



# Annual Report

2012-13

UAC  
Universities Admissions Centre



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(NSW & ACT) Pty Ltd 2013

ACN 070 055 935  
ABN 19 070 055 935

Published September 2013

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This publication is available on UAC's website and in electronic or printed format upon request.

## About this report

This report gives an overview of the operations of the Universities Admissions Centre (UAC) for the financial year ended 30 June 2013 and includes highlights of events during the financial year.

# Contents



Report from the Chair	02
Report from the Managing Director	03
Achievements in 2012–13	04
Mission, Vision, Values and Strategic goals	06
About UAC	07
Scope of UAC	08
UAC management structure and relationships	09
UAC Board and organisational structure	10
Publishing	11

# Report from the Chair



The 2012–13 financial year was another successful one for the Universities Admissions Centre. While there was pleasing growth in the number of UAC participating institutions, there were no significant changes in the nature of UAC's activities during the year. UAC's core business remains the provision of centralised application, assessment and offer services and a range of functions that support the application and enrolment process.

The activities of the UAC Board during 2012–13 included review of the UAC business continuity plan, approval for the development of an international portal, and receipt of the Managing Director's report to each meeting of the Board, including items relating to finance and budget, audit and risk, work health and safety, general issues of interest at UAC and in the sector, and advice of operational matters and projects in development at UAC.

In that time we have seen continuing growth in undergraduate places at our institutions, in line with the widening participation agenda set by the Bradley Review. As part of that, it is very pleasing that UAC has

partnered with the Bridges to Higher Education consortium to increase participation from disadvantaged and/or under-represented communities in higher education.

Of course, there will be further changes to the higher education sector in the year ahead, and UAC will continue to provide services that meet the changing needs of our participating institutions, schools and applicants.

I took up the role of Chair of the UAC Board in January 2013, and I look forward to working with the Board and UAC staff to ensure that UAC continues to excel in the provision of tertiary admissions services. I would like to acknowledge the prodigious contribution of Crystal Condous, my predecessor as Chair. Crystal served as Chair of the UAC Board for seven years, retiring in December 2012. Crystal's considerable experience and expertise in the tertiary sector was invaluable to UAC during her time as Chair, and her guidance and support over the years is much appreciated.

Finally, my thanks go to the UAC Board and UAC staff for their diligence and shared commitment to UAC's ongoing growth and success. UAC is committed to developing strong relationships with its institutions and all its stakeholders in the community.

Mr Bruce Lines  
Chair, UAC Board



# Report from the Managing Director



The 2012–13 financial year was one of growth and preparation for change for the Universities Admissions Centre (UAC).

We recorded growth in both applications and offers for undergraduate study (domestic and international), Equity Scholarships and Educational Access Schemes.

This year UAC also expanded to include six new participating institutions; a welcome addition that broadens the tertiary study options for our applicants.

In the coming year we are moving to a year-round admissions model, which will give applicants the opportunity to apply for courses starting at any time of the year in a single application.

The growth in applications comes at a time of further change in the higher education sector. Tertiary institutions are growing in student numbers while government funding is tightening, and there is growing demand for online and other innovative forms of course delivery. These variables, and a recent federal election,

make for challenging and uncertain times ahead. UAC is committed to partnering with our institutions to help them meet whatever challenges they may face.

Finally, I thank the staff of UAC for their hard work this year and our institutions and community stakeholders for their ongoing support.

Mr Andrew Stanton  
UAC Managing Director

# Achievements in 2012–13

As the education sector entered a new phase in 2012–13, much of its growth and change was reflected in the following highlights for UAC.

## *Undergraduate*

Applications for undergraduate study continued to grow. UAC received, processed and assessed more than 90,850 applications – a 1.5 per cent increase on last year.

## *Postgraduate*

There was a small decline in applications for postgraduate study. UAC received, processed and assessed more than 13,858 applications to the end of the admissions cycle in August – a 1.4 per cent decrease on last year.

## *Equity Scholarships*

UAC received 7,189 Equity Scholarship applications for 2013 admissions; this was an increase of 6.5 per cent compared to the previous year.

