

HOW TO MAXIMISE EVENT ROI WITH UCAS AND DATA DASHBOARDS

Kate Wright – k.wright@ucas.ac.uk

Aimee Okafor - a.Okafor@ucas.ac.uk

Kathryn Mead – k.mead@ucas.ac.uk

Event operational questions -
events@ucas.ac.uk

UCAS data dashboards

UCAS

UCAS Tracker Enhanced

Provides daily updates and a comprehensive snapshot of your application data, enabling you to make informed decisions promptly. Benchmark your recruitment performance at subject level against six aggregated peer institutions and the broader sector to understand where there's room to enhance your strategy.

UCAS Student Decision Insights Dashboard

Offers clear visibility into the key drivers behind student choices at a critical decision-making moment. Interactive and filterable insights give you clarity on what applicants value most, enabling your team to refine strategies thoughtfully and efficiently.

UCAS Exhibitions Dashboard

Provides insights to help you plan and optimise your event strategy. It allows you to compare three years of activity, analyse your performance against benchmarks, demonstrate ROI by event and identify trends.

UCAS DISCOVERY EVENTS: THE NUMBERS



147K

Total attendees



44

Events



2598

Schools



+21%

Increase in flagship event attendance (vs 2024)



+5%

Increase on leads per event (vs 2024)



