs through sub-committees and working parties as well as through day-to-day communication.

4. **Dimensions**

There are 25 UAC-participating institutions.

The admission cycle runs from August each year to July in the following year.

In the 2014/15 admission cycle, there were over 94,000 domestic applicants for undergraduate courses.

5. **Responsibilities**

1. The Research Analyst will have the opportunity to explore the large volume of admissions data gathered by UAC currently and over the past decade. Using these data and potentially other data from external sources, the Research Analyst will carry out expert statistical analysis relating to tertiary education outcomes. The types of research and analyses include:
   a. Looking for ways to improve or enhance current selection methods for university admissions, as well as keeping up-to-date with other research reported elsewhere on selection and admission procedures.
   b. Reviewing the wide range of secondary and tertiary qualifications from Australia and other countries, and constructing suitable ways of comparing these qualifications so that university admissions that are based on these qualifications will be fair and equitable.
   c. Producing evidence-based solutions and recommendations for UAC’s business decisions.

2. The Research Analyst will assist in calculating the ATARs (Australian Tertiary Admission Ranks) for NSW Year 12 students each year. This will involve:
   a. Supporting UAC staff in preparing the data files throughout the year.
   b. Supporting the RSD manager and the Chair of the Technical Committee on Scaling in data integrity checks, the scaling process and the calculation of the ATAR.
c. Gaining knowledge in the Higher School Certificate and the ATAR, in order to advise UAC staff and assist in answering queries from the general public.

3. The Research Analyst will work closely with the Information Technology and Information Services teams to help develop ways in publishing admissions statistics online. This will involve:
   a. Producing key statistics on applications, preferences, offers and enrolment, while ensuring that these statistics are accurate, consistent and timely.
   b. Proposing innovative ways to present data and statistics, in order to enhance the impact, usefulness and understanding of admissions trends and the higher education sector.

6. **Principal accountabilities**

The Research Analyst is accountable for:

1. The timeliness, accuracy and relevance of the research and statistical data provided as well as the quality and comprehensiveness of reports and project documentation.

2. Effective communication with all stakeholders and the development of appropriate and professional working relationships with UAC staff and the staff of participating institutions.

3. A demonstrated commitment to ensuring quality service to UAC’s clients and to the concept of continuous improvement.

7. **Challenges and constraints**

In order to achieve the unit’s strategic objectives the Research Analyst must be able to communicate effectively and succinctly on complex issues, with technical and non-technical staff, including senior management and stakeholders.

The type and rate of change in UAC’s environment, both internal and external, means that the Research Analyst must keep up to date with changes in the tertiary and secondary sectors; both national and international, and from technical, policy and procedural perspectives.

8. **Education and experience**

Tertiary level qualifications and relevant experience OR an equivalent combination of relevant experience and/or training.

9. **Selection criteria**

   **Essential**

1. Academic qualifications and technical experience
   a. Tertiary qualifications with major studies in one or more of mathematics/statistics, natural and physical sciences, information technology, social sciences or related areas and extensive relevant experience or an equivalent combination of relevant experience and/or education/training.
   b. Excellent analytical skills and able to develop creative and innovative approaches to complex problems and investigations.
   c. Skills and experience in using statistical techniques and packages (e.g., R, SAS, SPSS, SQL) to carry out exploratory investigations, modelling and/or predictive analyses.
d. Skills and experience in transforming and manipulating large datasets, for the purpose of data analysis.

e. Ability to communicate research methods and findings clearly to both technical and non-technical audiences.

2. Personal

a. Enthusiasm for working with numbers and communicating findings to technical and non-technical audiences.

b. Excellent communication and presentation skills and the ability to persuade and negotiate.

c. High-level organisational and time management skills, able to work to deadlines, manage multiple activities and respond to changing priorities.

d. Ability to work independently and as part of a team.

e. Understand and commit to the principles of anti-discrimination and equal employment opportunity legislation and the application of these principles in the workplace on a daily basis with a commitment to cultural diversity.

f. Understand and commit to the principles of work health and safety legislation and the application of these principles in the workplace on a daily basis.

**Desirable**

1. Experience working with data in sectors such as banking, finance, retail, e-commerce, health, biosciences, or other industries where decision-making is data-driven.

2. Experience working with unstructured datasets, and/or where data have been collated from multiple sources.

Employee_________________________ Date_________________________

Director_________________________ Date_________________________