A supplementary application period was held for six weeks between February and March, after the main round of offers. This extension to the application period was provided at the request of institutions to cater for students who only became aware of Equity Scholarships when they enrolled on campus after the closing date for applications for main round offers.

## *Educational Access Schemes*

There was a significant increase of more than 41 per cent in the number of Educational Access Schemes applications received for 2013 admissions. Of the 19,329 applications received, there were 8,259 paper applications and 11,070 'virtual' applications. (Virtual applications are those lodged automatically by UAC on behalf of students attending certain disadvantaged schools.)

## *Community engagement*

UAC's community engagement program continued to grow in 2012–13 and received a very positive response from our stakeholders in the community. Feedback from attendees highlighted the usefulness of real-life examples and the explanation of the UAC process in simple terms.

UAC had a presence at all major multi-school careers events and expos throughout NSW and the ACT in both metropolitan and regional areas, including the North West, Central West, North Coast, Central Coast, South Coast, Riverina, Illawarra, Newcastle and Hunter Valley regions.

These included the:

- Sydney Morning Herald HSC and Careers Expo at Moore Park
- Western Sydney Careers Expo at Sydney Olympic Park
- Central West Regional Careers Conference at Bathurst.

Towns visited included Forbes, Dubbo, Leeton, Wagga Wagga, Albury, Moruya, Canberra, Maitland, Newcastle, Taree, Camden Haven and the new destination of Moree in the far north of the state.





The Community Liaison team undertook presentations for particular groups. These included:

- the University of Western Sydney's Fast Forward program for current Year 12 students aimed at encouraging participation in tertiary education
- a Port Macquarie session for non-Year 12 students on behalf of Charles Sturt University and the University of Newcastle to build aspirations for tertiary study in the region
- a Sydney session for international Year 12 students and their parents on applying for tertiary study.

UAC also ran various sessions for Year 10 students choosing subjects for Years 11 and 12 and for parents guiding their children through the process of applying for tertiary study.

Based on the successful scaling sessions aimed at principals, deputy principals, careers advisers, head teachers and year advisers, the Community Liaison team has also run a series of UAC Information Days in metropolitan and regional areas, covering all aspects of the UAC process.

### ***Customer service***

UAC's Customer Service Centre is open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 4.30pm and handles counter enquiries, telephone calls and email enquiries. In the peak period of August 2012 to February 2013 we handled approximately 77,000 calls and 13,000 emails.

Customer Service received 3,010 calls on Thursday 20 December 2012, the day ATARs were released on UAC's website.

As well as striving to guide applicants through the admissions process by updating and improving content on UAC's website, UAC has developed its online social media presence, giving applicants several possible channels to stay up to date with UAC's latest announcements and reminders about important opening, closing and offer dates.

This financial year was the first full year UAC's Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/universitiesadmissionscentre](http://www.facebook.com/universitiesadmissionscentre)) was active. Facebook has continued to provide a valuable communication channel and to support our traditional phone and email customer service function. At UAC's peak period during the main admission period Facebook had more than 3,000 followers—an increase of 33 per cent since last year. Users under the age of 24 remain the largest demographic segment of users.

UAC launched its YouTube channel ([www.youtube.com/user/UACinfo](http://www.youtube.com/user/UACinfo)) in September 2012 with a series of guides to applying for undergraduate study as a domestic or international student and a guide to applying for postgraduate study. UAC also developed video guides explaining important parts of the application process, such as understanding the ATAR and changing preferences.

UAC's launch on Twitter (<http://twitter.com/UACinfo>) in December 2012 provided us with an additional social media channel to reach applicants who may not have Facebook. The follower base has grown at about 10 per cent each month.

In August 2012 we produced a podcast on understanding scaling, which has had over 50,000 downloads since its launch.

### ***Other achievements***

#### ***Flexible undergraduate admissions***

In 2012–13 UAC and its participating institutions agreed to move to flexible undergraduate admissions. This means that from 2014 admissions onwards UAC will have a single admissions period that runs from August through to July. Applicants will be able to apply for courses starting throughout the year with one application.

## MISSION

To excel at providing services to participating institutions, prospective students and others that promote access to tertiary education that is for the benefit of all community groups.