4.65

Number of exhibitors a student scans with on average excluding Scotland



76%

Proportion applied after attending



49%

Proportion applied to a scanned provider



25% STUDENTS

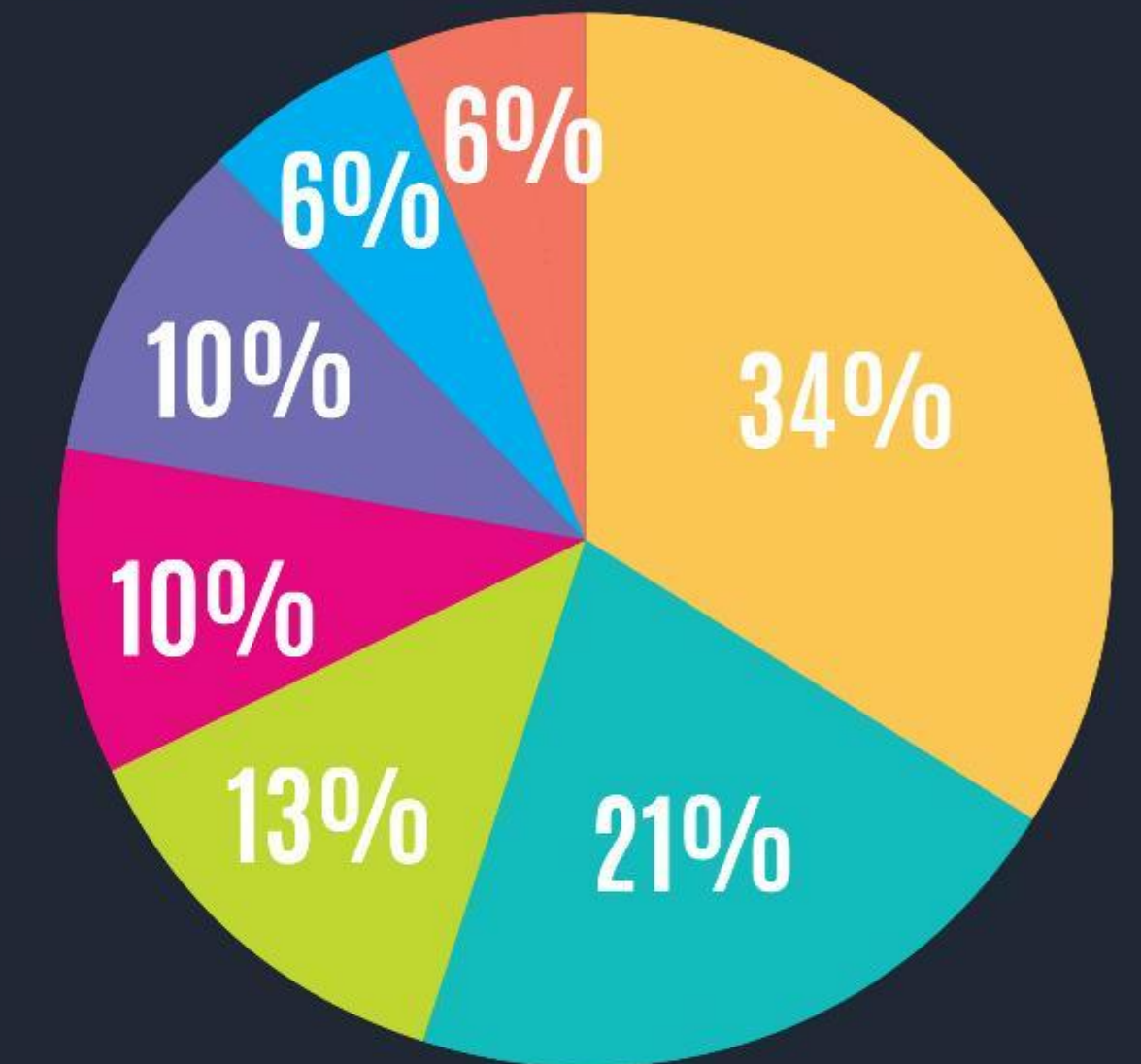
That attend from Polar 1 or 2



612K SCANS
(not unique)

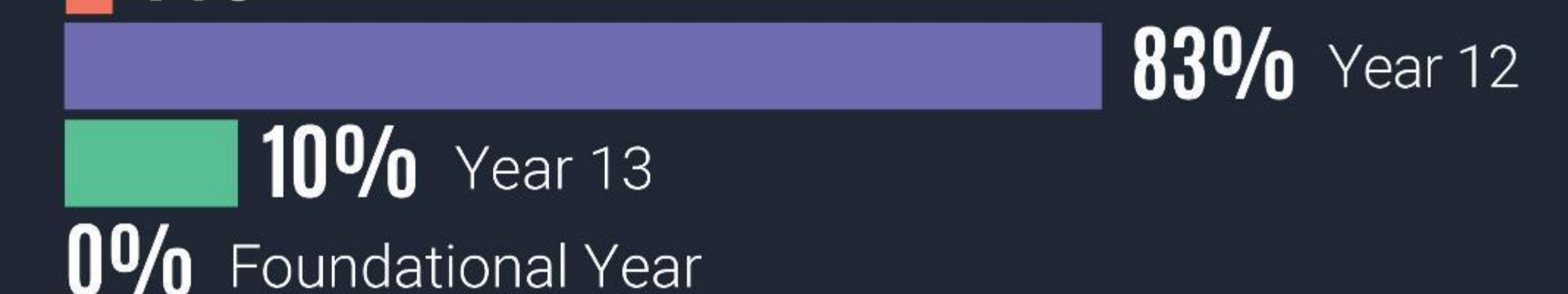
SCHOOL TYPE

- Sixth form college
- Comprehensive school
- Academy
- Independent school
- Further education college
- Grammar school
- Other



YEAR GROUP

- College
- Mature
- Other
- Year 11



Using data to plan your Event strategy

Shaping a regional targeting strategy through Tracker Enhanced

- In what regions is your institution performing well, for flagship event coverage?
- In what regions is your institution shrinking? And most importantly, where are you shrinking but your competitor set is growing?
- In what subject areas is your institution performing well, for flagship event coverage?
- In what subject areas is your institution shrinking? And most importantly, where are you shrinking but your competitor set is growing?

