

# Universities Admissions Centre (UAC)

## SUBMISSION

Response to improving retention,  
completion and success in  
higher education

Higher Educations Standards Panel  
Discussion Paper

July 2017



UNIVERSITIES  
ADMISSIONS CENTRE

# Universities Admissions Centre

## About us

The Universities Admissions Centre (NSW & ACT) Pty Ltd (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. Central to that mission is a strong culture of servicing the needs of all our stakeholders, in particular our institutions and applicants.

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 and for an easy interface with which to apply. Institutions rely upon UAC services to handle the bulk of the admissions process, allowing them to focus on their core capabilities of

## Executive summary

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UAC supports the release of the Higher Education Standards Panel's Discussion Paper on Improving retention, completion and success in higher education, and considers it a natural successor to the important work of the Panel on Improving the transparency of higher education admissions.

future. While universities can individually offer these services, and may choose to do so as part of their individual engagement activities, UAC can do so on behalf of higher education more broadly.

As acknowledged, again data has an important role to play to help make effective interventions where support is needed. UAC has pre-enrolment data which could be linked to post-enrolment data to support the sector to make targeted interventions and improve retention.

In conclusion, a deep understanding of the success cycle of prospective students is key to these strategies. Diagrammatically it can be represented as:



Prospective students come with many attributes, in relation to their personal background and circumstances, their qualifications and how they plan to study. From these a risk profile emerges, in much the same way as a car insurer will calculate risk based on your age, gender, type of car and what you plan to do with it. That risk profile can be used to determine eligibility for university courses and the level and type of tailored support that students will require. If these things are done well it will lead to improved student success.

UAC can use its expertise to collect student attributes, calculate risk and from that determine eligibility, while universities can focus on the quality of teaching and learning and on tailoring their individual support programs.

Selection is paramount to what UAC does and we continue to be well placed to help the sector in a wide variety of selection and admission processes.

## UAC's response to questions

On the following pages of this submission UAC provides specific feedback on the questions outlined in the Discussion Paper.

UAC thanks the Higher Education Standards Panel for the opportunity to provide feedback on the Discussion Paper and looks forward to working with the Panel, the Department of Education and Training and the higher education sector in whatever capacity those stakeholders determine to deliver greater success in higher education.





## Question 9

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What can we learn about enhancing student success from the international perspective?

While UAC has no specific answer to this question, it is interesting to note that other countries are using learning analytics, effectively matching students and study programs and monitoring students with “at risk” profiles – all areas that UAC is willing to engage with the sector to address.

## Question 10

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What are the most effective ways for providers to share best practice?

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