## VISION

To be regarded as the most effective, innovative, knowledgeable and helpful partner in the tertiary admissions sector.

## VALUES

### *Respect and develop our partnerships*

We have many partnerships – with participating institutions and the NSWVCC, staff, applicants, suppliers, government, and the UAC Board. Our success relies upon the quality of these relationships, which we maintain and improve through co-operation and understanding.

### *Exceed expectations*

We have a positive attitude and will always look to provide solutions to problems or different ways of doing the things that are important to our business and our partners.

### *Be the best*

We will strive to be the best in everything we do and bring a sense of care, skill, diligence and loyalty to our work. We will listen to our partners, make improvements where we can, take pride in our achievements and build on them.

### *Play by the rules*

We value the trust of our partners and will promote a culture of integrity, impartiality and honesty among our staff and through our partners as a core feature of our business.

## STRATEGIC GOALS

- Expand the range and utilisation of our services.
- Develop and improve our systems.
- Maintain excellence in our business processes.



# About UAC



Initially formed in 1969 as an association of Sydney metropolitan universities, UAC was set up in 1995 by the New South Wales Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NSWVCC) to process applications for admission to undergraduate courses offered by its participating universities in NSW and the ACT.

Before 1995, UAC operated as an administrative division of the University of Sydney. In 1996 it became the Universities Admissions Centre (NSW & ACT) Pty Ltd, a company owned by UniProjects Pty Limited, in turn owned by the NSWVCC.

UAC's offices are located at Sydney Olympic Park.

## Participating institutions

UAC welcomed several new participating institutions in 2012–13 as it moved to include other approved higher education providers offering courses at diploma level or higher that are eligible for FEE-HELP. These were:

- APM College of Business and Communication
- Billy Blue College of Design
- Campion College Australia
- International College of Management, Sydney
- Jansen Newman Institute
- William Blue College of Hospitality Management.

In total there were 24 participating institutions in 2012–13. The remaining institutions were:

- Australian Catholic University
- Australian Maritime College
- Australian National University
- Canberra Institute of Technology
- Charles Sturt University
- Griffith University
- La Trobe University
- Macquarie University
- Southern Cross University
- University of Canberra
- University of New England
- University of New South Wales
- University of Newcastle
- University of Sydney

- University of Technology, Sydney
- University of Western Sydney
- University of Wollongong.

Our services to participating institutions include centralised application and assessment processes for undergraduate, postgraduate and distance education courses, Educational Access Schemes (EAS) and Equity Scholarships (ES) applications, and applications from specific groups of international students. UAC is also responsible for calculating and providing the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) to NSW Higher School Certificate students.

## Apply direct institutions

For the first time in 2012–13, UAC offered approved higher education providers the opportunity to appear in the UAC Guide and on UAC's website without fully participating in UAC's application and assessment process. Applicants apply directly to these institutions. The following institutions appeared as apply direct institutions in the *UAC 2013 Guide*.

- Academy of Information Technology
- Australian College of Applied Psychology
- Australian College of Physical Education
- Australian International Conservatorium of Music
- Blue Mountains International Hotel Management School
- JMC Academy
- Sydney Institute of Business and Technology
- The University of Notre Dame Australia
- Whitehouse Institute of Design, Australia.

## Staff

UAC employed 62 people on a permanent basis and recruited 55 fixed-term temporary staff for periods of up to six months during 2012–13.

## Management

UAC's major policies are determined by the UAC Board, which reports to the NSWVCC. The day-to-day activities of UAC are the responsibility of the Managing Director. See page 9 for UAC management structure and relationships.