Understand the key factors driving applicant decisions ^{UCAS}

Getting into the student mindset through the Student Decision Insight Dashboard (age group 17 and under 18):

- High Importance Drivers:
 - Range of modules covered (88.1)
 - Social life and activities (81.9)
 - Student reviews (81.1)
 - Location in town/city (79.9)
- Lower Importance Drivers:
 - Cost of accommodation (68.0)
 - Ease of travel home (66.2)
 - Sports facilities (50.4)
 - Speed of getting an offer (44.4)

Event dashboard: using filters to plan and optimise your event strategy

- Event name: Compare events individually Discovery vs Create Your Future
- Event type: Analyse performance across Premium, shell and campus formats
- Comparison years: review historical data and forecast KPIs for future planning

Historic performance: Unlock insights to optimise

- **Scan trends YOY:** Are scans increasing or declining over time?
- **Attendee fluctuations:** How do scan trends align with changes in attendance?
- **Engagement ration:** What percentage of attendees scanned with you?
- **Engagement by event type:** Which formats (Premium, shell, campus) deliver highest engagement?

Historic performance: Unlock insights to optimise

- **Lead generation metrics** – how did you perform by event compared to the average scans per exhibitor
- **Geographic trends:** Are certain locations outperforming others?

Event	Current year average scans per exhibitor	Comparison year average scans per exhibitor	Current year your unique scans	Comparison year your unique scans
Birmingham	485	400	3,433	2,603
London	630	480	2,693	2,125
Manchester	470	390	2,082	1,249
Exeter	300	315	1,704	1,303
Newport	235	400	1,368	1,538
Farnborough	295	270	1,184	845
Bedford	250	230	1,049	793
Worcester	145	120	987	850
Lisburn	265	220	876	434
Leeds	210	185	746	658
Liverpool	160	160	619	426
Sheffield	160	165	610	468
Norwich	115	120	564	406
Maidstone	145	145	563	418

Using the dashboard to plan events

- **Forecast Attendance:** Pre-event, review booked numbers and download visitor lists in your Enet account to plan staffing levels and event materials. From January we will update the booked numbers weekly, on a Tuesday. Visitor lists are available 5 weeks, 1 week and 1 day before the event.

Stats and visitor lists are also updated 3 working days after the event has finished.

- **Predictive Analytics:** Use data extracted from the dashboard to forecast scans by event, add in stand sizes, and staffing to optimize resource allocation.
- **Interest Themes:** Analyse subject and apprenticeship interests across events to guide specialist staffing.

Visitor numbers in Enet

Event	Booked	Registered	Unique Attendees	Visitor List
Manchester	20066	16531	14159	Download
Exeter	8352	7380	6909	Download
Lisburn	8557	7493	6903	Download
London	26941	24190	21515	Download
Worcester	3987	3404	3132	Download
Brighton	3256	2649	2338	Download
Newport	5331	4635	4245	Download
Carmarthen	1082	939	871	Download
Winchester	4802	4207	3972	Download
Farnborough	8958	7817	7187	Download
Bristol (Spring)	1287	1095	996	Download
Middlesbrough	1617	1386	1296	Download
Maidstone	4712	3839	3624	Download
East London	6974	6123	5252	Download
Sheffield	4645	3867	3359	Download

Preparing for success

UCAS Tracker Enhanced provides key insight into current cycle trends, benchmarking your institution against the sector and a competitor set, allowing you to contextualise performance across key areas to drive regional and subject-led Events strategies.

Through the **UCAS Student Decision Insight Dashboard** (SDID, previously Student Insight Report) you can understand sector-wide, against your peers and for your institution the push and pull factors influencing student decision-making on university and course choice.

Combining these findings in the preparation stages helps institutions to:

- Identify target locations for events
- Know the subjects that need to be driven through opportunities like Subject Spotlights, Create Your Future and stand design
- Prepare your stand design to draw attention, hitting the key notes from the SDID
- Prepare your Event staff on the messages that must resonate on the day, based on findings from the SDID

UCAS Event Dashboard can help you analyse and forecast performance whilst planning your event attendance

Compare year-on-year data, event type, review geographic performance, identify trends, review how you are performing versus the average

Review attendance numbers to forecast staffing levels

Analyse subject interests to guide specialist staffing

How can your stand draw attention?

