

<b>Session Title:</b>	<b>Enhancing UCAS events for students who are from disadvantaged backgrounds without clear pathways</b>
<b>Speaker(s):</b>	<b>David Penney and Ellie Rowley</b>
<b>Chair:</b>	<b>Elliot Newstead</b>
<b>Reporter:</b>	<b>Louise Irving</b>

<b>Speaker/Institution Bio/Information:</b>	David Penney & Ellie Rowley, UCAS.
<b>Overview/Aim of session:</b>	Combined HELOA & UCAS workshop to identify opportunities to enhance UCAS events for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
<b>Workshop Content</b>	<p>In 2022 15,0000 visitors attended a UCAS event. There were over 606,779 connections through scans and half of UK schools attended. Overall the feedback from attendees of UCAS events is positive. The challenge is how to improve attendance specifically for WP students and schools.</p> <p>40% of attending 17 year-olds know what they are doing next compared to over half of 18 year-olds and over. 70% of 17 year-olds didn't know who to talk to when they came to event.</p> <p>How do we prepare attendees better? Prepared attendees get more out of it.</p> <p>Those visiting more exhibitors also rated the event as most useful.</p> <p>In the next 12 months, UCAS will focus on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving preparation of individuals in advance of attendance</li> <li>• Personalising the experience</li> <li>• Facilitating a greater level of conversations and questions between attendees and exhibitors</li> </ul> <p>UCAS are planning to offer attendee Q&amp;A sessions in advance to help attendees prepare to attend the event. They will additionally provide games and resources to</p>

	<p>teachers to help prepare their students.</p> <p>At the events, UCAS intend to have a prominent Q&amp;A Support Zone, encouraging attendees to focus more on the Q&amp;A aspect of an event.</p> <p>UCAS are looking to introduce the use of Mission Cards with questions for attendees to ask at event.</p> <p>Between 2011-2020, there was a 450% increase in the number of UK applicants sharing mental health conditions on their UCAS application.</p> <p>There are additional challenges for students with disabilities or who are care-experienced when attending an event. Exhibitors should ensure that staff are prepared to answer the types of questions that these students require the answer to at events e.g. student support services. UCAS reports on these areas are available.</p> <p>UCAS have forecast 1 million applicants in 2026. There will be greater demand for university places and additional challenges for WP applicants.</p> <p>With the introduction of additional questions within the UCAS application to support widening access, it is likely that these applicants will be prompted to ask questions about student support at a UCAS event.</p>
<b>Case Studies/Examples:</b>	
<b>Scenarios/Roundtable discussions:</b>	<p>If UCAS could do one thing to help disadvantaged or unrepresented students get the most from events, what should we do?</p> <p><u>Suggestions from discussion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UCAS could provide preparation resources to HEIs to help deliver to schools in advance of attendance at an event.</li> <li>• Change the teachers' lounge to a teacher workshop area.</li> <li>• UCAS could simplify the event registration process by merging it with the application system. This would allow attendees to identify themselves as WP students.</li> <li>• Not all teachers are receiving UCAS materials and updates regarding their local event due to changes in staffing. UCAS to ensure that their mailing lists</li> </ul>

	<p>are up to date before sending out materials and mailings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of an I Don't Know area at events. Make use of student ambassadors to speak to attendees instead of picking up cardboard.</li> </ul> <p>Please send any further ideas to <a href="mailto:access@ucas.ac.uk">access@ucas.ac.uk</a></p>
<b>Questions and Answers:</b>	
<b>SummaryKey takeaways:</b>	<p>As the HE landscape continues to change, UCAS are keen to work with HELOA to improve access to their careers events for WP students. Any ideas on improving access for these students can be sent to <a href="mailto:access@ucas.ac.uk">access@ucas.ac.uk</a>.</p>