# Scope of UAC

## Functions

From its origins as a centre for handling undergraduate applications, UAC's functions have increased significantly to include:

- **Undergraduate admissions** – administering undergraduate admissions for domestic and selected international applicants. This includes a centralised application and assessment process, management of the allocation process, and providing associated publications, information and services for applicants, potential applicants, other interested parties and the general public.
- **Postgraduate admissions** – administering postgraduate admissions for selected coursework courses for domestic applicants. This includes a centralised application and assessment process, management of the allocation process, and providing associated publications, information and services for applicants, potential applicants, other interested parties and the general public.
- **Educational Access Schemes (EAS)** – administering EAS, including the provision of centralised applications and assessment, and providing associated publications, information and services for applicants, potential applicants, other interested parties and the general public.
- **Equity Scholarships (ES)** – administering ES for UAC applicants and current university students, including centralised applications and assessment, and providing associated publications, information and services for applicants, potential applicants, other interested parties and the general public.
- **Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR)** – managing the ATAR, including website release, the production and distribution of ATAR Advice Notices, running the ATAR Enquiry Centre and providing associated publications and

information for students, teachers, parents, other interested parties and the general public.

- **Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT)** – administering STAT Multiple Choice and Written English, including providing centralised applications, test venues and supervisors, and associated publications, information and services for candidates, potential candidates, other interested parties and the general public.

## Size

The following figures for semester 1 in 2013 give some background to the size of the functions listed above.

<b>Undergraduate</b>	
Domestic applications	88,237
Domestic offers	82,069
International applications	2,702
International offers	4,890
<b>Postgraduate</b>	
Applications	11,057
Offers	12,263
<b>Educational Access Schemes (EAS)</b>	
Applications	19,329
<b>Equity Scholarships (ES)</b>	
Applications	7,189
<b>ATAR</b>	
ATAR Advice Notices sent in 2012	67,449
<b>STAT</b>	
STAT candidates	2,537



# UAC management structure and relationships



## NSW Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NSWVCC)

Comprises the Vice-Chancellor from each NSW/ACT university.

## UAC Board

Comprises:

- eight nominees of the NSWVCC (and one current Vice-Chancellor)
- Users Committee
- Managing Director, UAC

See UAC Board on page 10.

## UAC Managing Director

Andrew Stanton

## Users Committee

Comprises:

- one representative from each institution.

Provides advice to Managing Director. The Managing Director and senior UAC staff attend.

The Chair is a member of the Board.

## UAC Management and Staff

See UAC organisational structure on page 10.

# UAC Board and organisational structure

## Chair

### Mr Bruce Lines

BA (Hons), MPubPol, MBA, GAICD  
 Vice-President, Operations, University of Canberra  
 Appointed January 2013

Bruce joined the University of Canberra in 2003 as Director, Student Services. He was appointed Registrar in 2009, and Vice-President, Operations, in 2013.

Over the course of his career, Bruce has presented conference papers and published in areas relating to tertiary education management. He has previously chaired the Board of the University of Canberra Union (UCU) and also served on the Board of the Queensland Theatre Company. In 2006 Bruce was awarded a Carrick Institute Citation for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning, relating to his oversight of VET to UC pathway programs.

### Crystal Condous

Appointed June 2005; retired December 2012

Crystal Condous OAM, BComm (Marketing) MLib. Principal of Crystal Condous Consulting Services; was a member of the board of Governors for the Centennial Parklands Foundation; was Registrar and Deputy Principal of the University of New South Wales; awarded an OAM in 2004 for services to tertiary education as an administrator.

## Other members

### Professor Peter Lee (NSWVCC representative and Deputy Chair)

Vice-Chancellor, Southern Cross University  
 Appointed January 2012

### Professor Robert Coombes

Head School of Accounting and Finance  
 Charles Sturt University  
 Appointed September 2005

### Professor Joan Cooper

Pro-Vice Chancellor (Students) and Registrar University of New South Wales  
 Appointed February 2009

### Mr Damien Israel

Chief Finance Officer  
 University of Wollongong  
 Appointed July 2011

### Ms Shaneen McGlinchey

Deputy Registrar  
 University of Western Sydney  
 Appointed March 2010

### Mr Chris Hadley (Chair, Users Committee)

Manager, Enrolments and UAC Admissions  
 University of Wollongong  
 Appointed July 2011

### Mr Andrew Stanton (UAC Managing Director)

Appointed August 1995

## Officer

Mr John Pegg (Company Secretary)



# Publishing



## *Online*

### *Website*

UAC's website is the main information and application source for undergraduate, postgraduate and international applicants. It is updated constantly to reflect the latest general and course information. All applicants apply online. They can also review and change their applications at any time up until final closing dates using the Check & Change function.