High Importance Driver (SDID)	Translating into Stand Design
Range of modules covered (88.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject areas offered • QR codes to explore key courses • Subject spotlights
Social Life & Activities (81.9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imagery of real students participating in flagship activities e.g. sports teams • Spotlight on the Students Union
Student Reviews (81.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student quotes covering a variety of topics • Student ambassadors present on your stand • Videos of current students discussing their experiences
Location in town / city (79.9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map highlighting location (particularly if lesser known) • Iconic architecture • Campus vs city

Why stands were memorable

- **Top Factors:**

- Helpful and friendly staff
- Clear, informative answers to questions
- Useful advice and personalized guidance.
- Interactive and engaging experiences.

- **Theme:** Students value personal engagement, depth of information, and approachability. Authentic conversations with staff and student ambassadors make a strong impression

Recommendations

- 1.Increase Interactivity:** Incorporate demos, VR, or hands-on activities to make stands engaging.
- 2.Deploy Student Ambassadors:** Peer-to-peer insights resonate strongly with attendees.
- 3.Improve Information Delivery:** Provide concise, clear resources (QR codes, mini booklets).
- 4.Reduce Queues:** Add more staff or digital kiosks for popular stands.
- 5.Balance Marketing & Substance:** Freebies attract attention but should complement meaningful conversations.

Using the events dashboard to track and improve outcomes

- Scans by event / type of event / geographic region
- Proportion of attendees that scanned with you
- Scans compared to average scans per exhibitor
- Scans compared to comparison year unique scans
- Scans by subjects of interest
- Scans by POLAR / SIMD / WIMD / NIMDM / Age / School year

Engagement metrics: Balancing quality vs quantity

What is the conversion rate from scans to applications YoY?

Which event types deliver the highest conversion rates?

Are high-volume scan events driving meaningful conversion or just numbers?

Do smaller, targeted events outperform larger ones in conversion efficiency?

How does conversion vary by region?

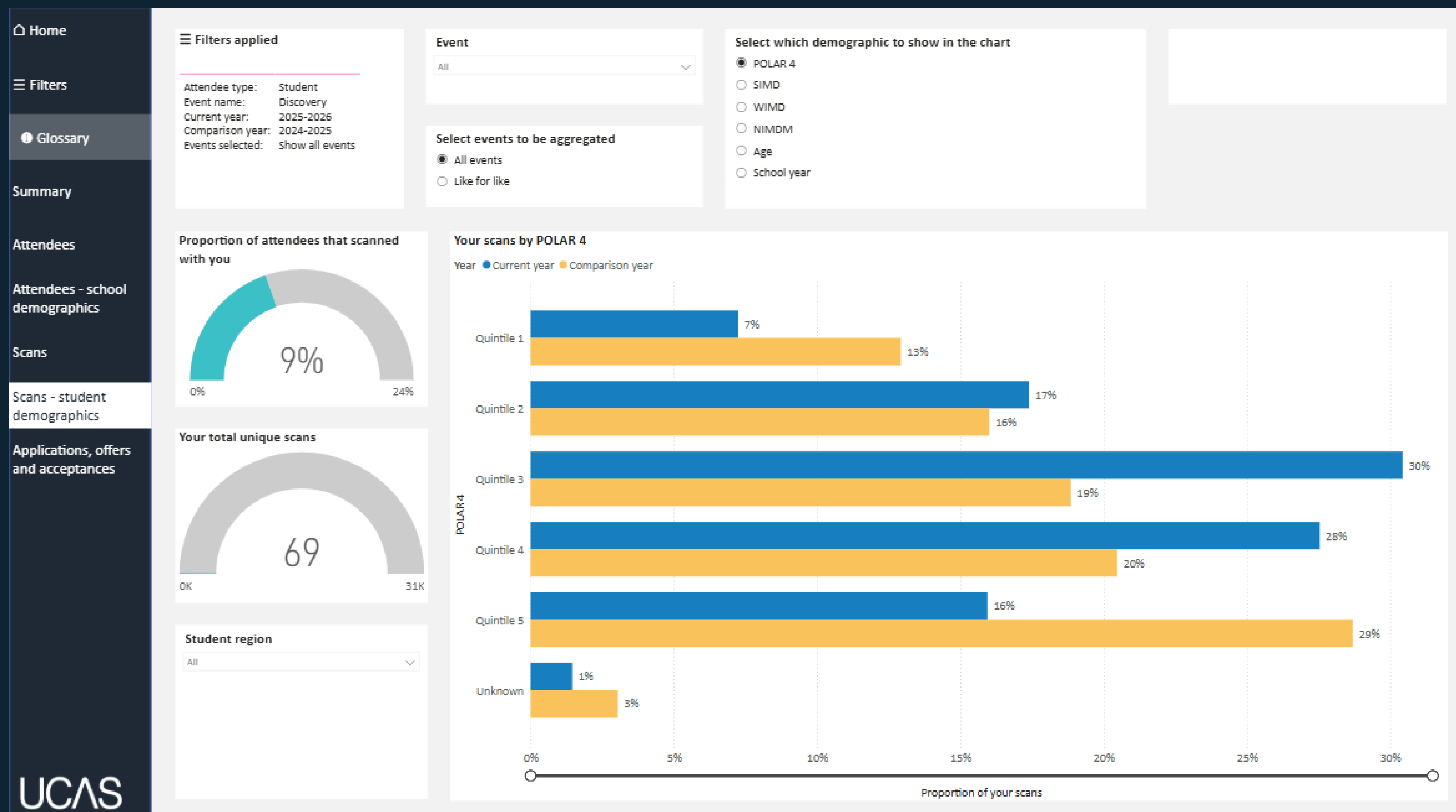
Which marketing activation lead to the highest conversion-to-application ratio?

What is the cost per conversion compared to cost per scan?

Using event data to evaluate widening participation

Widening Participation (WP) – review how many students have scanned with you across various demographics at each event

Include breakdown of different metrics across four nations (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales)



Measuring Success

High level event data:

- Attendee stats that can be compared YOY.
- A full list of subjects of interest and apprenticeship industries for those who attended.
- Analyse like for like events that run each year or include all events.

Customisable view of the data:

- The enhanced filtering allows you to choose what data you use.
- View YOY stats across three academic cycles.
- Analyse data by event type, region, registrant, all events or only events you attended.
- Switch between UCAS Discovery and Create Your Future events

Scanning statistics

- Data to support you with your WP objectives.
- A full list of subjects of interest and apprenticeship industries for those who scanned with you.
- How many scans you had versus average scans.

Applications, offers and acceptances:

- YOY comparisons so you have a clear view of your ROI.
- Ability to view conversions overall or by event or for an event cycle/season.

FAQs

How often is data updated?

Data from an event can be updating up to 3 days after the event is closed, especially data relating to scans.

Conversion data is updated regularly. The majority of conversion data (in the Applications, offers and acceptances tab) is updated January of the year post event. E.g. for events in 2023-2024 data will appear from January 2025.

Who has access to the dashboard?

Primary (and secondary on request) contacts for event bookings. You can also request additional users by emailing events@ucas.ac.uk or by asking your UCAS correspondent.

What do the stats mean?

Take a look at the Glossary which explains all the terminology and definitions. If you need further support understanding the statistics or how the dashboard works, we are here to help.

Need help or a dashboard demo for customers?

Customers can contact the UCAS Events Technical Support Team

Tel: 01242 545725 Email eventstechnical@ucas.ac.uk.

INSIGHT

- A quarter of young people are worried about not knowing what they want to do in the future
- Over 1 in 5 of unplaced students wanted more information from UCAS to help them feel supported
- Students can feel overwhelmed when they come to a Discovery event
- The volume of course choices available to students can feel overwhelming