The website contains information on Equity Access Schemes and Equity Scholarships as well as the Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT). Additional areas include Schoolink, which brings together resources for schools and careers advisers, as well as a secure corporate area for participating institutions.

With the growth in users accessing UAC's website through an array of devices, including phone, tablet and PDA, UAC developed the website for undergraduate admissions in August 2012 using the principles of responsive web design to enhance content and navigation on different screen widths.

Website content was also enhanced to include a Media Hub area, bringing together UAC's social media platforms of Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and podcasts.

### *Directions*

*Directions* is UAC's monthly e-newsletter for applicants, careers advisers, institution staff and international student agents. It advises subscribers of upcoming events, admissions deadlines, offer releases, scholarship information and closing dates.

## *Print*

### *UAC Guide*

The UAC Guide, published in July each year, is a comprehensive resource for domestic undergraduate admissions. It contains information about application procedures and admission requirements, general information about participating institutions and detailed course descriptions.

The Guide is distributed free-of-charge to Year 12 students in NSW and the ACT. Non-Year 12 applicants can buy a copy from newsagents throughout Australia or from UAC.

In 2012–13 the Guide expanded to include Apply direct institutions, with general information about these institutions, descriptions of the courses available and application information.

### *Mid-year Admissions Supplement*

The Mid-year Admissions Supplement is a companion publication to the UAC Guide. It is published in April each year with general and course information for applicants wanting to apply for undergraduate courses at UAC's participating institutions that commence in second semester.

With the move to year-long admissions for 2013/14, the 2013 mid-year supplement is the last edition to be published.

### *UAC International*

The UAC International booklet is published each year for certain international students who are eligible to apply through UAC. It contains application information and admission requirements, general information about participating institutions and a list of courses for first-semester undergraduate courses.

### *University Entry Requirements Year 10 booklet*

The University Entry Requirements Year 10 booklet is published each year to help Year 10 students make decisions about which HSC courses to take in Years 11 and 12. The booklet lists details of prerequisites, assumed knowledge and recommended studies for each area of study offered by UAC's participating institutions.

The booklet was expanded in 2013 to include background information about the HSC, the ATAR and applying to uni. It aims to encourage Year 10 students to think carefully about their subject selections for years 11 and 12, making it easier for them to enter and succeed at tertiary study.

### *Report on the Scaling of the NSW Higher School Certificate*

Compiled by the NSW Vice-Chancellor's Technical Committee on Scaling, this report contains information on the calculation of the ATAR in the previous admissions year.

### *All about your ATAR*

This booklet answers the frequently asked questions about the ATAR in simple terms. It is published to coincide with the release of the ATAR in December.

### *Educational Access Schemes (and application form)*

This booklet is published annually to provide essential information about applying for consideration under an Educational Access Scheme.

### *Equity Scholarships*

This booklet is published to provide information about applying for an Equity Scholarship through UAC.

### *UAC News*

This newsletter is for schools. It is published four times a year and contains general information for careers advisers, teachers, parents and students.

### *Other publications*

These publications for students, parents and career advisers are updated annually. They are distributed for free at information sessions and careers and university events across the state throughout the year.

### *All about UAC for Year 11 and 12 students*

This booklet gives Year 11 and 12 students information on the application process for university entry and details of how to prepare and research the many aspects of entry to tertiary study.

### *All about UAC for parents*

This booklet collates common questions parents have when guiding their child through the tertiary education process and enables them to understand the process and talk to their child's teachers with confidence.

### *All about UAC for careers advisers*

Based on the most common questions received by UAC from professional careers advisers, this booklet helps them to advise their Year 10 and 12 students on maximising their chances of being accepted to tertiary study.

### *Frequently asked questions about the ATAR*

Every year UAC receives many queries in relation to the ATAR. This booklet aims to address these common questions and the confusion surrounding the ATAR experienced by teachers, careers advisers, other education professionals, students and parents.

### *Steps 2 study*

This booklet is for prospective applicants for undergraduate study who have not recently completed their Year 12 studies. It outlines what they need to consider to achieve their goal of further study, and includes personal stories from others who have been in the same position.







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